



BOSTON HIGH SCHOOL

LEADING LEARNING TOGETHER



Name of Policy: Word Processor (Exams) Policy

Date Ratified:	November 2025
Monitoring Responsibility	Full: Yes Finance, Personnel and Premises: Standards & Outcomes :
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Headteacher:	Mr A Fulbrook
Chair of Governors:	Mrs L Smith
Draftee (Academy Lead):	Mrs K Osborn

Signed Date

Mrs L Smith – Chair of Governors

Word processor (exams) policy

An exam candidate may be approved the use of a word processor where this is appropriate to the candidate's needs and not simply because this is the candidate's preferred way of working within the centre. The regulations for this is set out within the JCQ regulations 5.8.4

This policy includes the statement of the criteria the centre uses to award and allocate word processors for exams. This includes a statement from Boston High School's Senior Leadership Team – attached as an appendix to this policy.

Centres are allowed to provide a word processor (e.g. computer, laptop or tablet) **with the spelling and grammar check/predictive text disabled** to a candidate **where it is their normal way of working within the centre**, unless an awarding body's specification says otherwise. For example, where the curriculum is delivered electronically and the centre provides word processors to all candidates. This also includes an electronic braille or a tablet. [ICE 14.20]

A word processor cannot simply be granted to a candidate because he/she now wants to type rather than write in examinations or can work faster on a keyboard, or because he/she uses a laptop at home.

The use of a word processor must reflect the candidate's normal way of working within the centre.

A member of Boston High School's Senior Leadership Team has produced a statement for inspection purposes which details the criteria the centre uses to award and allocate word processors for examinations. A copy of this is attached to both this policy and the school's Word Processor in Exams policy.

[AA 5.8.]

The purpose of an access arrangement is to ensure, where possible, that barriers to assessment are removed for a disabled candidate preventing him/her from being placed at a substantial disadvantage as a consequence of persistent and significant difficulties.

The integrity of the assessment is maintained, whilst at the same time providing access to assessments for a disabled candidate.

Although access arrangements are intended to allow access to assessments, they cannot be granted where they will compromise the assessment objectives of the specification in question.

(AA 4.2.2)

Candidates may not require the same access arrangements in each specification. Subjects and their methods of assessments may vary, leading to different demands of the candidate. The SENCo must consider the need for access arrangements on a subject-by-subject basis.

Purpose of the policy

This policy details how Boston High School complies with AA. Adjustments for candidates with disabilities and learning difficulties and (chapter 5.8) Word processor when awarding and allocating a candidate the use of word processor in his/her exams.

The term 'word processor' is used to describe for example, the use of a computer, laptop or tablet.

The use of a word processor

The centre will

- allocate the use of a word processor to a candidate where it is their normal way of working within the centre (AA 5.8.1)
- award the use of a word processor to a candidate if it is appropriate to their needs

Needs may include

- a learning difficulty which has a substantial and long term adverse effect on his/her ability to write legibly
 - a medical condition
 - a physical disability
 - a sensory impairment
 - planning and organisational problems when writing by hand
 - poor handwriting (AA 5.8.4)
- only permit the use of a word processor where the integrity of the assessment can be maintained (AA 4.2.1)
 - not grant the use of a word processor where it will compromise the assessment objectives of the specification in question (AA 4.2.2)

- consider on a subject-by-subject basis if the candidate will need to use a word processor in each specification (AA 4.2.3)
- consider the needs of the candidate at the start of the candidate's course leading to a qualification based on evidence gathered that firmly establishes the candidate's needs and 'normal way of working' in the classroom, internal tests/exams, mock exams etc. and confirm arrangements in place before the candidate takes an exam or assessment (AA 4.2.5)
- provide access to word processors to candidates in non-examination assessment components as standard practice unless prohibited by the specification (AA 5.8.2)

The centre will not

- simply grant the use of a word processor to a candidate because he/she prefers to type rather than write or can work faster on a keyboard, or because he/she uses a laptop at home (AA 5.8.4)

Exceptions

The only exceptions to the above where the use of a word processor would be considered for a candidate would be

- in the event of a temporary injury or impairment, or a diagnosis of a disability or manifestation of an impairment relating to an existing disability arising after the start of the course (AA 4.2.5)
- where a subject within the curriculum is delivered electronically and the centre provides word processors to all candidates

Centre specific processes

An electronic record of candidates who have been provided with a centre delegated access arrangement of a word processor is kept. This record is within the Access Arrangements electronic document locked and maintained by the Examinations Officer. The Access Arrangements document is available for staff to read via the Teacher area within the Shared drive. The SENCO informs the Examinations Officer when a candidate satisfactorily meets the criteria described above and has been approved for this arrangement. The Examinations Officer then updated this document accordingly.

Arrangements at the time of the assessment for the use of a word processor

A candidate using a word processor is accommodated primarily in a delegated examinations IT room (this may be IT1, IT2 or IT4). They may also be in the main examinations hall with the main cohort using a laptop. They may also be

accommodated in alternative room, dependent on the needs of the student whilst complying with the regulations.

In compliance with the regulations the centre:

- provides a word processor with the spelling and grammar check facility/predictive text disabled (switched off) unless an awarding body's specification says otherwise (5.8.1) or the exceptional reasons where the centre has approval for the use of a scribe, reflecting the candidate's normal way of working, together with below average spelling accuracy standardised score with unrecognisable spellings (5.7.5)
- Occasionally a candidate is to be seated with the main cohort, in this instance the battery capacity of the word processor will be checked before the candidate's exam to ensure that the battery is sufficiently charged for the entire duration of the exam (ICE 14.21)
- The invigilator ensures the candidate is reminded to complete his/her centre number, candidate number and the unit/component code. (ICE 14.22) This appears as a front page before opening the examination paper and candidates therefore complete this before commencing the examination. Students practise this process during their mock examinations.
- The document automatically forces the candidate to save and then autosaves every one minutes.
- The IT department set the documents at 12pt font and double spacing in order to assist examiners when marking (ICE 14.24). However candidates may change this, to allow to access for impairments such as visual impairments.
- Page numbers on the answer pages automatically number.

(ICE 14.25)

The centre will ensure the word processor:

- is only used in a way that ensures a candidate's script is produced under secure conditions
- is in good working order at the time of the exam
- is accommodated in such a way that other candidates are not disturbed and cannot read the screen
- is used as a typewriter, not as a database, although standard formatting software is acceptable and is not connected to an intranet or any other means of communication
- is cleared of any previously stored data
- does not give the candidate access to other applications such as a calculator (where prohibited in the examination), spreadsheets etc.
- does not include graphic packages or computer aided design software unless permission has been given to use these

- does not have any predictive text software or an automatic spelling and grammar check enabled unless the candidate has been permitted a scribe or is using speech recognition technology (a scribe cover sheet must be completed), or the awarding body's specification permits the use of automatic spell checking
- does not include speech recognition technology unless the candidate has permission to use a scribe or relevant software
- is not used on the candidate's behalf by a third party unless the candidate has permission to use a scribe

Portable storage medium

The centre will ensure that any portable storage medium (e.g. a memory stick) used

- is provided by the centre
- is cleared of any previously stored data

Printing the script after the exam is over

The centre will ensure:

- the word processor is either connected to a printer so that a script can be printed off, or have the facility to print from a portable storage medium
- the candidate is present to verify that the work printed is his or her own
- a word processed script is attached to any answer booklet which contains some of the answers
- a word processor cover sheet (Form 4) is completed and included with the candidate's typed script (according to the relevant awarding body's instructions)

Centre specific processes

Boston High School uses the software programme ExamsWritePad

Boston High School uses the electronic reader software programme 'ReadWrite' according to the regulations within Section 5.5

Appendices

Appendix 1

The criteria Boston High School uses to award and allocate word processors for examinations

The 'normal way of working' for exam candidates, as directed by the head of centre, is that candidates handwrite their exams. An exception to this is where a candidate

may have an approved access arrangement in place, for example the use of a scribe/speech recognition technology.

The use of word processors

There are also exceptions where a candidate may be awarded/allocated the use of a word processor in exams where he/she has a firmly established need, it reflects the candidate's normal way of working and by not being awarded a word processor would be at a substantial disadvantage to other candidates. Normal way of working is established through a student's use of a word processor in assessments, tests and mock examinations. The use of a laptop in lessons and access to the SEND departments laptops is also assigned to students with the SENCO approval where they meet the criteria outlined.

Needs might include where a candidate has, for example:

- a learning difficulty which has a substantial and long term adverse effect on their ability to write legibly
- a medical condition
- a physical disability
- a sensory impairment
- planning and organisational problems when writing by hand
- poor handwriting

The only exception to the above where the use of a word processor may be considered for a candidate would be

- on a temporary basis as a consequence of a temporary injury at the time of the assessment
- where a subject within the curriculum is delivered electronically and the centre provides word processors to all candidates

Arrangements for the use of word processors at the time of the assessment

Appropriate exam-compliant word processors will be provided by the IT department in liaison with the SENCO and the exams officer. In exceptional circumstances where the number of appropriate word processors may be insufficient for the cohort of candidates approved to use them in an exam session, the cohort will be split into two groups. One group will sit the exam earlier than or later than the awarding body's published start time. Boston High School currently use the IT rooms for examinations and this would therefore be in very exceptional circumstances. The security of the exam will be maintained at all times and candidates will be supervised in line with section 7 of ICE.