

## Policy on the Eligibility of Students to Use Word Processors in Exams 2024/25

This policy is reviewed and updated annually on the publication of updated JCQ regulations and guidance on access arrangements and instructions for conducting exams.

References in this policy to AA and ICE relate to/are directly taken from the Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments 2024-2025 and Instructions for conducting examinations 2024-2025 publications.

### Introduction

This Policy has been provided to support The Ladies' College in meeting the following requirements (AA, section 5.8):

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. For example, where the curriculum is delivered electronically and the centre provides word processors to all candidates.

The centre may wish to set out the types of candidates which it considers would benefit from the use of a word processor. For example, a candidate with...

A member of the centre's senior leadership team must produce a word processor policy, specific to the centre, which details the criteria the centre uses to award and allocate word processors for examinations and assessments. This policy must be available for inspection.

The use of a word processor in exams and assessments is an available access arrangement/reasonable adjustment.

The purpose of an access arrangement/reasonable adjustment is to ensure, where possible, that barriers to assessment are removed for a disabled candidate preventing them from being placed at a substantial disadvantage due to persistent and significant difficulties. The integrity of the assessment is maintained, whilst at the same time providing access to assessments for a disabled candidate. (AA 4.2.1)

Although access arrangements/adjustments 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/reasonable adjustments in each specification. Subjects and their methods of assessments may vary, leading to different demands of the candidate. The Head of Learning Support **must** consider the need for access arrangements/reasonable adjustments on a subject-by-subject basis. (AA 4.2.3)

The Head of Learning Support **must** ensure that the proposed access arrangement/reasonable adjustment does not unfairly disadvantage or advantage the candidate. (AA 4.2.1)

The candidate must have had appropriate opportunities to practice using the access arrangement(s)/reasonable adjustment(s) before their first examination. (AA 4.2.7)

## **Purpose of the policy**

This policy details how The Ladies' College complies with AA chapter 4 (Managing the needs of candidates and principles for centres), section 5.8 (Word processor) and ICE (sections 14.20-27) when awarding and allocating a candidate the use of word processor in examinations.

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

## **The Ladies' College uses the following criteria to award and allocate word processors for examinations and assessments**

Students at The Ladies' College sit two assessments in Year 7

- a LUCID GL assessment
- MidYIS test.

LUCID identifies a student's handwriting speed and typing speed. Those identified as needing to use a word processor to support their need are identified and, after discussions with the student, teachers and parents, will use a word processor in all lessons or identified lessons as a normal way of working. Feedback is gathered regularly to ensure the need is being addressed. As students move through the College, the use of a word processor is reviewed to confirm the continuing need as their normal way of working. Any recommendations for the use of a word processor will then be passed to the Examinations Officer by the Head of Learning Support and the student will be placed on the exams access arrangements list.

Throughout their studies, students, parents or teachers can also identify such a need and a discussion with the Head of Learning Support will then take place. A meeting will be arranged and the Head of Learning Support will carry out some preliminary tests to determine whether using a word processor would be the most appropriate option available to support the individual's needs.

The 'normal way of working' for exam candidates, as directed by the head of centre, is that candidates handwrite their exams unless there are exceptions.

## **Exceptions**

A candidate may be awarded the use of a word processor in examinations where:

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

The centre will

- allocate the use of a word processor to a candidate with the spelling and grammar check facility/predictive text switched off 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 where appropriate to their needs

For example, a candidate with:

- 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 (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)
  - process access arrangements/reasonable adjustments at the **start** of the course, or as soon as practicable having firmly established a picture of need and normal way of working, ensuring arrangements are always approved **before** an examination or assessment (AA 4.2.4)
  - provide the use of 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 they now want to type rather than write in examinations or can work faster on a keyboard, or because they use a laptop at home. (AA 5.8.4)

Additionally the use of a word processor would be considered for a candidate:

- 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 4.2.4)
- where the curriculum is delivered electronically and the centre provides word processors to all candidates (AA 5.8.4)

## Centre specific processes

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

A candidate using a word processor is accommodated in the hall if there are no additional Access Arrangements or in a room with EAA candidates if there are additional access arrangements. The candidate will follow the same procedures for internal, mock and final public examinations as is their normal way of working.

In compliance with the regulations the centre:

- provides a word processor 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 (ICE 14.20)
- (where a candidate is to be seated with the main cohort without the use of a power point) checks the battery capacity of the word processor before the candidate's exam to ensure that the battery is sufficiently charged for the entire duration of the exam (ICE 14.21)
- ensures the candidate is reminded to ensure that their centre number, candidate number and the unit/component code appear on each page as a header or footer e.g. 12345/8001 – 6391/01 (ICE 14.22)
- If a candidate is using the software application Notepad or Wordpad these do not allow for the insertion of a header or footer. In these instances once the candidate has completed the examination and printed off their typed script, they are instructed to handwrite their details as a header or footer. The candidate is supervised throughout this process to ensure that they are

solely performing this task and not re-reading their answers or amending their work in any way.

- ensures the candidate understands that each page of the typed script must be numbered, e.g. page 1 of 6 (ICE 14.23)
- ensures the candidate is reminded to save their work at regular intervals. (or where possible, an IT technician will set up 'autosave' on each laptop/tablet (or where possible, an IT technician will set up 'autosave' on each laptop/tablet to ensure that if there is a complication or technical issue, the candidate's work is not lost) (ICE 14.24)
- instructs the candidate to use a minimum of 12pt font and double spacing ~~in order to make marking easier for examiners~~ (ICE 14.24)

(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 not used to perform skills which are being assessed
- is not connected to an intranet or any other means of communication
- 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
- 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), e-mail, the Internet, social media sites, spreadsheets
- 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 (a scribe cover sheet must be completed), or the awarding body's specification permits the use of automatic spell checking
- does not include computer reading (text to speech) software unless the candidate has permission to use a computer reader
- does not include speech recognition technology unless the candidate has permission to use a scribe (a scribe cover sheet must be completed)
- is not used on the candidate's behalf by a third party unless the candidate has permission to use a scribe (a scribe cover sheet must be completed)

### **Portable storage medium**

(ICE 14.25)

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 has ended**

(ICE 14.25)

The centre will ensure:

- the word processor has the facility to print from a portable storage medium
- the candidate is present to verify that the work printed is their own
- a word processed script is attached to any answer booklet which contains some of the answers
- if a candidate omits to insert the required header or footer, they are instructed to handwrite the details as a header or footer; the candidate is supervised throughout this process to ensure that they are solely performing this task and not re-reading their answers or amending their work in any way (ICE 14.22)

The centre will also ensure that where an awarding body may require a word processor cover sheet, this is included with the candidate's typed script (and according to the relevant awarding body's instructions). (ICE 14.26)

### **Retaining electronic copies of word processed scripts**

The centre may retain electronic copies of word processed scripts as the electronic copy of a word processed script may be accepted by an awarding body where the printed copy has been lost. However, the centre would need to demonstrate to the awarding body that the e; file has been kept securely. The head of centre would be required to confirm this in writing to the awarding body. (ICE 14.27)

After printing the script after the exam has ended, the Exams Officer at The Ladies' College will

- save a copy of the script using the following naming convention – date surname name candidate number subject paper number/component eg 260523 Bloggs Joe Physics 7408\_1
- save all word processed scripts securely under Scripts in SharePoint/exams
- allow the folder to only be accessible to Exams Officer, IT Manager, SLT lead for exams and Head of Centre
- delete the file from the portable storage device after it has been saved into the folder.

### **Allocating word processors at the time of the assessment**

- Appropriate exam-compliant word processors will be provided by the IT department in liaison with the IT Manager, Head of Learning Support and the Examinations 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.
- The security of the exam will be maintained at all times and candidates will be supervised in line with section 7 of ICE 7.]

### **Centre specific processes**

#### **Using ExamWritePad**

The Ladies' College will use ExamWritePad with candidates. ExamWritePad will

- autosave at timed intervals
- auto back for up to 24 hours but within the software you can only recover the last 1 hour of backups.
- create backups in case of power failures
- allow headers for all the candidate information
- change background colour if suffering from Irlen's Syndrome
- zoom into document if unable to read
- print off word processing cover sheets for WJEC and CIE

If a student loses their work on-screen or closes without saving, there are three ways to restore it:

- Start a new session of EWP, click on 'Start New Exam', then fill in the candidate details with anything made up. Located on the FILE tab is a button called "Backup History", press it, and then using the drop-down list select the most recent work that the student selects is correct.

- Launching EWP, will give you the splash screen, press the button “Restore Previous”, then using the drop-down list select the most recent work that the student selects is correct.
- Without using EWP, navigate to the backup folder, normally located within “C:\ProgramData\ExamWritePad\ExamWritePad\{version #}\” where you will see a list of files. Each file should have a filename that will make it easy to narrow down the student's specific exam work. Each backup file has a file extension of “.ExamTextBackup, you need to rename the file extension to “.ExamText”, then you can proceed to open up the file in EWP.

### **Procedure for laptop candidates**

1. IT will set up the laptop in the hall/EAA room. They will check that there is no access to the internet, the template works and the autosave function is switched on. IT will use a sign off sheet to track that each laptop has been set up correctly. Each laptop will be plugged into the mains.
2. After briefing, the laptop candidates will be shown into the exam room ahead of the other candidates.
3. Before examinations, the candidates will be instructed on how to use ExamWritePad. They will have used this in mock examinations.
4. The candidate will be given a memory stick which will have no other work on it.
5. The candidate will need to fill in the boxes to set up the template (or examination officer does this before the exam?)
6. ExamWritePad will put in headers and footers and autosave.
7. At the end of the exam, the Examinations Officer will check to see if the file has saved to the memory stick and onto the hard drive of the laptop.
8. The Examinations Officer will insert the memory stick into her laptop and send to print.
9. At the same the Examinations Officer will save the work to Scripts under SharePoint/Exams, saving by datesurnamenamesubjectpaper
10. The Examinations Officer will delete the paper from the memory stick and the hard drive of the laptop after the exam script has been successfully saved and printed.
11. The Examinations Officer will delete all papers from this folder after the review of marking has finished (end of October)
12. The IT team will remove the laptop and sign to say that no files are held on the laptop.