

EXAMINATIONS WORD PROCESSOR POLICY

This policy applies to

Beal High School (Centre number 13317)

The Forest Academy (Centre number 13313)

Beacon Business and Innovation Hub (Centre 13362)

Area/Department responsible for policy	TRUST
Approval Body:	Trust Executive
Date of last review:	October 2025
Statutory (DFE) Yes/No	No

I Purpose of the policy

- 1 This policy details how BMAT Centres comply with 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.
- 2 References in this policy relate to JCQ Documents as follows
AA Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments and
ICE Instructions for conducting examinations.

II Introduction

- 3 The use of a word processor in exams and assessments is an available access arrangement/reasonable adjustment.
- 4 The following principles are applied to access arrangements at BMAT Centres
 - a. The purpose of an access arrangement/reasonable adjustment is to ensure, where possible, that barriers to assessment are removed for disabled or otherwise disadvantaged candidates with persistent and significant difficulties.
 - b. The integrity of the assessment is maintained, whilst at the same time providing access to assessments for a disabled or otherwise disadvantaged candidate.
- 5 Although access arrangements/adjustments are intended to allow access to assessments, they are not granted where they will compromise the assessment objectives of the specification in question.
- 6 Candidates may not require the use of a word processor in each exam. Subjects and their methods of assessments may vary, leading to different demands of the candidate. SENCos must consider the need for a word processor on a subject-by-subject basis.
- 7 The SENCo must ensure that the use of a word processor does not disadvantage or advantage a candidate.
- 8 The candidate must have had appropriate opportunities to practice using the word processor before their first examination.

III The use of a word processor

BMAT Centres will:

- 9 allocate a word processor to a candidate with the spelling and grammar check/predictive text disabled (switched off) where it is their normal way of working within the centre
 - a. award the use of a word processor to a candidate where appropriate to their needs. For example, a candidate with:
 - i. a learning difficulty which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his/her ability to write legibly
 - ii. a medical condition

- iii. a physical disability
 - iv. a sensory impairment
 - v. planning and organisational problems when writing by hand
 - vi. poor handwriting
- 10 only permit the use of a word processor where the integrity of the assessment can be maintained
 - 11 not grant the use of a word processor where it will compromise the assessment objectives of the specification in question
 - 12 consider on a subject-by-subject basis if the candidate will need to use a word processor in each specification
 - 13 process access arrangements 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
 - 14 provide the use of word processors to candidates in non-examination assessment components as standard practice unless prohibited by the specification

BMAT Centres will not:

- 15 simply grant the use of a word processor 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

IV Exceptions

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

- 16 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
- 17 where the curriculum is delivered electronically and the centre provides word processors to all candidates

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

- 18 Candidates using a word processors are accommodated in rooms other than main exam halls.

In compliance with the regulations, BMAT Centres will:

- 19 provide a word processor with the spelling and grammar check facility/predictive text disabled (switched off) unless an awarding body's specification says otherwise
- 20 ensure 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 unless using the Exam WritePad program which automatically completes this for the student.

- 21 if a candidate is using a software application that does not allow for the insertion of a header or footer, 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.
- 22 ensures the candidate understands that each page of the typed script must be numbered, e.g. page 1 of 6
- 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 to ensure that if there is a complication or technical issue, the candidate's work is not lost) unless using the Exam WritePad program which automatically completes this for the student.
- 24 instructs the candidate to use a minimum of 12pt font and double spacing to make marking easier for examiners

BMAT Centres will ensure the word processor:

- 25 is only used in a way that ensures a candidate's script is produced under secure conditions
- 26 is not used to perform skills which are being assessed
- 27 is not connected to an intranet or any other means of communication
- 28 is in good working order at the time of the exam
- 29 is accommodated in such a way that other candidates are not disturbed and cannot read the screen
- 30 is cleared of any previously stored data
- 31 does not give the candidate access to other applications such as a calculator (where prohibited in the examination), spreadsheets etc.
- 32 does not include graphic packages or computer aided design software unless permission has been given to use these
- 33 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
- 34 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

VI Portable storage medium

BMAT Centres will ensure that any portable storage medium (e.g. a memory stick) used:

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

VII Printing the script after the exam has ended

BMAT Centres will ensure that:

- 37 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
- 38 the candidate is present to verify that the work printed is their own
- 39 a word processed script is attached to any answer booklet which contains some of the answers
- 40 where an awarding body requires a cover sheet to be completed this is included with the candidate's typed script (according to the relevant awarding body's instructions)
- 41 if a candidate omits to insert the required header or footer, he/she is instructed to handwrite their details as a header or footer; the candidate is supervised throughout this process to ensure that he/she is solely performing this task and not re-reading their answers or amending their work in any way

JCQ Statement

JCQ regulations (Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments, section 5.8) state:

A member of the centre's senior leadership team must produce a statement for inspection purposes which details the criteria the centre uses to award and allocate word processors for examinations.

The criteria used to award and allocate word processors for examinations

BMAT Centres confirms the normal way of working in examinations is:

- candidates handwrite responses on their examination scripts (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)

Awarding the use of word processors

There are exceptions when BMAT Centres may award a candidate 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
- by not being awarded a word processor the candidate would be at a substantial disadvantage to other candidates

This may include where a candidate has, for example:

- 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

(This list is not exhaustive)

The only exceptions to the above where the use of a word processor may also 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

Allocating the use of word processors at the time of the assessment

Appropriate exam-compliant word processors will be allocated by:

- the Exams Team in liaison with the ICT and SEN Teams

In exceptional circumstances where the number of compliant 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 7.2 of ICE

Statement provided by

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