

Producing a centre policy for the use of a word processor

Summary of guidance from the JCQ 'Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments' booklet page 54

The Joint Council for Qualifications strongly recommends that a centre has a policy on the use of word processors which it can articulate to parents/carers. 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.

There is no requirement to carry out an assessment to determine whether a candidate can use a word processor in an examination, and no online application to use a word processor needs to be made unless the candidate needs access to a spell check or predictive text. If help with spelling is needed an application for the use of a scribe must be made. If approved, this will allow the candidate to use a word processor with the spell check or predictive text enabled.

However, everyone should understand that a word processor cannot simply be granted to a candidate because he or she now wants to type rather than write in examinations, can work faster on a keyboard or uses a laptop at home. The principle is that the use of a word processor must reflect the candidate's normal way of working within the centre.

In some centres the curriculum is delivered electronically and the centre provides word processors to all candidates. Where a centre has the resources to provide an individual, 'exam ready' word processor to every candidate, it may be used in exams. **A candidate must not use their own word processor in an exam.**

Other centres allow individual candidates to use a word processor in lessons according to their need. The centre may wish to set out the particular types of candidates which it considers would benefit from the use of a word processor in lessons and in examinations. Examples could include, 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

Please note that this list is not exhaustive and examples above are simply suggestions. Centres may choose different criteria in their allocation of word processors.