

Word processor use in Assessments and Examinations at The Priory School 2017-18.

The Priory School fully support the use of word processors in assessments and examinations in line with JCQ regulations and recommendations.

- Centres are allowed to provide a word processor with the spelling and grammar check facility/predictive text disabled (switched off) to a candidate where it is their normal way of working within the centre and is appropriate to their needs.

For example, the quality of language significantly improves as a result of using a word processor due to problems with planning and organisation when writing by hand.

(This also extends to the use of electronic brailers and tablets.)

- The use of word processors in controlled assessment or coursework components will be considered standard practice unless prohibited by the specification.
- It is permissible for a candidate using a word processor in an examination to type certain questions, i.e. those requiring extended writing, and handwrite shorter answers.

N.B. Examinations which have a significant amount of writing, as well as those that place a greater demand on the need to organise thought and plan extended answers, are those where candidates will frequently need to type. Examinations which require more simplistic answers are often easier to handwrite within the answer booklet. The candidate avoids the difficulty of visually tracking between the question paper and screen.

The use of a word processor must reflect the candidate's normal way of working within the centre and be appropriate to the candidate's needs.

The Priory School Word Processor Statement 2017-18

Use of a word processor in examinations is a centre-delegated arrangement. This statement about the use of word processors has been prepared to be shared with stakeholders. Principally, 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.

It is not a reasonable adjustment for a candidate to request use of a word processor because they can type faster than they can handwrite. The use of a word processor will be as a result of a **well-established SEN need/illegible handwriting which has been identified and evidenced over time.**

Students and their parents are at liberty to request permission to use their own word processor/laptop/i-pad in school at their own risk. This request will be considered by the SENCO and will be granted if it is agreed it will benefit the

student. A school word processor agreement must be signed before this arrangement can begin and the device has to be PAT tested before it can be used in school if it requires being plugged in. Personal devices brought into school are the responsibility of the student at all times and the school cannot be held liable for any loss or damage. **Permission to use a laptop/device in class should not be taken to imply permission to allow this arrangement in assessments/exams.** These decisions are taken at the start of the GCSE/A Level courses following testing and consultation with staff.

Permission to use a word processor in an exam may well be granted for 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.

This list is not exhaustive. Each case will be considered on its merits and a decision will be made by the SENCO in consultation with SLT.

Examples - Word processor

- A candidate who cannot write legibly because she has dyslexia asks to use a word processor in her examinations. It is her normal means of producing written work within the centre because her teachers cannot read her writing. She is very proficient in using a word processor. The SENCO allows her to use a word processor in her examinations.
- A candidate does not have a learning difficulty but is a 'messy' writer. His handwriting is hard to decipher. He requests the use of a word processor. This is granted by the SENCO because it reflects his normal way of working within the centre and is appropriate to his needs. (see point above about use being based on well-established SEN need over time)
- A candidate wishes to use a word processor since this is her normal way of working within the centre. However, the candidate additionally wishes to use the spelling and grammar check facility. Given that she does not meet the criteria for a scribe, the candidate cannot use the spelling and grammar check facility. The SENCO allows her to use a word processor in line with the regulations as set out in the JCQ 'ICE' booklet.
- A candidate taking an ICT paper wishes to use a word processor with the spelling and grammar check facility enabled. However, the paper is testing his ability to proof-read a document. The SENCO refuses the use of the spelling and

grammar check facility. He uses the word processor with the spelling and grammar check disabled (switched off).

- A candidate who has Dyslexia has quite legible writing. However, he makes many omissions and cannot order his ideas correctly. His written scripts are legible but covered in crossings-out and omission marks. He requests a word processor and this is granted by the SENCO. The use of a word processor is appropriate to his needs since it allows him to correct text, sequence his answers and reflects his normal way of working within the centre.
- A blind candidate asks to use a word processor in his examinations. He also requests the use of a screen reader to allow him to 'read' back and check the answers he has typed. These arrangements are permitted when using a word processor in his examinations. However, if the candidate also wants to use predictive text and/or the spelling and grammar check facility the centre must apply for the use of a scribe.

Examples - Word processor and 25% extra time

- A candidate has a below average free writing speed when handwriting and qualifies for 25% extra time. However, using a word processor is her normal way of working within the centre and when typing she can produce her written work effectively, and at a speed equivalent to an average handwriting rate. She has no further learning difficulties and so she is awarded the use of a word processor as it removes the barrier presented by her slow handwriting, and only given 25% extra time when she writes by hand such as in GCSE Mathematics examinations.
- A candidate with dyslexia has a below average speed of handwriting and below average scores in areas of cognitive processing and reading speed. As using a word processor is his normal way of working within the centre he has been able to improve his typing speed to match the equivalent average handwriting rate. However, he has persistent and significant difficulties in interpreting questions and formulating his typed answers. He is given 25% extra time, as well as the use of a word processor, as both arrangements are appropriate to his needs.

Name: Mrs J Trimnell

SENCO: The Priory School

October 2017.