THE BRITISH SCHOOL OF ALMERÍA

USE OF WORD PROCESSORS IN EXAMINATIONS POLICY

OWNER	THE BRITISH SCHOOL OF ALMERIA
TYPE OF PAPER	POLICY
TOPIC AREA	GENERAL PROCEDURES
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A.   PURPOSE

ISP and The British School of Almeria recognise that all students deserve the best possible chance to exceed in their Examinations.
This document explains the criteria used by the school to facilitate the students who require the use of Word Processors.

This policy makes reference to the JCQ Booklet:
¨Adjustments for candidates with disabilities and learning difficulties
Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments.
1 September 2022 to 31 August 2023.¨

Relevant sections of the above booklet are indicated in brackets.

B. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES:

THE BRITISH SCHOOL OF ALMERIA aims to:

1.   Detail the criteria the British School of Almeria uses to award and allocate word processors for examinations;
2.   Describe the procedures followed in the case that a word processor is allocated to a candidate.

C. CRITERIA USED TO AWARD AND ALLOCATE WORD PROCESSORS FOR EXAMS

The use of a word processor as an access arrangement is to ensure the removal of barriers to an assessment for a disabled candidate preventing him/her 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 the assessments for a disabled candidate. (4.2.1)

The following list indicates the possible situations that would lead to a candidate being granted the use of a word processor for examinations:

- A learning difficulty which has a substantial and long term effect on their ability to write legibly;
- A medical condition which causes undue strain or tiredness to the candidate when writing by hand;
- A physical disability which limits their fine motor control;
- A sensory impairment which prevents them from being able to put pen to paper;
- Planning and organisational problems when writing by hand;
- Poor handwriting at such a level that it is difficult to deciphers the words that have been written.
- Very slow handwriting speed with a standardised score of below 85.

This decision to use a word processor would be made following discussions with the student and teaching staff and SENDCo/access arrangements assessor. Where necessary the child will be assessed using the Detailed Assessment of Speed of Handwriting (DASH) to provide evidence to support the need for using a word processor..

The use of a word processor is always considered as a preferred option for candidates who may have been considered for using a scribe but are confident and competent in using a word processor.

In relation to the choice between the use of a scribe or a word processor the JCQ guidelines state the following:

If a word processor (with the spelling and grammar check disabled) is the candidate's normal way of working within the centre, then it should be used in examinations in order to encourage independent working and access to marks awarded for spelling, punctuation and grammar.
A scribe must only be used where a candidate is not sufficiently competent or confident in using a word processor with the spelling and grammar check or predictive text facility disabled (switched off). (5.7.1)

The use of a word processor cannot be granted where it will compromise the assessment objective of the specification in question. (4.2.2)

Candidates may not require the use of a word processor in each specification. Subjects and their methods of assessments may vary, leading to different demands on the candidate. The need for use of a word processor should be considered on a subject-by-subject basis. (4.2.3)

For example, candidates may need to type for those examinations that place a greater demand on the need to organise thought and plan extended answers. Whereas examinations which require more simplistic answers are often easier to handwrite within the answer booklet.

The use of a word processor should normally be agreed at the start of the course, having a firmly established picture of need and normal way of working. The only exception to this would be as a result 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. (4.2.4)

The arrangement to use a word processor must reflect the support given to the candidate in the centre, for example:
- In the classroom (where appropriate);
- Working in small groups for reading and/or writing;
- Support lessons;
- Intervention strategies;
- In internal school tests/examinations;
- Mock examinations.

This is commonly referred to as the 'normal way of working' for the candidate. (4.2.5)

Where a candidate moves from GCSE to GCE examinations within our school then they can continue the arrangement to use a word processor providing that it remains their normal way of working and they continue to have an identified need.

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

D. PROCEDURES FOLLOWED IN THE CASE THAT A WORD PROCESSOR IS ALLOCATED TO A CANDIDATE

Section 5.8 of the JCQ regulations state that there is not a requirement to process an application using Access Arrangements Online. No evidence is needed to support the arrangement for inspection purposes. (This also applies where a candidate is using a word processor on a temporary basis as a consequence of a temporary injury). However, the SENDCo will keep some justification of the need for a word processor in the Access Arrangements file for reference.

The British School of Almeria complies with the JCQ regulations regarding the use of word processors as follows:
-   Provides a word processor with the spelling and grammar check facility/predictive text disabled and no access to the internet.
-   Only grants the use of a word processor to a candidate where it is their normal way of working within the centre. (5.8.1)
-   Only grants the use of a word processor to a candidate where it is appropriate to their needs.
-   Allows the use of word processors in non-examination assessment components and considers this as standard practice unless prohibited by the specification. (5.8.2)
-   Allows a candidate to use a word processor to type certain questions e.g. those requiring extended answers, and hand-write shorter answers. (5.8.3)
-   Follows the regulations on the use of word processors in written examinations as set out in the JCQ publication *Instructions for Conducting Examinations,* with regard to font size, spacing and headers/footers.
-   At the end of the examination, prints the the candidate´s exam script and attaches a Pearson word processor cover sheet to the front.

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