Use of Word Processor in Exams Policy

2023/24

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Introduction

Roding Valley High School recognises that for some students with a range of Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) or access issues, a word processor/laptop may be the most appropriate method of organising and presenting their work for example, where the candidate's quality of language significantly improves due to problems with planning and organisation when writing by hand. Students are allowed to use a word processor/laptop in examinations where it is their normal way of working, where a need has been established and its use is recommended by the SENCO approved by the school.

Candidates that may benefit from the use of a word processor/laptop include:

- 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)

The use of a word processor/laptop must reflect the student's normal way of working within school and be appropriate to the student's needs.

A word processor cannot be granted to a candidate because they want to type rather than write examinations, can work faster on a keyboard or because they use a laptop at home.

The use of a word processor/laptop may also be granted on a temporary basis as a consequence of a temporary injury. We would request medical evidence in support of a request of this type.

Roding Valley High School will follow the latest JCQ Guidance in 'Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments' (AARA) and 'Instructions for Conducting Examinations (ICE).

Based on the principles of 'Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments' (AARA), Roding Valley High School will:

- Provide a word processor where it is the candidate's normal way of working;
- provide a word processor with the spelling and grammar check facility/predictive text switched off where it is the candidate's normal way of working within the centre;
- Provide a word processor with the spelling and grammar check switched on, or the predictive text / spelling switched on where the school has approval for the use of a scribe and where it reflects the normal way of working in the school as appropriate to their needs. The school will not permit this in examinations listed in AARA (5.7.5).
- Understand that word processors in non-examined components is considered standard practice;
- Understand that a candidate can use a word processor to type certain questions; i.e. those requiring extended writing and hand write shorter answers;
- Provide a word processor cover sheet where required;
- Ensure that candidates with access to word processors at Roding Valley High School are allowed to do so in order to remove barriers for disabled candidates which prevent them from being placed at a substantial disadvantage as a consequence of persistent and significant difficulties.

- Ensure that the use of word processors at Roding Valley High School is only permitted whilst ensuring that the integrity of the assessment is maintained, at the same time as providing access to assessments for a disabled candidate.
- Ensure that the use of a word processor at Roding Valley High School is not granted where it will compromise the assessment objectives of the specification in question.
- Understand that candidates at Roding Valley High School may not require the use of a word processor in each specification. As subjects and their methods of assessments may vary, leading to different demands of our candidates, the need for the use of a word processor is considered on a subject-by-subject basis.
- Ensure that the use of a word processor at Roding Valley High School is agreed/processed at the start of the course. Candidates are subsequently aware that they will have the use of a word processor for examinations and controlled assessments/coursework.
- Ensure that candidates at Roding Valley High School are aware that they will have the use of a word processor or examinations and controlled assessments/coursework.
- Ensure that the use of a word processor for candidates at Roding Valley High School is only granted if it reflects the support given to the candidate as their 'normal way of working', which is defined as support:

  - In the classroom; or
  - Working in small groups for reading and/or writing; or
  - Literacy support lessons; or
  - Literacy intervention strategies; and/or
  - Internal Roding Valley High School tests and mock examinations

Based on the principles in 'Instructions for Conducting Examinations (ICE), Roding Valley High School will:

- Understand that it must be used as a typewriter, not as a database, although standard formatting software is acceptable;
- Understand that it must have been cleared of any previously stored data, as must any portable storage medium used. An unauthorised memory stick must not be used by a candidate. When needed, the centre must provide a memory stick, which is cleared of any previously stored data, to the candidate;
- Understand that it must be in good working order at the time of the examination;
- Understand that must be accommodated in such a way that other candidates are not disturbed and cannot read the screen. Where a candidate using a word processor is accommodated in another room, a separate invigilator will be required;
- Understand that it must either be connected to a printer so that a script can be printed off, or have the facility to print from a portable storage medium. This must be done after the examination is over. The candidate must be present to verify that the work printed is his or her own. Word processed scripts must be attached to any answer booklet which contains some of the answers;
- Understand that it must be used to produce scripts under secure conditions, otherwise they may be refused;
- Understand that it must not be used to perform skills which are being assessed;
- Understand that it must not give the candidate access to other applications such as a calculator (where prohibited in the examination), email, the Internet, social media sites, spreadsheets;
- Understand that it must not include graphic packages or computer aided design software unless permission has been given to use these;
- Understand that it must 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;

- Understand that it must not include computer reading (text to speech) software unless the candidate has permission to use a computer reader;
- Understand that it must not include speech recognition technology unless the candidate has permission to use a scribe or relevant software;
- Understand that it must not be used on the candidate's behalf by a third party unless the candidate has permission to use a scribe;
- Understand that Centres may retain electronic copies of word-processed scripts. 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 file has been kept securely. The head of centre would be required to confirm this in writing to the awarding body.

Accommodating word processors in examinations

The use of word processors are internally accommodated at Roding Valley High School in the following manner:

Students using a word processor/laptop during examinations will always be housed at the back of the examination room.