



## Word processor use in assessments and examinations at Christ the King Catholic High School Policy



Christ the King School fully support the use of word processors in assessments and examinations in line with JCQ regulations and recommendations as follows:

- *5.8.1 – 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)*

- *5.8.2 – The use of word processors in controlled assessment or coursework components will be considered standard practice unless prohibited by the specification.*
- *5.8.3 – 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 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.*

### Christ the King School: Use of Word Processor policy statement

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 all staff involved in the preparation and delivery of assessments.

*Principally, a word processor cannot simply be granted to a candidate because he/she **wants to** type rather than write in an examination **or** can work faster on a keyboard, **or** because he/she uses a laptop to complete work 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 principally be granted as the result of a well-established SEN need, including illegible handwriting, writing organisational difficulty and/or evidence of slow writing which has been identified and evidenced over time.

**Permission to use a word processor in an exam may well be granted for a candidate with any of the following:**

- 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 the Specialist Assessor. The use of a word processor will require considerable gathering of evidence which will include:

- Evidence from class teachers to indicate normal way of working, candidate need and impact of provision
- Evidence from pupil that this is his/her normal way of working
- Discussions with Specialist Teacher – likely additional assessments to consider handwriting (legibility/speed) as well as typing proficiency

All evidence will be gathered and individually considered in line with JCQ regulations. A statement will be written by the SENCo detailing the considerations and agreement for provision which will be kept on file for evidence and inspection.

Students and their parents are at liberty to request permission to use their own word processor/laptop/i-pad at school at their own risk. This request will be considered by the SENCo/Head of Year and will be granted if it is agreed that it will benefit the student. Any device would need to be PAT tested before it can be used in school. 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/examinations.** These decisions are taken during the Spring/Summer term in year 9 (beginning of year 12) following whole year screening assessments for handwriting, consultation with class teachers and identified external assessments with our Specialist Assessor.

In some exceptional cases, candidates may also be considered for use of word processor with 25% extra time. This will need to be considered in line with established pupil need, recognised teacher evidence, history of need/provision and the candidate's normal way of working. Supervised rest breaks will always be initially considered and assessments will be conducted by the Specialist Assessor to determine the origin of need and most suitable arrangement to implement. Please see specific examples below of both arrangements.

### Use of word processor in assessments/examinations – examples:

- 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 recognises as a suitable adjustment to have the use of a word processor in all 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 above point re: 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 (as her normal way of working within the centre).
- 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. The candidate is granted permission to use the word processor, but the with spelling and grammar check disabled.
- 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.

### Use of word processor with 25% extra time in assessments/examinations – examples:

- 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 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 with 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.

**Signed (SENCo):** L. Stridgeon