

**St. Patrick's High  
School**



**Examinations Word  
Processing Policy**

***Latest Review:*** *March 2020*

***Next Review:*** *September 2020*

***Head of Centre:*** *Dr F Moore*

***Person Responsible:*** *Mrs M Moriarty (SENCO)*

**ADOPTED BY THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS**

**Date of meeting:** 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2020

**Signed:**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Helen Feen..', is written over a light blue horizontal line.

# Mission Statement

*As a Catholic School in partnership with parents and the community, the school seeks to provide children of all abilities with a secure, caring, stimulating and happy environment where high values of work, personal integrity and learning can be achieved and where all pupils are encouraged to develop their talents and character and to contribute positively to home, school, church and society.*

## Key staff involved in awarding and allocating word processors for exams

<b>Vice Principal (Exams)</b>	Mrs G Lundy
<b>SLT (Exams)/SENCo</b>	Mrs M Moriarty
<b>Exams Officer</b>	Mr S O' Connor
<b>IT support</b>	Ms E McArdle

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies and external legislation and documentation:

### Policies

- Examination Invigilation Policy
- Controlled Assessment Policy
- Appeals Policy
- Malpractice Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Positive Behaviour Policy

### External Legislation & Documentation:

- Joint Council for Qualifications:

General Regulations for approval centres

- Joint Council for Qualifications:

Instructions for conducting examinations

- Joint Council for Qualifications:

Instruction for conducting non-examinations

- Joint Council for Qualifications:

Instructions for conducting controlled assessments

- Joint Council for Qualifications:

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## Instruction for conducting coursework

- Joint Council for Qualifications:

### Access Arrangements & Reasonable Adjustments

- Equality Act 2010, Her Majesty's Stationery Office, London
- Special Educational Needs and Disability (Northern Ireland) Order 2005 (SENDO 2005)

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## Introduction

The school values good handwriting and imposes high standards on presentation of work, and expects that most pupils will handwrite in examinations. However, there are exceptional circumstances, as identified by the School, where pupils may benefit from using a word processor and in these cases the School will allow use of a word processor for note-making in class, for homework, and for internal and public examinations.

This policy details how the centre manages and administers the use of word processors (including laptops and tablets) in examinations and assessments as per recommendations from JCQ regulations on Access Arrangements (AA).

## Rationale

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.** The use of a word processor must reflect the candidate's normal way of working within the centre, for example candidates 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 policy on the use of word processors in examinations and assessments is reviewed and updated annually, on the publication of updated JCQ regulations and guidance contained in the publications Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments and Instructions for Conducting Examinations.

References to 'AA' relate to JCQ Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments 2019/20 and ICE to JCQ Instructions for conducting examinations 2019/20.

## **Criteria for use of Word Processor in St Patrick's High School**

The use of a word processor for students will be identified through the following processes:

Teacher referral

Heads of Year

Information from contributory primary schools

SEND assessment

The School will allow pupils to use word processors when they meet one or more of the following criteria:

- The student has a specific learning difficulty/disability which has a substantial and long term adverse effect on their ability to write legibly (such as dyslexia, dyspraxia, ASD);
- The student has a physical difficulty/medical condition (such as hyper mobility);
- The student has very poor handwriting and would lose marks due to the examiner finding his/her answers illegible.

Pupils permitted to use word processors in public examinations (i.e. GCSEs, and AS/A levels) must have been using a word processor as their normal way of working for classes, homework, internal tests and internal examinations.

A pupil may also use a word processor on a temporary basis as a consequence of a temporary injury.

Pupils who think they may be eligible or need to use a word processor should contact the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator.

Pupils who have permission to use a word processor in class will need to bring in their own laptop for use in School. The School will provide word processors for use in internal examinations and public examinations.

At the beginning and during each exam session the ICT technicians are available to assist with setting up/any problems arising

## **The Principles for using a Word Processor as per JCQ regulations**

(AA 4.2.1)

The purpose of an access arrangement is to ensure, where possible, that barriers to assessment are removed for a disabled candidate preventing him/her from 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 assessments for a disabled candidate.

### **Therefore in St. Patrick's High School Keady**

Candidates with **access to word processors** 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. The **use of word processors** 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

(AA 4.2.2)

Although access arrangements are intended to allow access to assessments, they cannot be granted where they will compromise the assessment objectives of the specification in question

### **Therefore in St. Patrick's High School Keady**

The use of a **word processor** is not granted where it will compromise the assessment objectives of the specification in question

(AA 4.2.3)

Candidates may not require the same access arrangements in each specification. Subjects and their methods of assessments may vary, leading to different demands of the candidate. SENCOs must consider the need for access arrangements on a subject by-subject basis. (See the second example below).

### **Therefore in St. Patrick's High School Keady**

Candidates 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

(AA 4.2.4)

Access arrangements should be processed at the start of the course. Schools, for example, should be able to process applications at the start of or during the first year of a two-year GCSE course having firmly established a picture of need and **normal way of working during Years 8 to 10.**

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However, in the event 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, access arrangements should be applied for as soon as is practicable. Arrangements must always be approved before an examination or assessment.

### **Therefore in St. Patrick's High School Keady**

The use of a **word processor** is agreed where appropriate at the start of the course providing the **centre has firmly established a picture of need and normal way of working** for a candidate. Candidates are made aware when they will have the use of a word processor for timetabled examinations and non-examination assessments. There is no formal application process online. A word processor cover sheet must be completed.

(AA 4.2.5)

The arrangement(s) put in place must reflect the support given to the candidate in the centre.

### **Therefore in St. Patrick's High School Keady**

The use of a **word processor** for candidates 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 (where appropriate); or (**Word processing in class or homework**)
- Working in small groups for reading and/or writing; or (**Word processing in groups**)
- Literacy support lessons; or (**word processing work for this lesson**)
- Literacy intervention strategies; and/or
- In internal school tests/examinations
- Mock examinations (**Word processing in house examinations, class tests, mock exams**)

The only exceptions to the above would be 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.

The use of a word processor at St. Patrick's High School Keady complies with AA **chapter 5 Access Arrangements** available as follows:

(AA 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.

### **Therefore in St. Patrick's High School Keady**

- We provide a **word processor** with the spelling and grammar check facility/predictive text disabled (switched off)
- Only grant the use of a word processor to a candidate where it is their **normal way of working** within the centre
- Only grant the use of a word processor to a candidate if it 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)

(AA 5.8.2)

The use of word processors in non-examination assessment components will be considered standard practice unless prohibited by the specification.

### **Therefore in St. Patrick's High School Keady**

Candidates can be provided with access to **word processors** to candidates in non-examination assessment components as standard practice unless prohibited by the specification

(AA 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.

### **Therefore in St. Patrick's High School Keady**

1. Candidates granted the use of a **word processor** in examinations may use it to answer certain types of question and handwrite for shorter questions.
2. In all cases, a word processor cover sheet (Form 4) is completed and included with each candidate's typed script (according to the instructions issued by the individual awarding body)
3. A candidate will not simply be granted a word processor because
  - a. he/she prefers to type rather than write or can work faster on a keyboard
  - b. or because he/she uses a laptop at home

### **Word Processor Compliance with ICE**

1. Word processors are used as a type-writer, not as a database, although standard formatting software is acceptable
2. Word processors have been cleared of any previously stored data, as must any portable storage medium used

3. An unauthorised memory stick is not permitted for use by a candidate
4. Candidates are provided with a memory stick, which has been cleared of any previously stored data, by a nominated member of centre staff
5. Word processors are in good working order at the time of the examination.
6. Word processors are accommodated in such a way that other candidates are not disturbed and cannot read the screen
7. Where a candidate using a word processor is accommodated separately, a separate invigilator is used. Word processors are either connected to a printer so that a script can be printed off, or have the facility to print from a portable storage medium
8. Documents are printed after the examination is over **in the presence of two exam team members with** candidates present to verify that the work printed is their own
9. A cover sheet Form 4 is completed and attached as per awarding body instructions to the work.
10. Word processed scripts are inserted in/attached to any answer booklet which contains some of the answers (and according to instructions issued by the individual awarding body)
11. Word processors are used to produce scripts under secure conditions, and if they are not then the centre is aware that they may be refused by the awarding body
12. Word processors are not used to perform skills which are being assessed
13. Word processors are not connected to an internet or any other means of communication.
14. Candidates are not given access to other applications such as a calculator (where prohibited in the examination), spreadsheets etc when using a word processor. Graphic packages or computer aided design software is not included on a word processor unless permission has been given to use these
15. Predictive text software or an automatic spelling and grammar check is disabled unless the candidate has been permitted a scribe or is using voice recognition technology (the script must have a completed scribe cover sheet included), or the awarding body's specification permits the use of automatic spell checking. Voice recognition technology is not included on word processors unless the candidate has permission to use a scribe or relevant software
16. Word processors are not used on the candidate's behalf by a third party unless the candidate has permission to use a scribe

### **Laptops used in examinations**

#### **St. Patrick's High School Keady further complies with ICE instructions by ensuring:**

1. Laptops used during examinations/assessments are designed to run for a long period of time once fully charged and are 'free-standing' or a facility is provided to have them plugged directly within the exam venue.
2. The battery capacity of all laptops is checked before the candidate's examination(s) with the battery sufficiently charged for the entire duration of the examination

3. Candidates with fully charged laptops are given the opportunity to be seated within the main examination hall without the need for separate invigilation and power points
4. Candidates are reminded that their centre number, candidate number and the unit/component code must appear on each page as a header or footer
5. Candidates are instructed to use a minimum 12pt font and double spacing
6. Invigilators remind candidates to save their work at regular intervals
7. Where it is possible 'autosave' is set up on each laptop/tablet
8. Candidates are present at the end of the examination when their script is printed off so they can verify that the work printed is their own in the presence of two members of the exam team.
9. A fully completed Form 4 is attached to the work

### **Accommodating word processors in examinations**

Candidates using word processors (including laptops or tablets) are internally accommodated in the following manner:

1. At the back of the exam hall away from the main body of candidates, near to a power point.
2. If there are more than 2 candidates using word processors and they cannot be accommodated in the main exam venue they will be accommodated in the Library Annex which is set up to adhere to exam conditions

### **Invigilation arrangements relating to the use of word processors include the following:**

1. If accommodated separately to the exam hall, an invigilator is assigned to them for the duration of the examination.
2. If they are accommodated in the main hall, invigilators are posted in positions that ensure the screen and candidates are visible to the invigilators at all times during the examination.
3. If the pupil has a separate access arrangement in addition to word processing then an additional person apart from the invigilator is supplied to facilitate this arrangements (e.g. reader)
4. The word processors used in examinations will come from the school's stock of laptops only and will be logged in using the specially set up exam user profile which is facilitated by the ICT support persons.

