



# Wimbledon College

## Word Processor Policy For Examinations 2024-25

This policy is reviewed annually to ensure compliance with current regulations  
Approved by the Governors Finance, Personnel & Resources Committee

March 2025

## **INTRODUCTION**

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 2024-25 and Instructions for Conducting Examinations 2024-25. References to 'AARA' relate to JCQ Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments and ICE to JCQ Instructions for Conducting Examinations.

The school will always follow the AA and ICE guidance, or any other relevant guidance from JCQ, and the rest of this policy is intended to be a summary of the key points set out in the JCQ guidance. If there is ever a discrepancy between the summary below and the guidance provided by JCQ, the school will follow JCQ's guidance.

Although access arrangements/adjustments are intended to allow access to assessments, they cannot be granted where they will compromise the assessment objectives of the specification in question. (AARA 4.2.2)

The SENDCo, or equivalent role must ensure that the proposed access arrangement/reasonable adjustment does not unfairly disadvantage or advantage the candidate. (AARA 4.2.1)

## **PURPOSE OF THE POLICY**

This policy details how Wimbledon College manages and administers the use of word processors (including laptops, chrome books and tablets) in external and internal examinations and assessments.

The centre will not simply grant the use of a word processor to a candidate because they now want to type rather than write in examinations or can work faster on a keyboard, or because they use a laptop at home. (AARA 5.8.4)

## **USING A WORD PROCESSOR**

Wimbledon College complies with AARA guidance regarding the use of word processors:

- “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. 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.” (AARA, 5.8.1). For more details concerning the use of the spelling and

grammar check facility / predictive text, the school will follow the guidance in JCQ's AA guidance.

- 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. (AARA 5.8.4)
- The use of a word processor must reflect the candidate's normal way of working within the centre.
- 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 due to persistent and significant difficulties. The integrity of the assessment is maintained, whilst at the same time providing access to assessments for a student with a learning difficulty or disability. (AARA 4.2.1)

The school will consider allowing a student to use a word processor as part of their normal way of working in a number of situations, including 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 (it is taken from AARA, 5.8.4).

'Normal way of working' is defined as support given to the candidate in school for one or more of the following (see AARA, 4.2.5):

- in the classroom (where appropriate);
- working in small groups for reading and/or writing;
- literacy support lessons;
- literacy intervention strategies;
- in internal school tests/examinations;
- mock examinations

At Wimbledon College we consider that a “normal way of working” would in almost all circumstances be established throughout the two year period leading up to a public examination. However, this should certainly be for a minimum of one year, unless there are exceptional circumstances. In all cases, a “normal way of working” necessarily entails the candidate having used a word processor for the mock examination of the qualification in question.

The only exception to this is where an arrangement may need to be put in place as a consequence of a temporary injury or impairment at the time of an exam or assessment. (AARA, 4.2.5)

- “The use of word processors in non-examination assessment components will be considered standard practice unless prohibited by the specification.” (AARA, 5.8.2)
- 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 7 to 9. However, in the event of a temporary injury or impairment, or a diagnosis of a disability 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. (AARA, 4.2.4)
- 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 computer screen. (AARA, 5.8.3)

- Candidates may not require the same access arrangements in each specification (AARA, 4.2.3).  
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 in discussion with the SENDCo and Examinations Officer, with the final decision taken by the SENDCo. Parents

or students may appeal to the Headteacher who will then investigate to check that an appropriate process was carried out prior to the decision being taken.

### **WORD PROCESSORS AND THEIR PROGRAMMES**

Wimbledon College complies with ICE 14.25 word processors instructions by ensuring:

A word processor:

- must be used as a type-writer, not as a database, although standard formatting software is acceptable;
- 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.
- must be in good working order at the time of the examination;
- 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;
- The candidate must be present in the Exam Office when their script is printed off so they can sign it 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;
- must be used to produce scripts under secure conditions, otherwise they may be refused;
- must not be used to perform skills which are being assessed;
- must not be connected to an intranet or any other means of communication;
- must not give the candidate access to other applications such as a calculator (where prohibited in the examination), spreadsheets etc;
- must not include graphic packages or computer aided design software unless permission has been given to use these;
- 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;
- must not include computer reading (text to speech) software unless the candidate has permission to use a computer reader;
- must not include speech recognition technology unless the candidate has permission to use a scribe or relevant software;
- must not be used on the candidate's behalf by a third party unless the candidate has permission to use a scribe.

## **LAPTOPS**

Wimbledon College currently uses IT rooms to accommodate candidates who use a word processor. The use of a fully charged laptop or tablet will however allow Wimbledon College to seat a candidate, if necessary, within the main examination hall or in an alternative room without the need for separate invigilation and power points.

Wimbledon College further complies with ICE 14.20 – 14.24 instructions by ensuring:

- Tablets are designed to run for a long period of time once fully charged. Their purpose is to be 'freestanding'. The battery capacity of a laptop or a tablet must be checked before the candidate's examination(s). The centre must ensure that the battery is sufficiently charged for the entire duration of the examination. Wimbledon College currently uses an IT room to accommodate candidates who use a word processor. The use of a fully charged laptop or tablet will however allow Wimbledon College to seat a candidate, if necessary, within the main examination hall without the need for separate invigilation and power points.

## **ACCOMMODATING WORD PROCESSORS IN EXAMINATIONS**

Wimbledon College will allocate each computer with a specific exam number sign on. The internet is disabled from each computer.

Candidates using word processors are internally accommodated in rooms where the computers are monitored in the Exams Office. These rooms are: Business Centre (IT4), IT1, IT3, 6<sup>th</sup> Form Study Hall, Careers Room, SEN, X2, X3, X4.

In compliance with the regulations relating to the use of word processors Wimbledon College ensures:

- the candidate is reminded to check that their centre number, candidate number and the unit/component code appear on each page as a header or footer. (ICE 14.22);
- the candidate understands that each page of the typed script must be numbered, e.g. page 1 of 6 (ICE 14.23)
- the candidate is reminded to save their work at regular intervals. (or where possible, an IT technician will set up 'autosave' on each laptop/tablet to ensure that if there is a complication or technical issue, the candidate's work is not lost) (ICE 14.24)
- instructs the candidate to use a minimum of 12pt font and double spacing to make marking easier for examiners (ICE 14.24)

On completion of the exam:

- an invigilator will remind the candidate to save all work onto the computer

- the invigilator will accompany the student, the laptop (if used) to the Exam Office for the work to be printed off and verified.
- when all work is printed and verified, it will be enclosed inside the student's examination script for submission to the awarding body with a completed word processor cover sheet;
- the word processor will be cleared of all work.