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Word Processor Policy 2025-2026

Blue Coat CE Secondary School

Policy Date: September 2025

Review Date: September 2026

Document History

Version	Status		Date	Author	Summary Changes
V1			September 2023	Kelly Jobson	Updated to Reflect JCQ changes 2023-2024
V2			September 2024	Kelly Jobson	Updated to reflect JCQ Changes 2024-2025 and centre specific actions regarding printing.
V3			September 2025	Kelly Jobson	Refined layout and updated with JCQ changes summary at the end of this document

This policy is reviewed and updated annually on the publication of updated JCQ regulations. References in this policy to **AA** and **ICE** relate to/are directly taken from the **JCQ publications Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments and Instructions for conducting examinations**.

1. Introduction

The use of a word processor in examinations and assessments is an available access arrangement/reasonable adjustment as per JCQ ICE (14.20). Its purpose is to remove barriers to assessment for disabled candidates who would otherwise be at a substantial disadvantage due to persistent and significant difficulties.

Decisions regarding access arrangements must be made by the centre. While external professionals may offer advice, they cannot make decisions on behalf of the centre. The SENCo is responsible for making informed decisions in line with JCQ regulations.

2. Principles Applied at Blue Coat School

- Access arrangements must maintain the integrity of the assessment while enabling access for disabled candidates (AA 4.2.1).
- Arrangements must not compromise assessment objectives (AA 4.2.2).
- Needs must be considered on a subject-by-subject basis (AA 4.2.3).
- Arrangements must be processed early in the course or as soon as practicable (AA 4.2.4).
- Candidates must have had sufficient practice using the arrangement before their first exam (AA 4.2.7).
- The SENCo and appointed assessor must undertake regular CPD (AA Introduction).

3. Purpose of the Policy

This policy outlines how Blue Coat School complies with:

- JCQ AARA Chapter 4 – Managing candidate needs
- JCQ AARA Section 5.8 – Word processor use
- JCQ ICE Sections 14.20–14.27 – Conducting exams with word processors

4. Criteria for Awarding Word Processors

The default method of exam completion is handwriting, unless:

- The candidate has an approved access arrangement (e.g. scribe, speech recognition).
- The candidate has a firmly established need and would be at a disadvantage without a word processor.
- The candidate's normal way of working includes using a word processor in lessons, tests, and mock exams.

5. Examples of Eligible Needs (AA 5.8.4):

- Learning difficulty affecting legibility
- Medical condition
- Physical disability
- Sensory impairment
- Planning/organisational difficulties

- Poor handwriting

Not permitted:

- Preference for typing
- Faster typing speed
- Use of a laptop at home

6. Implementation and Practice

Blue Coat School will:

- Ensure spelling/grammar check and predictive text are disabled unless permitted by the awarding body (AA 5.8.1, ICE 14.20).
- Provide word processors in non-exam assessments unless prohibited (AA 5.8.2).
- Consider subject-specific needs (AA 4.2.3).
- Apply for arrangements promptly, especially in cases of temporary injury or late diagnosis (AA 4.2.4).
- Maintain records of medical evidence for temporary arrangements – managed by Kerry Ram/Jo Earle.

7. Exam Day Arrangements

In line with ICE (14.20–14.27), Blue Coat School will:

- Accommodate candidates using word processors in separate rooms where possible.
- Ensure devices are fully charged and functioning (ICE 14.21).
- Instruct candidates to include centre number, candidate number, and unit/component code on each page (ICE 14.22).
- Supervise candidates who must handwrite headers/footers if software doesn't support them (ICE 14.22).
- Ensure pages are numbered (ICE 14.23).
- Use a minimum 12pt font and double spacing.
- Enable autosave and remind candidates to save work regularly.
- Ensure candidates verify printed scripts as their own.
- Provide cleared memory sticks if needed.
- Prevent access to prohibited applications (e.g. calculators, internet).
- Ensure word processors are used only as typewriters, not for functions being assessed.

8. Supervision and Printing

The roaming Invigilator at Blue Coat will supervise the candidates at the printer throughout this process and this will be done one student at a time. The invigilator inside the venue would remain with the other candidates to ensure all are supervised until permission is granted to leave the Exam venue.

9. Electronic Script Retention

Blue Coat School:

- Retains electronic copies of word-processed scripts as the electronic copy may be accepted by an awarding body where the printed copy has been lost.
- Stores these securely on the network with restricted access to IT and Exams only.
- Demonstrates to the awarding body that the file has been kept securely.
- The head of centre will confirm this in writing to the awarding body (ICE 14.27).
- Following the deadline of Post results service the files will be deleted permanently.

10. Allocating Word Processors at the Time of the Assessment

Appropriate exam-compliant word processors will be allocated by:

- The IT department in liaison with the ALS lead/SENCo and the Exam Officer.
- The security of the exam will be maintained at all times and candidates will be supervised in line with section 7.3 of ICE.

11. Summary of Changes – Word Processor Policy (2025/26 JCQ Update)

The following updates reflect the latest JCQ regulations from the Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments (AARA) and Instructions for Conducting Examinations (ICE) for the 2025/26 academic year:

1. Clarification of Normal Way of Working

Greater emphasis on ensuring the use of a word processor reflects the candidate's established normal way of working in the classroom, tests, and mock exams.

Centres must provide clear evidence that the candidate regularly uses a word processor as part of their learning and assessment routine.

2. Strengthened Evidence Requirements

Word processor use must be supported by documented teacher feedback and samples of work showing improved performance when typing.

Centres must avoid granting word processors solely based on candidate preference or home use.

3. Subject-Specific Consideration

Reinforced requirement to assess the need for a word processor on a subject-by-subject basis, ensuring that the arrangement does not compromise assessment objectives.

4. Exam Day Protocols

Continued requirement to disable spelling and grammar check/predictive text unless permitted by the awarding body.

Candidates must be supervised one at a time at the printer, with invigilators maintaining supervision of all candidates until dismissal.

Word processors must be used only as typewriters, not for any functions being assessed.

5. Electronic Script Retention

Centres may retain secure electronic copies of typed scripts in case printed versions are lost.

These must be stored with restricted access, and the Head of Centre must confirm secure handling to the awarding body.

Files must be deleted after the post-results deadline.

6. Allocation and Security

Word processors must be allocated by the IT department in liaison with the SENCo and Exams Officer.

All use must comply with ICE section 7.3, ensuring full supervision and exam security.

Reviewed by:

Kelly Jobson

September 2025

Next Review Date:

September 2026

Approved by Directors:

1 December 2025

Signed:



Lois Whitehouse
CEO



Nicky Aston
Chair of Standards