



Centre Guidance on the use of Word Processors in Public Examinations and Controlled Assessments

COVID-19

Exceptional arrangements put in place by the Department for Education (DfE), Ofqual and Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) and the awarding organisations as a result of the coronavirus pandemic will be strictly adhered to as and when required. Due to the fluid nature of the situation the usual policies will remain in place and new guidelines implemented to ensure compliance as and when required using Ofqual, DfE and JCQ guidance.

Aim

To ensure that all learners are offered equal opportunity to reach their potential.

Methodology

The use of a word processor must reflect the learner's normal way of working* within Brockenhurst College and be appropriate to the learner's educational needs. This may be that the learner handwrites shorter tasks and types longer ones.

All learners requesting the use of a word processor in examinations will require a formal assessment by a specialist assessor within the Skills Development team who will make a judgement based on previous learning history, evidence of need from teachers, samples of work and normal way of working within the centre.

The particular types of learners who would benefit from the use of a word processor in public examinations are those with:-

- a learning difficulty which has a substantial and long term adverse effect on their ability to write legibly.
- a medical condition, e.g. ADHD, Asperger's Syndrome
- a mental health difficulty
- a physical disability such as cerebral palsy
- a sensory impairment
- poor handwriting (illegible) but not necessarily a learning difficulty. The definition of illegibility is handwriting that is difficult to read aloud fluently.



- planning and organisational problems when writing by hand
- below average speed of handwriting **

Individual cases will be assessed, discussed and agreed within the Skills Development department. A file note on centre headed paper detailing or Form 8 will be completed if this is agreed.

Evaluation/Review

To ensure that this policy remains JCQ compliant it will be reviewed on an annual basis (during November) or before if guidelines change during an academic year.

- **P.54 of the 2017-18 regulations explains how a word-processor might be used as a normal way of working reflecting how students work in college, i.e. those requiring extended writing, and handwrite shorter answers...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 learners will frequently need to type...More simplistic answers are often easier to handwrite within the answer booklet*
- ***P55 of the 2015-16 regulations states:
A learner 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 she 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.*