

# Word Processor Policy

Last updated: September 2024

Date of next review: September 2025

Author(s): Shelley Marsh - Head of Learning Development and SENDCo,  
Specialist Teacher and Assessor, EAL Specialist  
&  
Chris Bond - Acting Deputy Head Academic

**Box Hill School: Word Processor Policy**  
**(Exams)**  
**2024-2025**

**Purpose of the Policy**

This policy details how Box Hill School manages and administers the use of word processors (including laptops) in examinations and assessments.

Link to other policies: [Exams Office Word Processor Policy for Exams.](#)

**Introduction**

This policy on the use of word processors in examinations and assessments is reviewed and updated annually, on the publication of the updated regulations for Cambridge International Examinations (CIE), International Baccalaureate (IB) examinations (*Candidates with assessment access requirements*) and JCQ regulations (*Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments and Instructions for conducting examinations*).

At Box Hill School, candidates who require a word processor for their examinations must have been using a word processor as their normal way of working for classes, homework, internal tests and internal exams. For clarity, the use of a word processor in class as a 'learning tool' is not an access arrangement.

**Reasons why a Word Processor might be granted as an examination access arrangement:**

- A candidate has a specific learning difficulty which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to write legibly or fluently.
- A formal assessment has shown the candidate to have a below average speed of handwriting.
- A formal assessment has indicated that a student has illegible handwriting (i.e. 10% or more words are illegible in context) and teachers judge this to be significantly impacting on his/her performance in assessed work.
- A candidate has a medical condition, physical disability or sensory impairment which impacts on his/her ability to write by hand. (Here evidence will be required from a relevant medical professional).
- A candidate has planning and organisational problems when writing by hand and teachers judge this to be significantly impacting on his/her performance in assessed work.

\*NB the above list is not exhaustive.

The use of a word processor will not be granted to a candidate because he/she prefers to type rather than write or can work faster on a keyboard, or because he/she uses a word processor/laptop at home.

Any candidate wishing to use a word processor in any internal/public examination must consult with the Head of Learning Development at the start of their examination course to confirm that they qualify to do so. Such candidates will be required to attend a session with the Learning Development Department to ensure that they understand how to use a word processor in examinations and meet the requirements of regulatory bodies.

### **Principles for using a Word Processor**

- The purpose of an access arrangement is to ensure, where possible, the 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 use of a word processor is only permitted whilst ensuring the integrity of the assessment is maintained, whilst at the same time providing access to assessments for disabled candidates.
- Although word processors are intended to allow access to assessments, they cannot be granted where they will compromise the assessment objectives of the specification in question.
- Candidates may not require the use of a word processor in each specification. Subjects and their methods of assessment 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.
- The use of a word processor is considered and agreed where appropriate at the start of the course, having established a picture of need and it being the normal way of working.
- The only exception to this is where an arrangement may need to be put in place as a consequence of a temporary injury or an impairment at the time of an examination or assessment.

### **The use of a Word Processor**

We will:

- Provide a word processor with spelling and grammar check facility/predictive text/dictionary 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).
- Provide access to a word processor to candidates in non-examination assessments components as standard practice unless prohibited by the specification.
- Allow candidates to use a word processor in an examination to type certain questions, i.e. those requiring extended writing and to handwrite shorter answers.
- Be aware that 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 the candidates will frequently need to type. For examinations which require more simplistic answers, it is often easier to handwrite within the answer booklet. The candidate then avoids the difficulty of visually tracking between the question paper and screen.
- Ensure that a word processor cover sheet is included with each candidate's typed script when acquired by an awarding body.

### **Word Processors and their Programmes**

Box Hill School will ensure that:

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

- Memory sticks are not used in school by candidates for public examinations.
- Word processors are in good working order at the time of the examination.
- Word processors are 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 separately, a separate invigilator is used.
- Word processors are either connected to a printer so that the script can be printed off or have a facility to print from a portable storage medium.
- Documents are printed after the examination is over.
- Candidates are present to verify that the work printed is their own.
- Word processed scripts are inserted in any answer booklet which contains some of the answers.
- The centre is aware of the need to produce scripts under secure conditions and adheres to this.
- Word processors are not used to perform skills which are being assessed.
- Word processors are not connected to an intranet or any other means of communication.
- 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 and computer aided design software is not included on a word processor unless permission has been given to use these.
- Predictive text 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 a word processor unless the candidate has permission to use a scribe or relevant software.
- Word processors are not used on the candidate's behalf by a third party unless the candidate has permission to use a scribe.

### **Current Programmes used at Box Hill School**

The current programmes used to support candidates who have been awarded Access Arrangements for reading and/ or scribing are Natural Reader and Microsoft Word Speech to Text.

### **Laptops**

Box Hill School will ensure that:

- Laptops used during examinations/assessments are designed to run for a long period of time once fully charged and are 'free standing'.
- The battery capacity of all laptops is checked before the candidates' examination(s) with the battery sufficiently charged for the entire duration of the examination.
- Candidates with fully charged laptops may be given the opportunity to be seated within the main examination hall without the need for separate invigilation.
- Candidates are reminded that their name, centre number, candidate number and unit/component code must appear on each page in a header and page numbers in a footer.
- Candidates using Notepad or WordPad software (which do not allow for the insertion of a header or footer) are instructed to handwrite their details as a header and add page numbers as a footer once they have finished their examination and printed off their script; candidates are

also supervised to ensure that they are solely performing this task and not re-reading their answers or amending their work in any way.

- Candidates are instructed to use a minimum 12pt font and double spacing.
- Invigilators remind candidates to save their work at regular intervals.
- Where it is possible 'auto save' is set up on each laptop.
- 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.

Signed:

Position: Deputy Head Academic

Date:

Review Date: September 2025