Word Processing Policy for Examinations

Last reviewed on:	03rd March 2026
Next review due by:	03rd March 2027

This policy is reviewed annually to ensure compliance with current regulations

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1. Preface

This policy is reviewed and updated annually on the publication of updated JCQ regulations and guidance on access arrangements and instructions for conducting exams. References in this policy to AA and ICE relate to/are directly taken from the Access Arrangements* and Reasonable Adjustments 2022-2023 and Instructions for conducting examinations 2022-2023 publications.

This policy details how St John Henry Newman Catholic School complies with AA chapter 4 (Managing the needs of candidates and principles for centres) section 5.8 (Word processor) and ICE (sections 14.20-27) when awarding and allocating a candidate the use of word processor in examinations. The term 'word processor' is used to describe, for example, the use of a computer, laptop or tablet.

Centres are allowed to provide a word processor (e.g., laptop, computer) 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.

2. Access arrangements

Access arrangements are agreed before an assessment. They allow candidates with specific needs, such as special educational needs, disabilities or temporary injuries to access the assessment and show what they know and can do without changing the demands of the assessment. The intention behind an access arrangement is to meet the particular needs of an individual candidate without affecting the integrity of the assessment. Access arrangements are the principal way in which awarding bodies comply with the duty under the Equality Act 2010 to make 'reasonable adjustments.'

The Equality Act 2010 requires an awarding body to make reasonable adjustments where a candidate who is disabled within the meaning of the Equality Act 2010, would be at a substantial disadvantage in comparison to someone who is not disabled.

Centres are allowed to provide a word processor (e.g., laptop, computer) 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.

3. Eligibility for Word Processing

In line with JCQ Regulations, we provide a word processor for use in public exams if it is the pupil's normal way of working within the centre and is appropriate to the pupil's needs.

The "normal way of working within the centre" includes the use of a word processor in the classroom and, if applying from Year 11 upwards, also during internal and mock examinations. This condition does not apply in the case of sudden physical injury (e.g. broken wrist).

"Appropriate to the pupil's needs" means that provision of a word processor is necessary to avoid the candidate being placed at a substantial (rather than minor) disadvantage in the examination as a consequence of persistent and significant difficulties.

The "needs" of a pupil that would therefore typically lead to them being considered for the use of a word processor include:

• A learning difficulty which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on the 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

(AARA 5.8.4)

A word processor cannot be granted to a pupil because:

• The pupil prefers to type rather than write

• The pupil can work faster on a keyboard

• The pupil uses a word processor at home

(AA 5.8.4)

4. Applications

For external examinations, an application for a word processor must be with the Head of Learning Support no later than 21 February of the year that the examination is to be taken. This allows for the provision of access arrangements from the perspective of timetabling, equipment, accommodation and staffing, and suitable training and practice for the pupil. This deadline does not apply when there is a temporary physical injury e.g. broken wrist.

When a pupil has been allocated a word processor for examinations, the Head of Learning Support will advise the Examinations Department and subject teachers.

In line with JCQ regulations, the Centre is responsible for determining suitable access arrangements for pupils. Recommendations in privately commissioned reports will not automatically be accepted and the final decision is made by the Centre. In any case, any such recommendations must be received by the School before the 21 February deadline mentioned above.

Pupils will be asked to complete the 'Word Processor Agreement' (appendix 1). This is a contract between the candidate and Centre 20420 – St John Henry Newman Catholic School Coventry, to state that the candidate is only allowed to use a word processor under the set criteria. Word processors will only be arranged for students and parents that have signed this document. A school representative (SENco, Senior Leader) will also sign this document.

To be accepted for the use of a word processor all candidates must meet the criteria outlined above.

5. Word Processor Regulations

St John Henry Newman complies with ICE (pg 29) regulations by ensuring:

• 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 be any portable storage medium used

• An unauthorized memory stick is not permitted for use by a candidate. Where required, candidates are provided with a memory stick, which has been cleared of any previously stored data, by a nominated member of centre staff

• 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 a script can be printed off or have the 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

• Word processors are used to produce scripts under secure conditions. If they are not, the centre is aware that they may be refused by the awarding body

• 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 or computer-aided design software are not included on a word processor unless permission has been given to use these

• 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

• Word processors are not used on the candidate's behalf by a third party unless the candidate has permission to use a scribe

St John Henry Newman further complies with ICE by ensuring:

• tablets 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 and/or tablets is checked before the candidate's examination(s) with the battery sufficiently charged for the entire duration of the examination

• candidates with fully charged laptops or tablets are given the opportunity to be seated within the main examination hall without the need for separate invigilation and power points

• candidates are reminded that their centre number, candidate number and the unit/component code must appear on each page as a header or 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 or footer once they have finished the examination and printed off their typed 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 appropriately number each page

• 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 'autosave' is set up on each laptop/tablet

• 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

6. Other arrangements

Other arrangements relating to the use of word processors include:

• If the Awarding body requires, a cover sheet will be handed over to the invigilator at the beginning of each exam for each student using a word processor

Printing the script after the exam is over

St John Henry Newman will ensure

• the word processor is either connected to a printer so that a script can be printed off, or have the facility to print from a portable storage medium*

• the candidate is supervised at all times until the script is printed and handed over to the lead invigilator to send off to the examination board with the rest of the papers

• the candidate is present to verify that the work printed is his or her own

• a word-processed script is attached to any answer booklet which contains some of the answers

• a word processor cover sheet, if required by the Awarding Body, is completed and included with the candidate's typed script (according to the relevant awarding body's instructions)

*Portable storage medium: The centre will ensure that any portable storage medium (e.g. a memory stick) used is provided by the centre and is cleared of any previously stored data

Updated School Name July 2026

Appendix A

St John Henry Newman (20420)
Word Processor
Agreement

Candidate Number	
Student Name:	
Parent Name:	

This is a contract between you and the center, St John Henry Newman Catholic School Coventry (20420) to state that you are only permitted to use a word processor under the following criteria:

• I will be seated in such a way that no other student can see my screen

• I will be seated in a way that the screen is visible to the invigilator

• I will not be allowed to use the internet, translate, spell check, smart search, etc. or access the school server

• I will save my work regularly

• I must use a font size which is at least 12pt and double line spacing as this will help examiners when marking my work

• The Centre number (20420), candidate number and the unit/component code must be included as a Header (e.g. 20420/1234 – 5RS01)

• Each page must be numbered so I must include a Footer with page numbers

• At the end of an examination I will accompany the invigilator to the exams printer where my work will be printed off in my presence.

• When my answers have been printed I need to check so that I can confirm that it is my work and that all the pages have been printed

• I will sign the printed answers to authenticate the printed copy.

Word Processors will only be arranged for students and parents that have signed this document.

Student Signature:	Date:
Parent Signature:	Date:
School Representative Name: Position: Signature: Date:	