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Farmor's School Laptop Protocol
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SLT Responsible: Noelle Sturla

Link Policies: Exams Policy, NEA Protocol

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Introduction

This protocol 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](#) and [Instructions for conducting examinations.](#)

References to 'AA' relate to JCQ *Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments 2022-2023* and ICE to JCQ *Instructions for conducting examinations 2022-2023*.

Purpose of the protocol

This protocol details how the centre manages and administers the use of word processors (including laptops and tablets) in class and in examinations.

Principles for using a word processor

A word processor can be a desktop computer, a laptop, electronic brailler or tablet.

- Candidates may have access to word processors in order to remove barriers for candidates which prevent them from being placed at a substantial disadvantage as a consequence of persistent and significant difficulties.
- The use of word processors is only permitted whilst ensuring that the integrity of the assessment is maintained.
- The use of a word processor is not granted where it will compromise the assessment objectives of the examination in question.
- Candidates may not require the use of a word processor in every subject/examination. As subjects and their methods of assessments may vary, leading to different demands of the candidates, the need for the use of a word processor is considered on a subject-by-subject basis.
- The use of a word processor in examinations is normally considered and agreed by the SENCo where appropriate, **providing the centre has firmly established a picture of need and normal way of working for a candidate.**

- Candidates are made aware when they will have the use of a word processor for timetabled examinations and non-examination assessments.

The use of a word processor for candidates is only granted if it reflects their 'normal way of working', which is defined as support:

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

The only exceptions to the above would be a temporary injury or impairment, or a late diagnosis of a disability, or manifestation of an impairment relating to an existing disability arising.

The use of a word processor in examinations

Farmor's School complies with AA chapter 5 *Access Arrangements and Adjustments* as follows:

AA 5.8.1

- Provides a word processor with the spelling and grammar check facility/predictive text disabled (switched off)
- Only grants the use of a word processor to a candidate where it is their normal way of working within the centre
- Only grants 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)

AA 5.8.3

- Allows candidates to use a word processor in an examination to type certain questions, i.e. those requiring extended writing, and handwrite shorter answers.
- Are also 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 candidates will frequently need to type. Examinations which require more simplistic answers are often easier to handwrite within the answer booklet as the candidate avoids the difficulty of visually tracking between the question paper and computer screen.

AA 5.8.4

- Does not simply grant the use of a word processor to a candidate because they prefer to type rather than write or can work faster on a keyboard, or because they uses a laptop at home.

Word processors and their programmes

Farmor's School complies with ICE 14.25 *Word Processors* instructions by ensuring:

- **candidates are proficient in the use of a word processor and that its use does not disadvantage the candidate.** Proficiency will be decided by the SENCo via student/parent/teacher testimony and/or use of typing speed/accuracy test(s)
- word processors are used as a typewriter, not as a database, although standard formatting software is acceptable
- word processors are cleared of any previously stored data, as are any portable storage medium used
- 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
- 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 attached to any answer booklet which contains some of the answers (and according to instructions issued by the individual 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 unrestricted access to other applications such as a calculator (where prohibited in the examination), spreadsheets, etc. when using a word processor. They will be closely supervised by invigilating staff.
- **predictive text software or an automatic spelling and grammar check is disabled unless the candidate has been permitted a scribe** or is using speech recognition technology, or the awarding body's specification permits the use of automatic spell checking
- Computer reading (text to speech) software is included on all word processors but is only utilised by candidates who have permission to use a computer reader
- speech 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

Where the use of a word processor is permitted in place of a scribe, decisions regarding enabling the spelling and grammar check function will be made with the student on a subject-by-subject basis due to the potential loss of access to Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar marks.
This will be agreed when Access Arrangements are agreed and student and parents will be informed through the normal school Access Arrangement correspondence.

Farmor's School uses the following criteria to award and allocate word processors for use in class and in examinations**:**

- A student has an approved access arrangement in place, for example the use of a scribe, but is looking to achieve greater independence

- A student has a firmly established need that reflects the student's normal way of working at school
- A student has a learning difficulty which has a **substantial** and **long-term** adverse effect on their ability to write legibly and/or time-efficiently

Substantial and long-term adverse effect on the ability to write legibly and/or time-efficiently may be caused by:
- a learning difficulty
- a medical condition
- a physical disability
- a sensory impairment
- planning and organisational problems when writing by hand
- poor handwriting
- below average handwriting speed

Laptops and tablets

Farmor's School further ensures that:
- candidates are given exam-compliant desk top computers/laptops to use as word processors in examinations
- candidates will be allowed the spell check facility switched ON if the student would otherwise be eligible for a scribe, as decided by the SENCo
- candidates will be made aware of the potential loss of access to Spelling Punctuation and Grammar marks and a joint decision will be made with student and parent
- students are expected to ensure that each piece of classwork/homework has a header containing their name and date. A title is expected to be used and pages numbered to ensure that work layout and achievement is clear to students, parents/carers and teachers
- for the majority of class notes, students are expected to use a minimum 12pt font in standard form e.g. Times New Roman, Arial, Comic Sans
- students are expected to save their work at regular intervals, ensuring that documents are saved with appropriate names in appropriate folders/files on their laptop or in the cloud. This is for ease of revision and re-printing where necessary
- students are expected to print and stick work into their exercise books so that teachers can mark, monitor and give feedback as per all students
- students **may not** access the internet or any intranet communication function (such as email) whilst using a word processor in class. When necessary, they may ask permission from the teacher to email a piece of work
- students are responsible for the safety and maintenance of their own devices whilst at school and Farmor's School highly recommends that devices are suitably insured before they are brought into school
- students **must** abide by usual classroom rules and routines and **must not** allow their use of a word processor to distract other students. Students **must** follow teacher direction as to appropriate use of the word processor in the lesson

- students must ensure that their device is fully charged at the start of each day and has enough charge to last for any lessons in which it may be required. Alternatively, students may ask to be seated near an accessible power point in the classroom. This will be at the discretion of the teacher.

Students recommended to use a word processor in class **may** be provided with one of a limited number of school laptops, in which case, the following will apply:
- students **must** sign their laptop in and out (from Learning Support) at the appropriate times every day, and **may not** remove the laptop from school premises (unless given agreed permission and with the relevant signed consent)
- students must take reasonable precautions against damaging or losing a school-owned device. Reasonable precautions include having the laptop in their possession for the minimum time required each day; securing the laptop at breaktime/lunchtime in a locker or other safe location; ensuring the laptop is being carried or is placed on a suitable surface at all times (NOT on the floor, and away from water sources, etc.)

Some students will bring their own laptop, having been agreed with the SEN team, and will be responsible for charging and protecting against loss/damage.

The same rules apply to the usage of personal laptops in school.

Parent/Carer Agreement

Farmor's School allows use of a laptop/tablet in class in accordance with recommendation from the SENCo.

Students have use of a word processor at school and in examinations in accordance with the preceding Word Processor Protocol 2022/2023.

Students and parents/carers understand, and are in agreement with, the access arrangement being removed if the student:

- repeatedly fails to follow expectations regarding classroom rules/teacher direction
- consistently fails to achieve/progress through lack of work produced/printed
- causes damage/loss to a school-owned device through failure to take <u>reasonable precautions</u>

Additionally, students and parents/carers understand, and are in agreement with the following:

- spell-checking facility will be disabled in tests & examinations unless otherwise agreed by the SENCo. It is therefore advisable to practise using the word processor with the spell-checking facility disabled at all times
- As a desk top computer with keyboard may be the word processor provided in examinations, it is highly advisable that students use a laptop with a keyboard rather than a tablet or touch screen keyboard, as the use of touchscreen has a very different feel to a physical keyboard which may put the candidate at a disadvantage when undertaking examinations

Please complete the following section and return to school **FAO: SENCO** to acknowledge the above agreement, so that we can allow your child use of a word processor.

Name of student:_____Registration Group: _____

I will be using my own device at school ☐

I request the use of a school-owned laptop ☐

Signature of parent/carer: _____

Print name : _____

Date: _____

Please return this slip to the SENCO.