



The BRIT School

Word Processing Policy (Exams)

2025-2026

KEY STAFF INVOLVED

Role	Name(s)
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Introduction

The use of a word processor in exams and assessments is an available access arrangement/reasonable adjustment.

The purpose of an access arrangement/reasonable adjustment is to ensure, where possible, that 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 following principles are applied to access arrangements at The BRIT School:

- The purpose of an access arrangement/reasonable adjustment is to ensure, where possible, that barriers to assessment are removed for a disabled candidate preventing them from being placed at a substantial disadvantage due to persistent and significant difficulties. The integrity of the assessment is maintained, whilst at the same time providing access to assessments for a disabled candidate. A centre must make decisions on appropriate access arrangements for their candidates. Although professionals from other organisations may give advice, they cannot make the decision for the centre. They will not have a working knowledge of an individual candidate's needs and how their difficulties impact in the classroom and/or in timed assessments. It is the responsibility of the SENCo to make appropriate and informed decisions based on the JCQ regulations. (AARA 4.2.1)
- Although access arrangements/adjustments are intended to allow access to assessments, they are not granted where they will compromise the assessment objectives of the specification in question. (AARA 4.2.2)
- Candidates may not require the same access arrangements/reasonable adjustments in each specification. Subjects and their methods of assessments may vary, leading to different demands of the candidate. SENCos (or equivalent role) must consider the need for access arrangements/reasonable adjustments on a subject-by-subject basis. (AARA 4.2.3)
- The SENCo (or equivalent role) must ensure that the proposed access arrangement/reasonable adjustment does not unfairly disadvantage or advantage a candidate. (AARA 4.2.1)
- The candidate must have had appropriate opportunities to practice using the access arrangement(s)/reasonable adjustments before their first exam. (AARA 4.2.7)

Purpose of the Policy

This policy details how The BRIT School complies with AARA, chapter 4 (Managing the needs of candidates - principles for centres), section 5.8 (Word processor) and ICE, sections 14.20-27 Word processors (computers, laptops and tablets) when awarding and allocating a candidate the use of word processor in exams.

The criteria The BRIT School uses to award and allocate word processors for exams and assessments

The 'normal way of working' for exam candidates, as directed by the head of centre, is that candidates handwrite their exams unless there are exceptions.

Exceptions

A candidate may be awarded the use of a word processor in examinations where:

- the candidate may have an approved access arrangement in place, for example the use of a scribe/speech recognition technology
- the candidate has a firmly established need, it reflects the candidate's normal way of working and by not being awarded a word processor would be at a substantial disadvantage to other candidates

The BRIT School will:

- allocate the use of a word processor to a candidate with the spelling and grammar check facility/predictive text switched off where it is their normal way of working within the centre (AARA 5.8.1)
- award the use of a word processor to candidates where appropriate to their needs (AARA 5.8.4). For example, a candidate with a learning difficulty which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his/her 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)
- only permit the use of a word processor where the integrity of the assessment can be maintained (AARA 4.2.1)
- not grant the use of a word processor where it will compromise the assessment objectives of the specification in question (AARA 4.2.2)
- consider on a subject-by-subject basis if the candidate will need to use a word processor in each specification (AARA 4.2.3)
- process access arrangements/reasonable adjustments at the start of the course, or as soon as practicable having firmly established a picture of need and normal way of working, ensuring arrangements are always approved before an exam or assessment (AARA 4.2.4)
- provide the use of word processors to candidates in non-exam assessment components as standard practice unless prohibited by the specification (AARA 5.8.2)

The BRIT School will not simply grant the use of a word processor to a candidate because they now want to type rather than write in examinations or can work faster on a keyboard, or because they use a laptop at home (AARA 5.8.4)

Additionally the use of a word processor would be considered for a candidate:

- in the event of a temporary injury or impairment, or a diagnosis of a disability or manifestation of an impairment relating to an existing disability arising after the start of the course (AARA 4.2.4)
- where the curriculum is delivered electronically and the centre provides word processors to all candidates (AARA 5.8.4)

Arrangements at the time of the assessment for the use of a word processor

Candidates using a word processor will be housed in one smaller space, if rooming allows. If necessary, they will be housed in the main exam room, where Invigilators will be informed of the processes involved. The IT Team will be available to assist at the end of the exam to ensure scripts are printed off correctly with students still present to handover to the Invigilator to send off to the exam board with the rest of the cohorts completed papers.

When housed in a separate exam room for one-to-one invigilation, the invigilator will be informed of the processes involved. The IT Team will be available to assist at the end of the exam to ensure scripts are printed off correctly with students still present

to handover to the invigilator to send off to the exam board with the rest of the cohorts completed papers.

In compliance with the regulations, The BRIT School:

- provides a word processor with the spelling and grammar check and predictive text off, unless specification says otherwise (ICE 14.20)
- checks the battery capacity of a laptop or tablet before the candidate's exam to ensure that the battery is sufficiently charged for the entire duration of the exam (ICE 14.21)
- ensures the candidate is reminded to ensure that the centre number, candidate number and the unit or component code appear on each page as a header or footer e.g. 12345/8001 – 6391/01 (ICE 14.22)
- if a candidate is using a software application that does not allow for the insertion of a header or footer, once the candidate has completed the examination and printed off their typed script, they are instructed to handwrite their details as a header or footer; the candidate is supervised throughout this process to ensure that they are solely performing this task and not re-reading their answers or amending their work in any way (ICE 14.22)
- ensures the candidate understands that each page of the typed script must be numbered, e.g. page 1 of 6 (ICE 14.23)
- ensures the candidate is reminded to save their work at regular intervals (or where possible, an IT technician will set up 'autosave' on each laptop or tablet to ensure that if there is a complication or technical issue, the candidate's work is not lost) (ICE 14.24)
- instructs the candidate to use a minimum of 12pt font and double spacing to make marking easier for examiners (ICE 14.24)

The BRIT School will ensure the word processor:
(ICE 14.25)

- is only used in a way that ensures a candidate's script is produced under secure conditions
- is not used to perform skills which are being assessed
- is in good working order at the time of the exam
- is accommodated in such a way that other candidates are not disturbed and cannot read the screen
- is used as a typewriter, not as a database, although standard formatting software is acceptable
- is cleared of any previously stored data
- does not give the candidate access to other applications such as a calculator (where prohibited in the examination), e-mail, the Internet, social media sites or spreadsheets
- does not include graphic packages or computer aided design software unless permission has been given to use these
- does not have any predictive text software or an automatic spelling and grammar check enabled unless the candidate has been permitted a scribe (a scribe cover sheet must be completed), or the awarding body's specification permits the use of automatic spell checking
- does not include computer reading (text to speech) software unless the candidate has permission to use a computer reader
- does not include speech recognition technology unless the candidate has permission to use a scribe (a scribe cover sheet must be completed)

- does not include AI tools
- is not used on the candidate's behalf by a third party unless the candidate has permission to use a scribe (a scribe cover sheet must be completed)

Portable storage medium

The BRIT School will ensure that any portable storage medium (e.g. a memory stick) used (ICE 14.25) is provided by the centre and is cleared of any previously stored data.

Printing the script after the exam has ended

The BRIT School will ensure (ICE 14.25):

- 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 present to verify that the work printed is their own
- a word-processed script is attached to any answer booklet which contains some of the answers
- where an awarding body may require a word processor cover sheet, this is included with the candidate's typed script (and according to the relevant awarding body's instructions) (ICE 14.26)
- if a candidate omits to insert the required header or footer, they are instructed to handwrite the details as a header or footer; the candidate is supervised throughout this process to ensure that they are solely performing this task and not re-reading their answers or amending their work in any way (ICE 14.22)

The BRIT School may retain electronic copies of word-processed scripts as the electronic copy of a word-processed script may be accepted by an awarding body where the printed copy has been lost. However, the centre will demonstrate to the awarding body that the electronic file has been kept securely. The head of centre would be required to confirm this in writing to the awarding body (ICE 14.27)

Allocating word processors at the time of the assessment

Appropriate exam-compliant word processors will be allocated by the IT Team in liaison with the SENCo (or equivalent role) and the exams officer.

In exceptional circumstances where the number of compliant word processors may be insufficient for the cohort of candidates approved to use them in an exam session, the cohort will be split into two groups. One group will sit the exam earlier or later than the published start time, and the security of the exam will be maintained at all times and candidates will be supervised in line with ICE 7.

Appendix 1

SENCO NOTE ON FILE FOR WORD PROCESSOR

Name:

D.O.B:

At The BRIT School, the “normal way of working” for exam candidates, as directed by the head of centre, is that candidates handwrite their exams. An exception to this is where a candidate may have an approved access arrangement in place, for example the use of a scribe.

I confirm that in line with the JCQ regulations and the school’s policy on use of a word processor that the above candidate has this arrangement because:

- [insert name] has a learning difficulty which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to write legibly
- [insert name] has a medical condition
- [insert name] has a physical disability
- [insert name] has a sensory impairment
- [insert name] has planning and organisation difficulties when writing by hand
- [insert name] has poor handwriting

There is evidence to support this arrangement and confirmation from staff to say that this is the student’s normal way of working.

The only exception to the above where the use of a word processor may be considered for a candidate would be on a temporary basis as a consequence of a temporary injury at the time of the assessment where a subject within the curriculum is delivered electronically and the centre provides word processors to all candidates. This is/is not the case for

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SENCO:

DATE: