Bishop Challoner Catholic College

Exam Access Word Processor Policy

Introduction

This policy has been written with reference to the Joint Council for Qualifications guidance on adjustments for candidates with disabilities and learning difficulties 'Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments' and should be read in conjunction with Bishop Challoner's Exam Access Policy and SEND Policy.

This policy was created by the school's Learning Support Coordinator (Caroline Milne) who has a Certificate of Competence in Educational Testing (Level A) and a Certificate of Psychometric Testing, Assessment & Access Arrangements in consultation with the school's Exams Officer (Lorraine Houldcroft-Flint) and the Special Educational Needs Coordinator (Eileen Breen).

Principles for using a word processor

A word processor may be used in an examination where the requirement for handwriting would place a candidate at a substantial disadvantage as a consequence of persistent and significant difficulties. A candidate may have a diagnosed disability such as dyspraxia, joint hypermobility or cerebral palsy which limits their ability to handwrite, in which case a report by an appropriately qualified professional should be provided.

Candidates requiring the use of a word processor in examinations will have a history of handwriting difficulties which are persistent and obvious in their school work. They will regularly use a word processor to complete written assignments and they will be able to demonstrate that their typing is efficient, accurate and of sufficient speed. The use of a word processor is only granted if it reflects the support given to the candidate as their 'normal way of working.'

The use of a word processor should be agreed at the start of the course. Candidates must be made aware that they will have the use of a word processor for examinations, controlled assessments and coursework and use them for this purpose.

The use of a word processor

The use of a word processor will only be granted to a candidate where it is their normal way of working within the centre and if it is appropriate to their needs (eg the quality of language improves significantly as a result of using a word processor due to problems with planning and organisation when writing by hand).

The use of word processors for controlled assessments and coursework will be considered standard practice unless prohibited by the specification.

Word processors are used to produce scripts under secure conditions, if not they may be refused by the awarding body. Word processors must have been cleared of any previously stored data and are not connected to an intranet or any other means of communication. A word processor with the spelling and grammar check facility/predictive text disabled will be provided for eligible candidates.

Candidates may not require the use of a word processor in all examinations and it is permissible for a candidate using a word processor in an examination to type certain questions (ie those requiring extended writing) and to handwrite shorter answers. Word processed scripts are attached to any answer booklet which contains some of the answers.

Candidates are reminded that their centre number, candidate number and the unit/component code must appear on each page as a header or footer. Each page of a typed script must be appropriately numbered. Candidates are instructed to use a minimum 12pt font and double spacing. Invigilators will remind candidates to save their work at regular intervals.

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. Documents are printed after the examination is over and when candidates are present to verify that the work printed is their own.

Candidates are instructed to handwrite their details as a header or footer once they have finished the examination and printed off their typed script, if they have not already typed this information into the document. They are also supervised to ensure that they are solely performing this task and not rereading their answers or amending their work in any way.

Word Processors and their programmes

Word processors are used as a typewriter, not as a database, although standard formatting software is allowed. Candidates are not given access to other applications such as a calculator (where prohibited in the examination) when using a word processor. Graphic packages or computer aided design software is not included on a word processor unless permission has been given to use these.

Predictive text software and automatic spelling and grammar check are switched off unless the candidate has been permitted a scribe, or is using voice recognition technology (the script must have a scribe cover sheet attached), 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 to perform skills which are being assessed and word processors are not used on the candidate's behalf by a third party unless the candidate has permission to use a scribe.

Accommodating word processors in examinations

Accommodation will be as appropriate for an examination. A number of candidates may be roomed together if they are all using a word processor. Appropriate invigilation will be provided.

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