Word Processor Policy – Public Examinations

This policy is compliant with the JCQ document Adjustments for candidates with disabilities and learning difficulties Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments (1st September 2021 – 31st August 2022)

The use of a word processor in examinations can assist some students to produce work of a higher standard than they would achieve when writing by hand.

A word-processor cannot be provided because a student would prefer to use one. The expectation of the Academy is that students will normally produce hand-written scripts, and that staff will encourage students to learn the skill of writing quickly and accurately.

In deciding whether to allocate a word processor, the Academy will need to consider the overall management of examinations, particularly its duty to ensure that examinations are properly supervised in appropriate venues. Since the use of a word processor does not have to be recorded online like other access arrangements, the school has some leeway in how many entitlements it allows, while also having regard to the number of invigilators and resources available.

A student may need to use a word processor for these reasons:

i)   The student's ability to articulate themselves and organise their ideas *significantly* improves when a word processor is used (though without the use of programs to check grammar or spelling)
ii)   The student has a long-term learning difficulty which adversely affects his/her ability to write legibly or fluently
iii)   The student has a medical condition or a physical disability which has an adverse effect on his/her ability to write by hand, or a sensory impairment
iv)   The student may be able to present work of a much higher standard if he/she is able to move text and make answers more logical and orderly
v)   Poor or illegible handwriting

If a student has 25% extra time, and is subsequently allocated a word processor, the SENCO will review his/her access arrangements to ascertain that both are needed.

Students do not have an entitlement to a word processor simply because it is their preference or because they can type more quickly than they can write. Any student who is given this provision is expected to type in lessons where this access arrangement applies.

Students may not to need to use a laptop in all sections of an examination, such as multiple choice questions, or questions with brief answers, and some exams are not suited to use of a laptop, such as Mathematics.

The SENDCo will work with the teaching staff to identify students who normally need to type. A word processor entitlement will be reviewed before internal assessments to ensure that it continues to meet students' needs.

Students are not allowed to use their own laptops. They can only use one of the Academy exam laptops, which have no access to the internet, or if in a small venue, a PC which is in exam mode. Students may not bring a memory stick or any electronic storage device into any exam venue.

Students must normally use 12PT Arial or alternative professional font and must double space between lines.

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