



HAGLEY CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL

SEMPER FIDELIS

Use of Word Processor in Public Examinations Policy

Version	5
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Ratified by	Local Governing Body
Date ratified	
Date issued	
Policy review date	Autumn 2026
Post holder responsible	Exams Officer
Director / LGB Chairperson	Mr G Taylor Smith



Commitment to Equality:

We are committed to providing a positive working environment which is free from prejudice and unlawful discrimination and any form of harassment, bullying or victimisation. We have developed a number of key policies to ensure that the principles of Catholic Social Teaching in relation to human dignity and dignity in work become embedded into every aspect of school life and these policies are reviewed regularly in this regard.

This Use of Word Processor in Public Examinations Policy has been approved and adopted by Hagley Catholic High School Governing Body on 10th February 2026 and will be reviewed in Autumn 2026.

Signed by LGB representative for Hagley Catholic High School:

Signed by Principal:

Summary of changes

- ✓ **In compliance with the regulations of the centre – bullet point 2** – removed Word Processor and replaced with laptop or tablet and battery is sufficiently charged to last – added.

- ✓ **The centre will ensure the Word Processor– bullet point 12 added** - does not include AI tools (with examples)



References in this policy to AARA and ICE relate to/are directly taken from the Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments and [Instructions for Conducting Examinations](#) publications.

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 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. (AA 4.2.1)

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.

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. (AA 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. (AA 4.2.3)

The SENCo or equivalent role **must** ensure that the proposed access arrangement/reasonable adjustment does not unfairly disadvantage or advantage the candidate. (AA 4.2.1)

The candidate **must** have had appropriate opportunities to practice using the access arrangement(s)/reasonable adjustments before their first examination. (AA 4.2.7)

Purpose of the policy

This policy details Hagley Catholic High 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) word processors (computers, laptops and tablets) 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.
- ✓ The criteria Hagley Catholic High School uses to award and allocate word processors for examinations and assessments.
- ✓ The 'normal way of working' for exam candidates, as directed by the Principal, 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 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.

Hagley Catholic High 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 (AA 5.8.1)
- award the use of a Word Processor to a candidate where appropriate to their needs.(AA 5.8.4)
 - a learning difficulty which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to write legibly;
 - a medical condition;
 - a physical disability;
 - a sensory impairment;
 - planning and organisational problems when writing by hand;
 - poor handwriting.
- only permit the use of a Word Processor where the integrity of the assessment can be maintained (AA 4.2.1)
- not grant the use of a Word Processor where it will compromise the assessment objectives of the specification in question (AA 4.2.2)
- consider on a subject-by-subject basis if the candidate will need to use a Word Processor in each specification (AA 4.2.3)
- The use of a Word Processor does not require prior approval via the AAO online system and is centre-delegated. Evidence of need and normal way of working will be retained on file.
- provide access to word processors to candidates in non-examination assessment components as standard practice unless prohibited by the specification (AA 5.8.2)

Hagley Catholic High 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 (AA 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 (AA 4.2.4)
- where the curriculum is delivered electronically, and the centre provides word processors to all candidates (AA 5.8.4)

Arrangements at the time of the assessment for the use of a Word Processor

A candidate using a Word Processor is accommodated in a smaller venue.

In compliance with the regulations of the centre:

- provides a word processor, with the spelling and grammar check and predictive text disabled (switched off) to a candidate where it is their normal way of working within the centre, unless an awarding body's specification says otherwise (ICE 14.20)
- (where a candidate is to be seated with the main cohort without the use of a power point) checks the battery capacity of a laptop or tablet before the candidate's exam to ensure that the battery is sufficiently charged to last for the entire duration of the exam (ICE 14.21)
- ensures the candidate is reminded to ensure that their 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.
- 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)

Hagley Catholic High 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), email, 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 (i.e. Grammarly, Copilot, CHATGP);
- 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

Hagley Catholic High School will ensure that any portable storage medium (e.g. a memory stick) used. **(ICE 14.25)**

- is provided by the centre;
- is cleared of any previously stored data.

Printing the script after the exam has ended. (ICE 14.25)

Hagley Catholic High School 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 present to verify that the work printed is their own;
- a word-processed script is included with any answer booklet which contains some of the answers;
- If a candidate omits to insert the required header or footer, they are instructed to handwrite the details as a header or footer (or as otherwise instructed by the awarding body); 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)

Hagley Catholic High will ensure that 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)

Hagley Catholic High 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 would need to demonstrate to the awarding body that the 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 provided by the IT department 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
- Any variation from the published start time will be conducted strictly in accordance with ICE section 7, with full supervision and exam security maintained.

The security of the exam will be maintained at all times and candidates will be supervised in line with ICE 7.

Appendix 1

The criteria Hagley Catholic High School uses to award and allocate word processors for examinations

Students may be allocated Word Processors for use in Examinations if they meet one or more of the following criteria:

- i. 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;
- ii. Difficulties with legibility of handwriting;
- iii. Where difficulties with handwriting speed are also being considered for extra time, a recognised handwriting speed assessment (e.g. DASH) may (but not always) be used and evidenced on Form 8;
- iv. Long-standing or temporary medical condition or physical impairment that affects the speed and/or the legibility of handwriting (where appropriate medical evidence is requested)

The use of a Word Processor in examinations must reflect the candidate's normal way of working within Hagley Catholic High School.

