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THE LATYMER SCHOOL
Founded 1624

Procedures for the use of laptops in written examinations

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SENCo: Ms Brander

1 Purpose

1.1 At the Latymer School, we recognise that for some candidates with specific learning difficulties or disabilities, a laptop (or other word processing device) may be the most appropriate method of organising and presenting their work.
1.2 We want to ensure that, in these situations, the relevant arrangements are being made and students practice under exam conditions prior to their formal examination.

2 Principles guiding this practice

2.1 The use of a laptop in an exam needs to reflect a candidate's normal way of working (NWOW) in his/her course at Latymer and must be appropriate to the candidate's needs.

The candidate must be proficient in the use of a laptop.

A laptop cannot be granted to a candidate solely because he/she prefers to type rather than write or can write faster on a keyboard.

The school follows the **Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments** guidance provided each year by JCQ. (Joint Council for Qualifications)

2.2 Candidates who might benefit from such an arrangement can, for example, include those with:
- A learning difficulty which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on the ability to write legibly.
- A medical condition, where rest breaks does not alleviate the issue.
- A physical disability, where rest breaks does not alleviate the issue.
- A sensory impairment.
- Illegible handwriting.
- Significantly slower handwriting speed confirmed by a 'Learning Needs Assessment' carried out by a professional known to the school and approved by the Headteacher.
- Planning, processing and organisational problems when writing by hand.
- Communication issues associated with students on the autistic spectrum.

2.3 The use of a laptop will be considered when:
- A need has been established using appropriate evidence.
- The use of laptop is recommended and approved by the SENCo.

2.4 The Learning Support Team need to be satisfied that:
- A candidate's typing is efficient, accurate and of sufficient speed to be able to cope with typing in timed examination conditions.
- A candidate has used a laptop as his or her NWOW in the subject area.
- A candidate has had practice in the use of it under exam conditions (e.g. mock exams and/or class tests).

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2.5 Where the above requirements are <u>not</u> met, the use of a laptop will not be recommended.

2.6 In exams without a significant amount of writing or consisting of more simplistic answers handwriting may be preferable for the candidate. A laptop should ideally be granted for extended writing.

3 Procedures

3.1 A request for investigating the use of a laptop must initially come from the subject teachers of the student concerned. Private reports paid for by parents are not permitted as evidence by JCQ.

3.2 Learning Support will gather appropriate evidence to make a judgement about the use of laptop. This evidence can include:
- Comments from staff that a candidate's work is not being completed in timed conditions.
- Incomplete exam/test papers.
- Comments from staff about illegible handwriting and photocopied examples provided.
- Reports from medical professionals. **Private reports are not accepted by JCQ.**

3.3 Learning Support will then confirm the use of a laptop with the exams office, who will then put the appropriate arrangements in place and provide the laptop. (No personal laptops are allowed.)

3.4 For national exams taking place in the summer, requests for access arrangements should be with Learning Support by the end of January in order to meet the JCQ deadline, which is usually in mid-February. (For exact dates see the JCQ guidelines for that academic year.)

4 Exceptions
The only exceptions to the above where the use of a word processor would be considered for a candidate would be: 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 a subject within the curriculum is delivered electronically and the centre provides word processors to all candidates (AA 5.8.4)

5 Accessing a word processor under exam conditions

5.1 A candidate using a word processor is accommodated either in the main exam venue with the main cohort or in a different room depending on their Exam Access Arrangements.

5.2 To comply with ICE (Instructions for Conducting Examinations), the Centre:
- provides a word processor with the spelling and grammar check facility/predictive text disabled (switched off).

- (where a candidate is to be seated with the main cohort without the use of a power point) checks the battery capacity of the word processor before the candidate's exam to ensure that the battery is sufficiently charged for the entire duration of the exam.

- ensures the candidate is reminded to check that his/her centre number, candidate number and the unit/component code appear on each page as a header or footer e.g. 12345/8001 – 6391/01.

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- If a candidate is using the software application Notepad or Wordpad these do not allow for the insertion of a header or footer. In such circumstances once the candidate has completed the examination and printed off his/her typed script, he/she must handwrite their details as a header or footer. The candidate must be supervised to ensure that he/she is 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.

- ensures the candidate is reminded to save his/her work at regular intervals. (or where possible, an IT technician will set up 'autosave' on each laptop/tablet).

- instruct the candidate to use a minimum of 12pt font and double spacing in order to assist examiners when marking.

5.3 The centre will ensure the word processor:
- 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 type-writer, not as a database, although standard formatting software is acceptable and is not connected to an intranet or any other means of communication.
- 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), spreadsheets etc.
- 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 or is using speech recognition technology (a scribe cover sheet must be completed), or the awarding body's specification permits the use of automatic spell checking.
- does not include speech recognition technology unless the candidate has permission to use a scribe or relevant software.
- is not be used on the candidate's behalf by a third party unless the candidate has permission to use a scribe.

6. Portable storage medium
The centre will ensure that any portable storage medium (e.g. a memory stick) used is:
- provided by the centre
- cleared of any previously stored data

7. Printing the script
After the exam is over, the Latymer School will ensure that:
- 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 his or her own
- a word-processed script is attached to any answer booklet which contains some of the answers
- a word processor cover sheet (Form 4) is completed and included with the candidate's typed script (according to the relevant awarding body's instructions)