**Adult Community Learning Essex**

Exams Word Processing Policy

# Control of the document SLT

This policy is issued, controlled, and may only be modified by the designated policy group member after proposed amendments have been presented to the Quality Improvement Group

The latest version of the policy will be maintained by the Adult Community Learning Service (ACL) and updates sent to all Managers. It is important that the latest version of the policy is used at all times.

# Policy Aims & Intention

This policy details how ACL Essex complies with AA (chapter 4) Adjustments for candidates with disabilities and learning difficulties, (section 5.8) Word processor and ICE (sections 14.20-25) 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.

**Responsibility Group:** SLT, Exams Leads & Exams Officers

Last Review Date: August 2023

New Review Date: September 2024

**Audience:**  All Strategic, Curriculum and Operational Managers, academic staff, support staff, volunteers, learners and other service users

**Use of a Word Processor in Exams**

The use of a word processor

The Centre will

* allocate the use of a word processor to a candidate with the spelling and grammar check/predictive text disabled (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 if it is appropriate to their needs. Needs may include
  + 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 (AA 5.8.4)
* 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)
* consider the needs of the candidate at the start of the candidate’s course leading to a qualification based on evidence gathered that firmly establishes the candidates’ needs and ’normal way of working’ in the classroom, internal tests/exams, mock exams etc. and confirm arrangements in place before the candidate takes an exam or assessment (AA 4.2.4)
* provide access to word processors to candidates in non-examination assessment components as standard practice unless prohibited by the specification (AA 5.8.2)

The centre will not

* simply grant the use of a word processor to a candidate because they prefer to type rather than write or can work faster on a keyboard, or because they use a laptop at home (AA 5.8.4)

**Exceptions**

* The only exception 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)

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

A candidate using a word processor will be in either the main venue with the main cohort or in a separate room.

To comply with ICE 14, the Centre

* provides a word processor with the spelling and grammar check facility/predictive text disabled (switched off) (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 the word processor 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 their centre number, candidate number and the unit/component code appear on each page as a header or footer e.g. 16119/2001 – 6391/01 (ICE 14.22)
* 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 their typed script, they are instructed to handwrite their details as a header or footer. The candidate must be supervised 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/tablet)
* instruct the candidate to use a minimum of 12pt font and double spacing in order to make marking easier for examiners (ICE 14.24)

(ICE 14.25)

The Centre will ensure the word processor:

* 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 not connected to an intranet or any other means of communication
* 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 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 used on the candidate’s behalf by a third party unless the candidate has permission to use a scribe

(ICE 14.25)

**Portable storage medium**

* The Centre will ensure that any portable storage medium (e.g. a memory stick) used
  + is provided by the centre
  + is cleared of any previously stored data

(ICE 14.25)

**Printing the script after the exam is over**

The Centre 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 attached to any answer booklet which contains some of the answers
* where an awarding body requires a cover sheet to be completed this is included with the candidate’s typed script (according to the relevant awarding body’s instructions)

**Arrangements for the use of word processors at the time of the assessment**

* Appropriate exam-compliant word processors will be provided by the IT department in liaison with LS Co-ordinator and the exams officer. In exceptional circumstances where the number of appropriate 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 than or later than the awarding body’s published start time. The security of the exam will be maintained at all times and candidates will be supervised in line with section 7 of ICE.