Word Processor Policy

Approved by the Board of Directors: November 2026

School Mission Statement

"To create and sustain, with God's help, a learning, caring and serving community where all people are valued for who they are and who they may become in the light of Jesus Christ."

This school is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

Purpose of the Policy

This policy details how St Bede's Inter-Church School complies with the JCQ publication Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments (AARA) 2026-27, Chapter 4: Managing the Needs of Candidates and Principles for Centres, Section 5.8: Word Processors, and Instructions for Conducting Examinations (ICE) 2026-27, Sections 14.20-14.27 when awarding and allocating the use of a word processor in examinations and assessments.

The term *word processor* is used to describe, for example, the use of a computer, laptop or tablet.

Responsibilities

Head of Centre: Alistair Day

- Overall responsibility for ensuring compliance with JCQ regulations and awarding body requirements.
- Ensures sufficient resources are available to implement approved access arrangements.

Deputy SENDCo: Jenny Steward

- Identifies candidates who may require the use of a word processor.
- Establishes evidence of need and normal way of working.
- Maintains supporting evidence and records.

Exams Officer: Sophie Smart

- Ensures examination arrangements comply with JCQ regulations.
- Coordinates examination provision and the secure handling of scripts.

IT Manager: Daniel Chung

- Prepares and maintains exam-compliant devices.
- Ensures security settings, software restrictions and AI controls are applied.

Invigilators

- Monitor compliance during examinations.
- Report any technical issues, suspected malpractice or security concerns immediately.

Candidates

- Follow all examination regulations and centre instructions.
- Ensure all work produced is their own.

Equality Act 2010

St Bede's Inter-Church School is committed to ensuring that disabled candidates are not placed at a substantial disadvantage when compared with their peers. Access arrangements, including the use of a word processor, will be implemented fairly, consistently and in accordance with the Equality Act 2010, JCQ Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments and JCQ Instructions for Conducting Examinations.

The use of a word processor in examinations and assessments is an available access arrangement and reasonable adjustment.

Introduction

The purpose of an access arrangement or reasonable adjustment is to ensure, where possible, that barriers to assessment are removed for a disabled candidate, whilst maintaining the integrity of the assessment. Access arrangements are intended to reduce a substantial disadvantage caused by a disability, impairment or learning difficulty and must not unfairly advantage a candidate.

St Bede's Inter-Church School is committed to ensuring that disabled candidates are not placed at a substantial disadvantage in comparison with their peers and that access arrangements are implemented fairly, consistently and in accordance with the Equality Act 2010 and JCQ regulations.

The following principles apply:

- The integrity of the assessment is maintained whilst providing access to assessments for disabled candidates.
- Access arrangements will not be granted where they compromise the assessment objectives of the qualification.
- Access arrangements are considered on a subject-by-subject basis.
- Candidates must have appropriate opportunities to practise using their approved arrangements before their first examination.
- The SENDCo must ensure that any arrangement reflects need, normal way of working and does not unfairly advantage or disadvantage a candidate.

Criteria Used to Award a Word Processor

The normal way of working for candidates at St Bede's Inter-Church School is to handwrite examinations unless there is evidence demonstrating a need for a different arrangement.

A candidate may be awarded the use of a word processor where:

- it reflects their normal way of working;
- there is a firmly established need;
- without the arrangement they would be placed at a substantial disadvantage;
- they may already have an approved access arrangement such as a scribe or speech recognition technology

Evidence for Approval

Decisions regarding the use of a word processor may be informed by:

- evidence of normal way of working;
- classroom and internal assessment evidence;
- teacher feedback;
- SEND records;
- relevant assessment information;
- medical evidence where appropriate;
- evidence that the candidate would be substantially disadvantaged without access to a word processor.

Use of a laptop at home, a preference for typing, or the ability to type faster than handwriting will not, on their own, constitute sufficient evidence for the use of a word processor.

St Bede's Inter-Church School will:

- Allocate the use of a word processor with spelling, grammar and predictive text functions disabled where this is the candidate's normal way of working.
- Award the use of a word processor where appropriate to a candidate's needs.
- Only permit the use of a word processor where the integrity of the assessment can be maintained.
- Not grant a word processor where it compromises the assessment objectives being tested.
- Provide word processors for non-examination assessment components for candidates who require them unless prohibited by the specification.

Examples of candidates who may require a word processor include those with:

- a learning difficulty which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to write legibly;

- a medical condition;
- a physical disability or condition;
- a sensory impairment;
- planning and organisational difficulties when writing by hand where the quality of written expression significantly improves when using a word processor;
- persistent illegible handwriting which would place them at a disadvantage in an examination.
- The use of a word processor may also be considered following a temporary injury or impairment arising after the start of a course where appropriate evidence is available.

This list is not exhaustive.

We will not:

- Grant the use of a word processor simply because a candidate prefers typing to handwriting.
- Grant the use of a word processor solely because a candidate types more quickly than they handwrite.
- Grant the use of a word processor because a candidate uses a laptop at home.

Arrangements at the Time of Assessment

Where appropriate, candidates using a word processor may be accommodated:

- in the main examination venue, provided examination security and the integrity of the assessment can be maintained.
- or in a smaller examination room;

In compliance with JCQ regulations, St Bede's Inter-Church School:

- provides a word processor with spelling, grammar and predictive text disabled unless an awarding body permits otherwise;
- checks battery capacity before each examination;
- ensures candidates add centre number, candidate number and unit/component code to every page;
- ensures pages are numbered appropriately;
- reminds candidates to save work regularly or enables autosave functionality;
- instructs candidates to use a minimum font size of 12pt and double spacing.

Prior to each examination the centre will ensure that:

- the device complies with current JCQ regulations;

- internet access is disabled where required;
- unauthorised applications are inaccessible;
- cloud storage services are unavailable;
- examination security is maintained at all times.

Artificial Intelligence (AI)

The use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) during examinations is prohibited unless specifically permitted by the awarding body.

Prior to each examination, St Bede's Inter-Church School will ensure that:

- AI functions embedded within word processing software are disabled;
- AI functions embedded within the device operating system, including Microsoft Copilot, Apple Intelligence or equivalent tools, are disabled or inaccessible;
- AI-assisted writing features, paraphrasing tools, grammar correction tools, predictive content generation and writing assistants are disabled;
- internet-based AI tools and browser access are unavailable;
- AI cannot be accessed through software, operating systems, browsers, applications or network connections;
- examination devices have been checked and tested to ensure compliance with JCQ regulations.

Candidates will be informed that the use or attempted use of AI during an examination may constitute malpractice and could result in sanctions imposed by the awarding body

Security Requirements for Word Processors

The centre will ensure that the word processor:

- is used only in a way that produces work under secure examination conditions;
- is not used to perform skills being assessed;
- is in good working order;
- is positioned so that other candidates cannot view the work;
- is used as a typewriter and not as a database;
- is cleared of previously stored data;
- prevents access to unauthorised applications;
- prevents access to email, internet, social media and spreadsheets where not permitted;
- does not include graphics or CAD software unless authorised;

- does not include predictive text, spellcheck or grammar-check functions unless permitted and approved by JCQ regulations;
- does not include computer reader software unless approved as an access arrangement;
- does not include speech recognition technology unless approved as an access arrangement;
- is not used by a third party unless a scribe access arrangement has been approved.

Technical Failure and Contingency Arrangements

In the event of a technical failure during an examination:

- the candidate must immediately notify the invigilator;
- the invigilator will inform the Exams Officer;
- the centre will attempt to recover saved work through autosave or recovery systems;
- a replacement device will be provided where appropriate;
- time lost and actions taken will be recorded;
- an incident log will be completed and retained;
- where appropriate, an application for Special Consideration may be considered in line with JCQ regulations.

Portable Storage Media

The centre will ensure that any portable storage device:

- is supplied by the school;
- has been cleared of previous data;
- is used only where authorised.

Unauthorised memory sticks must not be used by candidates.

Printing Scripts

The centre will ensure that:

- scripts can be printed either directly or via an authorised storage medium;
- the candidate is present to verify that the printed work is their own;
- typed scripts are attached to any answer booklet containing handwritten responses;
- awarding body cover sheets are completed where required;
- candidates who need to add handwritten headers or footers are supervised throughout the process;

- candidates are not permitted to amend examination responses once examination time has ended.

Record Keeping

The centre will retain records in accordance with JCQ and school retention requirements, including:

- evidence of need;
- evidence of normal way of working;
- access arrangement decisions;
- supporting assessments and documentation;
- technical incident logs;
- relevant correspondence;
- electronic copies of scripts where retained.

Electronic copies will be stored securely and access restricted to authorised staff only.

Retention of Electronic Scripts

St Bede's Inter-Church School may retain electronic copies of typed examination scripts.

Where a printed copy is lost, an awarding body may accept the electronic version provided the centre can demonstrate that it has been stored securely. In such circumstances, the Head of Centre may be required to provide written confirmation to the awarding body.