Blackfen School for Girls

Examinations Policy
Use of a word processor in examinations and assessments

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Chair of Governors: Mr S Fitz-Gerald

	Date	Name	Signature
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Statutory statement
This statement reflects the school policy of Blackfen School for Girls to establish and maintain compliance with the UK Equality Act (2010). It ensures that the operation of the Examinations Office also maintains compliance with the UK Equality Act (2010) in respect of equality, diversity and inclusion; with regard to legislation, regulatory requirements and best practice.

Rationale
The purpose of the 'Examinations Policy: Use of a Word Processor in assessments and examinations' is to ensure the school's compliance with JCQ regulations and guidance contained in the publications *Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments* and *Instructions for conducting examinations*.

The use of word processors in this policy covers the use of computers, laptops and tablets.

Outcomes
No unnecessary barriers are present which deny access to examination candidates who could otherwise enter for examinations and achieve qualifications.

Procedures
The use of a word processor for candidates is only granted if it reflects the support given to the candidate as their 'normal way of working', which is defined as support:
- In the classroom
- Working in small groups for reading and/or writing
- Literacy support lessons
- Literacy intervention strategies
- In internal school tests and mock examinations

The only exception to this list is where an arrangement may need to be put in place as a consequence of a temporary injury or impairment at the time of an exam or assessment.

This means that a word processor is usually offered to candidates under the following circumstances (although this list is not exhaustive):
- A learning difficulty which has a substantial and long term adverse effect on the ability to write legibly
- A medical condition
- A physical disability
- A sensory impairment
- Planning and organisation problems when writing by hand
- Poor handwriting

The use of word processors is only permitted whilst ensuring that the integrity of the assessment is maintained, at the same time as providing access to assessments for a disabled candidate.

The use of a word processor is not granted where it will compromise the assessment objectives of the specification in question

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Prior to the assessment or examination in which a word processor is to be used, the Examinations Officers must liaise with the school's IT support team to make the following checks:

1. The word processor can be used only as a type-writer, not as a database and contains only standard formatting software.
2. The following actions have been taken to prepare the word processor for use in assessments or examinations:
a) The word processor has been cleared of any previously stored data, as must any portable storage medium used.
b) Where required, a memory stick is provided to the candidate, which is cleared of any previously stored data. An unauthorised memory stick must not be used by a candidate.
c) The word processor is in good working order at the time of the examination.
d) The word processor is accommodated in the examination room in such a way that other candidates are not disturbed and cannot read the screen. Where a candidate using a word processor is accommodated in another room, a separate invigilator is provided.
e) The word processor must either be connected to a printer so that a script can be printed off, or have the facility to print from a portable storage medium. This must be done after the examination is over. The candidate must be present to verify that the work printed is his or her own. Word processed scripts must be attached to any answer booklet which contains some of the answers.

During the assessment or examination in which a word processor is used, the Examinations Officers must verify that the word processor:

- Must be used to produce scripts under secure conditions, otherwise they may be refused.
- Must not be used to perform skills which are being assessed.
- Must not be connected to an intranet or any other means of communication.
- Must not give the candidate access to other applications such as a calculator (where prohibited in the examination), spreadsheets etc.
- Must not include graphic packages or computer aided design software unless permission has been given to use these.
- Must 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.
- Must not include speech recognition technology unless the candidate has permission to use a scribe or relevant software.
- Must not be used on the candidate's behalf by a third party unless the candidate has permission to use a scribe.

After the assessment or examination in which a word processor has been used, the Examinations Officers must take the following actions:

- A word processor cover sheet (Form 4) must be printed from the JCQ website and included with the candidate's typed script.

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Key roles

LT line manager - Examinations Team: To ensure that the Examinations Officers apply the Word Processing policy in line with JCQ and school expectations, communicating with the SENCO and designated staff, as well as with Faculty and Subject Leaders and with examination boards, as required, in a timely manner.

Faculty / Subject Leaders: To communicate promptly with the SENDCO and Examinations Officers regarding students who use word processors as part of their normal way of working, so that a request for a word processor in an assessment or examination is made with sufficient time for the checking and preparation procedures to be applied.

Teaching staff: To liaise promptly with Subject and Faculty Leaders to identify students who may need to use word processors as part of their normal way of working; to inform students who use word processors as their normal way of working that they will be able to use word processors in assessments and examinations, where the integrity of the examination is not compromised.

Students: To take responsibility for following lesson guidance from teachers on how to use word processors as part of their normal way of working in each subject and to practise their use in 'mock' assessment and examinations.

Parents/Carers: To communicate concerns or queries about the use of word processors as a student's normal way of working promptly to the lesson teacher, Subject or Faculty Leader or SENDCO and to follow the advice provided.