ExamWritePad underperforming or locking up after so many minutes of use?

Last Modified on Monday, 07-Jul-2025 10:10:36 BST

There are factors that will limit ExamWritePad's performance. These vary from computer to computer, and also how you have setup the computer and locked it down in your environment.

The most common factors that may affect performance are:

- Not enough physical RAM
- Low hard disk storage
- Group policies that are too restrictive to the efficient running of the core operating system or applied to the user
- Background applications
- Anti-Virus Software (mainly on-access/on-demand/real-time scanning)

So please use the check list above as your basic guide to making sure you have setup the computer ready for ExamWritePad to run at its optimal performance.

Our recommendations are:

- If you are just using the document facility of ExamWritePad then 8GB RAM is more than adequate, but if you intend to use the PDF Viewer, it is advisable to use a computer with 16GB RAM to cope with number of PDF page and the screen size you are viewing at (larger the screen resolution multiplied by the higher number of pages = more RAM) for example, a 1920x1080 resolution, with a 30 page PDF will consume around 2.5GB RAM whereas a 4K resolution will consume 4GB RAM.
- Use a SSD or NVMe disk (for best performance) and a minimum 120GB total size.
- Having the right amount of set Group Policies for the computer and the user is a tight balance and the only real advice we can give is to thoroughly test it and keep on testing it until you are happy it can sustain an exam of around 3 or 4 hours long.
- Remove as many unnecessary applications from running on computer start-up and when the user logins in.
- Finally, and probably one of the most important that can have a negative outcome on performance is your Anti-Virus software. We strongly advise to add the following folder path below to your exception list so that it doesn't scan on-demand or on-access or real-time, whatever the terminology is used.

Let's use ESET Endpoint Security as an example, from within yout ESET console/website go to:

Policies --> {find your policy that targets your exam PC's} --> Edit --> Settings --> Detection Engine --> Exclusions --> Performance Exclusions --> Edit --> Add

Now add the following path below:

C:\Program Files\ExamWritePad*   (or what ever your installation folder path is)

C:\ProgramData\ExamWritePad*   (This is where the default backup files go, also the debug log file and the USB monitoring screenshots)

PLEASE NOTE: the * meaning all files and sub folder, so make sure you know what your equivalent is for your AV software.