

Access arrangements policy

2017/18

This policy is reviewed annually to ensure compliance with current regulations

Approved/reviewed by

Date of next review

Key staff involved in the access arrangements process

Role	Name(s)
SENCo	Tracey Davison
SENCo line manager (Senior Leader)	Lauren Phillips
Head of centre	Mark Allchorn
Assessor(s)	Sheila Chesterton
Access arrangement facilitator(s)	Becky Fenson

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What are access arrangements and reasonable adjustments?

Access arrangements

“Access arrangements are agreed before an assessment. They allow candidates with special educational needs, disabilities or temporary injuries to access the assessment and show what they know and can do without changing the demands of the assessment. The intention behind an access arrangement is to meet the particular needs of an individual candidate without affecting the integrity of the assessment. Access arrangements are the principal way in which awarding bodies comply with the duty under the Equality Act 2010* to make ‘reasonable adjustments’.” [AA Definitions, page 3]

Reasonable adjustments

“The Equality Act 2010 requires an Awarding Body to make reasonable adjustments where a disabled person would be at a substantial disadvantage in undertaking an assessment.

A reasonable adjustment for a particular person may be unique to that individual and may not be included in the list of available Access Arrangements.

How reasonable the adjustment is will depend on a number of factors including the needs of the disabled candidate/learner. An adjustment may not be considered reasonable if it involves unreasonable costs, timeframes or affects the security or integrity of the assessment.

There is no duty on the Awarding Bodies to make any adjustment to the assessment objectives being tested in an assessment.” [AA Definitions, page 3]

Purpose of the policy

The purpose of this policy is to confirm that [insert centre name] complies with its “...obligation to identify the need for, request and implement access arrangements...”

[JCO General Regulations for Approved Centres, 5.5]

This publication is further referred to in this policy as [GR](#).

The policy is annually reviewed to ensure that arrangements are carried out in accordance with the current edition of the JCO publication **Adjustments for candidates with disabilities and learning difficulties Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments’**.

This publication is further referred to in this policy as [AA](#).

Disability policy (exams)

A large part of the access arrangements policy is covered in the Disability policy (exams) which covers staff roles and responsibilities in identifying the need for, requesting and implementing access arrangements and the conduct of exams.

The Disability Policy is located on the Schools shared drive within L:\Staff\Policies
“A **written** disability policy setting out how the centre seeks to comply with the Equality Act 2010† and fully supporting disabled candidates **must** be available for inspection purposes.

for any legislation in a relevant jurisdiction other than England and Wales which has an equivalent purpose and effect” [GR 5.4]

The access arrangements policy further covers the assessment process and related issues in more detail.

The assessment process

Assessments are carried out by an assessor(s) appointed by the head of centre. The assessor(s) is (are) appropriately qualified as required by JCQ regulations in AA 7.3.

The qualification(s) of the current assessor(s)

Sheila Chesterton - SpLD Diploma Level 7 Cert No A2330672/040159

Checking the qualification(s) of the assessor(s)

The Schools HR Officer checks all required qualifications.
“Evidence of the assessor’s qualification(s) must be held on file for inspection purposes and be presented to the JCQ Centre Inspector by the SENCo.”
[AA 7.3]

How the assessment process is administered

A detailed history of need is collected from Primary school for each student. At the start of year 7, all students are assessed in literacy to determine the level of support that is appropriate and required for each individual.

In year 9 all students are assessed for access arrangements in a whole year group screening by our fully qualified SpLD Assessor. Those students who demonstrate persistent difficulties are individually assessed and the most appropriate support is applied for from the awarding bodies. The student’s normal way of working is reflected in the Access Arrangement which has been put in place.

Our SpLD Assessor attends an annual up-date of her qualification to ensure compliance with any changes to the JCQ regulations ensuring that the assessment process is administered correctly.

Form 8’s are completed, signed and dated by hand, by our fully qualified Specialist Assessor.

Once the form 8 is completed the candidate has an individual meeting with the Specialist Assessor to explain the application process, what information about them will be shared and with whom and the law regarding Data Protection. The student is asked to complete a Data Protection Notice and a letter is sent home to explain to parent/carers the nature of the changes that have been made.

[GR 5.5]

Note for private candidates the centre must
“...undertake the necessary and appropriate steps to gather an appropriate picture of need and demonstrate normal way of working for a private candidate. This includes distance

learners and home educated students. The centre, where required, **must lead on the assessment process.** The candidate **must be assessed by the centre's appointed assessor.** In some instances, depending on his/her needs, the candidate may have to be assessed away from the centre, for example at home...” [GR 5.4]

Recording evidence of need

All assessment evidence is retained and kept on individual files for each student who have Access Arrangements in place. All tests used are approved by the awarding body and marked against Standardised Scores. All tests and scoring are administered by Our fully qualified Specialist Assessor.

Information regarding scores is recorded on the JCQ form 8 by the Specialist Assessor.

Note

“Completing Form 8 – JCQ/AA/LD, Profile of Learning Difficulties...

Only Form 8 is acceptable. Spreadsheets, e-mail messages, centre devised equivalents of Form 8, educational psychologists' reports and other reports are not acceptable for inspection purposes...”

[AA 7.6]

“A privately commissioned assessment carried out without prior consultation with the centre cannot be used to award access arrangements and cannot be used to process an application using Access arrangements online.

The SENCo must complete at least a 'skeleton' Section A of Form 8 prior to the candidate being assessed (Section C of Form 8)... Where a privately commissioned report, or a report from an external professional, is rejected by a centre, the head of centre or a member of the senior leadership team should provide a written rationale supporting their decision to the parent/carer.

[AA 7.3]

Gathering evidence to demonstrate normal way of working

Teachers and support staff are asked to make individual comments with regard to those students who have been identified as having specific difficulties. They are asked to respond to the questions:

How has this student's difficulty impacted on teaching and learning in the classroom?

What support is regularly provided for this student?

Staff are also asked to provide evidence of examples such as unfinished timed tests or handwriting samples which are kept on file.

Information collected in Year 7 and a record of the support that was put in place such as, in class support, small group or one to one support are kept on file.

Information regarding students specific circumstances or learning difficulties are kept on file along with reports from outside agencies, parents or students own concerns.

Those students who have been awarded an Access Arrangement will routinely be given that provision in the classroom as their normal way of working. The support given in the centre reflects the arrangement put in place for the examination series.

All background information, support and or interventions are recorded in Section A of form 8.

“The arrangement(s) put in place must reflect the support given to the candidate in the centre†, for example:

- *in the classroom (where appropriate);*
- *working in small groups for reading and/or writing;*
- *literacy support lessons;*
- *literacy intervention strategies;*
- *in internal school tests/examinations;*
- *mock examinations.*

This is commonly referred to as ‘normal way of working’. For candidates with learning difficulties this is typically the background information recorded within Section A of Form 8 by the SENCo or the assessor working within the centre.

SENcos and assessors must refer to section 7.6.1, page 87, for information on how to confirm ‘normal way of working’. †The only exception to this is where an arrangement is put in place as a consequence of a temporary injury or impairment ...”

[AA 4.2]

Processing access arrangements

Arrangements requiring awarding body approval

Access arrangements online (AAO) is a tool provided by JCQ member awarding bodies for centres to apply for required access arrangement approval for the qualifications listed on page 2 of AA. This tool also provides the facility to order modified papers for those qualifications listed on page 74.

AAO is accessed by logging in to any of the awarding body secure extranet sites. A single application is required for each candidate regardless of the awarding body used.

The Specialist Assessor retains all original test papers, work samples and other supporting evidence along with a copy of the form and correspondence with parents/carers/outside agencies.

Centre-delegated access arrangements

Centre-delegated access arrangements such as considered seating or use of a word processor are entered onto the Centre Delegated Access Arrangement Form by the Specialist Assessor. Parents/Carers are advised of the arrangements put in place and

SIMS is updated to reflect this to assist the Exams Officer & Invigilation team in ensuring these arrangements are fulfilled.

Centre-specific criteria for particular access arrangements

Word processor policy (exams)

An exam candidate may be approved the use of a word processor where this is appropriate to the candidate's needs and not simply because this is the candidate's preferred way of working within the centre.

The Word processor policy is located on the Schools shared drive within L:\Staff\Policies

"It is strongly recommended that a centre has a policy on the use of word processors which it can articulate to parents/carers. Principally, that a word processor cannot simply be granted to a candidate because he/she now wants to type rather than write or can work faster on a keyboard, or because he/she uses a laptop at home.

The use of a word processor must reflect the candidate's normal way of working within the centre and be appropriate to the candidate's needs...

A member of the centre's senior leadership team must produce a statement for inspection purposes which details the criteria the centre uses to award and allocate word processors for examinations."

[AA 5.8]

Separate invigilation within the centre

A decision where an exam candidate may be approved separate invigilation within the centre will be made by the SENCo.

The decision will be based on

"whether the candidate has a substantial and long term impairment which has an adverse effect and the candidate's normal way of working within the centre."

[AA 5.16]