



## Appendix 9 – Access Arrangements 2021/22

---

Next review: Autumn 2022

## Contents

Appendix 9 – Access Arrangements 2021/22 .....	1
Key staff involved in the policy.....	2
What are access arrangements and reasonable adjustments?.....	3
Access arrangements.....	3
Reasonable adjustments .....	3
Purpose of the policy .....	3
General principles .....	4
Equalities Policy (Exams).....	4
The assessment process.....	4
The qualification(s) of the current assessor(s).....	4
Appointment of assessors of candidates with learning difficulties .....	4
Process for the assessment of a candidate’s learning difficulties by an assessor .....	5
Painting a ‘holistic picture of need’, confirming normal way of working.....	5
Processing access arrangements and adjustments.....	6
Arrangements/adjustments requiring awarding body approval.....	6
Centre-delegated arrangements/adjustments.....	6
Centre-specific criteria for particular arrangements/adjustments.....	7
Word Processor Policy (Exams).....	7
Separate Invigilation Policy.....	7

## Key staff involved in the policy

Role	Name(s)
ALS lead/SENCo	Mrs C Long
ALS lead/SENCo line manager (Senior leader)	Mrs J Napper
Head of centre	Mrs J Napper
Assessor(s)	Mrs M Watkins
Access arrangement facilitator(s)	Invigilators

## What are access arrangements and reasonable adjustments?

### Access arrangements

Access arrangements are agreed **before** an assessment. They allow candidates with **specific needs**, such as 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 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](#))

### Reasonable adjustments

The Equality Act 2010\* requires an awarding body to make reasonable adjustments where a candidate, who is disabled within the meaning of the Equality Act 2010, would be at a **substantial disadvantage** in comparison to someone who is not disabled. The awarding body is required to take reasonable steps to overcome that disadvantage. An example would be a Braille paper which would be a reasonable adjustment for a vision impaired candidate who could read Braille. A reasonable adjustment may be unique to that individual and may not be included in the list of available access arrangements. Whether an adjustment will be considered reasonable will depend on several factors which will include, but are not limited to:

- the needs of the disabled candidate;
- the effectiveness of the adjustment;
- the cost of the adjustment; **and**
- the likely impact of the adjustment upon the candidate and other candidates.

An adjustment will not be approved if it:

- involves unreasonable costs to the awarding body;
- involves unreasonable timeframes; **or**
- affects the security and integrity of the assessment.

This is because the adjustment is not 'reasonable'. ([AA Definitions](#))

\*References to legislation are to the Equality Act 2010. Separate legislation is in place for Northern Ireland (see [AA 1.8](#)). The definitions and procedures in [AA](#) relating to access arrangements and reasonable adjustments will also apply in Northern Ireland

## Purpose of the policy

The purpose of this policy is to confirm that Westborough High School has a written record which clearly shows the centre is leading on the access arrangements process and is complying with its ...obligation to identify the need for, request and implement access arrangements...

(General Regulations for Approved Centres, section 5.4)

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

This policy is maintained and held by the ALS lead/SENCo alongside the individual files/e-folders of each access arrangements candidate. Each file/e-folder contains detailed records of all the essential information that is required to be held according to the regulations.

Where the SENCo is storing documentation electronically he/she **must** create an e-folder for each individual candidate. The candidate's e-folder must hold each of the required documents for inspection. ([AA 4.2](#))

The policy is annually reviewed to ensure that processes are carried out in accordance with the current edition of the JCQ 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](#)

## General principles

The principles for the centre to consider are detailed in [AA](#) (section 4.2). These include:

The purpose of an access arrangement/reasonable adjustment is to ensure, where possible, that barriers to assessment are removed for a disabled candidate preventing him/her from being placed at a substantial disadvantage due to persistent and significant difficulties. The integrity of the assessment is maintained, whilst at the same time providing access to assessments for disabled candidate.

The SENCo, or an equivalent member of staff within a FE college, **must** ensure that the proposed access arrangement/reasonable adjustment does not unfairly disadvantage or advantage the candidate.

Access arrangements/reasonable adjustments should be processed at the **start** of the course.

Arrangements **must** always be approved **before** an examination or assessment.

The arrangement(s) put in place must reflect the support given to the candidate in the centre.

The candidate **must** have had appropriate opportunities to practise using the access arrangement(s)/reasonable adjustment(s) before his/her first examination.

## Equalities Policy (Exams)

A large part of the access arrangements/reasonable adjustments process is covered in the Equalities Policy (Exams) which covers staff roles and responsibilities in identifying the need for, requesting and implementing access arrangements and the conduct of exams.

The Equalities Policy can be found in Appendix 5.

**The head of centre/senior leadership team will...** recognise its duties towards disabled candidates, ensuring compliance with all aspects of the Equality Act 2010<sup>†</sup>, particularly Section 20 (7). This **must** include a duty to explore and provide access to suitable courses, through the access arrangements process submit applications for reasonable adjustments and make reasonable adjustments to the service the centre provides to disabled candidates. Where the centre is under a duty to make a reasonable adjustment, the centre **must not** charge a disabled candidate any additional fee in relation to the adjustment or aid...

<sup>†</sup>or any legislation in a relevant jurisdiction other than England and Wales which has an equivalent purpose and effect ([GR](#) section 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](#), section 7.3.

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

Melanie Watkins

### Appointment of assessors of candidates with learning difficulties

At the point an assessor is engaged/employed in the centre, evidence of the assessor's qualification is obtained and checked against the current requirements in [AA](#). This process is carried out prior to the assessor undertaking any assessment of a candidate.

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

The assessor is an external assessor who has an established working relationship with the centre. They hold an appropriate qualification to teach and make recommendations for

secondary aged or adult learners who have learning difficulties and is HCPC registered. (AA 7.3.4)

Westborough holds on file for inspection purposes evidence that the assessor(s) is suitably qualified, and the name is entered into Access arrangements online to confirm their status. (AA 7.4)

### **Reporting the appointment of the assessor(s)**

The evidence that the assessor(s) is/are suitably qualified is held by the ALS lead/SENCo.

Westborough holds on file for inspection purposes evidence that the assessor(s) is suitably qualified, and the name is entered into Access arrangements online to confirm their status. (AA 7.4)

### **Process for the assessment of a candidate's learning difficulties by an assessor**

[AA 7.5](#) (Guidelines for the assessment of the candidate's learning difficulties by an assessor)

Before the candidate's assessment, the SENCo provides the assessor with background information, i.e. a picture of need has been painted as required in Part 1 of Form 8. The SENCo and the assessor work together to ensure a joined-up and consistent process.

The assessor contacts the centre and asks for evidence of the candidate's normal way of working and relevant background information.

The assessor carries out tests which are relevant to support the application, using the most current editions of nationally standardised tests. Standardised scores are reported on part 2 of Form 8.

AA 7.6 (Completing Form 8 – JCQ/AA/LD, Profile of Learning Difficulties)

The correct procedures are followed as in Chapter 7 of the JCQ publication Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments.

### **Painting a 'holistic picture of need', confirming normal way of working**

[AA 7.5](#) (Guidelines for the assessment of the candidate's learning difficulties by an assessor) and [7.6](#) (Completing Form 8 – JCQ/AA/LD, Profile of Learning Difficulties)

Part 1 of Form 8 is a pen portrait of the candidate's needs and firstly filled out using the online version. It allows the SENCo to 'paint a holistic picture of need', confirming normal way of working bringing together (this is done no earlier than year 9):

- if known, arrangements made for Key Stage 2 tests;
- comments and observations from teaching staff and support staff (i.e. Learning Support Assistants, Teaching Assistants and Communication Support Workers);
- intervention strategies (e.g. individual education/learning plans) in place for the candidate;
- pupil premium indicators;
- screening test results;
- use of baseline data;
- information about any differentiation in the classroom;
- normal way of working in the classroom (where appropriate);

- arrangements made for end of year internal school examinations/mock examinations.

If very little information is available, a selection from the following is used by the SENCo to paint a picture of need within Part 1 of Form 8, for example:

- screening test results;
- the candidate's self-reported difficulties;
- comments and observations from teaching staff and support staff (i.e. Learning Support Assistants, Teaching Assistants and Communication Support Workers) who have noted the candidate's difficulties;
- comments in school reports and/or pupil tracking data;
- information relayed by telephone, with notes taken, or a photocopy of Form 8, where a candidate has moved schools.

Part 3 of Form 8 is completed by the SENCo once the assessor has completed their testing and confirmed that the candidate has an impairment which substantially affects their performance.

Part 3 of Form 8 must make recommendations for access arrangements/ adjustments taking into account:

- the information from the assessment (Part 2 of Form 8);
- the requirements of the specifications; and
- the candidate's normal way of working in the centre (Part 1 of Form 8).

## Processing access arrangements and adjustments

### Arrangements/adjustments 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 covered by the tool. This tool also provides the facility to order modified papers for those qualifications included. (Refer to AA, chapter 8 (Processing applications for access arrangements and adjustments) and chapter 6 (Modified papers)).

AAO is accessed within the JCQ Centre Admin Portal (CAP) by logging in to one of the awarding body secure extranet sites. A single application for approval is required for each candidate regardless of the awarding body used.

This information is kept by the SENCo

The SENCo keeps detailed records, both electronically and in hard copy paper format, of all the essential information on file. This includes a copy of the candidate's approved application, appropriate evidence of need (where required) **and** a signed candidate personal data consent form for inspection by the JCQ Centre Inspection Service. (AA 8.6)

### Centre-delegated arrangements/adjustments

The following arrangements do not need to be processed online:

- Amplification equipment
- Bilingual dictionary
- Braille transcript
- Braille
- Closed Circuit Television (CCTV)
- Colour naming by the invigilator for candidates who are colour blind
- Coloured overlays

- Communication Professional (for candidates using Sign Language)
- Examination on coloured/enlarged paper
- Live speaker for pre-recorded examination components
- Low vision aid/magnifier
- Optical Character Reader (OCR) scanners
- Prompter
- Read aloud (which can include an examination reading pen)
- Separate invigilation within the centre
- Supervised rest breaks
- Word processor

The SENCo must make their decision 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.

This is recorded in the exam access file as part of the skeleton outline of a candidates needs.

## Centre-specific criteria for particular arrangements/adjustments

### 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 the candidate now wants to type rather than write in exams or can work faster on a keyboard, or because they use a laptop at home. The use of a word processor must reflect the candidate's normal way of working within the centre.

This policy can be found in Appendix 10.

A centre **must** have a policy on the use of word processors... 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 Policy

A decision where an exam candidate may be approved separate invigilation within the centre will be made by the ALS lead/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)

Candidates' difficulties **must** be established within the centre and known to the Form Teacher, Year Leader or the SENCo. Separate invigilation **will** reflect the candidate's **normal** way of working in internal assessments and mock examinations as a consequence of **long-term** social, mental or emotional needs. Separate invigilation **will not** be allocated for candidates suffering with exam anxiety.

For example, in the case of separate invigilation, the candidate's difficulties are **established within the centre** (see Chapter 4, paragraph 4.1.4) and known to a Form Tutor, a Head of Year, the SENCo or a senior member of staff with pastoral responsibilities.

Separate invigilation reflects the candidate's normal way of working in internal school tests and mock examinations as a consequence of a **long-term** medical condition or **long-term** social, emotional and mental health needs. (AA 5.16)