

# Access Arrangements Procedure

## 2020/21

This policy is reviewed annually to ensure compliance with current regulations

Approved/reviewed by	
Kate Temple	
Date of next review	September 2021

### Key staff involved in the policy

<b>Role</b>	<b>Name(s)</b>
SENCo	<b>Kate Temple</b>
SENCo line manager (Senior leader)	<b>Leigh Parry</b>
Head of centre	<b>Clare Hatto</b>
Exams Officer	<b>Carly Kyle</b>
Access arrangement facilitator(s)	<b>Kate Temple</b>

## Contents

Key staff involved in the policy .....	1
What are access arrangements and reasonable adjustments? .....	4
Access arrangements .....	4
Reasonable adjustments .....	4
Purpose of the procedure .....	4
General principles .....	4
Equalities Policy (Exams) .....	5
The assessment process .....	5
The qualification(s) of the current assessor(s) .....	5
Appointment of assessors of candidates with learning difficulties .....	5
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 .....	6
Processing access arrangements .....	6
Arrangements requiring awarding body approval .....	6
Centre-delegated access arrangements .....	6
Centre-specific criteria for particular access arrangements .....	6
Word Processor Policy (Exams) .....	6
Separate Invigilation Policy .....	7

## What are access arrangements and reasonable adjustments?

### Access arrangements

AA (Definitions, page 3) state... **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'.

### Reasonable adjustments

AA (Definitions, page 3) state... 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'.

### Purpose of the procedure

The purpose of this procedure is to confirm that Aldercar 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...

[JCQ General Regulations for Approved Centres, (section 5.4)]

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

This procedure is maintained and held by the 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 access arrangements 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 procedure 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 general principles of access arrangements for the centre to consider are detailed in [AA](#) (section 4.2). These include:

The purpose of an access arrangement 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 a disabled candidate.

The SENCo must ensure that the proposed access arrangement does not disadvantage or advantage the candidate.

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) before his/her first examination.

## Equalities Policy (Exams)

A large part of the access arrangements 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 (Exams) is attached to this document.

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)

Aldercar High School currently uses an external Access Arrangements assessor. The assessor will always hold a relevant Level 7 qualification.

## 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)

At Aldercar High School, the SENCO, Exams Officer and Head of Centre will check the assessor's qualifications. This will be done by asking to see certificates from an appropriate and recognised Level 7 qualification. This will be done at the point of engagement/ employment and prior to the assessor undertaking and assessment of candidates.

Evidence of the assessor's qualification(s) will be held on file for inspection purposes and will be presented to the JCQ Centre Inspector by the SENCo.

## Reporting the appointment of the assessor(s)

The SENCo will hold on file the evidence of the assessor's qualification(s). The name of the external assessor will be entered onto Access Arrangements online.

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

Prior to any student being assessed, the SENCo will enter into a joined-up and consistent process of working with the assessor. The SENCo will provide background information to the assessor painting a "picture of need" and Part 1 of as Form 8 will be completed.

The assessor will then conduct an assessment based on the information provided by the SENCo.

"The assessor is required to establish if the results of tests in literacy and/ or cognitive abilities present evidence that the candidate has an impairment which substantially affects their performance". AA 7.5.4

Where a parent/ carer/ candidate requests an assessment from an independent assessor, the assessor must contact the SENCo first and ask for evidence of the candidate's normal way of working. The responsibility to request access arrangements specifically lies with the SENCo.

Any assessor must carry out tests which are relevant and which give a standardised score.

The SENCo will ensure that all tests are carried out in a suitable space that is quiet.

The SENCo will ensure that arrangements are in place for assessing students who may be private candidates, such as distance learners or those who are home educated. The centre assessor will assess the candidate. In some cases, the assessments will need to take place away from the centre, for example, at home.

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

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

An independent assessor must contact the centre and ask for evidence of the candidate's normal way of working and relevant background information. This must take place before the candidate is assessed.

All candidates must be assessed in light of the picture of need and the background information as detailed within Part 1 of Form 8.

An independent assessor must discuss access arrangements with the SENCo. The responsibility to request access arrangements specifically lies with the SENCo. (AA 7.5)

Class teachers will be asked for their feedback to support the candidate's normal way of working.

### 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 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 (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.

The SENCO will process applications for Access Arrangements on AAO with the support of the Exams Officer. The JCQ regulations will be used in conjunction with AAO.

The SENCo must keep detailed records, whether electronically or 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)

Where a student has a late diagnosis of a disability, late manifestation of an impairment or a temporary injury/ impairment, the SENCO will process an application through AAO for relevant access Arrangements. Appropriate documentation will be held on file to support any application.

Where an application does not gain approval, the SENCO will refer to the relevant awarding bodies.

#### Centre-delegated access arrangements

Centre delegated arrangements, such as the use of a reader, supervised rest breaks or a prompter will be determined in discussion with the SENCO/ Exams Officer and supported by evidence of a normal way of working from teaching staff. Where relevant, this will also be supported by evidence from outside agencies such as CAMHS.

### 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 policy for the use of Word Processors is attached to this document.

### Separate Invigilation Policy

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)

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 Pastoral Lead, 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, mental or emotional needs. (AA 5.16)