

The Heathland School

A Mathematics and Science College



Access Arrangement Policy	2022 – 2023
Person(s) Responsible:	Headteacher, Deputy Head Curriculum, SENCo
Status:	Statutory
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Review Period:	As and when required

Key staff involved in the Access arrangement process

Role	Name(s)
ALS lead/SENCo	Ms C Muiyah
ALS lead/SENCo line manager (Senior leader)	Ms E Turner
Head of centre	Mr J M Rose
Assessor(s)	Miss E Chahal-Ferguson
Access arrangement facilitator(s)	Miss K Kundi

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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'. (1AA, 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'. (1AA, 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 The Heathland 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's **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 **ALS lead/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. (1AA, section 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 school Equalities Policy (Exams) is available electronically via the staff portal under Examinations/Polices

The head of centre/senior leadership team will... recognise its duties towards disabled candidates, **including private candidates**, ensuring compliance with all aspects of the Equality Act 2010[†], 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...

[†]for 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)

- Understanding the Principles of Psychometric Testing Accessing for Access Arrangements
- **Mrs Elleisha Chahal-Ferguson:** SFJ Awards Level 7 Organisation Postgraduate Award of Proficiency In Assessment for Access arrangements (PAPAA)
- **Ms Ceceliah Muyah:** NASENCo, CPT3A

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 head of centre/senior leadership team will at the time of appointment check the qualification of assessing candidates and hold a copy on file. ([GR](#), [section 5.4](#)) ([AA](#), [section 7.3](#))

Reporting the appointment of the assessor(s)

Senco and Examination Officer holds:

- Copy of 'Understanding the principles of Psychometric Testing / Assessing for Access Arrangement' Certificate - Certificate no.648210
- SFJ Awards Level 7 Organisation Postgraduate Award of Proficiency in Assessment for Access arrangement (PAPAA) Certificate no. 648210
- Copy of CPT3A - Certificate no.001043

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

SENcos and assessors working within the centre always make sure that the correct procedures are followed as in Chapter 7 of the JCQ publication *Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments...*

([GR](#), section 5.4)

The SENCo will paint a picture of need over a significant period. This consideration will include the following, but not exclusively:

- Pupils on the SEND register who receive interventions for their needs
- Historical data from KS2 where applicable
- Recommendations from professionals
- Referrals from subject teachers
- Test scores from assessments for access arrangements
- Internal tests and exam attainment results
- Parental concerns

Picture of need/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 required in Part 1 of Form 8. The SENCo and the assessor **must** work together to ensure a joined-up and consistent process.

Painting a 'holistic picture of need' and gathering evidence to demonstrate normal way of working could include the following examples of how access arrangements become normal practice in the classroom and in assessments:

- Working in small groups for reading and/or for writing
- Literacy and numeracy support lessons
- In class additional adult support
- Use of assistive technology
- Touch type programmes
- Support in internal test and examinations

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.

The Heathland School Examination Officer and Assistant Examinations Officer process the application online, once a copy of the tests/EHCP and a fully completed Form 8 signed and dated is received from the SENCO/Assessor, also a Data protection form has been completed by the student.

Paper copy are all documents, plus copy of online approval are kept in a file in the Exams office. ([AA](#), [section 8.6](#))

Note the change to the (AAO) Candidate **Personal data consent form** and the requirement for completion of the **Data protection confirmation by the examinations officer or SENCo**, prior to the processing of the online application, which must be retained for 26 months from the date of the online application being approved.

Cases that do not gain approval, are referred to the awarding body

Modified papers are applied for before the deadline.

Arrangements for a late diagnosis of a disability or late manifestation of an impairment may be processed as the need arises. However, evidence of need will still be required to the same standard as if it was an application being processed by the published deadline. Please see the definition of evidence of need within the Definitions section and the relevant section(s) of Chapter 5 for full details as to what constitutes the core evidence/evidence of need for each arrangement. It is important that the appropriate evidence is produced and processed with the application. Appropriate documentation (where required), as per Chapter 5, must be held on file to support the arrangement(s) processed and be available for inspection.

Access arrangements online must also be used for those qualifications listed within the Deadlines section, for candidates with a temporary injury or temporary impairment, such as a broken arm. These arrangements can be processed as the need arises. Appropriate documentation (where required) must be held on file to support any temporary access arrangement made.

Centre-delegated arrangements/adjustments

The following arrangements do not need to be processed online, however the arrangement must be approved by the SENCo and Examinations Officer. A statement on headed paper must be kept on file for JCQ Inspection:

- 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

- Fidget toys and stress balls
- Live speaker for pre-recorded examination components
- Low vision aid/magnifier
- Non-electronic ear defenders/ear plugs
- Optical Character Reader (OCR) scanners
- Prompter
- Read aloud (which can include an examination reading pen)
- Separate invigilation within the centre (sitting the examination outside of the main examination hall/room, e.g. a room for a smaller group of candidates)
- Squared paper for visual spatial difficulties
- Supervised rest breaks
- Word processor

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.

The school Word Processor Policy is available electronically via the staff portal under Examinations/Polices.

A member of the centre's senior leadership team must produce a word processor policy, specific to the centre, which details the criteria the centre uses to award and allocate word processors for examinations and assessments. This policy must be available for inspection. (AA, section 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, section 5.16)

The school Separate Room Policy is available electronically via the staff portal under Examinations/Polices.

In the case of separate invigilation, the candidate's **disability is established within the centre** (see Chapter 4, paragraph 4.1.4). It is known to a Form Tutor, a Head of Year, the SENCo or a senior member of staff with pastoral responsibilities. **For example, a long-term medical condition which has a substantial and adverse effect.**

Separate invigilation must reflect the candidate's normal and current way of working in internal school tests and mock examinations.

Nervousness, low level anxiety or being worried about examinations is not sufficient grounds for separate invigilation within the centre. (AA, section 5.16)