



# Access Arrangements Policy

This policy is reviewed annually to ensure compliance with current regulations.

Approved/reviewed by	
Miss C Brooks	
Date of next review	06/12/24

Key staff involved in the policy:

Role	Name(s)
Head of centre	Mrs C L Jones
Exams officer	Miss C. Brooks
SENCo	Mrs J Hartley
IT manager	Mr D Brewer
Data manager	Mr D Brewer



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 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 7]

## 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 a number of 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’.*

*The centre must ensure that approved adjustments can be delivered to candidates.*

*In most cases it will not be reasonable for adjustments to be made to assessment objectives within a qualification. To do so would likely undermine the effectiveness of the qualification in providing a reliable indication of the knowledge, skills and understanding of the candidate. There is no duty to make adjustments which the qualifications regulators have specified should not be made. As set out in Chapter 2, there is no duty to make adjustments to competence standards within vocational qualifications. (See Chapter 3 for information on assessment objectives and Chapter 1, sections 1.6 and 1.8 for the list of general qualifications covered by equality legislation in England, Wales and Northern Ireland.)*

[AA Definitions, page 7]

## Purpose of the policy

The purpose of this policy is to confirm that Kirkstone House 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, 5.5]

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



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

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](#)

## Disability policy (exams)

A large part of the access arrangements process 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 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.

### 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 school will check the assessor's eligibility according to the whole school policy for employment.

Certificates of qualification are to be found in the examinations policy folder.

*"The head of centre/senior leadership team will...have a written process in place to not only check the qualification(s) of their assessor(s) but that the correct procedures are followed as in Chapter 7 of the JCQ publication Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments..."* [\[GR 5.4\]](#)

*"The Head of Centre must ensure that evidence of the assessor's qualification(s) is obtained at the point of engagement/employment and prior to the assessor undertaking any assessment of a candidate.*

*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."* [\[AA 7.3\]](#)



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

*"The SENCo must arrange for the candidate to be assessed by the centre's appointed assessor.*

*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.*

*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.*

*Assessors must personally conduct the assessments. They must not sign off assessments carried out by another professional.*

*The assessor must carry out tests which are relevant to support the application.*

*Current editions of nationally standardised tests which produce standardised scores must be used, where published.*

*The candidate's chronological age must be less than the 'ceiling' of the test, unless there is no published test for the candidate's age.*

*Results must be given as standardised scores which use a mean of 100 and a standard deviation of 15. (These are standard scores.) Standardised scores of 84 or less are described as 'below average'. Standardised scores of 85-89 are described as 'low average'. Test results for Part 2 of Form 8 must not be reported as percentiles, scaled scores, T-scores or age-equivalent scores. Such scores must be converted into standard scores."*

[\[AA 7.5\]](#)

### Picture of need/normal way of working

All teaching staff will provide evidence to the Senco to paint a picture of need. This would include photocopied front pages of internal tests and exams where an access arrangement has been implemented. This would include written confirmation that a reader/scribe or extra time has been used.

Additionally, forms will be completed by staff detailing how the access arrangement has been used as a normal way of working in lessons.

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.

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. Additionally, the independent assessor **must** be approved by the head of centre to assess the candidate.

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/reasonable adjustments with the SENCo.

The responsibility to determine and request appropriate and practicable access arrangements/reasonable adjustments specifically lies with the SENCo.



Assessor's and the SENCo must make full reference to AA, sections 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) and record the process that reflects the requirements. [AA 7.5]

## 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 95 of [AA](#). This tool also provides the facility to order modified papers for those qualifications listed on page 76.

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 exams officer and Senco will ensure that all applications meet the deadline for each exam series. The Senco will make the application and the printed information or an electronic version will be stored in the designated access arrangements file.

Applications for modified papers according to the access arrangement will be made within allowed timescales.

*"The SENCo must keep detailed records, whether electronically or in hard copy paper format, of all the essential information on file. This includes the following:*

- *a signed candidate personal data consent form;*
- *a completed Data protection confirmation by the examinations officer or SENCo form;*
- *a copy of the candidate's approved application;*
- *appropriate evidence of need (where required);*
- *evidence of the assessor's qualification (where required)"* [AA 8.6]

## Centre-specific criteria for particular access arrangements

### 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]

Those candidates with access arrangements (readers and scribes will be situated in the library and/or Ante Room and will be screened from each other to avoid overhearing and disruption. An invigilator will oversee those readers/scribes at regular intervals.



*"In the case of alternative rooming arrangements, 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.*

*Alternative rooming arrangements 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.*

### **Examples of alternative rooming arrangements**

- *A candidate has a formal diagnosis of a tic disorder. This causes him to grunt as well as sometimes shout out words. The SENCo considers an alternative rooming arrangement to be appropriate based on his established difficulties.*
- *A candidate has a formal diagnosis of misophonia from a specialist. As the candidate has a distressing and exceptional aversion to sounds, the SENCo considers an alternative rooming arrangement to be an appropriate and reasonable adjustment. The exams officer will ensure that aversive sounds in the room where the candidate will be accommodated for their GCSE examinations, such as a clock ticking, will be minimized."*

[\[AA 5.16\]](#)

Authorised by

Mrs C L Jones  
Headteacher  
On behalf of the  
Proprietors

Authorised by:

Miss C. Brooks  
Examinations  
Officer

Dated

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Date of next review

Dec 24

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