



WHICKHAM SCHOOL

ACCESS ARRANGEMENTS POLICY

2022/23

This policy is reviewed annually to ensure compliance with current regulations

Approved/reviewed by	
P Wheatley	
Date of next review	September 2023

Key staff involved in the policy

Role	Name(s)
ALS lead/SENCo	A Purvis
ALS lead/SENCo line manager (Senior leader)	D Crosland
Head of centre	F Turnbull
Assessor(s)	A Gowland, C Ford
Access arrangement facilitator(s)	Invigilators

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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 Wickham 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**'.

¹This 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 **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 on the school website in the Exam policies and procedures section.

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)

A Gowland: CPT3A (level 7 Certificate of Psychometric Testing, Assessment and Access Arrangements) through Real Training (Middlesex University)
C Ford: Masters in Specialist Dyslexia, Edge Hill University

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 will check that the assessors are a suitably qualified teacher or HCPC registered psychologist, have successfully completed a post graduate course or equivalent to Level 7, have a thorough knowledge and understanding of JCQ Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments and how to apply them and be familiar with the Equality Act 2010.

Reporting the appointment of the assessor(s)

The SENCo will hold on file a record of the qualifications held by each of the assessors used to assess pupils and will ensure that they are suitably qualified.

Names of all assessors used to test pupils for exam access arrangements will be entered into Access arrangements online to confirm their status.

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

Teachers will bring any concerns about a pupil's ability to access exams to the attention of the SENCo, who will check to see if the pupil has an EHCP or Statement of Special Education Needs, and if they don't have either the SENCo will then discuss the nature of the concerns with the pupil's other teachers. The SENCo will then complete part 1 of Form 8 to form a picture of need which they will share with the assessor. The SENCo will arrange for the pupil to be tested by a suitable assessor using current editions of nationally standardised tests.

The assessor will complete part 2 of the Form 8 either during or after the assessment. The SENCo or the assessor will complete part 3 of the Form 8 after the assessment has been completed.

The SENCo will arrange for the pupil, and parent or carer if necessary, to sign the Data Protection Notice.

For pupils with a history of reading difficulties a reader and 25% extra time will be allocated if the standardised score is 84 or less.

For pupils with a history of writing difficulties a scribe and 25% extra time will be allocated if the standardised score is 84 or less.

For pupils with a history of cognitive processing difficulties 25% extra time will be allocated if the standardised score is 84 or less.

Picture of need/normal way of working

On admission students with an EHCP (Educational Healthcare Plan) are allocated appropriate in-class support by the SENCo.

At any point throughout the year, the Behaviour and Inclusion Team, Achievement Team, Faculty Leaders and SENCo will aim to identify new students (without an EHCP) who may require testing to confirm any additional needs (using input from prior data and teaching staff concerns over performance in class/test situations over an extended period/concerns raised by parents).

Additionally evidence is also gathered for SME students via CYPS, CAMHS, counselling, police reports, inclusion notes, EP and other reports.

Year 9 – Access Arrangements Testing

Following assessments that are carried out in the Autumn term (TA1 November 2019) SLT/ Faculty Leaders will identify Year 9 students selected to be tested which will provide the school with an indication as to whether further testing (SPLD assessments) may be necessary for specific students.

Year 9 SPLD assessments should be completed by the end of the Summer First Half Term (22 May 2020), in order that applications for Access Arrangements can be completed and approved by Exam Boards before the start of Year 10. (When making an application the school utilises all previous years' testing as evidence of the student's difficulties as well as being able to demonstrate the normal way of working within the classroom and during test situations, which is a JCQ requirement. Any application we make requesting Access Arrangements needs to include school-based evidence of need.)

Students with approved applications for access arrangements will have these arrangements in class tests (if feasibly possible), mock exams and assessments. Details of measures provided in mock exams and assessments are documented by the use of access arrangement dispensation logs sheets maintained by the Examinations Officer.

For students with hearing impairments individual arrangements are made with advice from the SENCo and LINT team.

Private Educational Psychologist Reports:

If under the schools testing system, a student does not qualify for Access Arrangements, parents can, if they wish, obtain a Private Educational Psychologist (EP) Assessment. If parents wish to submit an EP report as part of their request for the school to consider their child for Access Arrangements parents should be aware that the school will need to see:

A full copy of the report and Original copies of all the tests completed. This will enable the School (who under JCQ guidelines, can be the sole referrer for Access Arrangements) to have full confidence in the testing that has been undertaken and ensure that testing has been robust and valid and fits the testing interval criteria. Even in this instance the report will only form part of the school's evidence when applying for Access Arrangements and may not guarantee that concessions will be awarded.

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.

In line with JCQ regulations the SENCo makes the online applications by the published deadlines as directed in JCQ Guidance 2019 - 2020.

The SENCo keeps a record of the printed online application, letters from awarding bodies, Form 8's, a copy a data protection form, assessments and any additional forms or documents for inspection.

The files for inspection are located in the SENCO's office.

Students informed in writing of the outcome of their exam access assessment. Teachers are informed verbally of the outcome of exam access arrangements testing and have access to a shared document detailing access arrangements for all pupils in Whickham school.

A record of a candidate's access arrangements are maintained and held electronically by the Examination Officer.

Centre-delegated arrangements/adjustments

The school follows JCQ guidance when providing centre delegated access arrangements.

The SENCo allocates candidates a prompter or rest breaks if;

- The need is a result of substantial and long term impairment and it is their normal way of working.
- There is medical evidence to substantiate this arrangement and it is their normal way of working.

The SENCo keeps a record of all centre delegated access arrangements and evidence of need on file. A record of arrangements are maintained and held electronically by the Examination Officer.

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 word processor policy can be found on the school website under Exams policies and procedures.

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)

Separate invigilation will only be allocated by the SENCo where there is a known difficulty which would result in disruption to other candidates during the course of the exam.