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What are Access Arrangements?

Access Arrangements

"Access Arrangements are pre-examination adjustments for candidates based on evidence of need and normal way of working. Access Arrangements fall into two distinct categories: some arrangements are delegated to centres, others require prior JCQ^{CIC} awarding body approval.

Access Arrangements allow candidates/learners with special educational needs, disabilities or temporary injuries to access the assessment without changing the demands of the assessment. For example, readers, scribes and Braille question papers. In this way Awarding Bodies will comply with the duty of the Equality Act 2010 to make 'reasonable adjustments'.

Reasonable Adjustments

The Equality Act 2010 requires an Awarding Body to make reasonable adjustments where a disabled person would be at a substantial disadvantage in undertaking an assessment.

A reasonable adjustment for a particular person may be unique to that individual and may not be included in the list of available Access Arrangements.

How reasonable the adjustment is will depend on a number of factors including the needs of the disabled candidate/learner. An adjustment may not be considered reasonable if it involves unreasonable costs, timeframes or affects the security or integrity of the assessment.

There is no duty on the Awarding Bodies to make any adjustment to the assessment objectives being tested in an assessment."

[JCQ website [An overview](#)]

Purpose Of The Policy

The purpose of this policy is to confirm that West Sussex Alternative Provision College fulfils *"its obligations in respect of identifying the need for, requesting and implementing access arrangements."*

[JCQ 'General regulations for approved centres' Chapter 5.5]

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

The policy is annually reviewed to ensure that arrangements 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*

General and Vocational qualifications'

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

Disability Policy (Exams)

A large part of the access arrangements policy 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.

All Examination Policies can be found on the Policies area of the College's Sharepoint site and on the College website.

"A **written** disability policy setting out how the centre seeks to comply with the Equality Act 2010† and fully supporting disabled candidates **must** be available for inspection purposes..."
[GR 5]

The access arrangements policy further covers the assessment process and related issues in more detail.

The Assessment Process

Assessments are carried out by the assessors appointed by the Senior Leadership Team. The assessors are appropriately qualified as required in JCQ regulations as follows:

- *an access arrangements assessor who has successfully completed a post-graduate course at or equivalent to Level 7, including at least 100 hours relating to individual specialist assessment. An access arrangements assessor may conduct assessments to be recorded within Section C of Form 8; and/or*
- *an appropriately qualified psychologist registered with the Health & Care Professions Council who may conduct assessments to be recorded within Section C of Form 8 and where necessary undertake full diagnostic assessments; and/or*
- *a specialist assessor with a current SpLD Assessment Practising Certificate, as awarded by Patoss, Dyslexia Action or BDA and listed on the SASC website, who may conduct assessments to be recorded within Section C of Form 8 and where necessary undertake full diagnostic assessments.*

and

An access arrangements assessor must have successfully completed a post-graduate course at or equivalent to Level 7, including at least 100 hours relating to individual specialist assessment, which must include training in all of the following:

- *the theoretical basis underlying psychometric tests, such as the concepts of validity and reliability; standard deviations and the normal curve; raw scores, standard scores, quotients, percentiles and age equivalent scores; the*

- concept of statistically significant discrepancies between scores; standard error of measurement and confidence intervals;*
- *the appropriate use of nationally standardised tests for the age group being tested;*
 - *the objective administration of attainment tests which can be administered individually. This must include tests of reading accuracy, reading speed, reading comprehension and spelling. Appropriate methods of assessing writing skills, including speed, must also be covered;*
 - *the appropriate selection and objective use of tests of cognitive skills, see paragraph 7.5.12, page 86;*
 - *the ethical administration of testing including the ability to understand the limitation of their own skills and experience, and to define when it is necessary to refer the candidate to an alternative professional...*

[AA 7.3]

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

Bearing in mind all relevant JCQ regulations and guidance provided in [GR](#) and [AA](#) , including centres are required to

*"...have a **written** process in place to not only check the qualification(s) of their specialist assessor(s) but that the assessment process is administered correctly...*

*...ensure that where a candidate with a learning difficulty requires an assessment of his/her needs, he/she is assessed by an appropriately qualified specialist assessor **as appointed by the head of centre...**"*

[[GR](#) 5.4] and

"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]

JCQ Form 8A is completed and signed by the Co-Headteacher and kept with the Access Arrangement paperwork

How the assessment process is administered

The process detailed below confirms

“that the assessment process is administered correctly...”

[GR 5.5]

The SENCo completes baseline information and the Pupil Passport and these indicate which students require further assessment by a specialist teacher. The Pupil Passport contains any available information and assessment from the student’s previous school.

The SENCo administers the following key assessments:

Hodder Oral Reading Test

Vernon Graded Word Spelling

BPVS

Plus specialist assessments to inform Access Arrangements:

NNAT – Naglieri Nonverbal Ability Test

PHAB – Phonological Assessment Battery

Dyslexia Screening Test (Secondary)

The assessments below are carried out by a specialist assessor for Access Arrangements:

WRAT 4

CTOPP 2

TOMAL 2

DASH

Recording evidence of need

As per JCQ regulations as appropriate the SENCO will:

Complete JCQ Form 8 if student has been assessed and has scores which indicate a substantial impairment which is persistent and significant.

Provide examples of work.

Compile SENCO letter including medical evidence (CAMHS, Hospital Consultant, EP, Sensory Impairment Service, Speech and language Service).

Include EHCP.

Confirm that the Access Arrangement is the candidate’s normal way of working.

Gathering evidence of normal way of working

Bearing in mind *normal way of working* as defined by JCQ...

"The arrangement(s) put in place must reflect the support given to the candidate in the centre†, e.g.

- in the classroom;
- working in small groups for reading and/or writing;
- literacy support lessons;
- literacy intervention strategies;
- mock examinations.

This is commonly referred to as 'normal way of working'. For candidates with learning difficulties this is typically the background information recorded with Section A of Form 8.

SENCOs and assessors must refer to section 7.6.1, page 87, for information on how to confirm 'normal way of working'.

†The only exception to this is where an arrangement is put in place as a consequence of a temporary injury or impairment (see section 8.3, page 89)."

[AA 4.2.5]

The SENCO will complete 'Normal Way Of Working' form with teachers and support staff.

Processing applications for access arrangements

Access arrangements online

Access arrangements online is a tool provided by JCQ member awarding bodies for GCSE and GCE qualifications. This tool also provides the facility to order modified papers for GCSE and GCE qualifications.

"For GCSE and GCE qualifications, *Access arrangements online* enables centres to make a single on-line application for a candidate requiring access arrangements using any of the secure awarding body extranet sites. *Access arrangements online* will provide an instant response and will only allow a maximum of 26 months for any arrangement.

Further information on *Access arrangements online* is available from:
<http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/aao-access-arrangements-online>"

[AA 8.1]

Assessors employed within the centre (SENCOs) process the application online.

Form 8 is signed by hand and dated.

Data protection notice is signed by student and dated.

Confirmation of Access Arrangements is received online.

Arrangements for temporary injury or impairment are processed as the need arises.

When a form 8 is not completed a SENCO letter with medical evidence etc. is provided.

Normal Way of Working form is completed by SENCo.

Information gathered during the assessment process and showing evidence of need is held on file.

If a candidate has very substantial needs and they do not gain approval the case will be discussed with the relevant awarding bodies.

If the awarding body requests that the information is referred this will be done by the exams officer in conjunction with the SENCO.

Centre-delegated access arrangements

Head of Centre/SENCo completes 'Normal Way of Working' form as appropriate showing evidence of persistent and significant difficulties which have a substantial and adverse effect.

Head of Centre/SENCo ensures the Access Arrangement register is current and includes all the centre delegated access arrangements.

Word processor policy

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.

"It is strongly recommended that a centre has a policy on the use of word processors which it can articulate to parents/carers. Principally, that a word processor cannot simply be granted to a candidate because he/she prefers to type rather than write or can work faster on a keyboard, or because he/she uses a laptop at home.

The use of a word processor must reflect the candidate's normal way of working within the centre and be appropriate to the candidate's needs..." [AA 5.8]

Accordingly WSAPC has an Examinations Word Processing Policy, see appendix 2

Separate invigilation within the centre

A decision where an exam candidate may be approved separate invigilation within the centre 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]

Accordingly, the Head of centre completes a 'Normal Way Of Working' form.

[see AA 5.16]

Appendices

1. Normal Way of Working form
2. Word Processor Policy

ISSUED	April 2017
ADOPTED BY WSAPC	April 2017
RATIFIED BY GB	
REVIEW DATE	

Appendix 1-Demonstrating 'normal way of working' for access arrangements

Name of Student:	Date of birth:
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Access arrangements under consideration/ area of concern			
	(Tick all applicable)		(Tick all applicable)
Scribe		Use of WP	
Reader		Prompt	
Extra Time		Supervised rest breaks	
		Separate room	

EXTRA TIME	YES	NO
Support is needed to complete assessments within the given time		
Quality and content of work improves with extra time		
Student is routinely given extra time to re-read and process text		
Differentiated questioning is used to allow additional thinking and processing time		
Always finishes tasks after others or submits incomplete work		
Needs time to formulate an answer to a verbal question (slow responding)		
Needs careful explanations in straightforward language of tasks/assignment titles		

READING	YES	NO
Reads aloud in class to understand text		
Uses a reader during mock exams and tests		
Understanding of text improves with the use of a reader		
Uses peer reader or adult reader in class		
Has problem following written instructions		
Finds it difficult to quickly get the idea of what s/he has read		
Finds it hard to remember what s/he has read		
Uses Reading Pen in classroom		

SCRIBE / WORD PROCESSING	YES	NO
Has difficulty copying from the board		
Finds taking notes hard		
Needs support with planning written work		
Evidence is available to show that use of a word processor is the usual way of working in class		
Handwriting is illegible		
Spelling is incomprehensible		
Student has difficulty expressing thoughts in writing		
Verbal responses are more comprehensive than written responses		
Slow writing speed results in tasks not being completed within the set time		
Able to produce written text quicker when using a scribe / voice activated software		

COLOURED PAPER AND OVERLAYS / Print Size	YES	NO
Needs larger print size		
Evidence is available to show that students use coloured paper as their usual way of learning		
Students routinely use coloured reading rulers in class		

MEMORY & CONCENTRATION	YES	NO
Has difficulty following oral instructions		
Has difficulty concentrating for long periods		
Has difficulty remembering information / instructions		
Needs to have instructions repeated		
Needs to have instructions written down		

ORGANISATION	YES	NO
Organisational skills are weak – loses things, forgets items s/he needs to bring		
Has difficulty working efficiently		

DIFFERENTIATION / OTHER SUPPORT	YES	NO
Use of TA in class		
Differentiated curriculum provided		
Personal copies of notes/ information provided to highlight key words		
Manifest Stress or anxiety in class when placed under exam conditions		
Needs to take frequent supervised rest breaks		
Needs timely reminders to stay focused on task – prompt		

Any other relevant information:

Date normal way of working discussed and agreed:

SENCO :

Appendix 2- Word Processor Policy

The use of a word processor/laptop must reflect the candidate's normal way of working within the centre and be appropriate to the candidate's needs.

A word processor cannot be granted to a candidate because they prefer to type rather than write or can work faster, or they use a laptop at home.

This list helps to identify candidates who would benefit from the use of a word processor/laptop, although not exhaustive;

- A learning difficulty which has a substantial and long term adverse effect on the ability to write.
- A medical condition.
- A physical condition
- A sensory impairment
- Planning and organisation problems when writing by hand.
- Poor handwriting

There is not a requirement to process an Access arrangement, or have evidence of need, but all requests for word processor/laptop in WSAPC must be approved by SENCo before examination series starts, to enable Exams officers and Head of centres to plan accommodation.

A word processor/laptop will be provided with the spelling and grammar checkers and predictive text facility disabled unless the candidate has been permitted a scribe or using voice recognition technology.

The use of word processors/laptops in controlled assessment or coursework components will be considered standard practice unless prohibited by the specification.

Candidates may not require the use of a word processor /laptop in each specification, although it is permissible to use word processor / laptop for extended writing and handwrite shorter answers.

Invigilators must remind candidates to save their work at regular intervals. Alternatively an IT technician can set up 'auto save' on word processor/laptop.

Candidates must ensure that their centre number, candidate number, specification, and unit code are typed or handwritten on each page, and the question numbers clearly marked.

Only authorised memory sticks provided by the exams officer may be used.

Printing must be carried out after the examination is over and the candidate must be present to verify their work. (Printing to photocopier is not permissible, unless prior consent from exams officer) IT technician to ensure there are available printers at each unit.

A JCQ or CIE word processor cover sheet must be completed and attached to candidate's script.

This Policy is in line with JCQ regulations 2015-16

Monitoring and Review

This policy will be monitored and reviewed annually.

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