



Access arrangements policy 2023/24

DfE no: 850/7900



Approved by: L Cooper Headteacher

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Next review by: March 2025

Monitoring arrangements

This policy is reviewed annually by the SLT to ensure compliance with current regulation

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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 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’.

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’.”

*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 this Policy

The purpose of this policy is to confirm that the Inclusion 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](#) 5.5.4]

This policy is held by the SEND Lead alongside the individual files/e-folders 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.

Where the SEND Lead is storing documentation electronically, they **must** create a folder for each individual candidate. The candidate’s folder must hold each of the required documents for inspection. ([AA](#) 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 along with any differing awarding body requirements.

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 Access Arrangements Policy further covers the assessment process and related issues in more detail.

The Assessment Process

All the learners at the Inclusion College have been awarded an EHCP and therefore an assessment by an external assessor is unnecessary for those sitting Functional Skill examinations. External assessment will take place for those learners sitting GCSE qualifications as appropriate.

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.

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

If a candidate will be assessed, the SEND lead is painting a picture of need and demonstrating the candidate's normal way of working and completing Part of Form 8, prior to the candidate being assessed.

As a centre we ensure full regard to the Access Arrangements (AA) document 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 that the correct procedures are followed as in Chapter 7 of the JCQ publication Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustment (General regulations, section 5.4)

Note: The SEND Lead and assessors working within the centre should always carefully consider any privately commissioned assessment to see whether the process of gathering a picture of need, demonstrating normal way of working within the centre and ultimately assessing the candidate themselves should be instigated (AA, section 7.3)

Note ...SEND Lead / SLT Lead for Exams will refer to the General regulations (GR) section 5.4 for a private candidate such as a distance or a home educated student

Painting a picture of need and gathering evidence to demonstrate normal way of working

The SEND Lead will provide evidence that shows that there is a clear demonstration of need and that this is the candidate's normal way of working. This evidence may, for example, include lesson plans, annotation of work, pictorial evidence and individual's folder/e-folder along with anything more that assists with the holistic picture of need

In the event of an assessor being required, the SEND Lead 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... (AA, section 7.5)

The responsibility to request access arrangements specifically lies with the ALS lead/SENCo." [\[AA section 7.5.3\]](#)

Processing access arrangements and adjustments

Arrangements/adjustments requiring awarding body approval

Access arrangements online (AAO) is a tool provided by JCQ member awarding bodies to enable 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. ([AA](#).Chapter 8, Processing application 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 is required for each candidate regardless of the awarding body used.

All exam policies are on the Inclusion College website and the College Secure Shared Internal Drive

The SEND Lead and the Exams Officer will oversee the process and timescales for ensuring the AAO or any other Awarding organisation approval documentation for examinations is completed timely.

The signed data protection applications are located in the Learners secure file. Inclusion College will, as far as is possible, ensure that all data protection forms are counter-signed by the parent/guardian. The completed Data protection forms are retained for 26 months from the date of the online application being approved.

“The ALS lead/SENCo must keep detailed records, whether electronically or in hard copy paper format, of all the essential information on file. This includes 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, section 8.6)

Centre-delegated arrangements/adjustments

A record is kept of all centre delegated arrangements/adjustments with evidence of need and evidence that this is the normal way of working.

Awarding organisations are notified of the use of centre delegated arrangements/adjustments in line with their requirements.

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 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.

A candidate may be awarded/allocated the use of a word processor in exams where they have a firmly established need, it reflects the candidate’s normal way of working and by not being awarded a word processor would be at a substantial disadvantage to the candidate/s.

All exam policies are on the Inclusion College website and the College Secure Shared Internal Drive

“Centres are allowed to provide a word processor (e.g. computer, laptop or tablet) with the spelling and grammar check/predictive text disabled to a candidate where it is their normal way of working within the centre, unless an awarding body’s specification says otherwise. For example, where the curriculum is delivered electronically and the centre provides word processors to all candidates. This also includes an electronic braille or a tablet.” [ICE 14.20]

Alternative rooming arrangements Policy

A decision where an exam candidate may be approved alternative rooming arrangements e.g. a room for a smaller group of candidates with similar needs (formally known as separate invigilation) will be made by the SEND Lead.

Separate invigilation reflects the candidate’s normal way of working in internal tests and mock examinations as a consequence of a long-term medical condition or long-term social, emotional and mental health needs which is known about within the setting.

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

