



ACCESS ARRANGEMENTS POLICY

2023/24

This policy is reviewed annually to ensure compliance with current regulations

Approved/reviewed by	
Grace Leng Paula Aliwell Paula Harris-Pearce Steve Whittle	
Date of next review	Nov 2024

Key staff involved in the policy

Role	Name(s)
ALS lead/SENCo	Paula Aliwell & Grace Leng
ALS lead/SENCo line manager (Senior leader)	Steve Whittle
Head of centre	Steve Whittle
Assessor(s)	Milica Way
Access arrangement facilitator(s)	Grace Leng

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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 Hayes 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, 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.

Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Policy (Exams)

The Trust's aims and responsibilities towards disabled students are set out in the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy, including compliance with the Equality Act 2010.

The Access Arrangements Policy further covers the assessment process and 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)

Mrs M Way: CPT3A Certificate of Psychometric Testing, Assessment and Access Arrangements given by Real Training

Mrs P Aliwell: CPT3A Certificate of Psychometric Testing, Assessment and Access Arrangements given by Real Training

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 PA to the Head of Centre requests and holds a copy of the Assessor Qualifications which is made available for the Head of Centre to inspect.

A photocopy of the assessor's certificate(s) (or a printout of screenshot of HCPC or SASC registration, or screenshot of other relevant qualification listing) is kept on file (AA 7.3.1, 7.4.1)

The Head of Centre will satisfy themselves that the assessor has the required level of competence and training and that the assessor has presented evidence of the successful completion of a post-graduate course in individual specialist assessment at or equivalent to level 7. This evidence will be retained by the PA to the Head of Centre.

Reporting the appointment of the assessor(s)

The Head of Centre will appoint an assessor as outlined in AA 7.3.3 and one whom has completed a qualification as required on AA 7.4 and understands the relevant publications as detailed in AA 7.4

The SENCo will work closely with and receive support from the Access Arrangements Facilitator and the Exams Officer to ensure that the correct procedures are in place. The procedures are open to Quality Assurance by the Head of Centre.

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

Hayes School confirms:

- Guidelines for the assessment of the candidate's learning difficulties by an assessor will be followed and Form 8 (JCQ/AA/LD - Profile of Learning Difficulties) will be completed (AA 7.5, 7.6)
- Assessors must personally conduct the assessments. They must not sign off assessments carried out by another professional. (AA7.5.5)
- The assessor must carry out tests which are relevant to support the application. (AA7.5.6)
- A privately commissioned assessment carried out without prior consultation with the centre cannot be used to award access arrangements and cannot be used to process an application using Access arrangements online. (AA7.3.6)
- Where a candidate has cognitive processing difficulties which have a substantial and long-term adverse impact on their speed of working 25% ET may be awarded where these difficulties are demonstrated by below average standardised of 84 or less in two tests or one score below and one low average score (85-80) in tests that relate to two different areas. (AA7.5.12)
- 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 7.3.6)

Picture of need/normal way of working

Hayes School confirms:

- Before the candidate's assessment, the person appointed in the centre must provide the assessor with background information, i.e. a picture of need has been painted as per Part 1 of Form 8. The centre and the assessor must work together to ensure a joined up and consistent process. (AA 7.5.2)
- 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.
- 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 with the person appointed in the centre. The responsibility to request access arrangements specifically lies with the centre. The independent assessor is appointed by the centre to assess the candidate (AA 7.5.3)
- A picture of need is built by the SENCo referencing evidence and information supplied by a candidate's teachers and learning support staff alongside knowledge of a candidate's provision map and individual needs.

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.

- Access arrangements online (AAO) is used to apply for approval of arrangements for the qualifications listed within the JCQ publication Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments.
- AAO is accessed through 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.
- Applications are made with regard to the deadlines which apply for each examination series for the submission of applications for approval using AAO.
 - Vocational Qualification AAs are applied for using the appropriate Exam Board Portal if different to the above.
- Hard copies or an e.folder are retained by the AA Facilitator for Inspection purposes and QA by the Head of Centre.

Centre-delegated arrangements/adjustments

Decisions relating to the approval of centre delegated arrangements are made by the SENCo, supported by Senior staff, the AA facilitator and assessor as appropriate. Appropriate evidence, where required by the arrangement, is held on file by Paula Aliwell – SENCo and the AA Facilitator.

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.

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 (formerly known as separate invigilation) 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 5.16)

The SENCo will be supported in the process by the School Inclusion Team and the year Achievement Coordinator. For example, in the case of separate invigilation or the use of a smaller room, the candidate's difficulties will be **established within the centre** and known to a Form Tutor, a Head of Year, the SENCo or a senior member of staff with pastoral responsibilities and will be the subject of external intervention such as CAMHs or a registered psychologist. Evidence of external intervention will be retained by the AA Facilitator.

The Exams Officer, in liaison with Year Achievement Coordinator may make the decision to place a candidate in a smaller room as a temporary measure where, for example, a candidate may suffer a severe anxiety attack or short term medical condition and would otherwise be unable to complete the exam.

Separate invigilation will reflect the candidate's normal way of working in internal school tests and mock examinations because of a **long-term** medical condition or **long-term** social, emotional and mental health needs. (AA 5.16)

Appendices

APPENDICES

Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ): Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments 2023-2024 https://www.jcq.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/AA_regs_Revision_One_Sep23_FINAL.pdf

Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ): Instructions for Conducting Examinations 2023-2024 https://www.jcq.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/ICE_23-24_Final-March-2024.pdf