



HENLEY-IN-ARDEN SCHOOL

Achieving Excellence Together

Name of Policy	Exams Access Arrangements Policy	
Lead	Mr Joe Roper, Associate Headteacher	
Governor Committee	T&L	
Policy Status	Updated	October 2024
	Date Governor Approved	
Review Frequency	Annually	

This policy is reviewed annually to ensure compliance with current regulations

Key staff involved in the policy

Role	Name(s)
SENCo (Senior Leader)	Cheryl Grantham
Head of centre	Joseph Roper
Assessor(s)	Kate Griffiths
Access arrangement facilitator(s)	Invigilators/Teaching Assistants

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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'.
[AA Definitions, page 3]

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'. 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 3]

Purpose of the policy

The purpose of this policy is to confirm that Henley in Arden 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](#)

School Accessibility Plan

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 head of centre/senior leadership team will... recognise its duties towards disabled candidates as defined under the terms of the Equality Act 2010†. This **must** include a duty to explore and provide access to suitable courses, submit applications for reasonable adjustments and make reasonable adjustments to the service the centre provides to disabled candidates;

†or any legislation in a relevant jurisdiction other than England and Wales which has an equivalent purpose and effect [GR 5.4]

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.

The qualification(s) of the current assessor(s)

These are held within the SENCo department

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)

When we make the appointment we ask them to bring a copy of their qualification certificate with them.

Bear in mind **all** relevant JCQ regulations and guidance provided in [GR](#) and [AA](#) including:

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 per **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]

Make full reference to [AA](#) 7.3 *Appointment of assessors of candidates with learning difficulties* and record your process that reflects the requirements.

Reporting the appointment of the assessor(s)

The assessor will be named as the assessor on Access Arrangements online (AAO) via the Centre Admin Portal (CAP)

Make full reference to [AA 7.4 Reporting the appointment of assessors](#) and record your process that reflects the requirements.

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

Exam access arrangement processes are administered with regard to the Equality Act 2010 and SEN Code of Practice 2014

Candidates who require access arrangements are identified by the SENCo in a number of ways:

- Primary school transition information
- SEN Register and monitoring list ie. Candidates requiring on-going support or with a diagnosed need
- Subject teachers / Teaching Assistants referrals from class work and assessments
- Parent referrals
- Outside agency recommendations

Once candidates are identified access arrangements are implemented for internal tests and exams to establish this as the normal way of working for each candidate and to build evidence of need. All teaching staff are responsible for implementing the adjustments and for monitoring these.

Evidence is reviewed by the SENCo in the summer term of Year 9 and used to complete Form 8 ready for assessment. Assessment is completed no later than the autumn term of Year 10: the SENCo will liaise with the Assessor to identify access arrangement requirements and relevant testing needs, adhering to all sections of [AA 7.5](#). The SENCo will work with the Exams Officer, teaching and support staff to ensure approved access arrangements are in place for internet tests, mock examinations, and examinations. They will also ensure that appropriate opportunities are provided for candidates to practise using the access arrangement before their first examination. The SENCo will also continue to gather evidence to inform subject variation of need: for example, a candidate requiring a scribe may need this for English but not for Maths. If the arrangement is never used then it is deemed to not be the candidate's normal way of working: the SENCo may withdraw the arrangement provided this does not place the candidate at a significant disadvantage.

The SENCo will work jointly with the Exams Officer to ensure that staff appointed to facilitate access arrangements for candidates are appropriately trained and understand the rules of the particular arrangement.

Any privately commissioned assessment will not be accepted unless the external assessor has, before assessment, established a relationship with the centre as set out in [AA 7.3](#). Internal evidence of the candidate's normal way of working will also be required, as set out above as 'the responsibility to request access arrangements specifically lies with the SENCo' [AA 7.5](#)

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

The SENCo, teaching and support staff keep a record of evidence that reflects the support candidates receive on a day to day basis such as:

- Previous access arrangements from other schools
- Subject teacher referral forms and record of on-going results from tests using the shared spreadsheet. Subject teachers will keep physical evidence of work to support their referrals ready for inspection when required.
- Results of baseline tests such as reading, comprehension age or writing tests.
- Copy of EHCP
- Records of supported provision given in class, in small groups for reading and writing, literacy interventions, internal tests, mock examinations, examinations.

The record of evidence is used to complete Part 1 of Form 8, adhering to [AA.7.6](#)

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 2 of [AA](#). This tool also provides the facility to order modified papers for those qualifications listed on page 74.

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. The application refers to all possible awarding bodies the candidate is likely to use. The application is made at the start of the candidate's course; i.e the beginning of Year 10 (or Year 12 for candidates who move onto Sixth Form or enter the Sixth Form from another school). The application is made by the SENCo / Director of Learning Support who then informs the Exams Officer prior to the deadline for processing arrangements for the January series.

The SENCo/Director of Learning Support is required to print the AAO approval (and/or any referral) and keep it with detailed records of all essential information (detailed history of need; signed personal data consent form etc) so that it can be inspected by the JCQ Centre Inspection Service on request. The records are in paper files in the Learning Support Office.

Centre-delegated access arrangements

Arrangements that do not require awarding body approval will be evidenced in the same way with a file in the Learning Support Office containing the essential information including picture of need; normal way of working.

Centre-specific criteria for particular access arrangements

Word processor policy (exams):

see separate policy 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 this is the candidate's preferred way of working within the centre.

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. It is only possible where a candidate has an established difficulty (see section 5.16 of the JCQ publication Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments), known to the SENCo and separate invigilation is their normal way of working within the centre (as evidenced by a Form Tutor / Head of Year / the Director Learning Support / the SENCo or a senior member of staff with pastoral responsibilities) and has been used in internal school tests and mock examinations etc. The SENCo will decide if separate invigilation in a small room (away from the main cohort) is appropriate to their needs.

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 only exceptions would be a temporary illness or injury which is clearly evidenced.