

Access arrangements policy 2018/19

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Head of centre	Mrs Brooks
SENCo	Ms Salt
Assessor(s)	Ms Salt
Access arrangement facilitator(s)	Ms Salt

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’.

[[AA](#) Definitions, page 3]

Purpose of the policy

The purpose of this policy is to confirm that the Evolution Centre 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 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.

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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](#)

Disability policy (exams)

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.

Overtyping here the location of the centre's policy, alternatively include as an appendix at the end of this document or include sections from this policy that you feel may be relevant to your centre's Access arrangement policy within this document

"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; †for 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

The school SENCo, Emma Salt is currently the centre's assessor. She holds the required Level 7 Certificate of Psychometric testing assessment and access arrangements qualification and is registered as a test User (Educational, Ability/Attainment) with the British Psychological Society, as well as the minimum requirement of 100hours testing.

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 centre will use its qualified SENCo, Emma Salt for all assessments relating to access arrangements. In the absence of our internal assessment the following checks will be carried out on the appointed assessor:

- Assessors qualification for carrying out assessment for access arrangements, following JCQ guidance 7.3.4
- Competence check – post graduate course in individual specialist assessment, JCQ guidance 7.3.3
- 100 hours in individual testing
- Usual safeguarding employment checks

“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]

Reporting the appointment of the assessor(s)

All evidence will be held in the school staff personnel and training file

Process for the assessment of a candidate’s learning difficulties by an assessor and normal way of working

At the Evolution Centre we assess all pupils on arrival at the school. For pupils who are year 9 and above this becomes the basis of the Access Arrangements assessment. This testing provides a picture of the learners' difficulties and produces a picture of need demonstrating that the candidates learning difficulties require Access Arrangements to be applied for.

For pupils, without an Education, Health and Care Plan, form 8, is completed and access arrangements online are applied for, supported by Form 8 and a portfolio of evidence that will be kept on record while the access arrangement is available. Along with this testing, a picture of normal way of working is developed to support the student’s daily requirements.

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“Before the candidate’s assessment, the SENCo must provide the assessor with background information, i.e. a picture of need has been painted as per Section A of Form 8. The SENCo 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.

The candidate must be assessed in light of the picture of need and the background information as detailed within Section A of Form 8.

An independent assessor must discuss access arrangements with the SENCo. The responsibility to request access arrangements specifically lies with the SENCo.” [AA 7.5.3]

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

AAO is accessed by logging in to any of the awarding body secure extranet sites. A single application is required for each candidate regardless of the awarding body used.

At the Evolution Centre we apply for AA in the summer of year 9, however we often receive students part way through Key Stage four and in this case we would apply for AA as soon as we were clear they were required. If students arrive after the AA deadline we would seek advice about applying. The SENCo/Exams Officer is responsible for the application. The Evolution Centre keeps testing data, normal way of working and professional reports which may support an AA application securely in the Exams /SENCo Office.

If an application did not receive approval the Evolution Centre would approach the awarding body for further discussions, recording all conversations.

“The SENCo must keep detailed records, whether electronically or in hard copy paper format, of all the essential information on file. This includes a copy of the candidate's approved application, appropriate evidence of need (where required) and a signed data protection notice for inspection by the JCQ Centre Inspection Service.” [AA 8.6]

Make full reference to [AA 8 Processing applications for access arrangements](#) and record your process that reflects the requirements.

Centre-delegated access arrangements

At the Evolution Centre we may allocate centre delegated arrangements based on normal way of working over a period of time as recorded in their Student Education Provision Record (SEPR) and the SENCo's written evidence. These confirm the candidate's established difficulties that the arrangement reflects in their normal way of working.

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

The Evolution Centre has a word processor policy available on the school's website <https://www.evolution-centre.co.uk/>

"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]

"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 now wants 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. For example, where the curriculum is delivered electronically and the centre provides word processors to all candidates...

A member of the centre's senior leadership team must produce a statement for inspection purposes which details the criteria the centre uses to award and allocate word processors for examinations."

[AA 5.8]

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.

The decision will be based on

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- ▶ *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* [\[AA 5.16\]](#)

At the Evolution Centre candidates will be permitted separate invigilation if we are aware that their early childhood trauma's, attachment difficulties and experiences lead them to coping less well in a group examination situation. This may vary from subject to subject and exam to exam depending on the levels of stress experienced by the student. Wherever possible the centre hopes to give students experience of a mainstream examination room as this helps to prepare them for the future. .

“SENCOs must note that candidates are only entitled to the above arrangements if they are disabled within the meaning of the Equality Act. The candidate is at a substantial disadvantage when compared with other non-disabled candidates undertaking the assessment and it would be reasonable in all the circumstances to provide the arrangement. (The only exception to this would be a temporary illness, a temporary injury or other temporary indisposition which is clearly evidenced.)

For example, in the case of separate invigilation, the candidate's difficulties are established within the centre (see Chapter 4, paragraph 4.1.4, page 16) and known to a Form Tutor, a Head of Year, the SENCO or a senior member of staff with pastoral responsibilities.

Separate invigilation reflects the candidate's normal way of working in internal school tests and mock examinations as a consequence of a long term medical condition or long term social, mental or emotional needs.”

[\[AA 5.16\]](#)

Last Reviewed	March 2019
Next Review	March 2020
Reviewed by	Head Teacher and Exams Officer/SENCO