

HENDON SCHOOL



Learning Together Across the World

Access Arrangements Policy

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Trustee Committee:	Student Welfare Committee
School Staff Responsible:	SENDCo
Nominated Trustee:	Chair of Student Welfare
Policy Held:	School Policy File

Version control

The table below summarises the changes that have been made to the policy at this review (version 1.0) and will be updated going forward:

Version	Date	Summary of changes
1.0		

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1. Definition and Purpose

The purpose of Access Arrangements is to remove, where possible, any barriers to assessment for disabled candidates who would otherwise be at a substantial disadvantage due to persistent and significant difficulties. These arrangements must maintain the integrity of the assessment while enabling fair access.

Access Arrangements are pre-examination adjustments for candidates based on evidence of need and a candidate's normal way of working. Access Arrangements fall into two categories:

- Arrangements which are delegated to centres
- Arrangements which require prior Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) awarding body approval

This policy should be read alongside:

- [Equality Policy](#)
- [SEND Information Report](#)
- [SEND Policy](#)
- [Admissions Policy](#)
- [Word processor policy](#)

2. Reasonable Adjustments

The Equality Act 2010 requires awarding bodies 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 undertaking an assessment.

What constitutes a "reasonable" adjustment depends on several factors, including the needs of the candidate, the practicality and cost of the adjustment, and the impact on the assessment's integrity. Not all adjustments are suitable for every individual.

3. Special Educational Needs

A candidate has Special Educational Needs as defined in the SEND code of practice: 0 to 25 years, if they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for them.

The Equality Act 2010 definition of disability includes substantial and long-term sensory impairments such as those affecting sight or hearing, mobility impairment mental health difficulties and long-term health conditions such as asthma, diabetes, epilepsy and cancer.

Available Access Arrangements include:

- Supervised rest breaks
- Extra time of up to 50%
- Scribe/Speech recognition technology
- 25% extra time
- Sign Language Interpreter
- Bilingual translation dictionaries
- Braille Papers
- Computer reader/reader
- Word processor
- Language Modifier
- Practical assistant
- Modified Papers
- Coloured/Enlarged Papers
- Alternative Site Arrangement

4. Fundamental Principles

Access Arrangements are governed by the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ), whose regulations are reviewed and updated annually. Centres are required to comply fully with the latest guidance to ensure fairness and consistency in assessment.

As such, while this policy outlines the centre's general approach to access arrangements, it should always be read alongside the current JCQ publication Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments.

- Subjects and their methods of assessments may vary, leading to different demands of the candidate. The need for Access Arrangements are therefore considered on a subject-by-subject basis.
- The arrangement(s) put in place must reflect the support given to the candidate **in school**:
 - in the classroom; or
 - working in small groups for reading and/or writing; or
 - literacy intervention strategies; and/or
 - in internal school assessments and mock examinations.

This is commonly referred to as '**normal way of working**'.

- The key principle is that the SENCo or the Access Arrangement Assessor (AAA) working within the centre can show a history of support and provision. The arrangement is not suddenly being granted to the candidate at the time of his/her examinations.
- The candidate must have appropriate opportunities to practise using the Access Arrangement(s) before his/her examination.
- If a candidate has not made use of the arrangement granted to him/her, e.g. 25% extra time or supervised rest breaks, then it is **not** his/her normal way of working. In these specific circumstances, the arrangement may be rescinded at our discretion.
- Where Supervised Rest Breaks are granted in exams, they may not be taken in the first or final 15 minutes of an examination.

5. Access Arrangements Process

To begin a referral for access arrangements, classroom teachers will highlight students to the SENCo/Access Arrangements Assessor who they feel may be facing barriers in exams. This provides the necessary teacher evidence which is required in the later stage of application.

- The SENCo/AAA will examine the student's profile, including their needs and determine whether an assessment is necessary.
- Students are invited for an assessment using standardised tests.
- Based on results, diagnosis and need, appropriate arrangements are put in place.
- Arrangements are trialled in mocks and assessments.
- Applications are submitted to JCQ with student consent via a data protection form.

6. Deadlines for Submitting Applications

The school aims to get Access Arrangements in place well in advance of GCSE and A Level exams so that students have time to practise using them. Changes will not be made between the last full set of formal mock exams and the final exams.

Applications for Access Arrangements must be processed by the published deadline. This will allow centres to make provision for Access Arrangements from the perspective of timetabling logistics, accommodation and staffing. If a referral to an awarding body becomes necessary, there may not be sufficient time to process the application if it is made after the respective deadline

7. Core and Supplementary Evidence

JCQ inspectors will inspect centres annually to review documentation that supports the awarding of Access Arrangements.

8. Core evidence for Learning Difficulties

To award Access Arrangements, the school must assess the candidate's needs based on either:

- An Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) confirming a disability; or
- A post-Year 9 assessment by a specialist assessor confirming a relevant learning difficulty

Assessments use psychometric tools to measure processing, reading, and writing speeds, generating standardised scores. These are conducted in-house by a qualified assessor.

8.1 Privately Commissioned Assessments

Privately commissioned assessments can only be accepted if the assessor has consulted with the school prior to the assessment. This includes:

- The SENCo completing at least a skeleton Part 1 of Form 8
- The SENCo providing background information to the assessor
- Evidence of normal way of working being submitted before the assessment
- Post-assessment discussion between the assessor and the SENCo

Responsibility for applying for Access Arrangements lies with the SENCo/ AAA.

8.2 Literacy or Processing Difficulty Referrals

Where a literacy or processing difficulty significantly and persistently affects classroom learning, teachers may refer the student to the SENCo. Evidence is gathered from staff, students, assessment data, and support plans. If a picture of need emerges, further testing will be carried out to determine Access Arrangement eligibility.

Note: These assessments are for educational planning and do not constitute a diagnostic report.

8.3 Core Evidence for Medical/Health Conditions

Supervised rest breaks must always be considered before applying for extra time. Form 9 must be supported by evidence such as:

- Letters from CAMHS, HCPC-registered psychologists, hospital consultants, psychiatrists
- Reports from Local Authority Services or SaLTs
- An EHCP confirming the candidate's disability

GP letters may support supervised rest breaks or alternative rooming only. One-to-one rooming will only be approved in rare cases and must reflect the student's normal way of working.

8.4 Assessment – Key Stage 5

Where students enter Key Stage 5 with existing Access Arrangements, these may be rolled forward, provided the continued need is confirmed and normal way of working remains in place. Teaching staff must confirm this through evidence of usual classroom practice.

Where necessary, a Specialist Assessor (appointed by the Head of Centre and fully qualified) may carry out updated assessments using JCQ-accepted tests recommended by PATOSS. Standardised scores are used to assess eligibility. Students are supported in practising their arrangements in class, assessments, and mocks.

8.5 Supplementary Evidence for All Candidates

In all cases, the SENCo must be able to demonstrate that:

The candidate has persistent and significant difficulties and qualifies under the Equality Act 2010

The difficulties impact substantially on learning and classroom performance

Without the arrangement, the candidate would be at a disadvantage compared to non-disabled peers

The arrangement is the candidate's normal way of working in the centre

9. Special Consideration

Special Consideration refers to post-exam adjustments made to reflect temporary illness, injury, or other adverse circumstances. These are managed by the Exams Office.

10. Temporary Injury

Temporary Access Arrangements (e.g. for a broken arm) are applied via AAO as needed. Supporting medical evidence, a signed data protection form, a file note, and a copy of the AAO approval are kept on file.

11. Policy Review

This policy is reviewed annually in line with JCQ updates.

Contacts

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