

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 an Access Arrangement is to ensure, where possible, that barriers to assessment are removed for a candidate who has a learning difficulty or is disabled, preventing them from being placed at a substantial disadvantage as a consequence of persistent and significant difficulties. The integrity of the assessment is maintained, whilst at the same time providing access to assessments for a candidate with learning difficulties or a disability.

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

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

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following guidance, information and policies:

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

2. 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 undertaking an assessment.

A reasonable adjustment for a particular person may be unique to that individual and may not be included in the list of available Access Arrangements.

How reasonable the adjustment is will depend on a number of factors including the needs of the disabled candidate/learner. An adjustment may not be considered reasonable if it involves significant cost, unrealistic timeframes or affects the security or integrity of the assessment.

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	Computer reader/reader
25% extra time	Word processor
Scribe/Speech recognition technology	Oral Language Modifier
Bilingual translation dictionaries	Practical assistant
Sign Language Interpreter	Modified Papers
Braille Papers	Coloured/Enlarged Papers
Extra time of up to 50% (in exceptional cases)	

4. Fundamental Principles

- 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 working within the school 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 history of need, support and provision must be recorded in the official 'Form 8' for students with learning needs or a 'File note' for those with medical needs, by the school's SENDCO or Access Arrangements Coordinator.
- The candidate must have appropriate opportunities to practise using the Access Arrangement(s) before his/her GCSE / A level or other national examinations.
- If a candidate has never 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 the school's discretion.

5. Deadlines for submitting applications for Access Arrangements

Applications for Access Arrangements must be processed by the school by The Joint Centre for Qualifications (JCQ's) published deadline. This allows the school to make appropriate 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.

Core and Supplementary Evidence

All GCE centres will be inspected by a member of the JCQ Centre Inspection Service. Inspectors will expect to see appropriate documentation to substantiate the use of an Access Arrangement processed electronically.

Core evidence for candidates with a **Learning Difficulty**

In order to award access arrangements, the school **must** assess the needs of the candidate based on one of the following documents:

- an Education, Health and Care Plan, which confirms the candidate's disability; or
- an assessment carried out no earlier than the start of Year 9 by a specialist assessor confirming a learning difficulty relating to secondary/further education.

6. Assessment

Once a data protection form has been signed by the candidate, a series of psychometric tests (recommended by the Professional Association of Teachers with Specific learning difficulties (PATOSS) and acceptable to JCQ) are administered to determine processing, reading and writing speeds using standardised scores.

The assessment is conducted in-house by the qualified Access Arrangements Coordinator, who compares the literacy of an individual student against a standardised set of peer results. If the standardised scores fulfil JCQ's criteria, a decision about the best access arrangement(s) will be made in conjunction with the student. Subsequent support and practice in the use of the appropriate Access Arrangement(s) is offered by the individual school departments.

7. Privately Commissioned Assessments

The school can only accept privately commissioned assessments where the external assessor has, before assessment, established a relationship with the school. This is set out in the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) publication, 'Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments':

- 7.3.6 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.**

The SENCo must complete at least a 'skeleton' Part 1 of Form 8 prior to the candidate being assessed (Part 2 of Form 8).

- 7.5.2 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 Part 1 of Form 8. The SENCo and the assessor must work together to ensure a joined-up and consistent process.**

7.5.3 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 Part 1 of Form 8.

An independent assessor must discuss access arrangements with the SENCo. The responsibility to request access arrangements specifically lies with the SENCo.

8. Literacy and or Processing Difficulties

The school must provide evidence of how a literacy or processing difficulty significantly and persistently impacts on teaching and learning in the classroom. Information is gathered from the student, those who work with the student (teachers and/or support staff), progress grades and screening assessment results. Those students who require extra support may be referred for interventions which focus on literacy and academic skills. If a picture of need has been established, the student will be referred for assessment to ascertain if there is a need for Access Arrangements in future examinations.

Please note that the tests are undertaken purely for educational purposes and in no respect indicate a diagnosis of any underlying Specific Learning Difficulty.

9. Core Evidence for a candidate with a Medical/Health condition

The JCQ document (Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments) is clear that supervised rest breaks must always be considered before making a request for extra time, since they may be more appropriate for candidates with a medical condition, a physical disability or a psychological condition.

In addition to the supplementary evidence collated by the school, the file note is supported with, for example:

- a letter from CAMHS, HCPC registered psychologist, hospital consultant, psychiatrist; **or**
- a letter from the Local Authority Specialist Service, Local Authority Sensory Impairment Service or Occupational Health Service; **or**
- a letter from a Speech and Language Therapist (SaLT); **or**
- an Education, Health and Care plan **which confirms the candidate's disability.**

Please note that a letter from a G.P. is acceptable for supervised rest breaks or request for a small room, though all other Access Arrangements (including extra time) require an up to date letter from one of the above.

Supplementary evidence for all Access Arrangements

In all cases, in addition to the core evidence, the school must paint a picture of the candidate's normal way of working within the centre. So as not to give an unfair advantage, the SENCo or the Access Arrangements Coordinator must have available evidence which clearly shows that an Access Arrangement is (still) needed for GCE AS, A-level and the vocational examinations, including BTecs and VCerts:

- confirm that the candidate continues to have persistent and significant difficulties when accessing and processing information and is disabled within the meaning of the Equality Act 2010;
- include evidence of the candidate's current difficulties and how they **substantially** impact on teaching and learning in the classroom;
- confirm that without the application of extra time/reader/scribe, etc. the candidate would **continue to be at a substantial disadvantage** when taking GCE AS/A-level/Btec/VCert examinations compared to other non-disabled candidates;
- confirm that extra time/reader/scribe, etc. **continues** to be the candidates normal way of working within the centre **as a direct consequence of their disability**.

10. Special Consideration

Special Consideration is a post examination adjustment to a candidate's mark or grade to reflect temporary injury, illness or other indisposition at the time of the examination or assessment. This will be processed by the examinations office.

Temporary Injury

Access Arrangement Online (AAO) is used for a candidate with a temporary injury or impairment, such as a broken arm during the examination period. These arrangements are processed as the need arises. Medical evidence is retained within the department, together with a file note detailing the circumstances, a signed data protection form and a copy of the AAO Approval.

Reviewing the Policy

In light of JCQ regulation updates, this policy is reviewed annually.

Contacts

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