Ashton Community Science College

Access Arrangements Policy

(including word processing)

Version Control

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Access Arrangements Policy (including use of word processor)

Rationale

Our Exam Access Arrangements Policy explains the activity undertaken to ensure inclusion throughout the school for all students with Additional Learning Needs (ALN), which will include those with formally diagnosed Special Educational Needs Disabilities (SEND). The policy supports and facilitates the school's aim to create a learning environment in which every student can fulfil his or her full potential.

What are Exam Access Arrangements?

Access Arrangements are actions taken to remove the disadvantages to a student accessing an examination caused by physical, learning, sensory or psychological difficulties, without creating any unfair advantage or compromising the integrity of an assessment. These arrangements are agreed before an assessment, and must reflect a student's normal way of working within the school.

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. A candidate with a disability or difficulty which has a substantial and long term effect on performance in examinations may qualify for access arrangements. An adjustment may not be considered reasonable if it involves unreasonable costs, timeframes or affects the security or integrity of the assessment.

Available Exam Access Arrangements include:

• Supervised rest breaks
• Extra time
• Reader/Computer reader
• Scribe
• Word processor
• Prompter
• Live speaker for pre-recorded examination components
• Alternative site for exams
• Bilingual translation dictionaries
• Modified papers (e.g. enlarged or modified papers)
• Language modifier

A reasonable adjustment may not be included in the list of available access arrangements because it may be unique to an individual.

Evidence needed for Access Arrangements

Various pieces of evidence are required to apply for an Exam Access Arrangement from the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ), depending on the arrangement required.
These could include:

- Form 8 report from Access Arrangements Assessor
- Previous Access Arrangements from other schools
- Subject teachers – examples of work as appropriate
- Results of baseline tests e.g. spelling, writing, reading comprehension tests
- Any letters from outside agencies, hospitals or doctors
- Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP)

Once the Access Arrangement is granted, this evidence will be held on file and available for inspection, together with:

- Permission from the awarding body for the arrangement
- A data protection notice signed by the student
- A record of where the student has been supported by Access Arrangements

Note on Private Educational Psychologists Reports

A growing number of parents are having their children assessed by private educational psychologists and submitting the reports to the SENDCo as evidence that their child should be awarded extra time, or other Access Arrangements. We can only accept private reports as part of wider school evidence. External Assessors are required to contact the SENCo before carrying out the assessment. The SENDCo will provide the Assessor with any existing information about previous support and current difficulties. A student's 'normal way of working' in school is key, and Access Arrangements will not be awarded purely on the basis of a private report. In line with JCQ guidelines, where we choose to accept or reject a privately commissioned report from an external professional, the head of centre or a member of the senior leadership team will provide a brief, written rationale to support this decision which will then be available for inspection purposes.

Identifying the need for Access Arrangements

Students will be identified for consideration for Access Arrangements in one of the following ways:

- They had an Access Arrangement in KS2 for their National Curriculum Tests
- Baseline testing in Year 7 completed using the Cognitive Ability Tests (CATs)
- Parental referral
- Subject Teacher referral
- Information from previous schools
- They are known to the Special Needs department

Testing and applying for Access Arrangements

When a student is brought to the attention of a SENDCo in one of the above ways, the SENDCo will investigate further. If further testing or screening is indicated, this will be carried out and parents informed. The outcomes of the assessments will be recorded and summarised; where an Access Arrangement is recommended due to

a learning difficulty, JCQ Form 8 Part 2 (the assessor's report) will be completed and used as evidence for online submission of a formal Access Arrangement application. The school will then apply to the Awarding Bodies using the Access Arrangements Online application system. The feedback is usually instant, and, where the Access Arrangement is approved, the arrangement is allocated to the student, and the parents informed in writing. The evidence of need is held on file, and the SENCo monitors and ensures that the Access Arrangement is normal working practice for the student within school.

Deadlines for Access Arrangement Applications

The school deadline to submit evidence and request Access Arrangements for a student in Year 11 is the July the student is in year 10. This allows the SENCo and the Examinations Officer time to plan the Year 11 mock examinations which are the last opportunity to trial any Access Arrangements. The Year 10 examinations should provide an opportunity to identify any difficulties a student may have.

Word Processors

ACSC complies with AA chapter 4 Adjustments for candidates with disabilities and learning difficulties regulations and guidance as follows:

- Candidates with access to word processors and/or laptops are allowed to do so in order to remove barriers for disabled candidates which prevent them from being placed at a substantial disadvantage as a consequence of persistent and significant difficulties
- The use of word processors is only permitted whilst ensuring that the integrity of the assessment is maintained, at the same time as providing access to assessments for a disabled candidate
- The use of a word processor is not granted where it will compromise the assessment objectives of the specification in question
- Candidates may not require the use of a word processor in each specification. As subjects and their methods of assessments may vary, leading to different demands of our candidates, the need for the use of a word processor is considered on a subject-by-subject basis
- The use of a word processor is normally considered and agreed where appropriate at the start of the course providing the centre has firmly established a picture of need and normal way of working for a candidate
- Candidates are made aware when they will have the use of a word processor for timetabled
- examinations and non-examination assessments
- The use of a word processor for candidates is only granted if it reflects the support given to the candidate as their 'normal way of working'

The only exceptions to the above would be a temporary injury or impairment, or a diagnosis of a disability or manifestation of an impairment relating to an existing disability arising after the start of the course.

The use of a word processor:

ACSC complies with AA chapter 5 Access arrangements available as follows:

- Provides a word processor with the spelling and grammar check facility/predictive text disabled (switched off)
- Only grants the use of a word processor to a candidate where it is their normal way of working (see 4.2.5 above) within the centre
- Only grants the use of a word processor to a candidate if it is appropriate to their needs (for example, the quality of language significantly improves as a result of using a word processor due to problems with planning and organisation when writing by hand) (The above also extends to the use of electronic braillers and tablets)
- Provides access to word processors to candidates in non-examination assessment components as standard practice unless prohibited by the specification
- Allows candidates to use a word processor in an examination to type certain questions, i.e. those requiring extended writing, and handwrite shorter answers
- Are also aware that examinations which have a significant amount of writing, as well as those that place a greater demand on the need to organise thought and plan extended answers, are those where candidates will frequently need to type. Examinations which require more simplistic answers are often easier to handwrite within the answer booklet. The candidate avoids the difficulty of visually tracking between the question paper and screen
- In all cases, ensures that a word processor cover sheet (Form 4) is completed and included with each candidate's typed script (according to the instructions issued by the individual awarding body)
- Does not simply grant the use of a word processor to a candidate because he/she prefers to type rather than write or can work faster on a keyboard, or because he/she uses a laptop at home

Word processors and their programmes:

ACSC complies with ICE 8.8 Word processors instructions by ensuring:

- word processors are used as a type-writer, not as a database, although standard formatting software is acceptable
- word processors have been cleared of any previously stored data, as must any portable storage medium used
- an unauthorised memory stick is not permitted for use by a candidate
- where required, candidates are provided with a memory stick, which has been cleared of any previously stored data, by a nominated member of centre staff
- word processors are in good working order at the time of the examination
- word processors are accommodated in such a way that other candidates are not disturbed and cannot read the screen
- where a candidate using a word processor is accommodated separately, a separate invigilator is used

- word processors are either connected to a printer so that a script can be printed off, or have the facility to print from a portable storage medium
- documents are printed after the examination is over
- candidates are present to verify that the work printed is their own
- word processed scripts are inserted in/attached to any answer booklet which contains some of the answers (and according to instructions issued by the individual awarding body)
- word processors are used to produce scripts under secure conditions, and if they are not then the centre is aware that they may be refused by the awarding body
- word processors are not used to perform skills which are being assessed
- word processors are not connected to an intranet or any other means of communication.
- candidates are not given access to other applications such as a calculator (where prohibited in the examination), spreadsheets etc when using a word processor
- graphic packages or computer aided design software is not included on a word processor unless permission has been given to use these
- voice recognition technology is not included on word processors unless the candidate has permission to use a scribe or relevant software

Further Information:

Further information can be found on the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) website: www.jcq.org.uk If you have questions about Access Arrangements, please contact the SENCo on 01772 513002