

ACCESS ARRANGEMENTS POLICY

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"EVERYONE EXCELS EVERYDAY"

1. PURPOSE OF THE POLICY

The purpose of this Access Arrangements Policy is to ensure that all pupils at Hollingworth Academy are provided with fair and equal opportunities to demonstrate their knowledge, skills, and understanding during assessments and examinations, in accordance with the guidelines set by relevant examination bodies and the Equality Act (2010). This policy outlines how the academy will accommodate the needs of pupils with disabilities, learning difficulties, or other specific needs that may affect their performance during assessments.

2. SCOPE OF THE POLICY

This policy applies to:

- All pupils at Hollingworth Academy
- Teachers, examination officers, SENDCO (Special Educational Needs & Disabilities Co-ordinator), parents, and external invigilators involved in the arrangement of access accommodations.

3. DEFINITIONS

- **Access Arrangements:** Reasonable adjustments that allow pupils with specific needs to demonstrate their abilities in assessments and exams without being disadvantaged.
- **SENDCO:** Special Educational Needs & Disabilities Co-ordinator, responsible for overseeing access arrangements.
- **Reasonable Adjustments:** Changes or accommodations that are made to ensure pupils with disabilities or specific needs are not unfairly disadvantaged.

4. PRINCIPLES OF ACCESS ARRANGEMENTS

- Access arrangements should be based on **evidence of need and normal way of working**.
- Arrangements are intended to level the playing field without giving an unfair advantage.
- All access arrangements must comply with the regulations set by examination boards and the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) or other relevant bodies.
- Arrangements will be individualised to meet the specific needs of each pupil, identified through assessments, medical reports, or professional diagnoses.

5. TYPES OF ACCESS ARRANGEMENTS

The types of access arrangements provided at Hollingworth Academy may include, but are not limited to:

- **Extra time:** Up to 25% extra time for pupils who have a documented processing difficulty or other valid reason.
- **Computer Reader:** Use of an online reading tool, CLARO Read.

- **Scribe:** A trained adult who writes or types for a pupil who cannot physically write or type.
- **Word Processor:** Pupils may use a word processor if it is their normal way of working, due to specific difficulties with handwriting or other conditions. Further details can be found in the centres 'Word Processor Policy'.
- **Modified Papers:** Exam papers in larger fonts, braille, or other formats suited to pupils with visual or hearing impairments.
- **Rest breaks:** Pupils are allowed supervised breaks during the examination if they have medical or mental health needs.
- **Prompter:** A trained adult who reminds the pupil to stay focused during an exam.
- **Use of a separate room:** Pupils may take exams in a separate room if they have anxiety, concentration difficulties, or require specific support.
- **Other reasonable adjustments:** Other arrangements may be provided on a case-by-case basis as determined by the SENDCO, following an assessment of need.

6. IDENTIFICATION OF NEED

The identification of a pupil's need for access arrangements may arise from the following:

- **Teacher or Parent Referral:** Teachers and parents may refer pupils for assessment if they believe access arrangements are necessary.
- **Professional Diagnosis:** Evidence from healthcare professionals (e.g., psychologists, doctors, or occupational therapists) detailing a disability or condition that requires adjustments.
- **Internal Assessments:** Data from in-class assessments, standardised testing, and the pupil's normal way of working may indicate a need for access arrangements.
- **Previous Access Arrangements:** Where a pupil has received access arrangements in earlier education (e.g., primary school or in Key Stage 3), these will be reviewed and adjusted as needed.

7. APPLICATION PROCESS FOR ACCESS ARRANGEMENTS REQUIRING JCQ APPROVAL

1. **Referral:** A teacher, parent, or pupil may submit a referral for access arrangements to the SENDCO. This must be submitted with enough time to gather evidence.
2. **Assessment:** The SENDCO/ Specialist Assessor will assess the pupil's needs based on documentation provided and any necessary formal or informal assessments.
3. **Evidence Gathering:** The SENDCO will gather supporting evidence, including:
 - Medical reports.
 - Educational Psychologist assessments.
 - Teacher observations.
 - Past examination results and accommodations.
4. **Application to Examination Bodies:** The SENDCO, in collaboration with the Exams Officer, will submit the relevant paperwork and evidence to the appropriate examination body (e.g., JCQ) for approval, via the CAP portal. This must only be done when they are supported by the centre and the candidate meets the published criteria, with full supporting evidence in place. This should be done at the start or during the first year of a two-year course, after having established a picture of need and normal

way working. Candidates must be informed that an application has been processed using the *Access Arrangements Online* portal, complying with UK GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018.

5. **Approval and Implementation:** Upon approval from the examination board, the necessary access arrangements will be put in place for all internal and external assessments.
6. **Communication:** Parents, teachers, and the pupil will be informed of the access arrangements in place. Teachers are responsible for ensuring these arrangements are applied consistently in day-to-day classroom assessments.
7. **Records:** The SENDCO must keep detailed records for inspection purposes (digital or hard copy). These include:
 - A copy of the candidate's approved application
 - Appropriate evidence
 - Evidence of the assessor's qualification

8. APPLICATION PROCESS FOR ACCESS ARRANGEMENTS THAT ARE CENTRE DELEGATED

1. **Referral:** A teacher, parent, or pupil may submit a referral for access arrangements to the SENDCO. This must be submitted with enough time to gather evidence.
2. **Evidence Gathering:** The SENDCO will gather supporting evidence, including:
 - a. Medical reports.
 - b. Educational Psychologist assessments.
 - c. Teacher observations.
 - d. Past examination results and accommodations.
3. **Implementation:** Once the SENDCO is satisfied that the need for the access arrangement is genuine the records will be updated, and the necessary access arrangements will be put in place for all internal and external assessments.
4. **Communication:** Parents, teachers, and the pupil will be informed of the access arrangements in place. Teachers are responsible for ensuring these arrangements are applied consistently in day-to-day classroom assessments.

9. ALTERNATIVE ROOMING ARRANGMENTS POLICY

A decision where an exam candidate may be approved alternative rooming arrangements, e.g. a room for a smaller group of candidates with similar needs will be made by the SENDCO.

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

Centre policy states that pupils may be placed in a smaller room if it is their normal way of working and they:

- have access arrangements which are best implemented in a smaller room (e.g. extra time or word processor)
- have a medical condition (e.g. diabetes or epilepsy)

- having a diagnosed mental health condition and/or are under review for anxiety with CAMHS, #THRIVE etc.

As per AARA guidelines, pupils must only have 1:1 invigilation where one (or more) of the following applies:

- serious medical condition (e.g. frequent seizures).
- significant behavioural issues, that would cause disruption to other candidates.

10. MONITORING AND REVIEW

- Access arrangements will be reviewed on a regular basis to ensure they remain appropriate and continue to meet the needs of the pupil.
- Teachers, parents, and the pupil may request a review at any time if they believe the pupil's needs have changed.
- The SENDCO will liaise with teachers to monitor the effectiveness of the access arrangements in supporting the pupil.

11. RESPONSIBILITIES

- **SENDCO:** Responsible for overseeing the access arrangements process, liaising with examination boards, and ensuring compliance with regulations.
- **Exams Officer:** Responsible for ensuring that examination boards are informed of the access arrangements in advance of assessments and exams.
- **Teachers:** Responsible for incorporating access arrangements into regular classroom assessments and exams where appropriate.
- **Parents:** Responsible for providing up-to-date medical or psychological evidence and supporting their child through the process.
- **Pupils:** Responsible for following the access arrangements as agreed and communicating any changes in needs to the SENDCO or relevant staff members.

12. CONFIDENTIALITY

All information and documentation regarding access arrangements will be treated as confidential and will be shared only with relevant staff members, examination bodies, and others who need to know in accordance with the academy's Data Protection Policy.

13. POLICY REVIEW

This policy will be reviewed annually or as required in response to changes in legislation or examination body regulations.

CONTACT:

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This policy is intended to ensure that all pupils have fair access to assessments and examinations, in line with their specific needs, and in a manner that promotes equality and inclusion at Hollingworth Academy.