

Lytham St Anne's High School



Access Arrangements Policy – Appendix I

2022 - 2023

This policy is reviewed annually to ensure compliance with current regulations

Approved/reviewed by	
Date of next review	

Key staff involved in the policy

Role	Name(s)
ALS lead/SENCo	Tonia Hallam
ALS lead/SENCo line manager (Senior leader)	Sara Cardno
Head of centre	Ray Baker
Assessor(s)	Tonia Hallam, Sheila Vann

Contents

Key staff involved in the policy	2
What are access arrangements and reasonable adjustments?	4
Access arrangements	4
Reasonable adjustments	4
Purpose of the policy	4
General principles	5
Equalities Policy (Exams)	5
The assessment process	5
The qualification(s) of the current assessor(s)	5
Appointment of assessors of candidates with learning difficulties	5
Process for the assessment of a candidate's learning difficulties by an assessor	6
Picture of need/normal way of working	6
Processing access arrangements and adjustments	7
Arrangements/adjustments requiring awarding body approval	7
Centre-delegated arrangements/adjustments	7
Centre-specific criteria for particular arrangements/adjustments	7
Word Processor Policy (Exams)	7
Separate Invigilation Policy	7

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 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](#))

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 several 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](#))

*References to legislation are to the Equality Act 2010. Separate legislation is in place for Northern Ireland (see [AA 1.8](#)). The definitions and procedures in [AA](#) relating to access arrangements and reasonable adjustments will also apply in Northern Ireland

Purpose of the policy

The purpose of this policy is to confirm that Lytham St Anne's High School 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, (section 5.4)

This publication is further referred to in this policy as [GR](#)

This policy is maintained and held by the ALS lead/SENCo alongside the individual files/e-folders of each access arrangements candidate. Each file/e-folder contains detailed records of all the essential information that is required to be held according to the regulations.

Where the ALS lead/SENCo is storing documentation electronically he/she **must** create an e-folder for each individual candidate. The candidate's e-folder must hold each of the required documents for inspection. ([AA](#), section4.2)

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](#)

General principles

The principles for the centre to consider are detailed in [AA](#) (section 4.2). These include:

- The purpose of an access arrangement/reasonable adjustment is to ensure, where possible, that barriers to assessment are removed for a disabled candidate preventing him/her from being placed at a substantial disadvantage due to persistent and significant difficulties. The integrity of the assessment is maintained, whilst at the same time providing access to assessments for a disabled candidate.
- The SENCo, or an equivalent member of staff within a FE college, **must** ensure that the proposed access arrangement/reasonable adjustment does not unfairly disadvantage or advantage the candidate.
- Access Arrangements/reasonable adjustments should be processed at the **start** of the course.
- The arrangement(s) put in place **must** reflect the support given to the candidate in the centre
- The candidate **must** have had appropriate opportunities to practise using the access arrangement(s)/reasonable adjustment(s) before his/her first examination.

Equalities Policy (Exams)

A large part of the access arrangements/reasonable adjustments process is covered in the Equalities Policy (Exams) which covers staff roles and responsibilities in identifying the need for, requesting and implementing access arrangements and the conduct of exams.

A copy of the Exams Equalities Policy is included as an appendix in the Lytham St Anne's High School exam policy document.

The head of centre/senior leadership team will... recognise its duties towards disabled candidates, including private candidates, ensuring compliance with all aspects of the Equality Act 2010+, particularly Section 20 (7). This **must** include a duty to explore and provide access to suitable courses, through the access arrangements process submit applications for reasonable adjustments and make reasonable adjustments to the service the centre provides to disabled candidates. Where the centre is under a duty to make reasonable adjustment, the centre must not charge a disabled candidate any additional fee in relation to the adjustment or aid ...

+or 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 assessors are appropriately qualified as required by JCQ regulations in [AA](#) Section 7.3.

The qualification(s) of the current assessor(s)

Tonia Hallam - IQ Level 7 Organisation Postgraduate Award of Proficiency in Assessment for Access Arrangements (PAPAA) - Communicate-ed

Sheila Vann - Postgraduate Certificate in Specific Learning Difficulties (Dyslexia) - British Dyslexia Association

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)

Assessor's must produce their original certificates for the SENCO/Principal to verify their awarding and a copy of these qualifications will be held with the Access Arrangement files. These certificates must be produced prior to the assessor undertaking any assessment in the centre.

Bear in mind **all** relevant JCQ regulations and guidance provided in [GR](#) and [AA](#) including:

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 in Chapter 7 of the JCQ publication Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments... (GR_section 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, section7.3)

Reporting the appointment of the assessor(s)

Evidence of the assessor's qualifications are held by the SENCO in a locked filing cabinet in her office, alongside the evidence for access arrangements.

Process for the assessment of a candidate's learning difficulties by an assessor

Students on the schools SEND register are assessed in accordance with their current needs. A student's needs are identified through the school's graduated response to meeting the needs of learners who are not making expected progress in their subjects. Students on the SEND register who are K - SEN Support or C - Additional educational need are assessed using the appropriate assessments for their areas of need.

These students are assessed every year and their normal ways of working are assessed at every data analysis point. This is to ensure we have the correct support in place for students on the SEND register.

In the Summer term of Year 9 as a centre we endeavour to complete our formal assessments for candidates with a learning difficulty. As a school we have a school referral system where staff and parents can raise a concern about their child's progress throughout their schooling, in Key Stage 4 - we ask parents and teachers to raise concerns in Year 10, to ensure we can complete the necessary assessments in a timely manner and the need for an arrangement then becomes their normal way of working.

Note

... SENCOs and assessors working within the centre should always carefully consider any privately commissioned assessment to see whether the process of gathering a picture of need, demonstrating normal way of working within the centre and ultimately assessing the candidate themselves should be instigated ([AA section7.3](#))

Picture of need/confirming normal way of working

At Lytham we start to collate evidence of need from Year 6 to 7 transition we then ensure that student passports are up to date, these are used to inform teachers of the high quality strategies they need to be using to meet a student's needs in the classroom. On this document we advise what students need to be doing when they have assessments and exams, this ensures that from Year 7 we are aiming to embed the skills they will need when they sit their exams.

Each year we review their provision and AA. In Years 10 and 11 we endeavour to work with teaching staff to gather evidence from them on how they use the AA in class and whether the student still requires this arrangement.

Before the candidate's assessment, the SENCo **must** provide the assessor with background information, i.e. a picture of need has been painted as required in Part 1 of Form 8. The SENCo and the assessor **must** work together to ensure a joined-up and consistent process.

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. Additionally, the independent assessor **must** be approved by the Head of Centre to assess the candidate.

All candidates **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/reasonable adjustments with the SENCo. The responsibility to determine and request appropriate and practical access arrangements/reasonable adjustments specifically lies with the SENCo. (AA section 7.5)

Processing access arrangements and adjustments

Arrangements/adjustments 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 covered by the tool. This tool also provides the facility to order modified papers for those qualifications included. (Refer to AA, (chapter 8) (Processing applications for access arrangements and adjustments) and chapter 6 (Modified papers)

AAO is accessed within the JCQ Centre Admin Portal (CAP) by logging in to one of the awarding body secure extranet sites. A single application for approval is required for each candidate regardless of the awarding body used.

Centre-delegated arrangements/adjustments

As a school we use the same approach to centre-delegated adjustments. These are in class, we ask for teaching staff to confirm students require these arrangements. We use a formal letter to paint a picture of need for students using centre delegated arrangements. We endeavour to review these arrangements yearly leading up to Key Stage 4 and then whilst accessing their Key Stage 4 curriculum.

Centre-specific criteria for particular arrangements/adjustments

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 the candidate now wants to type rather than write in exams or can work faster on a keyboard, or because they use a laptop at home. The use of a word processor must reflect the candidates normal way of working within the centre.

The Exam Word Processor Policy document is included as an appendix in this document and is also kept in a locked filing cabinet in the SENCO's office.

Separate Invigilation Policy

A decision where an exam candidate may be approved separate invigilation within the centre will be made by the ALS lead/SENCo in conjunction with the Exams Officer.

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 (AA section 5.16)

As a school students who use a separate exam room or smaller space, are students who are-

- a) Are accessing SEMH support in school, counselling services and or Camhs
- b) Students who are taught in small classes.
- c) Students who have a diagnosis, that would impact on their ability and the ability of others to be able to complete the exams in the correct environment, if they were placed in the main hall for exams.

Separate invigilation must reflect the candidate's normal and current way of working in internal school tests and mock examinations.

Nervousness, low level anxiety or being worried about examinations is not sufficient grounds for separate invigilation within the centre. ([AA](#), section 5.16)