

Access Arrangements Policy

2020/21

This policy is reviewed annually to ensure compliance with current regulations

Approved/reviewed by	
Mr A. Shaw	
Date of next review	October 2021

Key staff involved in the policy

Role	Name(s)
Additional Learner Support (ALS) lead/SENCo	Mrs L. Findlay
ALS lead/SENCo line manager (Senior leader)	Miss D. Sullivan
Head of centre	Mr G. Langston-Jones
Assessor(s)	Mrs J. Byrne
Access arrangement facilitator(s)	Mrs R. Bentley Mrs M. Bradbury Mrs R. Chilver Mr L. Clarke Mrs R. Forrester Miss T. Gibson Miss L. Harrison Mrs S. McGreggor Mrs J. Millard Mrs C Sharp

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What are access arrangements and reasonable adjustments?

Access arrangements

AA (Definitions, page 3) state... **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'.

Reasonable adjustments

AA (Definitions, page 3) state... 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'.

Purpose of the policy

The purpose of this policy is to confirm that Nether Stowe 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 SENCo alongside the individual files of each access arrangements candidate. Each file contains detailed records of all the essential information that is required to be held according to the regulations.

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 general principles of access arrangements for the centre to consider are detailed in AA (section 4.2). These include:

The purpose of an access arrangement 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 must ensure that the proposed access arrangement does not disadvantage or advantage the candidate.

Arrangements must always be approved before an examination or assessment.

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) before his/her first examination.

Equalities Policy (Exams)

A large part of the access arrangements 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.

The Access Arrangements Policy further covers the assessment process and related issues in more detail.

The assessment process

Assessments are carried out by an assessors appointed by the head of centre. The assessor is appropriately qualified as required by JCQ regulations in [AA 7.3](#).

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

IQ Level 7 Organisation Postgraduate Award of Proficiency in Assessment for Access Arrangements (PAPAA)

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

Evidence of the assessor's qualification(s) is held on file for inspection purposes and be presented to the JCQ Centre Inspector by the SENCo. ([AA 7.3](#))

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

Where a candidate has learning difficulties and is not subject to a current *Education, Health and Care Plan* or *Statement of Special Educational Needs*, SENCo prepares a detailed picture of need demonstrating the candidate's normal way of working and completing Part 1 of Form 8 prior to the candidate being assessed .

Painting a 'holistic picture of need', confirming normal way of working

Before the candidate's assessment, SENCo provides the assessor with background information, and all evidence of the candidate's normal way of working. This reflects the support given in the classroom and during internal tests/mock examinations.

Processing access arrangements

Arrangements requiring awarding body approval

Applications for access arrangements are submitted to the exam boards using their online tool (AAO). Prior to an application, each candidate must sign a JCQ Data Protection Form. When approved the candidates printed report and all supporting documentation is held on his/her file in

the SENCo department. Their approval number and application expiry date are recorded onto a summary report used when planning examinations.

Applications are processed again for A Levels following GCSE examinations. Access Arrangements will only allow a maximum of 26 months for any arrangements.

Centre-delegated access arrangements

Where exam board approval is not required, Nether Stowe School may grant individual candidates personal arrangements to meet their individual needs if at a substantial disadvantage when compared with other candidates undertaking the same assessment. Candidates themselves or their teachers may make a referral or raise concerns i.e. handwriting, concentration/focus and needs pertaining to reading. The gathered evidence is held on their file and implemented through lessons and all examinations.

Centre-specific criteria for particular access arrangements

Word Processor Policy (Exams)

An exam candidate may be approved the use of a word processor (with the spelling and grammar check/predictive text disabled) for internal and external exams where this is appropriate to the candidate's needs and not simply because this is the candidate's preferred way of working within the centre. Evidence is required in all cases.

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. The candidate's difficulties must be established within the centre (see Chapter 4, paragraph 4.1.4) and known to a Form Tutor, a Head of Year, the SENCo or a senior member of staff with pastoral responsibilities.

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 5.16)