



Arts & Media School
ISLINGTON

Access Arrangements Policy

Date: 2023-2024

ACCESS ARRANGEMENTS POLICY

2023/24

This policy is reviewed annually to ensure compliance with current regulations

Approved/reviewed by	
Angella Harris	
Date of next review	January 2025

Key staff involved in the policy

Role	Name(s)
SENCo	Angella Harris
SENCo line manager (Senior leader)	Maleka Begum
Head of centre	Susan Service
Assessor	Angella Harris
Access arrangement facilitator(s)	Angella Harris

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.....	4
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.....	6
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
Alternative Rooming Arrangements Policy.....	8
Appendices.....	9

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'. (¹AA, 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'. (¹AA, 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 Arts and Media 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's **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. (¹AA, section 4.2)

The policy is annually reviewed to ensure that processes are carried out in accordance with the current edition of the JCQ publication 'Adjustments t for candidates with disabilities and learning difficulties - **Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments**'.

¹This 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 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.

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)/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.

The Equalities Policy (Exams) can be found on the school website

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 a 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, section 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 assessor(s) is (are) appropriately qualified as required by JCQ regulations in AA, section 7.3.

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

The Access Arrangement Assessor at Arts and Media School is also the SENCO who holds Certificate of Psychometric Testing, Assessment & Access Arrangements (CPT3A)

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)

Arts and Media School has a written statement of the process of checking the qualifications of centre's assessors and that the assessment process is administered correctly" on file as per Chapter 7 of the JCQ publication Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments. (GR5.4)

The Headteacher of Arts and Media School will 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) will be held on file for inspection purposes and be presented to the JCQ Centre Inspector by the Exams Officer.

The Headteacher is responsible for checking the qualifications and the appointment of the access assessor. The Headteacher is responsible for the quality of the AA process.

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

Reporting the appointment of the assessor(s)

Evidence of the assessor's qualifications are held on file by the Exams Officer and in the AA file for JCQ inspection

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 the teachers and SLT will be painting a picture of need and demonstrating the candidate's normal way of working and completing Section 1 of Form 8 prior to the candidate being assessed, ensuring that the correct procedures are followed as per Chapter 7 of the JCQ publication Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments.

Arts and Media School do not currently accept private candidates who were not previously on roll.

Arts and Media School will 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 7.3)

Picture of need/normal way of working

On admission students with an EHCP (Educational Healthcare Plan) are allocated appropriate in-class support by the SENCo.

At any point throughout the year, the Behaviour and Inclusion Team and SENCo will aim to identify new students (without an EHCP) who may require assessing to confirm any additional needs (using input from prior data and teaching staff concerns over performance in class/test situations over an extended period/concerns raised by parents).

Additionally, evidence is also gathered for students via CAHMs, counselling, police reports, inclusion notes, EP and other reports.

Year 9 – Access Arrangements Testing following assessments that are carried out at the end of yr9 in order that applications for Access Arrangements can be completed and approved by Exam Boards before the start of Year 10. (When making an application the school utilises all previous years' testing as evidence of the student's difficulties as well as being able to demonstrate the normal way of working within the classroom and during test situations, which is a JCQ requirement. Any application we make requesting Access Arrangements needs to include school-based evidence of need.)

Details of measures provided in mock exams and assessments are documented by the use access arrangement logs maintained by the Access Arrangements Facilitator. These are shared with all staff through internal document sharing

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.

The SENCo must keep detailed records, whether electronically or in hard copy paper format, of all the essential information on file. This includes a copy of the candidate's approved application, appropriate evidence of need (where required) and a signed candidate personal data consent form for inspection by the JCQ Centre Inspection Service. (AA 8.6)

In line with JCQ regulations the SENCo makes the online applications by the published deadline of the 21st February 2022. The SENCo keeps a record of the printed online application, letters from awarding bodies, Form 8's, a copy a data protection form, assessments and any additional forms or documents for inspection. The files for inspection are located in the SEN office. Students and Teachers are informed verbally of the outcome of their exam access assessment by the SEN team. A record of a candidate's access arrangements are maintained and held electronically by the Access Arrangements Facilitator

Centre-delegated arrangements/adjustments

Centre delegated arrangements/adjustments (CDAA) are made in line with JCQ regulations with evidence of normal way of working held on file. The SENCO is the final arbiter of all CDAA

These arrangements are shared with all staff through internal documentation

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 candidate's normal way of working within the centre.

The Word Processor Policy (Exams) can be found on the school website.

Alternative Rooming Arrangements 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 (formerly known as separate invigilation) will be made by the ALS lead/SENCo.

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)