

# Access Arrangements Policy 2023- 2024

## Contents Page

Key staff involved in the Policy	2
What are access arrangements and reasonable adjustments?	2
Access Arrangements	2
Reasonable adjustments	2
Purpose of the Policy	3
General Principles	4
Equalities Policy (Exams)	4
The assessment process	4
The qualification(s) of the current assessor(s)	4
Appointment of assessors of candidates with learning difficulties	5
Process for the assessment of a candidate’s learning difficulties by an assessor	5
Painting a ‘holistic picture of need’, confirming normal way of working	5
Processing access arrangements and adjustments	6
Arrangements/adjustments requiring awarding body approval	6
Centre-delegated arrangements/adjustments	6
Centre-specific criteria for particular arrangements/adjustments	6
Word Processor Policy (Exams)	6
Separate Invigilation Policy	7
Appendices	5

## Review

This policy is reviewed annually to ensure compliance with current regulations.

<b>Approved and reviewed by</b>	The Governing Body
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<b>Date of next review</b>	September 2023
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### Key staff involved in the policy

Role	Name
ALS Lead/ SENCo	Gemma Fox
ALS Lead / SENCo Line Manager (Senior Leader)	Julie Wood
Head of centre	James Topham
Assessor(s)	Gemma Fox
Access arrangement facilitator(s)	Gemma Fox

## 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 Wood Green Academy 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...

(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 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 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 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/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.
- 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 practice 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 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)

Gemma Fox– SENCo

## **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)**

Gemma Fox – Postgraduate Award of Proficiency in Assessment for Access Arrangements (Level 7)

## **Reporting the appointment of the assessor(s)**

- JCQ form 8
- Completed test papers
- Education Health Care Plans
- Teacher comments
- Student comments
- Inclusion Support review documents for Moderate Learning Difficulties
- Inclusion Support review documents for Specific Learning Difficulties.
- Psychologist reports
- Evidence of students' work

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

A picture of need is developed over a number of years ranging from Year 7 to Year 9. Students who are on the SEN register within Wood Green Academy and currently receive interventions from the SEN department for their learning needs are tested by Gemma Fox (SENCo) to determine the level of support needed for examination access arrangements. Teacher comments and previous academic attainment (including Key Stage 2 primary school data) is taken into consideration to develop an accurate picture of need.

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

The following list are examples of how access arrangements become normal working way of practise: in the classroom (where appropriate);

- working in small groups for reading and/or writing;

- Accelerated reading programme
- literacy support lessons via the Skills Development programme
- Touch type programmes
- Literacy intervention strategies
- Internal school tests/examinations

## **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.

Following the completion of form 8s by the external assessor, the SENCo then makes an application online using the AQA website.

Form 8s and hardcopies of the online application forms are stored in a folder in the SENCo office.

### **Centre-delegated access arrangements/adjustments**

A proforma designed by the SENCo at Wood Green Academy is completed for students who are only entitled to any one of the following:

- Word Processor
- Reader
- Separate room

## **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.

## **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 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)

Medical evidence typically accompanies requests for separate invigilation away from the school hall when based on medical needs alone.

## Appendices