**ACCESS ARRANGEMENTS POLICY**

2022/23

This policy is reviewed annually to ensure compliance with current regulations

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Approved/reviewed by | |
| Reviewed by Sarah Bailey-Wiles | |
| Date of next review | 7.5.2024 |

Key staff involved in the policy

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Role | Name(s) |
| ALS lead/Acting SENCo | **Mr Steve CARR** |
| ALS lead/SENCo line manager (Senior leader) | **Ms Sarah BAILEY-WILES** |
| Head of centre | **Mr George COLES** |
| Assessor(s) | **Mrs Anne SHIPTON** |
| Access arrangement facilitator(s) | **Nottingham City Council (Local Authority)** |

Contents

[Key staff involved in the policy 2](#_Toc116998071)

[What are access arrangements and reasonable adjustments? 4](#_Toc116998072)

[Access arrangements 4](#_Toc116998073)

[Reasonable adjustments 4](#_Toc116998074)

[Purpose of the policy 4](#_Toc116998075)

[General principles 4](#_Toc116998076)

[Equalities Policy (Exams) 5](#_Toc116998077)

[The assessment process 5](#_Toc116998078)

[The qualification(s) of the current assessor(s) 5](#_Toc116998079)

[Appointment of assessors of candidates with learning difficulties 5](#_Toc116998080)

[Process for the assessment of a candidate’s learning difficulties by an assessor 6](#_Toc116998081)

[Picture of need/normal way of working 7](#_Toc116998082)

[Processing access arrangements and adjustments 7](#_Toc116998083)

[Arrangements/adjustments requiring awarding body approval 7](#_Toc116998084)

[Centre-delegated arrangements/adjustments 8](#_Toc116998085)

[Centre-specific criteria for particular arrangements/adjustments 8](#_Toc116998086)

[Word Processor Policy (Exams) 8](#_Toc116998087)

[Separate Invigilation Policy 9](#_Toc116998088)

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’. (1[AA](http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/access-arrangements-and-special-consideration/regulations-and-guidance), 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’. (1[AA](http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/access-arrangements-and-special-consideration/regulations-and-guidance), Definitions)

\*References to legislation are to the Equality Act 2010. Separate legislation is in place for Northern Ireland (see [AA](http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/access-arrangements-and-special-consideration/regulations-and-guidance) 1.8). The definitions and procedures in [AA](http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/access-arrangements-and-special-consideration/regulations-and-guidance) 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 The Wells 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.

(JCQ’s **General Regulations for Approved Centres**, section 5.4)

This publication is further referred to in this policy as [GR](http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/general-regulations)

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 **mus**t create an e-folder for each individual candidate. The candidate’s e-folder must hold each of the required documents for inspection. (1[AA](http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/access-arrangements-and-special-consideration/regulations-and-guidance), 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 for candidates with disabilities and learning difficulties - **Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments**’.

1This publication is further referred to in this policy as [AA](http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/access-arrangements-and-special-consideration/regulations-and-guidance)

General principles

The principles for the centre to consider are detailed in [AA](http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/access-arrangements-and-special-consideration/regulations-and-guidance) (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 Full Equalities Policy can be found on the school’s file management system, Microsoft Teams, within the “WAC\_Exams” section. Additionally, a paper version of this policy will be kept with: the Exams Officer, the Vice Principal in charge of examinations, the head of centre, the SENDCo and the Head of Year 11.  **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 no**t 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](http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/general-regulations), 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](http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/access-arrangements-and-special-consideration/regulations-and-guidance), section 7.3.

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

|  |
| --- |
| The current assessor is Anne SHIPTON Notts City, who possesses the following qualifications:   * Post-Graduate Award of Proficiency in Assessment of 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](http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/access-arrangements-and-special-consideration/regulations-and-guidance). This process is carried out prior to the assessor undertaking any assessment of a candidate.

**Checking the qualification(s) of the assessor(s)**

|  |
| --- |
| Upon the first meeting with the centre’s SENDCo, the assessor has their qualifications verified and a photocopy is made and stored in the access arrangements file. This is in accordance with A.A. guideline 7.4.  **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](http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/general-regulations), 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](http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/access-arrangements-and-special-consideration/regulations-and-guidance), section 7.3)  At The Wells Academy, exam access arrangements are facilitated through the Local Authority Notts City and the Learning Support Specialist with the qualification for assessing completes all assessments for students identified as required considering for exam access arrangements. Evidence of the assessor’s qualification is held by the centre and stored in the Exam Access Arrangements folder. |

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

|  |
| --- |
| The centre’s SENDCo maintains the evidence of the assessor(s)’s qualifications in the Access Arrangements folder, and is therefore available upon request to JCQ inspectors. |

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

|  |
| --- |
| The Assessment procedure is led by the specialist external assessor.   * Upon SENDCo completion of part of the Form 8, to evidence a candidate’s normal way of working within the centre and paints a clear picture of need, specialist assessors will assess the candidate using JCQ approved testing. * The assessor carries out confidential testing on a one-to-one basis with the candidate. The results of this will form the basis of an access arrangement application. * The original tests, supporting evidence, Form 8’s, processed application forms and signed data protection forms are stored in the candidate’s file in the access arrangements folder.   In doing so, The Wells Academy ensures that the correct procedures are followed as per Chapter 7 of the JCQ publication “Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments”.  **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](http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/access-arrangements-and-special-consideration/regulations-and-guidance), section 7.3)  No other arrangements are granted (in the case of private candidates / home educated students) unless the above processes have been completed by the specialist assessor and can be evidenced as a normal way of work through documentation provided by previous settings / 1:1 tutors / external specialists etc. The SENCo will undertake the necessary and appropriate steps to gather a picture of need and demonstrate normal way of working for a private candidate. The SENCo, where required, will lead on the assessment process and the candidate must be assessed by the approved assessor. In some instances, depending on their needs, a candidate may need to be assessed away from the centre, such as in their own home, and the centre must comply with the obligation to identify the need for, request and implement access arrangements.  SENCo undertakes the necessary and appropriate steps to gather a  picture of need and demonstrate normal way of working for a private candidate such as  a distance learner or a home educated student. The centre, where required, must lead  on the assessment process. The candidate must be assessed by the centre’s appointed  assessor. In some instances, depending on his/her needs, the candidate may have to  be assessed away from the centre, for example at home. The centre must comply with  the obligation to identify the need for, request and implement access arrangements  SENCo undertakes the necessary and appropriate steps to gather a  picture of need and demonstrate normal way of working for a private candidate such as  a distance learner or a home educated student. The centre, where required, must lead  on the assessment process. The candidate must be assessed by the centre’s appointed  assessor. In some instances, depending on his/her needs, the candidate may have to  be assessed away from the centre, for example at home. The centre must comply with  the obligation to identify the need for, request and implement access arrangements  SENCo undertakes the necessary and appropriate steps to gather a  picture of need and demonstrate normal way of working for a private candidate such as  a distance learner or a home educated student. The centre, where required, must lead  on the assessment process. The candidate must be assessed by the centre’s appointed  assessor. In some instances, depending on his/her needs, the candidate may have to  be assessed away from the centre, for example at home. The centre must comply with  the obligation to identify the need for, request and implement access arrangements  SENCo undertakes the necessary and appropriate steps to gather a  picture of need and demonstrate normal way of working for a private candidate such as  a distance learner or a home educated student. The centre, where required, must lead  on the assessment process. The candidate must be assessed by the centre’s appointed  assessor. In some instances, depending on his/her needs, the candidate may have to  be assessed away from the centre, for example at home. The centre must comply with  the obligation to identify the need for, request and implement access arrangements  SENCo undertakes the necessary and appropriate steps to gather a  picture of need and demonstrate normal way of working for a private candidate such as  a distance learner or a home educated student. The centre, where required, must lead  on the assessment process. The candidate must be assessed by the centre’s appointed  assessor. In some instances, depending on his/her needs, the candidate may have to  be assessed away from the centre, for example at home. The centre must comply with  the obligation to identify the need for, request and implement access arrangements |

Picture of need/normal way of working

|  |
| --- |
| Where a candidate has a substantial impairment, a SENDCo file note documents the candidates persistent and significant difficulties and how they substantially impact on teaching and learning. Their normal way of working within the centre is evidenced and supporting documentation from an appropriately qualified professional, supports the file note and confirms that the candidate has persistent/significant difficutleis and is disabled within the definition of the Equality Act 2010, e.g. a letter from:   * CAMHS * A HCPC registered psychologist * A medical consultant * A psychiatrist * A Speech and Language Therapist (SaLT) * Local Authority Specialist Service, Local Authority Sensory Impairment Service or Occupational Health * A **current** Statement of Special Educational Needs, or an Education, Health and Care Plan, **which confirms the candidate’s disability.**   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 practicable access arrangements/reasonable adjustments specifically lies with the SENCo**.** ([AA](http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/access-arrangements-and-special-consideration/regulations-and-guidance), 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](http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/access-arrangements-and-special-consideration/regulations-and-guidance), 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 procedure for applying for access arrangements via AAO is as follows:   * The SENDCo will have identified candidates who would benefit from access arrangements and have compiled evidence of need and evidence of normal way of working in the access arrangements folder. * Upon completion of a candidate’s access arrangement portfolio, the SENDCo will meet with the exams officer, who will complete the application via AAO under supervision. The SENDCo will provide answers to necessary questions as part of the application process. * The results of completed applications are printed and kept in the candidate’s access arrangement portfolio along with the appropriate evidence of need (where required) and a signed data protection notice. * The access arrangements folder is stored in the SENDCo’s office and is available for inspection by the JCQ Centre inspection service.   + - * 1. Note the change to the (AAO) Candidate **Personal data consent from** and the requirement for completion of the [Data protection confirmation by the examinations officer or SENCo](https://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/access-arrangements-and-special-consideration/forms/), prior to the processing of the online application, which must be retained for 26 months from the date of the online application being approved.   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](http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/access-arrangements-and-special-consideration/regulations-and-guidance), section 8.6) |

Centre-delegated arrangements/adjustments

|  |
| --- |
| Centre-delegated access arrangements and reasonable adjustments refer to those which are granted by the centre.  The centre offers a smaller, quieter examinations venue for candidates who may benefit from it, but do not have needs that require access arrangements with awarding body approval.  Candidates may be provided with this arrangement for reason such as, but not limited to:   * Having an identified SEND need that would be better served in the quiet venue * Recent physical injuries or sickness * Bereavement or other such upsetting incidents that would impact a candidate’s performance in the exam * Behaviour concerns that would necessitate closer supervision of the candidate, and to separate them from the main exam venue in order to minimise potential disruption to the majority of the cohort.   The SENDCo keeps a record of all centre-delegated access arrangements and evidence of need on file.  A record of arrangements are maintained and held electronically by the access arrangements facilitator. |

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 Full Word Processor Policy can be found on the school’s staff file management system, Microsoft Teams, within the “WAC\_Exams” section and I the relevant section of the Academy’s website. Additionally, a paper version of this policy will be kept with: the Exams Officer, the Vice Principal in charge of examinations, the Head of Centre, the SENDCo and the Head of Year.  A member of the centre’s senior leadership team must produce a word processor policy, specific to the centre, which details the criteria the centre uses to award and allocate word processors for examinations and assessments. This policy must be available for inspection. ([AA](http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/access-arrangements-and-special-consideration/regulations-and-guidance), section 5.8) |

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](http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/access-arrangements-and-special-consideration), section 5.16)

|  |
| --- |
| The SENDCo will gather evidence and compile a portfolio for any candidate who may require separate invigilation, and then liaise with the exams officer to determine an appropriate venue within the centre, likely to be an empty classroom or SLT office. The exams officer is then responsible for ensuring that the venue is appropriately prepared for separate invigilation, in accordance with JCQ regulations on the matter.  The SENDCo and the Exams Officer will liaise to deploy an appropriately qualified invigilator (internal or otherwise) for the separate invigilation. The deployed invigilator will be trained to facilitate this, with the details recorded in the invigilator training log.  In the case of separate invigilation, the candidate’s disability is **established within the centre** (see Chapter 4, paragraph 4.1.4). It is known to a Form Tutor, a Head of Year, the SENCo or a senior member of staff with pastoral responsibilities. **For** example, a long-term medical condition which has a substantial and adverse effect.  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](http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/access-arrangements-and-special-consideration/regulations-and-guidance), section 5.16) |