



# Access Arrangements

<b>Role</b>	<b>Name(s)</b>
SENCo	<b>Lucy Saxon</b>
Head of centre	<b>Stephen Walton, Headteacher</b>
Assessor(s)	<b>Lucy Saxon</b>
Access arrangement facilitator(s)	<b>Karen Cook, Access Arrangement Co-ordinator</b>

## **Purpose of the policy**

The purpose of this policy is to confirm that Chauncy 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, 5.4)

This policy is maintained and held by the SENCo alongside the individual files for 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 (AARA).

## **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'. (AARA, 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'.

The centre must ensure that approved adjustments can be delivered to candidates. (AARA, Definitions)

## **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 them 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 ensures that the proposed access arrangement does not disadvantage or advantage the candidate.
- The centre must make decisions on appropriate access arrangements for their candidates. Although professionals from other organisations may give advice, they cannot make the decision of the centre. They will not have a working knowledge of an individual candidate's needs and how their difficulties impact in the classroom and/or timed assessments. It is the responsibility of the SENCO to make appropriate and informed decisions based on the JCQ regulations.
- Arrangements must always be approved before an examination or assessment and at the start of a course where possible
- 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 Statement (Exams)**

The head of centre/senior leadership team will recognise its duties towards disabled candidates, including private candidates, as defined under the terms of the Equality Act 2010. This will 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.

### **The assessment process**

Assessments are carried out by an assessor appointed by the head of centre. The assessor is appropriately qualified and the correct procedures are followed, as required by JCQ regulations in AARA 7.3.

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

Lucy Saxon, SENCO, holds the following qualification which meets the criteria set out by JCQ. She completes annual update training and is on the British Psychological Society Register of Qualifications in Test Use. Her line manager is the Head of Centre and the performance process ensures adherence to the correct procedures for the access arrangements.

CCET + AAC = CPT3A (Certificate in Psychometric Testing, Assessment and Access Arrangements) Real Training, Middlesex University,

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

The head of centre ensures the assessor's qualification remains appropriate and up to date as part of the performance review process. Details of training completed are recorded to reflect the most current competencies of the assessor. This evidence is held on file and is available for inspection purposes and will be presented to the JCQ Centre Inspector by the SENCO whenever requested.

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

Exam Access Arrangements processes are administered with regard to the Equality Act 2010 regulations and SEN Code of Practice (2014).

Students will be identified for possible access arrangements through a combination of the following criteria/on-going assessment and review:

- Information on Key Stage 2 access arrangements is requested and shared at transition and students are monitored through Key Stage 3 to look for on-going need
- Assessment and monitoring of students' academic and processing begins in year 7 where students complete a range of cognitive and literacy assessments
- Termly assessment, screening and tracking information
- As part of the EHCP annual review process
- In KS3 students with specific needs are allowed access arrangements for class work and assessments to allow them to display their full underlying knowledge. This information is shared with staff via the KS3 Access Arrangement Spreadsheet. On-going monitoring ensures this provision remains appropriate and informs Key Stage 4 assessment.
- Referral from a teacher and evidence supporting student's area of need – from year 7.
- Presentation of a recent medical letter/diagnosis from a qualified health care professional.
- Parental concern/request for assessment.
- Students are also identified via prior literacy testing and the school SEN register. The assessor meets with each student individually, who have been identified as requiring formal access arrangements, to complete a range of JCQ approved assessments. These tests include:
  - DASH 11-16/17+
  - WRAT 5
  - TOMAL 2
  - CTOPP 2
  - SPaRCSRAN – RAS
  - NFER
  - ACCESS Reading and Mathematics
- Private assessments are also considered as part of the process for deciding on assessment. The SENCo will use these to guide student's assessment and to help confirm a picture of need.

- Students and their parents are able to share concerns around access needs and request further investigations and assessment if appropriate.
- Where students join Chauncy with access arrangements in place, Form 8s are requested as soon as possible to support online applications and as evidence for history of need.

### **Painting a picture of need' and gathering evidence to demonstrate normal way of working**

The SENCO has responsibility for compiling evidence on history of need and gathering evidence to confirm current needs and evidence of normal working practice.

The aim in gathering evidence of need is to demonstrate normal way of working within the centre. The arrangements must reflect the support given to students in Chauncy, for example:

- In the classroom where appropriate
- In internal school tests/assessments
- Mock exams

All teachers at Chauncy have a responsibility to provide evidence to the SENCO to support the normal way of working with the students' lessons and activities. The only exception to this is where an access arrangement is put in place as a consequence of a temporary injury or impairment. The SENCO must gather information regarding the temporary injury or impairment to 'paint a picture of need'.

### **Processing access arrangements**

#### **Arrangements 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 AARA 8 (Processing applications for access arrangements and adjustments) and AARA 6 (Modified papers).

AAO is accessed within the JCQ Centre Admin Portal (CAP) by using 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 is responsible for submitting the applications to AAO within the published JCQ deadlines. Online applications will only be published where they are supported by the centre and the candidate meets the published criteria for the arrangements, with the full supporting evidence in place (AARA 8 Summary). All applications are stored as hard copies with the supporting documentation in the SENCOs office. Each student must sign a JCQ Data Protection Form prior to an application and this is stored with their Form 8, alongside a copy of a candidate's approved application, appropriate evidence of need (where required) and details of the assessor's qualifications. The files for inspection are available for inspection whenever requested, in either electronic or hard copy paper format. Parents and students are informed of the outcome of any assessment and the arrangements in place. Information on each student's provision is shared with staff through the Access Arrangement spreadsheet. Students are offered a card with details of their specific arrangements to share with staff for assessments.

Applications are processed again for Key Stage 5 following GCSE examinations. Students and teachers are consulted prior to this application to ensure the arrangements remain appropriate.

### **Centre-delegated access arrangements**

The school follows JCQ guidance when providing centre designated arrangements. The SENCO ensures that these are appropriate for a student's needs and reflect their normal working practice. Teacher feedback is sought to help the SENCO make an informed decision. Staff are made aware of these arrangements and students are allowed these for internal assessments. The SENCO ensures appropriate evidence is held on file and informs the Exam Office of all arrangements prior to exams/assessments taking place to ensure that appropriate facilities/arrangements are provided.

### **Centre-specific criteria for particular access arrangements**

#### **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 this is the candidate's preferred way of working within the centre. The centre policy reflects the arrangements for use of word processors in exams. This policy is available for inspection purposes.

#### **Alternative Rooming Arrangements Policy**

Separate invigilation reflects the candidate's normal way of working in internal school tests and mock examinations as a consequence of a long term medical condition or long term social, mental or emotional needs. (AA 5.16)

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)

A decision where an exam candidate may be approved separate invigilation within the centre will be made by the SENCo, supported by evidence from teachers, the Pastoral team and outside professionals.

The SENCO will make arrangements for a student to sit their examination in a smaller room if it is their normal way of working and

- Written evidence is provided from a medical or mental health professional which outlines the student's need and explicitly recommends separate invigilation.
- The history of the student is known to the SENCO e.g. evidence provided by previous school.
- The student has mental health and/or social/emotional needs, and is accessing supporting with school or via an external agency e.g. CAMHS.
- The student qualifies for an access arrangement necessitating separate invigilation e.g. scribe.
- The SENCO/Safeguarding team has made an assessment that the student will be substantially disadvantaged by sitting their examinations in the main examination room.

In exceptional circumstances a student may be granted separate invigilation in their own room if they will be significantly disadvantaged by sitting their examinations in a room with other candidates and evidence is on file. Evidence can be from:

- Medical or mental health specialist explicitly recommends the use of a room on their own
- A significant history of need and known to the SENCO/Safeguarding team

All evidence must be on file before the examination take place.

The only exception to this would be a temporary illness, a temporary injury or other temporary indisposition which is clearly evidenced.

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

### **Use of technology**

Chauncy will consider the use of technology to support students in their exams. Computer readers, examination reading pens, speech recognition technology and word processors will continue to be explored to allow candidates to work independently but also as better preparation for Further and Higher Education and the world of employment.