



Access arrangements policy

2021/22

This policy is reviewed annually to ensure compliance with current regulations

Approved/reviewed by	
Emma Pearce	
Date of next review	October 2022

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 particular 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, page 3]

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 a number of 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'. 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, page 3]

Purpose of the policy

The purpose of this policy is to confirm that The Pines Special 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, 5.5]

This publication is further referred to in this policy as [GR](#)

This policy is maintained and held by the SENDCo 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.

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](#)

Disability policy (exams)

A large part of the access arrangements process is covered in the Disability Policy (exams) which covers staff roles and responsibilities in identifying the need for, requesting and implementing access arrangements and the conduct of exams. The Disability policy can be found on the school's website and is available on request from the schools' reception.

The Access arrangements policy further covers the assessment process and related issues in more detail.

The assessment process

All students within The Pines Special School have a current EHCP and a diagnosis of ASC. The exams officer will make the relevant AAO and ensure sufficient evidence of Normal Way of Working is kept on file. Form 8 is not required and must not be used. If assessment is required they will be carried out by an assessor(s) appointed by the head of centre. The assessor will be appropriately qualified as required by JCQ regulations in [AA](#) 7.3.

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

N/A

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)

The headteacher of The Pines 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.

Reporting the appointment of the assessor(s)

If an assessor is used, evidence of the assessor's qualifications will be held on file by the Exams Officer.

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

All students within the Pines Special School have a current EHCP and have a diagnosis of ASC. Access arrangements will reflect each candidate's normal way of working at the centre. The SENDCo and exams officer will ensure that the correct procedures are followed as per Chapter 7 of the JCQ publication Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments.

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

Individual staff roles and procedures are outlined in The Pine Special School exams specific Disability Policy. All Pines Special School's procedures strictly adhere to the regulations set out in the JCQ publications AA, ICE & GR.

All students at The Pines School have a current EHCP and a diagnosis of ASC. The exams officer, working within the class teams will collate evidence of each candidate's normal ways of working within the centre which will build a picture of need to determine if access arrangements are required. Form 8 is not required and must not be used. If additional assessments are required, the EO will discuss this with the independent assessor.

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 listed on page 2 of [AA](#). This tool also provides the facility to order modified papers for those qualifications listed on page 74.

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 is required for each candidate regardless of the awarding body used.

The exams officer is responsible for applying for AAO and keeping detailed records in Candidates individual folders, as outlined below:

"The SENDCo 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 data protection notice for inspection by the JCQ Centre Inspection Service." [AA 8.6]

Applications will be submitted in the Autumn term when candidates begin Year 10 or when they formally begin the accredited course. The EO will submit applications and keep, on file, all relevant documentation.

Centre-delegated access arrangements

All students at The Pines Special School have an EHCP, the exams officer will make the relevant AAO and ensure sufficient evidence of Normal Way of Working is kept on file. Form 8 is not required and must not be used.

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 Pines Special School has a policy on the use of word processors which articulates to parents/carers, principally, that a word processor cannot simply be granted to a candidate because it is their personal preference of working. A copy of the policy on using a word processor in examinations can be accessed by students and parents/carers on the school's website or a hard copy can requested from the school's reception.

The use of a word processor reflects the candidate's normal way of working within The Pines School.

Separate invigilation within the centre

A decision where an exam candidate may be approved separate invigilation within the centre will be made by the SENDCo.

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]

The Exams Officer is aware that candidates are only entitled to the above arrangements if they are disabled within the meaning of the Equality Act. The candidate is at a substantial disadvantage when compared with other non-disabled candidates undertaking the assessment and it would be reasonable in all the circumstances to provide the arrangement. (The only exception to this would be a temporary illness, a temporary injury or other temporary indisposition which is clearly evidenced.)