

Access Arrangements Policy

2018/19

This policy is reviewed annually to ensure compliance with current regulations

Approved/reviewed by

Key staff involved in the access arrangements process

Role	Name(s)
SENDCo	Amy Griffiths
SENDCo line manager (Senior Leader)	Anna Leman
Head of centre	Fiona Brierley
Assessor(s)	Jo Bicknell

Equality statement

All duties and procedures will not discriminate against students or staff. In carrying out its public duties, SHSG will do so with due regard of the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who shared a protected characteristic and people who do not.
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not.

We will not discriminate against, harass or victimise staff or students because of; sex, race, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, pregnancy/maternity, or gender reassignment.

Contents

Key staff involved in the access arrangements process.....	2
What are access arrangements and reasonable adjustments?	4
Access arrangements	4
Reasonable adjustments.....	4
Purpose of the policy	4
Disability 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
Painting a <i>picture of need</i> and gathering evidence to demonstrate <i>normal way of working</i>	6
Processing access arrangements	7
Arrangements requiring awarding body approval	7
Centre-delegated access arrangements	7
Centre-specific criteria for particular access arrangements	8
Word processor policy (exams).....	8
Separate invigilation within the centre	8

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’.

[AA Definitions, page 3]

Purpose of the policy

The purpose of this policy is to confirm that Southend High School for Girls 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 of 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.

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.

A Paper copy is held with the Bursar and is available to parents on the school website.

Documentation must be presented to JCQ Inspector by SENDCo (JCQ Access 4.2), Head of Centre, Deputy Head in charge of exams or Examinations officer.

All supporting evidence is locked in the Student Services office.

“The head of centre/senior leadership team will...recognise its duties towards disabled candidates as defined under the terms of the Equality Act 2010†. This must include a duty to explore and provide access to suitable courses, submit applications for reasonable adjustments and make reasonable adjustments to the service the centre provides to disabled candidates; †for any legislation in a relevant jurisdiction other than England and Wales which has an equivalent purpose and effect” [\[GR 5.4\]](#)

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 7.3](#).

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

Joanne Bicknell:

PGDip Assessing SpLDs

PGcert in Teaching Adult Learners with Dyslexia/ SpLDs

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)

We hold copies of the specialist assessor’s qualifications.

These are kept in the folder locked in the Sendco Office.

They can be presented to the JCQ Centre Inspector by the SENDCo, Head of Centre or Examination Officer.

All assessments are checked by the SENDCo after they have been carried out by the specialist assessor and hard copies archived in the student files.

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

The SENDCo works in close collaboration with SLT, Learning Managers and Subject Teachers to identify candidates who may need access arrangements.

Identification can be prompted by classroom observation, concerns from subject teachers' attainment, correspondence from parents/guardians and/or from conversations from the student.

Once alerted to an issue, the SENDCo will meet with the student.

The SENDCo will conduct a 'round robin' to gather evidence from ST and LM to open a history of need.

The SENDCo or LM will get in touch with the parents/guardians of the student.

This could range from informal support within school to access arrangements for external exams.

Referral to outside agencies and/or assessment by our specialist assessor.

If the specialist assessor is appointed, the assessment process will be administered correctly and evidence for Form 8 will be collated from the history of need.

Once a picture of need is created, the SENDCo (in conjunction and after discussion with the LM, AH and parents) will decide on the next course of action.

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

Initial enquiries are documented with centre devised forms for;

Expressing and initial concerns about a student.

Gathering information from staff (round robins)

Sharing strategies and information with staff (IPPs, EHCPs).

This information is stored and shared in paper format, locked in a filing cabinet and on our online registration system, SIMS and G-Drive.

Gathering parent and student evidence (one page profiles, IPPs, EHAs)

We then use the awarding body and JCQ forms when recording the applications and approval for access arrangements.

The SENDCo requests termly or half termly or termly evidence of the students 'normal way of working' within the classroom from the staff.

Extra interventions and support is recorded in the students individual folders.

Test conditions are recorded by staff and fed back to the SENDCo as part of this process.

In more formal, internal exams' such as end of year and mocks the exams officer instructs the invigilators to record the arrangements used on the templates provided.

At the end of the exam session, the evidence is collated and passed to the SENDCo who after considering whether it reflects the normal way of working, archives it in the students file.

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

AAO is accessed by logging in to any of the awarding body secure extranet sites. A single application is required for each candidate regardless of the awarding body used.

The SENDCo collates the evidence on each candidate in advance including all parts of the Form 8.

The SENDCo, Deputy Head in charge of examinations, examinations officer and Learning Managers meet to discuss the access arrangements.

Each case is reviewed by the above parties who decide whether to apply for access arrangements online.

After careful consideration of the all the evidence and the candidate's normal way of working, a decision is made.

The SENDCo and examinations officer make the application to the awarding bodies together.

The decision evidence is filed by the SENDCo who then informs the candidate, their parent/guardian, teachers and learning manager.

Letters of confirmation are sent home with an acknowledgment slip to be returned to school.

Centre-delegated access arrangements

The same procedure as outlined above in 'Processing applications for access arrangements' is followed with the exception of the completion of Form 8.

A confirmation letter, outlining the need and provision on headed note paper is written by the SENDCo and filed with the evidence.

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.

A copy of the Word Processor policy together with the statement, which details the criteria the centre, uses to award and allocate word processors for exams is held by the Director of Finance & Business and available to view on the school's website.

"Centres are allowed to provide a word processor (e.g. computer, laptop or tablet) with the spelling and grammar check/predictive text disabled to a candidate where it is their normal way of working within the centre, unless an awarding body's specification says otherwise. For example, where the curriculum is delivered electronically and the centre provides word processors to all candidates. This also includes an electronic braille or a tablet." [ICE 14.20]

"It is strongly recommended that a centre has a policy on the use of word processors which it can articulate to parents/carers. Principally, that a word processor cannot simply be granted to a candidate because he/she now wants to type rather than write or can work faster on a keyboard, or because he/she uses a laptop at home.

The use of a word processor must reflect the candidate's normal way of working within the centre. For example, where the curriculum is delivered electronically and the centre provides word processors to all candidates...

A member of the centre's senior leadership team must produce a statement for inspection purposes which details the criteria the centre uses to award and allocate word processors for examinations." [AA 5.8]

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 same procedure as outlined above in 'Processing applications for access arrangements' is followed with the exception of the completion of Form 8.

In the case of separate invigilation sometimes the need can be medical, in which case we request documentation from a health professional in support of the application in conjunction with a history of need. A confirmation letter, outlining the need and provision on headed note paper is written by the SENDCo and filed with the evidence.