



MULTI-ACADEMY TRUST

ACCESS ARRANGEMENTS POLICY

BRINSWORTH ACADEMY & DINNINGTON HIGH
SCHOOL

Responsible for Policy	CEO
Trust Key Reader	MS
Approved by Trust Board	October 2024
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Key staff involved in the access arrangements process

Role	Name(s)
SENCo/ALS Lead	L Routledge (BA)/S Humphries (DHS)
SENCo/ALS Lead line manager (Senior Leader)	A Birch
Head of centre	G Raynor/K Wade
Assessor(s)	J Smith
Access arrangement facilitator(s)	S Glew/E Foottit (Brinsworth Academy) R Parks/Exams Officer (Dinnington High School)

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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]

*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 LEAP schools (Brinsworth and Dinnington) 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 publication is further referred to in this policy as [GR](#).

This policy is maintained and held by the SENCo/ALS Lead 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 access arrangements 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 principles 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 practise using the access arrangement/reasonable adjustment (s) before his/her first examination.

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The candidate **must** have had appropriate opportunities to practise using the access arrangement/reasonable adjustment (s) before his/her first examination.

Equalities Policy (Exams)

A large part of the access arrangement/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 arrangement/reasonable adjustments and the conduct of exams.

The access arrangement/reasonable adjustments policy further covers the assessment process and related issues in more detail.

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 not** charge a disabled candidate any additional fee in relation to the adjustment or aid...

for any legislation in a relevant jurisdiction other than England and Wales which has an equivalent purpose and effect (GR section 5.4)

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](#).

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.

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

Level 7 CCET with CPT3a

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

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. Signpost to the location of the evidence that the assessor(s) is/are suitably qualified held by the ALS lead/SENCo. Make full reference to AA section 7.3 Appointment of assessors of candidates with learning difficulties and record your process that reflects the requirements.

The specialist assessor qualifications for whomever has carried out the testing is filed alongside any applications in the following locations: Brinsworth (SEN office), Dinnington & Eckington (Exams office)

Bear in mind all relevant JCQ regulations and guidance provided in [GR](#) and [AA](#), including that centres are required to

*"...have a **written** process in place to not only check the qualification(s) of their specialist assessor(s) but that the assessment process is administered correctly..."*

*...ensure that where a candidate with a learning difficulty requires an assessment of his/her needs, he/she is assessed by an appropriately qualified specialist assessor **as appointed by the head of centre...**"* [\[GR 5.4\]](#)

"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](#)

[section 7.3\]](#)

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

In accordance with AA, sections 7.5 and 7.6, all schools within the LEAP Trust:-

- Students are screened for exam access throughout their schooling
- Teachers are asked to outline a pupil's normal way of working
- A specialist assessment is carried out
- The SENCo considers all the evidence and completes Part 1 of form 8
- The exam's officer applied on AAO for an arrangement outlined in form 8 and then implements any arrangements

The LEAP Trust confirms:-

"...that the assessment process is administered correctly..."

[GR 5.4]

Recording evidence of need

Evidence is collected by the SENCo and stored within the exam file from:-

Teaching staff

The specialist assessor

Other specialist services eg CAMHS, NHS, EHCPs

An application is made following consideration of all the evidence collected and completion of a:-

Form 8 or school based centre note (for arrangements not made through AAO or for those made on the basis of medical or EHCP based evidence)

No application will be made by any centre within LEAP using ONLY evidence provided by a privately commissioned assessment.

Picture of need/ normal way of working

Evidence is collected to show normal way of working within the centre by consideration of evidence from the SENCo and teachers showing a reflection of a pupil's way of working within the classroom and within all assessment situations in school .

Examples used of evidence are:

- *in the classroom (where appropriate);*
- *working in small groups for reading and/or writing;*
- *literacy support lessons;*
- *literacy intervention strategies;*
- *in internal school tests/examinations;*
- *mock examinations.*

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 7.5)

Make full reference to [AA 7.5 Guidelines for the assessment of the candidate's learning difficulties by an assessor](#) and [7.6 Completing Form 8 – JCQ/AA/LD, Profile of Learning Difficulties](#) and record your process that reflects the requirements.

†The only exception to this is where an arrangement is put in place as a consequence of a temporary injury or impairment ...” [AA 4.2]

Processing access arrangement and adjustments

Arrangements/adjustments requiring awarding body approval

Access arrangement/reasonable adjustments online (AAO) is a tool provided by JCQ member awarding bodies for centres to apply for required access arrangement/reasonable adjustment approval for the qualifications listed on page 2 of [AA](#). This tool also provides the facility to order modified papers for those qualifications ([AA Chapter 6s & 8](#)).

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.

Prior to an application all information is shown to the SENCo who makes a final decision on access arrangement/reasonable adjustments.

The form 8 is then processed by the exams officer through an application through AAO, the exams officer will consult with the SENCo around any queries on the online application or if this gets referred to the awarding bodies.

Note the change to the (AAO) Candidate Personal data consent form and the requirement for completion of the Data protection confirmation by the examinations officer or SENCo, 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 8.6]

Centre-delegated arrangements/reasonable adjustments

For any centre delegated access arrangement/reasonable adjustment, the SENCo will provide a centre note and additional evidence (if required) to justify the use of the arrangement.

Centre-specific criteria for particular access arrangement/reasonable 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.

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, section 5.8) A copy of the centre's policy for the use of laptops is stored in the exam officers file alongside other policies pertaining to arrangements for exams

Separate Invigilation Policy

A decision where an exam candidate may be approved separate invigilation within the centre will be made by the SENCo/ALS Lead.

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]

All LEAP schools will ensure that consideration is given to the most appropriate arrangement for invigilation within a centre. Consideration will be made to:-

- A pupil's medical need
- A pupil's access arrangement/reasonable adjustment
- A pupil's mental health needs

And how any implementation of their arrangement may impact on other candidates within a centre.

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.

[see [AA 5.16](#) plus centre-determined criteria]