Access arrangements policy

2019/20

This policy is reviewed annually to ensure compliance with current regulations

Approved/reviewed by	
Date of next review	Jan 2021

Key staff involved in the policy

Role	Name(s)
SENCo	**Ms Katarzyna Wyciszkiewicz**
SENCo line manager (Senior Leader)	**Ms Rubina Ahmad**
Head of centre	**Mr Paul Dunne**
Assessor(s)	**Assessor details are on file in the Exams Office available for JCQ inspection**

Key staff involved in the policy

Role	Name(s)
SENCo	**Ms Katarzyna Wyciszkiewicz**
SENCo line manager (Senior Leader)	**Ms Rubina Ahmad**

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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'. 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 St John Bosco College 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 SENCo 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.

> The location of the Disability Policy is: -
>
> https://www.sjbc.wandsworth.sch.uk/attachments/download.asp?file=197&type=pdf
>
> **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;
>
> †or 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)

> Aneta Gabriela Piotrowska - Assessing SpLD post Graduate BDA (British Dyslexia Association)
>
> Lara Goodere - AMBDA post Graduate BDA (British Dyslexia Association)
>
> Anita Janjua – Assessing SPLD – Level 7 (AMBDA IMPENDING)
>
> Sarah Styles– AMBDA Post Graduate BDA (British Dyslexia Association)

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)

> Assessor(s)'s provide evidence of their qualification(s) to the Personnel Manager and SENCo. Copies of the evidence of the assessor's/assessors' qualification(s) held by Personnel/Exam Officer for the JCQ inspection.
>
> JCQ regulations and guidance provided in **GR** and **AA** including:
>
> > **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 per **Chapter 7** of the JCQ publication Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments… **[GR 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 7.3]**
>
> **AA** 7.3 *Appointment of assessors of candidates with learning difficulties*
>
> The assessor if fully interviewed by SLT (SEN Lead) and proof of suitability is sought and qualifications are verified.

Reporting the appointment of the assessor(s)

> Assessor's/assessors' qualification(s) held by Personnel and the Exams Officer (copy in the inspection folder).
>
> **AA** 7.4 *Reporting the appointment of assessors* The Centre updates the JCQ Access on Line site with assessors' details.

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

The SENCo collects data from school staff and information for students that may require access arrangements.

Evidence is collected to ascertain the student's normal method of working and to paint a picture of need.

Each student is identified and communication is made to the student's parent/carer to have a professional assessment carried out to confirm the needs if any for examinations.

Section A is completed on the form 8 to provide an assessor with background information, i.e. picture of need has been painted as per Section A 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 takes place before the student is assessed.

The assessor must discuss access arrangements with the SENCo. The responsibility to request access arrangements specifically lies with the SENCo.

The assessor will use the JCQ guidelines' 7.5 for the assessment of the candidate's learning difficulties and complete Form 8 JCQ/AA/LD, Profile of Learning Difficulties.

[GR 5.4]

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 7.3]

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

Each pupil must have at least three pieces of evidence form their class teachers, showing that they use their access arrangements in class and in assessments as their normal way of working. E.g. using a scribe in assessments and receiving extra time. A reading test is undertaken. Written work is assessed.

Teachers keep the SENCo informed by filling in Centre designed forms and submitting written evidence and copies of students mock papers, test papers to paint the picture of need.

Assessments are carried out by professionals to further strengthen evidence held in the school.

Looking at the evidence a picture of need and normal method of working for each student can be ascertained to put the correct access arrangements for each student.

Bear in mind *normal way of working* as defined by JCQ...

"The arrangement(s) put in place must reflect the support given to the candidate in the centre†, for example:
- *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.*

This is commonly referred to as 'normal way of working'. For candidates with learning difficulties this is typically the background information recorded within Section A of Form 8 by the SENCo or the assessor working within the centre.

The SENCO works with the assessor closely to ensure that arrangements are a true reflection of the candidate's normal way of working and a Form 8 is completed.

The SENCO is responsible for applying for the access arrangements online, once all the evidence and assessments have been completed and the candidate has signed a data protection notice provided by the JCQ. The applications and evidence are kept on file in a secure room and archived every year.

Pupils who require separate rooms would be pupils who are using an Oral Language Modified, scribe and/or reader, or if there is a medical reason, such as anxiety where a pupil requires a separate room.

> **Before the candidate's assessment, the SENCo must provide the assessor with background information, i.e. a picture of need has been painted as per 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.**
>
> **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 with the SENCo. The responsibility to request access arrangements 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.

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.

> Evidence is collected and collated by the SENCo. Everything is printed and kept for each student on a file. Applications are submitted by the SENCo printed and added to each students file. The completed files are given to the Exams Officer for the JCQ inspector's visit.
>
> > **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]
>
> Make full reference to AA 8 *Processing applications for access arrangements* and record your process that reflects the requirements.

Centre-delegated access arrangements

> Evidence is collected and kept for any students that have arrangements such as a word processor for exams. The evidence is kept on file. The exams officer is informed of these arrangements so as to ensure the student has the correct arrangement for each exam.
>
> Arrangements that do not require online applications such as a rest break are advised by the SENCo. The examinations officer puts in place a comprehensive list using SIMS for invigilators to know and understand the candidates that require certain arrangements. All access arrangement students are sat together where possible and the desks are labelled clearly so as to ensure the arrangements are facilitated. The attendance register is printed for each exam and has the access arrangement with desk number etc. attached to the register. Seating plans are also annotated for invigilators to ensure clarity of who has arrangements during each exam session.

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 word processor policy can be found on the school website:
> https://www.sjbc.wandsworth.sch.uk/attachments/download.asp?file=167&type=pdf
>
> (the statement details the criteria the centre uses to award and allocate word processors for exams.
>
> > 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 brailler or a tablet.** [ICE 14.20]
> >
> > **A centre must have a policy on the use of word processors. A word processor cannot simply be granted to a candidate because he/she now wants to type rather than write in examinations 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.**
> >
> > **The centre may wish to set out the particular types of candidates which it considers would benefit from the use of a word processor. For example, a candidate with…**
> >
> > **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 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 5.16]

> Overtype here the centre's criteria (or policy) on separate invigilation within the centre or alternatively include as an appendix at the end of this document.
>
> > For example, in the case of separate invigilation, the candidate's difficulties are established within the centre (see Chapter 4, paragraph 4.1.4, page 16) and known to a Form Tutor, a Head of Year, the SENCo or a senior member of staff with pastoral responsibilities.
> >
> > 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]