



Fairfield High School

Access Arrangements Policy 2023/24

This policy is reviewed annually to ensure compliance with current regulations

Approved/reviewed by	
Principal	
Last reviewed:	September 2023
Date of next review:	September 2024

Role	Name(s)
SENCo	Kate Smee
SENCo Line Manager (Senior Leader)	James Barnes
Head of Centre	Amanda Bridgewater
Assessor(s)	Hayley Kelly
Access Arrangement Facilitator(s)	Hayley Kelly

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'.

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'.

Purpose of the policy

The purpose of this policy is to confirm that Fairfield High 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.

This policy is maintained and held by the SENCo 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.

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 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.

The qualification of the current, internal assessor-

Hayley Kelly – Certificate of Psychometric Testing, Assessment and Access Arrangement

Appointment of assessors

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.

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

Show that where a candidate has learning difficulties and is not subject to a current *Education, Health and Care Plan* or *Statement of Special Educational Needs* that the SENCo is painting a picture of need and demonstrating the candidate's normal way of working and completing Part 1 of Form 8 prior to the candidate being assessed.

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

By detailing this, you should be confirming ...that the correct procedures are followed as per Chapter 7 of the JCQ publication *Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments*...

[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]

Also detail any process (where relevant) for private candidates, distance learners and home educated students (refer to the requirement in [GR 5.4](#))

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

It is essential that a *picture of need* for each student is gathered. Teacher/parent and self-referrals are an integral part of this. The centre must be able to demonstrate student's *normal way of working*. Refer to Fairfield's access arrangement flow chart which shows each step of the process.

[Flow chart.docx](#)

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. This tool also provides the facility to order modified papers.

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 of AAO confirmation must be saved electronically or printed.

Centre-delegated access arrangements

In line with current JCQ regulations, certain access arrangements can be centre-delegated to become student's normal way of working **before** GCSE examinations; by year 10 PPEs. Therefore testing should ideally take place during year 9.

Centre-specific criteria for access arrangements

Word processor policy (exams)

A 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 arrangement can be

taken away if no evidence is collected. Ideally using a word processor should be the candidate's normal way of working by Year 10 Term 5/6 PPEs. [Use of Word Processors in Examinations Policy.docx](#)

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

If parents/carers want a separate room for their child as opposed to being in the hall, it's possible for parents to pay the cost of an invigilator.

A GP letter cannot be used to award access arrangements such as 25% extra time, a reader, a scribe etc. An alternative rooming arrangement is determined by the SENCo and/or the relevant senior leader. It is not determined by a parent. It is not determined by a GP.

The SENCo and/or the relevant senior leader must exercise their professional judgement. This is a centre delegated arrangement.

The SENCo and/or the relevant senior leader must be satisfied that it is appropriate to accommodate the candidate in a smaller room away from the main examination hall/room. This would be based on their knowledge of the candidate and arrangements for internal school tests and mock examinations. The candidate's difficulties are known to pastoral staff, teaching staff. The candidate's difficulties are established within the school.

Scribe (exams)

A candidate may be approved the use of a scribe 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 arrangement can be taken away if no evidence is collected. Ideally use of a word scribe should be the candidate's normal way of working by Year 10 Term 5/6 PPEs.

Reader/screen reader (exams)

A candidate may be approved the use of a reader/screen reader 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 arrangement can be taken away if no evidence is collected. Ideally using a reader/screen reader should be the candidate's normal way of working by Year 10 Term 5/6 PPEs. If a teacher claims a candidate's normal way of working is being read to during assessment a teacher referral must be completed. Along with three examples of when the reader has been used.

At Fairfield, testing for access arrangements takes place during year 9. This is so students, families and the school can fully support the transition for KS3 to KS4. Students can be referred for testing anytime during KS3; KS4 referrals will not be accepted unless there is profound evidence of need.

EAL pupils

The first step is to try and establish whether the candidate has a learning difficulty in their first language. The candidate can only be awarded access arrangements if he/she has a learning difficulty in his first language. The candidate cannot be awarded access arrangements on the sole basis that English is an additional language. Fairfield would have to draw upon pupil attainment data, pupil tracking data, comments and observations from teaching staff, as well as screening test results and those of cognitive ability. This data would have to be pieced together to substantiate the SENCo's argument that in his/her professional judgement the candidate does have a learning difficulty in their first language. If such a rationale cannot be produced, cannot be substantiated, then the candidate could not be awarded access arrangements.

