

Appendix 6 – Exam Access Arrangements Policy 2020/21

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Key staff involved in the policy

Role	Name(s)
SENDCo	Mr D Malachi
SENDCo Line Manager (Senior Leader)	
Head of Centre	Mr D Malachi
Assessor(s)	
Access Arrangement Facilitator(s)	

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 Odyssey House 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.

[Appendix 3: Disability Policy](#)

This 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)

Mrs S Lord, Certificate of Psychometric Testing, Assessment and Access Arrangements (CP3TA)

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 Head of Centre at Odyssey House School is responsible for:

- the quality of the access arrangements process in school
- the appointment of assessors, and checking the qualifications of those assessing candidates

The Head of Centre will appoint:

- an assessor who has successfully completed a post-graduate course at or equivalent to Level 7, including at least 100 hours relating to individual specialist assessment. This can include lecture, seminar and tutorial time, study time, assessment time and time spent completing assignments.
- a specialist assessor with a current SpLD Assessment Practising Certificate as awarded by BDA, the Dyslexia Guild or Patoss and listed on the SASC website.
- an appropriately qualified psychologist registered with the Health & Care Professions Council.

Reporting the appointment of the assessor(s)

The credentials of assessors used by the school will be held on file in the Additional Needs Department.

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

Where a candidate has learning difficulties and is not subject to a current *Education, Health and Care Plan* or *Statement of Special Educational Needs* the SENDCo will paint a picture of need and demonstrate the candidate's normal way of working and complete Part 1 of Form 8 prior to the candidate being assessed.

All candidates will be assessed in light of the picture of need and relevant background information.

The assessor will establish if the results of tests in literacy and/or cognitive abilities present evidence that the candidate has an impairment which **substantially** affects their performance.

The assessor will carry out tests which are relevant to support the application. Current editions of nationally standardised tests which produce standardised scores will be used, where published.

For candidates potentially requiring a Language Modifier reading comprehension will be assessed using a recognised test of text or sentence comprehension.

Reading speed will be tested in various ways depending on the individual candidate.

Candidates will be allowed the use of a scribe where they have a substantial impairment:

- a below average standardised spelling accuracy score with unrecognisable spelling attempts; or
- a below average standardised score for writing speed.

Cognitive processing assessments will include a range of assessments as determined appropriate for the candidate by the assessor.

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

The SENDCo will work closely with Heads of Departments, subject teachers, Heads of Year, teaching assistants and other centre staff to gather information to paint a picture of need for candidates. Statements regarding the candidate's normal way of working in the classroom and in internal assessments will be held on 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 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.

Applications will be processed for both long-term and temporary conditions.

The approval will be filed alongside the candidate's EHCP/Statement of Special Educational Needs, the form 8 where appropriate, any statements gathered to evidence the candidate's normal way of working, and the signed and dated **Personal data consent, Privacy Notice (AAO) and Data Protection confirmation**.

For cases that are not approved, the SENDCo will consider whether this is because the candidate does not meet the published criteria, whether the reasonable adjustment is not listed, and consider further exploration in relation to the competence being tested.

Centre-delegated access arrangements

Centre-delegated arrangements will be looked at on a case-by-case basis. Candidates with anxiety will be seated in the main room (after discussion with the EO seating will be allocated appropriately in the room, separate invigilation will not be allocated).

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.

[Appendix 7: Word Processor Policy](#)

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]

Candidates difficulties must be established within the centre and known to a form teacher, Head of Year or the SENDCo. Separate invigilation will reflect the candidate's **normal** way of working in internal assessments and mock examinations as a consequence of long-term social, mental or emotional needs. Separate invigilation will not be allocated for candidates suffering with exam anxiety.