

# Examination access arrangements policy

## 2018/19

*This template is provided for members of The Exams Office **only** and must not be shared beyond use in your centre*

**Access arrangements policy template (2018/19)**  
Hyperlinks provided in this document were correct as at September 2018

## Key staff involved in the access arrangements process

<b>Role</b>	<b>Name(s)</b>
SENCo	
SENCo line manager (Senior Leader)	<b>Karen Gracie-Langrick</b>
Head of centre	<b>Matthew Judd</b>
Assessor(s)	<b>Jo-anne Elliott, Sophia Butler</b>
Access arrangement facilitator(s)	<b>Susan Pether</b>

## 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> ?	
Processing access arrangements .....	8
Arrangements requiring awarding body approval .....	8
Centre-delegated access arrangements .....	8
Centre-specific criteria for particular access arrangements .....	9
Word processor policy (exams).....	9
Separate invigilation within the centre .....	9

## 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 Leighton Park 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 Disability policy is available to staff via Teacherswork and via the school website to students and parents.

*“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)

Jo-anne Elliott (CPT3A, MBPsS & RQTU: 349338, QTLS - AJ002696)

Sophia Butler (APS, AMBDA, APC No. 1010/256, British Psychological Association Practising Certificate No. 267777)

### 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)

Any assessor has their qualification checked by searching the HCPC, SASC or BPS Test User website. A screenshot is taken and stored with a copy of their certificate electronically with each ‘Form 8’.

If not a psychologist, the assessor must also provide their qualification to teach secondary or adult learners which is scanned in and stored. A hardcopy of all relevant documents is also stored with the SENCo.

Bear in mind **all** relevant 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.”* [\[AA 7.3\]](#)

Make full reference to [AA 7.3 Appointment of assessors of candidates with learning difficulties](#) and record your process that reflects the requirements.

## **Process for the assessment of a candidate’s learning difficulties by an assessor**

Access Arrangements are coordinated by the SENCo who collects and analyses all relevant information in consultation with teachers.

Pupils are identified by using screening tests, SEN register, teaching staff or concerned parents. In year 9, continuing through year 10 and 11, evidence is collected so a ‘picture of need’ can be painted and ‘normal way of working’ evidenced.

Parents are consulted if their child is identified and a ‘picture of need’ and ‘normal way of working’ can be evidenced. Approval for a specialist assessor report to be conducted is gained.

Once permission is granted the SENCo completes section A on the Form 8 which is provided to the specialist assessor before they conduct any assessments. This highlights the ‘normal way of working’ and ‘history of need’.

Any concessions must also be supported with a Specialist Assessor report and completed ‘Form 8’ section C. Leighton Park currently employs two access arrangement assessors to assess pupils and perform diagnostic tests. All assessment(s) are administered as per guidelines of the assessment(s).

A final decision to submit an JCQ AA application will be made by the SENCo on the evidence gathered, assessor report and JCQ regulations at that time.

The ‘Form 8’ documentation is completed by the SENCo/Specialist Assessor and the access arrangements applied for online by the SENCo/Examinations Officer.

The results of the tests, ‘Form 8’, specialist assessor qualifications and result of the JCQ online AA application are stored for each identified pupil.

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 Section A 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 [1.6](#) *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...*”* [\[GR 5.4\]](#)

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**

'Background information' is collated from a variety of sources. Leighton Park uses GL Assessments to screen and track progress of students and results are discussed and analysed by the SENCo and Academic Deputy Head. Specialist reports are also provided by parents, either upon entry or after discussion with the SENCo, which provide 'background information' on diagnosis and recommendations. Differentiation plans are also included which show consultation and engagement by teachers on identified need(s) of relevant students. Teachers also provide background information on 'normal way of working' in years 7 and 8. This information is collated by the SENCo and the Form 8 section A is completed showing the picture of need.

Parents are given a choice on which assessor to use. The current SENCo or an independent assessor who works very closely with the school and can provide DSA compliant reports.

In light of the picture of need relevant assessments are conducted. Both the SENCo and independent assessor work together to ensure the process is consistent with current regulations and a discussion takes place on the findings.

It is the SENCo's responsibility to recommend the appropriate access arrangements which is recorded on the form 8 section B.

The SENCo or exams officers then lodges any applications for any AA.

Where relevant include any additional information relating to **private candidates**.

*“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 Section A of Form 8. The SENCo and the assessor must work together to ensure a joined-up and consistent process.”* [AA 7.5.2]

*“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.*

*The candidate must be assessed in light of the picture of need and the background information as detailed within Section A 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 7.5.3]

*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 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 SENCo and Exams Officer are responsible for making applications via AAO in a timely manner and no later than the Board deadlines. A copy of the approval is kept by the EO and another by the SENCo to complete the evidence file.

*“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 data protection notice 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

The SENCo keeps any available records of these and informs the EO of all Centre-delegated AAs.

## 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.

This is a separate policy and can be found in Teacherswork or on the school website

### 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](#)]

The SENCo will make arrangements for a pupil to sit their examination in a smaller room if it is their 'Normal way of working' and

- Written evidence is provided from a medical or mental health professional which outlines the pupils need and explicitly recommends separate invigilation.
- The history of the pupil is known to the SENCo e.g. evidence provided by previous school.
- Pupil with mental health and/or social/emotional needs who is accessing support within school or via an external agency e.g CAMHs.
- The pupil qualifies for an access arrangement necessitating separate invigilation e.g. scribe.
- SENCo/ Safeguarding Lead has made an assessment that the pupil will be substantially disadvantaged by sitting their examinations in the main examination room.

*Pupils need to be aware that they may not be in a separate room alone, there may be up to 15 other pupils sitting examinations in the smaller room.*

In exceptional circumstances a pupil may be granted separate invigilation in their own room if they will be significantly disadvantaged by sitting their examinations in a room with other candidates and evidence is on file. Evidence can be from

- medical or mental health specialist explicitly recommends the use their own room
- a significant history of need and known to the SENCo/Safe guarding Lead

- Evidence from teaching staff their 'normal way of working' for examinations is in their own room.

*All evidence must be on file before the mock examinations take place.*

*“SENCoS must note that candidates are only entitled to the above arrangements if they are disabled within the meaning of the Equality Act. The candidate is at a substantial disadvantage when compared with other non-disabled candidates undertaking the assessment and it would be reasonable in all the circumstances to provide the arrangement. (The only exception to this would be a temporary illness, a temporary injury or other temporary indisposition which is clearly evidenced.)*

*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]

Author: Karen Gracie-Langrick, Deputy Head Academic Studies  
Sign off: Matthew Judd, Head  
Reviewed: March 2019  
Next Review Date: March 2021  
Publication: Z:\Policies\Current Policies\Examination Access Arrangements  
V:\School Policies\Examination Access Arrangements  
<http://www.leightonpark.com/parents/policies>