

THE SALTERNS ACADEMY TRUST: ADMIRAL LORD NELSON SCHOOL

Examination Access Arrangements



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CONTENTS	PAGE NUMBER
1. Governors Statement	3
2. Key staff involved in the access arrangement's process	3
3. What are access arrangements and reasonable adjustments?	3
3.1 Access Arrangements	
3.2 Reasonable Adjustments	
4. Purpose of the policy	4
5. Disability policy	4
6. The assessment process	4
6.1 The qualifications(s) of the current assessor(s)	
6.2 Checking the qualification(s) of the assessor(s)	
6.3 How the assessment process is administered	
6.4 Recording evidence of need	
6.5 Gathering evidence to demonstrate <i>normal way of working</i>	
7. Processing access arrangements	6
7.1 Arrangements requiring awarding body approval	
7.2 Centre-delegated access arrangements	
8. Centre-specific criteria for particular access arrangements	8
8.1 Word processor policy (exams)	
9. References	9

Article 3: 'Best interests of the child must be a top priority in all decisions and actions that affect children'

Article 28: 'Children and young people have the right to education no matter who they are: regardless of race, gender or disability; if they're in detention, or if they're a refugee'

1. Governing Body Statement:

The Governing body will ensure that:

Planning and management of all exams is conducted in the best interest of candidates and in full compliance with the published JCQ regulations and awarding body requirements.

2. Key staff involved in the access arrangement's process

Role	Name(s)
SENCO:	Lee Morgan
SENCO Line Manager (Assistant Head Inclusivity):	Steve Fenner
Head of Centre:	Nys Hardingham
Link Governor:	Justeen White
Assessor(s):	Laura Stevenson
Access arrangement facilitator(s):	Seonaid Oswald (Exams Officer)

3. What are access arrangements and reasonable adjustments?

3.1 Access Arrangements

Access arrangements are agreed before an assessment. They allow candidates with 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]

3.2 Reasonable Adjustments

The Equality Act 2010 requires an Awarding Body to make reasonable adjustments where a disabled person would be at a substantial disadvantage in comparison to someone who is not disabled.

A reasonable adjustment for a particular person may be unique to that individual and may not be included in the list of available Access Arrangements.

How reasonable the adjustment is will depend on a number of factors including the needs of the disabled candidate/learner. An adjustment may not be considered reasonable if it involves unreasonable costs, timeframes or affects the security or integrity of the assessment.

There is no duty on the Awarding Bodies to make any adjustment to the assessment objectives being tested in an assessment.

4. Purpose of the policy

The purpose of this policy is to confirm that Admiral Lord Nelson School complies 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](#).

The policy is annually reviewed to ensure that arrangements 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](#).

5. Disability policy

A large part of the Access Arrangements policy is linked to the Accessibility Plan which covers staff roles and responsibilities in identifying and supporting additional needs and disabilities, including full access to the school and curriculum.

A copy of this plan can be found on the school website.

"A written disability policy setting out how the centre seeks to comply with the Equality Act 2010+ and fully supporting disabled candidates must be available for inspection purposes.

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 covers the assessment process and related issues in more detail.

6. The assessment process

Assessments are carried out by an assessor appointed by the head of centre. The assessor is appropriately qualified as required by JCQ regulations in [AA](#) 7.3.

6.1 The qualifications(s) of the current assessor(s)

CPT3A & AAC
BA (hons) English Language and Literature
PGCE
NPQML

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

Evidence of assessor's qualification is located within the 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 7.3]

6.3 How the assessment process is administered

Administration of the assessment process is completed after a thorough screening process and detailed consideration of a student's normal way of working.

All assessments are arranged by the SENCo, Lee Morgan, in liaison with the Specialist Assessor, Laura Stevenson.

Before a candidate's assessment, the SENCo will provide a picture of need in section A of the Form 8.

Evidence will be collated to demonstrate a candidate's normal way of working and relevant background information demonstrating a history of need.

The assessor will only conduct assessments which are relevant to support the application, using the most recent edition of nationally standardised tests. The tests used must produce standardised scores and the candidate's chronological age must be lower than the 'ceiling' of the test, unless no test is published for the candidate's age.

The assessor will personally conduct the assessment and consider if the results of tests demonstrate an impairment which substantially affects the student's performance.

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

[GR 5.5]

Note for private candidates the centre must

"...undertake the necessary and appropriate steps to gather an appropriate picture of need and demonstrate normal way of working for a private candidate. This includes distance learners and home educated students. The centre, where required, must lead on the assessment process. The candidate must be assessed by the centre's appointed assessor. In some instances, depending on his/her needs, the candidate may have to be assessed away from the centre, for example at home..."

[GR 5.4]

6.4 Recording evidence of need

Evidence is recorded through the use of a Form 8 and centre-devised forms completed by the SENCo.

"Completing Form 8 – JCQ/AA/LD, Profile of Learning Difficulties... Only Form 8 is acceptable. Spreadsheets, e-mail messages, centre devised equivalents of Form 8, educational psychologists' reports and other reports are not acceptable for inspection purposes..."

[AA 7.6]

"A privately commissioned assessment carried out without prior consultation with the centre cannot be used to award access arrangements and cannot be used to process an application using Access arrangements online.

The SENCo must complete at least a 'skeleton' Section A of Form 8 prior to the candidate being assessed (Section C of Form 8)... Where a privately commissioned report, or a report from an external professional, is rejected by a centre, the head of centre or a member of the senior leadership team should provide a written rationale supporting their decision to the parent/carer.

[AA 7.3]

6.5 Gathering evidence to demonstrate normal way of working

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 Part 1 of Form 8 by the SENCo or the assessor working within the centre.

SENcos and assessors must refer to section 7.6.1, page 82, for information on how to confirm 'normal way of working'. †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]

7. Processing access arrangements

7.1 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 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.

Section B and C must be completed by a SENCo once testing is complete and it is confirmed that the candidate has an impairment which substantially affects their performance. This document must be hand signed and dated, combined with evidence of the candidate's normal way of working and a centre file note.

Using all of the assessment data and acquired evidence, applications will be submitted at the beginning of Year10 through Access Arrangements online. The instant response will be printed, filed and the arrangement will be formally allowed for 26 months. If an application is unsuccessful an additional review of the student's access requirements will take place and an additional application may be submitted after consultation with the relevant awarding body and the acquisition of additional evidence.

The responsibility for applying for access arrangements lies with the SENCo, Lee Morgan.

7.2 Centre-delegated access arrangements

The following arrangements do not need to be processed on-line and can be awarded by the centre. The responsibility to award centre-delegated access arrangements lies with the SENCo, who will gather appropriate evidence. Candidates will only be entitled to centre-delegated arrangements if they are disabled within the meaning of the Equalities Act and evidence demonstrates that they are at a substantial disadvantage when compared with non-disabled candidates undertaking the assessment. The only exception to this would be a temporary illness or injury.

The following arrangements can be centre-delegated:

- Amplification equipment
- Bilingual dictionary
- Braille transcript
- Colour naming
- Examination on coloured or enlarged paper
- Low vision aid or magnifier
- Prompter
- Read aloud
- Separate invigilation within the centre
- Sign Language Interpreter
- Supervised rest breaks
- Word processor

8. Centre-specific criteria for particular access arrangements

8.1 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 policy for the use of word processors during exams can be found on the school website. The following statement (Appendix 1, Word Processor Policy) details the criteria the centre uses to award and allocate word processors for examinations.

The 'normal way of working' for exam candidates, as directed by the head of centre, is that candidates handwrite their exams. An exception to this is where a candidate may have an approved access arrangement in place, for example the use of a scribe/speech recognition technology.

Awarding word processors

There are also exceptions where a candidate may be **awarded** the use of a word processor in exams where he/she has a firmly established need, it reflects the candidate's normal way of working and by not being awarded a word processor would be at a substantial disadvantage to other candidates.

Exceptions might include where a candidate has, for example:

- a learning difficulty which has a substantial and long term adverse effect on their ability to write legibly
- a medical condition
- a physical disability
- a sensory impairment
- planning and organisational problems when writing by hand
- poor handwriting

Allocating word processors

Appropriate exam-compliant word processors will be **allocated** by the Student Services Team in liaison with the SENCo and the exams officer. In exceptional circumstances where the number of appropriate word processors may be insufficient for the cohort of candidates approved to use them in an exam session, the cohort will be split into two groups. One group will sit the exam earlier than or later than the published start time. The security of the exam will be maintained at all times and candidates will be supervised in line with section 2.11 of ICE.

"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 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...

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."

8.2 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]

Separate invigilation within the centre may be considered if it 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 mental health needs. The decision will be made by the SENCo in-line with the candidate's individual needs.

[see AA 5.16 plus centre-determined criteria]

9. References

JCQ Joint Council for Qualifications. 2020. *General Regulations - JCQ Joint Council For Qualifications*. [online] Available at: <<https://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/general-regulations>> [Accessed 22 December 2020].