



ORMISTON
SIX VILLAGES
ACADEMY



Access Arrangements Policy

2021/22

This policy is reviewed annually to ensure compliance with current regulations

Approved/reviewed by	
Paul Slaughter	
Date of next review	September 2022

Key staff involved in the policy

Role	Name(s)
ALS lead/SENCo	Emma Barber
ALS lead/SENCo line manager (Senior leader)	Paul Slaughter
Head of centre	Paul Slaughter
Assessor(s)	Emma Barber
Access arrangement facilitator(s)	Teresa Hardman

Contents

Key staff involved in the policy	2
What are access arrangements and reasonable adjustments?	4
Access arrangements	4
Reasonable adjustments	4
Purpose of the policy	4
General principles	5
Equalities 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 'holistic picture of need', confirming normal way of working	7
Processing access arrangements and adjustments	7
Arrangements/adjustments requiring awarding body approval	7
Centre-delegated arrangements/adjustments	7
Centre-specific criteria for particular arrangements/adjustments	7
Word Processor Policy (Exams)	7
Separate Invigilation Policy	8

What are access arrangements and reasonable adjustments?

References in this policy to AA and ICE relate to/are directly taken from the Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments 2021-2022 (AA) and Instructions for Conducting Examinations 2021-2022 publications (ICE).

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 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](#))

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 several 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](#))

*References to legislation are to the Equality Act 2010. Separate legislation is in place for Northern Ireland (see [AA 1.8](#)). The definitions and procedures in [AA](#) relating to access arrangements and reasonable adjustments will also apply in Northern Ireland

Purpose of the policy

The purpose of this policy is to confirm that Ormiston Six Villages Academy 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... (General Regulations for Approved Centres, section 5.4) This publication is further referred to in this policy as [GR](#)

This policy is maintained and held by the ALS lead/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.

Where the SENCo is storing documentation electronically he/she **must** create an e-folder for each individual candidate. The candidate's e-folder must hold each of the required documents for inspection. ([AA 4.2](#))

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.

General principles

The principles for the centre to consider are detailed in [AA](#) (section 4.2). These include:

The purpose of an access arrangement/reasonable adjustment is to ensure, where possible, that barriers to assessment are removed for a disabled candidate preventing him/her from being placed at a substantial disadvantage due to persistent and significant difficulties. The integrity of the assessment is maintained, whilst at the same time providing access to assessments for a disabled candidate.

The SENCo, or an equivalent member of staff within a FE college, **must** ensure that the proposed access arrangement/reasonable adjustment does not unfairly disadvantage or advantage the candidate.

Access arrangements/reasonable adjustments should be processed at the **start** of the course.

Arrangements **must** always be approved **before** an examination or assessment.

The arrangement(s) put in place must reflect the support given to the candidate in the centre.

The candidate **must** have had appropriate opportunities to practise using the access arrangement(s)/reasonable adjustment(s) before his/her first examination.

Equalities Policy (Exams)

A large part of the access arrangements/reasonable adjustments process is covered in the Equalities Policy (Exams) which covers staff roles and responsibilities in identifying the need for, requesting and implementing access arrangements and the conduct of exams.

The Equality policy is available on the website.

The head of centre/senior leadership team will... recognise its duties towards disabled candidates, ensuring compliance with all aspects of the Equality Act 2010[†], particularly Section 20 (7). This **must** include a duty to explore and provide access to suitable courses, through the access arrangements process submit applications for reasonable adjustments and make reasonable adjustments to the service the centre provides to disabled candidates. Where the centre is under a duty to make a reasonable adjustment, the centre **must not** charge a disabled candidate any additional fee in relation to the adjustment or aid...

[†]or any legislation in a relevant jurisdiction other than England and Wales which has an equivalent purpose and effect ([GR](#) section 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](#), section 7.3.

The qualification(s) of the current assessor(s)

Emma Barber

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

Postgraduate Certificate in Professional Practice: National; Award for Special Educational Needs Coordination

Qualified Teacher Status

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 will check the qualification(s) of their assessor(s) and that the correct procedures are followed as in Chapter 7 of the JCQ publication Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments... (GR 5.4)

The Head of Centre at OSVA 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.
- 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

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)

Reporting the appointment of the assessor(s)

The credentials of assessors used by the school will be held on file in the Inclusion Department Exams Access Arrangements and by the OSVA Business Manager. (AA 7.4)

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

There are several ways in which a student may be highlighted for Access Arrangements testing:

OSVA identify those who may need access arrangements. These students normally have a history of Special Educational Needs (SEND).

A teacher may voice a concern about a student.

A parent / carer may raise concerns about their child.

Students may raise concerns.

Screening tests results suggest a need.

If the initial concerns are echoed by others, the student will be assessed for access arrangements. Students who may need access arrangements must be formally assessed by a specialist teacher, an educational psychologist, or an appropriately qualified person, no earlier than the start of Year 9

OSVA must then compile evidence that supports each candidate's particular need for arrangements. A number of standardised tests are used to assess areas such as speed of handwriting and phonological processing etc. Screening assessments will begin in the summer term of Year 9 and access arrangements tests will begin in Autumn term of Year 10. This allows for gathering of information from staff, parents, and any other relevant professionals, and completing Form 8, before the application deadline in Year 11. (GR 5.4)

Note

Any privately commissioned assessment are carefully considered 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 a private candidate such as a distance learner or a home educated student (refer to the requirement in GR 5.4)

Painting a 'holistic picture of need', confirming normal way of working

There must be a genuine need for access arrangements. Access arrangements should reflect how the student is supported in the classroom, internal tests, and mock examinations. This is called the 'normal way of working.' Information regarding this is gathered from teachers and teaching assistants.

The SENCo **must** provide the assessor with background information, i.e. a picture of need has been painted as required in 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. Additionally, the independent assessor **must** be approved by the head of centre to assess the candidate.

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/reasonable adjustments with the SENCo. The responsibility to determine and request appropriate and practicable access arrangements/reasonable adjustments specifically lies with the SENCo. (AA 7.5)

Processing access arrangements and adjustments

Arrangements/adjustments 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 covered by the tool. This tool also provides the facility to order modified papers for those qualifications included. (Refer to AA, chapter 8 (Processing applications for access arrangements and adjustments) and chapter 6 (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 for approval is required for each candidate regardless of the awarding body used.

The SENCo keeps 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 EHCP approved application, appropriate evidence of need (where required) any statements gathered to evidence the candidate's normal way of working and a signed candidate personal data consent form for inspection by the JCQ Centre Inspection Service. (AA 8.6)

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. Non approved applications and awarding body referral evidence is kept appropriately.

Centre-delegated arrangements/adjustments

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 Exams Officer seating will be allocated appropriately in the room, separate invigilation will not be allocated).

Centre-specific criteria for particular arrangements/adjustments

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 the candidate now wants to type rather than write in exams or can work faster on a keyboard, or because they use a laptop at home. The use of a word processor must reflect the candidate's normal way of working within the centre.

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 the candidate now wants to type rather than write in exams or can work faster on a keyboard, or because they use a laptop at home. The use of a word processor must reflect the candidate's normal way of working within the centre.

See Appendix 1: Word Processing Policy

Separate Invigilation Policy

A decision where an exam candidate may be approved separate invigilation within the centre will be made by the ALS lead/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)

For example, in the case of separate invigilation, the candidate's difficulties are **established within the centre** (see Chapter 4, paragraph 4.1.4) and known to a Form Tutor, a Director of Learning, 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, emotional and mental health needs. (AA 5.16)