



# Access Arrangements Policy

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<b>Signature:</b>			

# Access arrangements policy

## 2020/21

This policy is reviewed annually to ensure compliance with current regulations

Approved/reviewed by	
R. Garratt	
Date of next review	December 2021

## Key staff involved in the access arrangements process

<b>Role</b>	<b>Name(s)</b>
Exams Officer	<b>Lotte Tvede</b>
EO's line manager (Senior Leader)	<b>Rebekah Thompson</b>
Head of centre	<b>Rebecca Garratt</b>
Deputy Head (Curriculum)	<b>Jo Kehoe</b>
Access arrangement facilitator(s)	<b>Invigilators</b>

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## 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'.*"

[[AA](#) Definitions,

page 3]

## Purpose of the policy

The purpose of this policy is to confirm that Wyre Forest 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 Exams Officer 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](#)

## General principles

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

The purpose of an access arrangement 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 does not disadvantage or advantage the candidate.

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) before his/her first examination.

## Equalities Policy (exams)

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

The headteacher/senior leadership team recognises its duties towards disabled candidates, including private candidates, as defined under the terms of the Equality Act 2010†. This includes a duty to explore and provide access to suitable courses, through the access arrangement process submit applications for reasonable adjustments and make reasonable adjustments to the service Wyre forest School provides to disabled candidates.

The Access Arrangement 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)

N/A for the academic year 2020-21

## 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)

Wyre Forest School has a written statement of the process of checking the qualifications of centre's assessors and that the assessment process is administered correctly" on file as per Chapter 7 of the JCQ publication Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments. (GR5.4)

The headteacher of Wyre forest School will 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) will be held on file for inspection purposes and be presented to the JCQ Centre Inspector by the Exams Officer. ([AA](#) 7.3)

The headteacher is responsible for checking the qualifications and the appointment of the access assessor. The headteacher is responsible for the quality of the AA process.

### Reporting the appointment of the assessor(s)

Evidence of the assessor's qualifications are held on file by the Exams Officer.

## 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* (EHCP) or *Statement of Special Educational Needs* the teachers and SLT will be painting a holistic picture of need, demonstrating the candidate's normal way of working and completing Section A of Form 8 prior to the candidate being assessed, ensuring that the correct procedures are followed as per Chapter 7 of the JCQ publication Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments. (GR 5.4)

Wyre Forest School will be using an external moderator should the need arise. Procedures are in place for checking qualifications and processes.

## Painting a holistic picture of need, gathering evidence confirming normal way of working

Individual staff roles and procedures are outlined in Wyre Forest School's exams specific **Disability Policy**.

All Wyre Forest School's procedures strictly adheres to the regulations set out in the JCQ publications AA, ICE & GR. e.g.

"Before the candidate's assessment, the Exams Officer will provide the assessor with background information, i.e. a picture of need has been painted as per Section A of Form 8. [AA 7.6](#) The EO and the assessor will 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. [AA 7.5](#)

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 EO. The responsibility to request access arrangements specifically lies with the EO

As Wyre Forest school doesn't currently employ a SENCo the exams officer takes over that role with regards to the AA.

## 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 88 of [AA](#). This tool also provides the facility to order modified papers for those qualifications listed on page 69 of [AA](#).

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 exams officer is responsible for applying for AAO and keeping detailed records in Candidates individual folders, as outlined below:

*"The SENCo/ALS 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](#)]

### Centre-delegated access arrangements

Where a student has got an EHCP, the exams officer will make the relevant AAO and ensure sufficient evidence of Normal Way of Working is kept on file. Form 8 is not required and must not be used with EHCP applications.



## 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.

Wyre Forest School has a policy on the use of word processors which articulates to parents/carers, principally, that a word processor cannot simply be granted to a candidate because they now wants to type rather than write or can work faster on a keyboard, or because they use a laptop at home. A copy of the policy on using a word processor in examinations can be accessed by students and parents/carers on the school's web site.

The use of a word processor reflects the candidate's normal way of working within the Wyre Forest School. For example, where the curriculum is delivered electronically and the centre provides word processors to all candidates...

The headteacher has produced a statement for inspection purposes which details the criteria the centre uses to award and allocate word processors for examinations. A hard copy of this can be found in the 2018/19 Exams Policy folder which is held by the exams officer

### Separate Invigilation Policy within the centre

A decision where an exam candidate may be approved separate invigilation within the centre will be made by the ALS and the EO.

The decision will be based on:

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- whether the candidate has a substantial and long-term impairment which has an adverse effect
- the candidate's normal way of working within the centre 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)
- The candidate's difficulties being established within the centre (see Chapter 4, paragraph 4.1.4) and known to a Form Tutor, a Head of Year, the ALS or a senior member of staff with pastoral responsibilities.
- Whether a candidate has been awarded a Reader and/or a scribe

The Exams Officer is aware 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.)

