

ACCESS ARRANGEMENTS POLICY

2023/24

This policy is reviewed annually to ensure compliance with current regulations

Approved/reviewed by	
S Hatch - Principal	
Date of next review	January 2025

Key staff involved in the policy

Role	Name(s)
ALS lead/SENCo	J Fodor/SENCO
ALS lead/SENCo line manager (Senior leader)	Assistant Principal - Raising Standards
Head of centre	S Hatch - Principal
Assessor(s)	Donna Dawson
Access arrangement facilitator(s)	J Fodor/SENCO A To

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
Picture of need/normal way of working	6
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
Alternative Rooming Arrangements Policy.....	8

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 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'. (¹AA, 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'. (¹AA, 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 Christ's College, Guildford 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's **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 ALS lead/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. (¹AA, section 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 t for candidates with disabilities and learning difficulties - **Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments**'.

¹This publication is further referred to in this policy as AA

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 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 Exams Equalities Policy can be found on our website in the policies section of the Exams website page <https://www.christscollege.surrey.sch.uk/288/exams>

The head of centre/senior leadership team will recognise its duties towards disabled candidates, including private 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...

[†]for 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)

Donna Dawson Postgraduate Diploma in Dyslexia and Literacy

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)

Original copies of the assessors qualifications have been obtained and kept on record within the centre.

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 in Chapter 7 of the JCQ publication *Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments...* (GR, section 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, section 7.3)

Make full reference to AA, section 7.3 (Appointment of assessors) and record your process that reflects the requirements.

Reporting the appointment of the assessor(s)

Signpost to the location of the evidence that the assessor(s) is/are suitably qualified held by the ALS lead/SENCo.

Make full reference to AA, section 7.4 (Reporting the appointment of assessors) and record your process that reflects the requirements.

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

Original copies of the assessors qualifications have been obtained and kept on record within the centre.

Make full reference to AA, sections 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.

By detailing this, you should be confirming ...that the correct procedures are followed as in Chapter 7 of the JCQ publication *Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments...* (GR, section 5.4)

Note

...SENCos and assessors working within the centre should always carefully consider any privately commissioned assessment 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, section 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, section 5.4)

Picture of need/normal way of working

Assessors compile a picture of need from when students start at Christ's College until their final exams. Class teachers, Tutors, Progress Leaders and SENCO work together with the assessors to determine the best way to support students. Once this has been identified provisions will be put in place for the student to access these arrangements during all assessments.

Close monitoring of the students use of these arrangements, assessment data and assessors Review data is then used to monitor any arrangements in place.

All evidence of this is kept on file in the Learning support department.

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 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, section 7.5)

Make full reference to AA, sections 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 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.

Facilitators work closely with class teachers, progress leaders and parents/carers to review the progress of students over time. Access arrangements can be trialled at any point to build a picture of need for an individual student.

A combination of CAT4 tests in year 7 and GL Exact testing in year 9, plus teacher assessment are used to identify need for reasonable adjustments.

Students who are judged by the SENCO to be in need of reasonable adjustments will then be assessed by the external assessor. If two scores are obtained below 80 in this assessment a recommendation of reasonable adjustments will be made by the assessor on Form 8. Formal applications will then be submitted to the examining bodies to obtain access arrangements for these students.

Once approval is given all evidence is stored on file in learning support.

Should an arrangement not be approved by the examining body. Alternative arrangements or evidence will be gathered before resubmission.

Note the change to the (AAO) Candidate **Personal data consent form** and the requirement for completion of the Data protection confirmation by the examinations officer or

SENCo, prior to the processing of the online application, which must be retained for 26 months from the date of the online application being approved.

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 candidate personal data consent form for inspection by the JCQ Centre Inspection Service. (AA, section 8.6)

Make full reference to AA, section 8 (Processing applications for access arrangements and adjustments), section 6 (Modified papers) and record your process that reflects the requirements.

Centre-delegated arrangements/adjustments

There are a small number of arrangements which can be agreed by the SENCO based on need without the approval of the examining bodies.

These arrangements are only awarded where a holistic picture of need is built and the SENCO in discussion with the facilitators believe it is appropriate support for that student. Each case is assessed on the individual student and no arrangement is to be awarded without evidence of need.

A record of need and centre-delegated arrangements can be found in the Learning support department.

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.

Students may be awarded the use of a word processor in exams where the SENCO has deemed it beneficial for the student to use a word processor as their normal way of working in school.

Students cannot use a word processor unless previously agreed with the SENCO. In extenuating circumstances e.g. due to a medical condition meaning they are unable to write and supported by evidence from a medical professional the use of a word processor may be awarded where this has previously not been the normal way of working.

The Exams Word Processor Policy 2022-23 can be found on our website in the policies section of the Exams website page <https://www.christscollege.surrey.sch.uk/288/exams>

A member of the centre's senior leadership team must produce a word processor policy, specific to the centre, which details the criteria the centre uses to award and allocate word processors for examinations and assessments. This policy must be available for inspection. (AA, section 5.8)

Alternative Rooming Arrangements Policy

A decision where an exam candidate may be approved alternative rooming arrangements, e.g. a room for a smaller group of candidates with similar needs (formerly known as separate invigilation) 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, section 5.16)

Students may be placed in a smaller/ separate invigilation room where this has been their normal way of working. The SENCO must have agreed this arrangement and there must be supporting evidence of an impairment or medical condition.

In the case of alternative rooming arrangements, the candidate's disability is **established within the centre** (see Chapter 4, paragraph 4.1.4). It is known to a Form Tutor, a Head of Year, the SENCO or a senior member of staff with pastoral responsibilities. For example, a long-term medical condition which has a substantial and adverse effect.

Alternative rooming arrangements **must** reflect the candidate's normal and current way of working in internal school tests and mock examinations.

Nervousness, low level anxiety or being worried about examinations **is not** sufficient grounds for separate invigilation within the centre. (AA, section 5.16)