



# THE BEWDLEY SCHOOL

Learning for Life - Achievement for All

## Access Arrangements Policy

### 2020/21

This policy is reviewed annually to ensure compliance with current regulations

Approved/reviewed by	
	
Date of next review	September 2021

**Key staff involved in the policy**

<b>Role</b>	<b>Name(s)</b>
ALS lead/SENCo	<b>Mr P Willis</b>
ALS lead/SENCo line manager (Senior leader)	<b>Mr P Willis (Assistant Headteacher)/Mr D Hadley-Pryce (Headteacher)</b>
Head of centre	<b>Mr D Hadley-Pryce</b>
Assessor(s)	<b>Wendy Robins/Rebecca Thompson/Diana Willetts</b>
Access arrangement facilitator(s)	<b>Mr P Willis/Mrs G Bodman</b>

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## What are access arrangements and reasonable adjustments?

### Access arrangements

AA (Definitions, page 3) state... **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'.

### Reasonable adjustments

AA (Definitions, page 3) state... 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'.

### Purpose of the policy

The purpose of this policy is to confirm that The Bewdley 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...

[JCQ 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 access arrangements 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.

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 Equalities Policy (Exams) which covers staff roles and responsibilities in identifying the need for, requesting and implementing access arrangements and the conduct of exams.

See Appendix to Exams Policy

**The head of centre/senior leadership team will...** recognise its duties towards disabled candidates, including private candidates, as defined under the terms of the Equality Act 2010<sup>†</sup>. 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...

†or 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)**

The Bewdley School currently commissions a specialist assessor to carry out exam access arrangements. The specialist assessor holds a current practising assessment.

Wendy Robins – SPLD Assessment Practising Certificate – patoss

Wendy Robins – OCR Level 7 Diploma in Teaching and Assessing Learners with Dyslexia/Specific Learning Difficulties.

Rebecca Thompson – SpLD Assessment Practising Certificate (APC) from the British Dyslexia Association.

**Diana Willetts – Certificate of Psychometric Testing, Assessment and Access Arrangements Testing (CPT3A)**

### **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)**

A written process is in place to complete qualification checks before assessors are appointed to work at the Bewdley school.
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Evidence of the assessor's qualifications is held on file by the SENCO for inspection purposes and will be presented to the JCQ Centre Inspector when required.

The Bewdley School ensures that candidates with a learning difficulty have been assessed appropriately by a qualified assessor.

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

The assessor's certificates are held electronically by the SENCO and the Examinations Officer for reference and inspection. These can be found on the shared area under, SEN, For Curriculum Support, Access Arrangements for Exams, Assessor Information

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

Exam Access Arrangement processes are administered with regard to the Equality Act 2010 regulations and the SEN Code of Practice (2014).

The school makes every attempt to identify students needing exam Access Arrangements as early as possible.

Teachers, Teaching Assistants and the SENCO identify students needing exam arrangements through:

- The use of ongoing formative and summative assessment (teacher assessment)
- Information from primary school (or previous educational establishment) at the time of transition to The Bewdley School
- Ongoing tracking and monitoring information (reading assessments, spelling assessments.
- Feedback from class teachers about identified classroom difficulties, in class provision and any existing Access Arrangement being used as standard practice for the identified student.
- Information from external agencies (including, for example, LST, SALT, EP, Community Paediatrician, CCN team, and CAMHS...)
- The school does not currently have accommodate private students, have students distance learning or enter any students being educated at home (private students).
- After identifying level of student need, the form 8 is completed to include information about a student's difficulties, in class and assessment support and the proposed Access Arrangement and the reason for this.

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

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](#))

#### **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 7.3](#))

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 'holistic picture of need', confirming normal way of working**

From entry to the school, students in need of extra support are identified through ongoing monitoring of teacher summative and formative assessment as well as guidance from any external providers.

During year 9, the Curriculum Support Team commence a thorough data collection activity. This involves asking and expecting all classroom teachers to complete an audit of student need. This includes identifying students who experience classroom difficulties and how students are supported both through quality first teaching and to access any assessment opportunities. This information is collated centrally by the Curriculum Support team. The data collected is reviewed and considered in conjunction with data such as student reading age, spelling testing results, reading comprehension skills. The Curriculum Support team also ensure that medical conditions which may necessitate particular extra Access Arrangements are taken into account.

Prior to assessment by the external assessor, the SENCO and Curriculum Support team ensure that all relevant documentation and evidence is collated and that the Form 8 and LST application is completed as fully as possible. This enables the assessor to assess the student with as full a picture of need and provision as possible.

Students with approved Access Arrangement applications will have these arrangements in class tests, mock examinations and assessments. Student voice is taken into account, with students with identified Access Arrangements being asked to identify whether (or not) they have used the Access Arrangement and whether this same Access Arrangement is required for all examination entries. Information on the Access Arrangements for students is shared with invigilators who feed back to the Exams Officer/SENCO about student use of identified Access Arrangements. This is particularly important for monitoring whether a student would benefit more from supervised rest breaks or from 25% extra time.

All exam Access Arrangement assessments are completed by the end of the first term of year 10, wherever possible. As students join the school, or subsequent areas of need are identified, further testing may take place. This may be done after the first term of the year 10 course.

Prior to applying for any Access Arrangement, the proposed arrangement is discussed with the student.

Information about approved Access Arrangements is produced in a spreadsheet and made available to all teaching colleagues. There is a procedure for colleagues to request TA support to act as a reader, scribe or practical assistant for ongoing assessment opportunities. It is also possible for departments to request a student takes an exam in an alternative space (usually a smaller room in Curriculum Support, if taking an exam in a separate exam space is standard practice for that student).

For students with an EHCP, the SENCO reviews the student's EHCP and in-school provision to ensure that appropriate Access Arrangements are provided which for the candidate.

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 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.**

**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 with the SENCo. The responsibility to request access arrangements specifically lies with the SENCo. (AA 7.5)**

**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 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 (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.

In accordance with JCQ regulations, the SENCO makes the appropriate AAO and PPAO applications in advance of the published deadline.

The SENCO prints off a paper copy of the online application and stores this with the LST referral documentation and the summary of LST findings, the form 8, the data protection form, as well as any other supporting and supplementary documentation. For students with an EHCP, this is included in their file as key evidence. All live Access Arrangement files are stored in Curriculum Support.

In the event of an assessor deeming a student ineligible for any Access Arrangement, the SENCO ensures that a copy of the LST referral documentation and summary of findings, the form 8, the data protection form as well as any other supporting and supplementary documentation. Where an application is declined by the JCQ online site, the SENCO would review whether an individual awarding body referral is required, giving supplementary information as required.

Students are told verbally of any Access Arrangements which are to be applied for in advance of the application being made. Information about the outcomes of the Access Arrangements application is shared with students verbally.

Information about approved Access Arrangement applications is collated on a spreadsheet which is reviewed by Curriculum Support staff and shared with all teaching colleagues. This spreadsheet includes information about Access Arrangements which require awarding body approval and arrangements which are centre-delegated.

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 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 school follows JCQ guidance when providing centre delegated Access Arrangements. The identification of students who may benefit from centre delegated Access Arrangements is the same as for Access Arrangements requiring awarding body approval.

Evidence of student need for the centre-delegated Access Arrangements is recorded in the students Access Arrangement folders which are kept in the Curriculum Support admin office.

Centre-delegated Access Arrangements are identified during a student's year 9. The evidence collated is used to inform any decisions. All centre-designated Access Arrangements information is shared with colleagues via a centrally located spreadsheet (on the school system). The spreadsheet is compiled and maintained by the Curriculum Support team. Student usage of centre-devised Access Arrangements is tracked and monitored throughout the exam courses to ensure that this remains both a student's normal way of working as well as being the most appropriate support for a student.

### 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.

See Appendix to Exams Policy

A centre must have a policy on the use of word processors... 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. (AA 5.8)

#### 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)

The need for separate invigilation must be substantiated by appropriate evidence of need. This may take the form of a letter from a GP, CAMHS, EP, evidence within an EHCP or under

guidance of the SENCO or a Head of Year (for students with social, emotional or mental health difficulties).

Students requiring separate invigilation are identified where possible by the end of the first term of year 10. These students are identified on the whole school Access Arrangements summary spreadsheet. These students should be permitted to complete assessments under separate invigilation wherever possible. Teaching colleagues can request support from Curriculum Support to facilitate this Access Arrangement.

**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 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)**

