



LLOYD WILLIAMSON  
FOUNDATION

# The Lloyd Williamson Schools Foundation

## ACCESS ARRANGEMENTS POLICY (Exams)

2023-2024

## Key staff involved in the policy

Role	Name
SENCo	Lucy Meyer
Head of centre	Lucy Meyer
Exams Officer	Deborah Thackeray
Access arrangement facilitator	Clare Smart
Access arrangements assessor	Sarah Mansfield

## 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 Lloyd Williamson Schools Foundation 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. (<sup>1</sup>AA, 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 for candidates with disabilities and learning difficulties - **Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments**'.

<sup>1</sup>This 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. This is published on the school website.

## The assessment process

Assessments are carried out by an independent assessor appointed by the head of centre, Lucy Meyer. The assessor is appropriately qualified as required by JCQ regulations in AA, section 7.3.

## The qualifications of the current assessor

Sarah Mansfield (freelance / independent assessor)

Qualifications: ?

## Appointment of assessors of candidates with learning difficulties

At the point an assessor is engaged at 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 qualifications of the assessor

The head of centre will have a written process in place to not only check the qualifications of their assessor and correct procedures will be followed as per 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 qualifications is obtained at the point of engagement/employment and prior to the assessor undertaking any assessment of a candidate.

Evidence of the assessor's qualifications must be held on file for inspection purposes and be presented to the JCQ Centre Inspector by the SENCo. (AA, section 7.3).

LWSF uses the services of an external assessor who visits the school to conduct assessments.

### **Reporting the appointment of the assessor**

Evidence of the assessor's qualifications is held on record by the exams officer as approved by the SENCo.

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

Students are identified by the SENCo as requiring assessment. A visit by the external assessor is arranged. The assessor conducts the standard tests and completes the assessments. Form 8 is completed.

### **Picture of need/normal way of working**

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... (AA, section 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.

On a day to day basis, the exams officer and deputy exams officer are responsible for applications and all administrations concerning access arrangements.

Note the requirements around completion of the Candidate **Personal data consent form** and 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 for inspection purposes, whether electronically or in hard copy paper format, of all the essential information on file. This includes a signed candidate personal data consent form; a completed *Data protection confirmation by the examinations officer or SENCo* form; a copy of the candidate's approved application; appropriate evidence of need (where required); evidence of the assessor's qualification (where required). (AA, section 8.6)

## Centre-delegated arrangements/adjustments

The centre will record any centre-delegated arrangements such as:

25% extra time  
Supervised rest  
Separate invigilation  
Read aloud  
Prompter  
Word processor  
Reading pen

## 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.

This policy is published on the school website.

### 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) will be made by the SENCo and the exams officer.

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)

Candidates will only be granted alternative rooming arrangements if there is a proven need. *Nervousness, low level anxiety or being worried about examinations* is **not** sufficient grounds for alternative rooming arrangements within the centre. (AA, section 5.16)

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.

**Updated January 2024**

**Lucy Meyer**  
**Co-Principal**

**Deborah Thackeray**  
**Exams Officer**