

The Friary School

ACCESS ARRANGEMENTS

What are Access Arrangements & Reasonable Adjustments ?



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).

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 a candidate
- the effectiveness of the adjustment
- the cost of the adjustment
- 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 would be where an adjustment is not 'reasonable' (AA, Definitions)

This process is connected to the legislation in the Equality Act 2010.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to confirm that The Friary 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'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 Special Educational Needs Co-Ordinator (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.

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 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 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 the candidate
- The SENCO 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.
- Access Arrangements must always be approved before an examination or assessment.
- The Access 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 linked with our Equalities Policy and our staff - working in connection with our SENCO - which have responsibilities in identifying the need for, requesting and implementing of Access Arrangements and the conduct of exams.

Information is contained within the SEND Information Report and our Equalities Policy on our school website.

The Head of Centre / Senior Leadership Team recognises its duties towards candidates, including private candidates, ensuring compliance with all aspects of the Equality Act 2010. This includes exploring and providing access to suitable courses, through the Access Arrangements process submitting applications for reasonable adjustments and making reasonable adjustments to the service the centre provides to candidates. Where the centre is under a duty to make a reasonable adjustment, the centre does not charge a candidate any additional fee in relation to the adjustment or aid.

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) is Alethea (Lucy) Eagland: Postgraduate Award of Proficiency in Assessment for Access Arrangements.

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)

Lucy Eagland achieved the following unit credits on the 17 August 2020:

- Understanding the Principles of Psychometric Testing

Assessing for Access Arrangements

Lucy Eagland has a thorough understanding of the current edition of the JCQ publication Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments and the principles, procedures and accountabilities involved. She has also accessed the online webinar: Introduction to the JCQ changes for 2023/2024 in September 2023.

As Access Arrangements coordinator and assessor, Lucy Eagland, follows a process of assessment and monitoring to ensure a picture of need and normal way of working are fully identified and understood to 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.

Reporting the Appointment of the Assessor(s)

Lucy Eagland is appointed by the Headteacher as the centre's assessor.

A certificate is held by HR, the exams officer and in the Access Arrangements folder to certify that Lucy Eagland has achieved a pass in the SFJ Awards Level 7 Organisation Postgraduate Award of Proficiency in Assessment for Access Arrangements (PAPAA) on the 17 August 2020 at Include-ed.

Process for the Assessment of a Candidate's Learning Difficulties by an Assessor

The SENCO arranges suitable assessment based on the particular need:

- The SENCO, as the assessor, reviews progress and normal way of working, liaising with teachers, the candidate and parents around Access Arrangements considered based on the picture of need.
- The SENCO / assessor establishes if the results of tests in literacy and/or cognitive abilities present evidence that the candidate has an impairment which substantially affects their performance.
- All assessments are conducted by Lucy Eagland - appointed assessor
- All tests are relevant to support the application using current editions of nationally standardised tests which produce standardised scores

Tests used by the assessor are:

- TOWRE-2 for reading efficiency
- RAN/RAS for phonological processing
- TOMAL-2 for working memory
- DASH for handwriting speed WRAT-5 for reading ability
- Results are recorded as standardised scores which use a mean of 100 and a standard deviation of 15

Picture of Need / Normal Way of Working

Candidates who require reasonable adjustments to access the school environment/curriculum and effectively record their work are monitored with assessment of need from the point of transition to The Friary School.

Where candidates work with reasonable adjustments their normal way of working is evidenced through individual support plans updated by the SENCO and classroom support plans updated by class teachers.

Processing Access Arrangements & Adjustments (PAAO)

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.

For candidates who have barriers to learning with picture of need, normal way of working and assessor scores confirming an application should be made, Form 8 is completed and an application made through AAO and PAAO.

Where a candidate requires an application to be made for a reader but does not require extra time and/or a scribe, Form 9 is completed with details of the nature of the learning barrier and evidence of the normal way of working within the centre.

Where a candidate has a persistent/significant need with documents confirming the difficulty, Access Arrangements are determined by the picture of need and the normal way of working for the candidate within the centre. Form 9 is completed with a description of the exact nature of the candidate's need and evidence of their normal way of working. Letters confirming the candidate's needs can be from:

- CAMHS
- HCPC registered psychologist
- Medical consultant
- Psychiatrist
- Speech language therapist (SaLT)
- Local Authority Specialist Service (Eg - Sensory Impairment or Occupational Health)
- EHCP, which confirms candidate's disability

Where modified papers are required the exams officer orders these through AAO using the 'other' option.

Centre-Delegated Arrangements / Adjustments

All arrangements are recorded on a central spreadsheet.

Where a candidate requires supervised rest breaks:

- A statement within Form 9, confirming the need is completed

Where a candidate requires coloured paper:

- The colour required is recorded on the central spreadsheet

Where a candidate requires a prompter:

- evidence of need is obtained from the relevant professional based on normal way of working where the candidate
 - * has little or no sense of time (Eg - candidates with ADHD or ASD);
 - * persistently loses concentration
 - * is affected by an obsessive-compulsive disorder which leads them to keep revisiting a question rather than moving onto other questions

Where a candidate requires a small room:

- evidence of need is obtained from the relevant professional working with the candidate

Centre-Specific Criteria for Particular Arrangements / Adjustments

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.

The Word Processor Policy is held in the exams office.

A word processor is considered where a candidate has:

- a learning difficulty which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to write legibly
- a medical condition
- a physical disability
- a sensory impairment
- planning and organisational problems when writing by hand
- poor handwriting

Where a candidate requires use of a word processor, evidence of need is based on:

- documents from medical professionals
- normal way of working alongside assessment and monitoring of speed/quality of handwriting

Separate Invigilation Policy

A decision where an exam candidate may be approved separate invigilation within the centre will be made by the 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)
- Where a candidate known to a Form Tutor, a Head of House, the SENCO, or a senior member of staff with pastoral responsibilities, has a significant medical or physical need and a separate room is the normal way of working for accessing assessments (and separate invigilation will be arranged)
- Where a candidate has significant difficulties requiring significant support around well-being and mental health is a concern a small room is arranged

Reviewed By	Headteacher	Implementation Date	Nov 2024	Review Date	Jan 2026
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