



Access Arrangements Policy

2023 - 2024

This procedure is reviewed annually to ensure compliance with current regulations

Approved/reviewed by	
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Key staff involved in the policy

Role	Name(s)
Head of Centre	Glenn Mellor
ALS Lead / SENCo	Cat Osborne (operational)
SENCo Line Manager	Zoe Johal (DHT)
Assessor/s	Julie Lewis / Allocated Staff from SEMHL Team at Coventry City Council
Exams Officer	Cathy Pierce

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.....	6
Arrangements / adjustments requiring awarding body approval	6
Word processor policy (exams).....	6
Centre-delegated arrangements / adjustments	7

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)

Purpose of the policy

The purpose of this policy is to confirm that Coventry Extended Learning Centre (CELC) 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, 5.4]

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

CELC Website - [CELC Policies](#)

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)

Assessor - Julie Lewis (SEMHL Team)

Associate Member of the British Dyslexia Association

SpLD Assessment Practising Certificate

Postgraduate Certificate in Specific Learning Difficulties (Dyslexia)

Cat Osborne being trained as an Assessor during the AY 2023/24

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)

The ALS Lead / SENCo and or DHT responsible for SEN is responsible for checking the assessor's qualifications and providing a copy of relevant certificates to the Exams Officer. Evidence of qualifications should be held by the ALS Lead / SENCo.

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

The assessment procedure is led by the specialist external assessor, based on a referral system by the centre's ALS Lead / SENCo

The ALS Lead / SENCo makes a referral based on observations and recommendations from teachers, observations carried out within classes, and via consultation/requests made by parents and carers

The assessor carries out confidential testing on a one-to-one basis with the candidate. The results of this will form the basis of an access arrangement application. The original tests are stored in the candidate's files in the access arrangements folder.

Picture of need/normal way of working

Teaching staff are asked to provide examples of candidates' work to demonstrate the need that has led to the application of an access arrangement being made. Access Arrangements should reflect candidate's normal way of working.

This work is then stored in the student file in the access arrangement folder and made available for inspection. A hard copy of this evidence is kept by the Exams Officer

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 listed on page 2 of AA. This tool also provides the facility to order modified papers for those qualifications listed on page 74.

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 is required for each candidate regardless of the awarding body used.

Information is provided for each application on the completed Form 8, detailing the assessment scores and recommended requirements in line with candidate's normal way of working.

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. Copies of the signed consent form **must** be available for inspection, together with appropriate evidence and copies of complete JCQ form 8 and form 9.

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.

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)

[CELC Word Processor \(Exams\) Policy](#)

Alternative Rooming Arrangements Policy

A decision where an exam candidate may be approved alternative rooming arrangements, eg a room with a smaller groups 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** [\[AA 5.16\]](#)

[CELC Alternate Rooming Arrangement Policy](#)

Centre-delegated arrangements / adjustments

Many Access Arrangements do not need to be applied for via AAO / CAP and can be allowed at the discretion of each Centre. Evidence of need and that these reflect normal way of working will be retained in the relevant student folder on CELC Sharepoint.

These include, but are not limited to:

- Amplification equipment
- Bilingual dictionary
- Braille transcript
- Colour naming by the invigilator for candidates who are colour blind
- Coloured overlays
- Communication Professional (for candidates using Sign Language)
- Examination on coloured/enlarged paper
- Live speaker for pre-recorded examination components
- Prompter
- Read aloud / use of a reading pen
- Fidget toys
- Non electronic ear defenders / ear plugs
- Squared paper for visual spatial difficulties
- Supervised rest breaks