

**BLUE COAT CHURCH OF ENGLAND
SCHOOL AND MUSIC COLLEGE**



ACCESS ARRANGEMENT POLICY

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What are access arrangements?

“Access Arrangements

Access Arrangements are pre-examination adjustments for candidates based on evidence of need and normal way of working. Access Arrangements fall into two distinct categories: some arrangements are delegated to centres, others require prior JCQ^{CIC} Awarding Body approval.

Access Arrangements allow candidates/learners with special educational needs, disabilities or temporary injuries to access the assessment without changing the demands of the assessment. For example, readers, scribes and Braille question papers. In this way Awarding Bodies will comply with the duty of the Equality Act 2010 to make 'reasonable adjustments'.

Reasonable Adjustments

The Equality Act 2010 requires an Awarding Body to make reasonable adjustments where a disabled person would be at a substantial disadvantage in undertaking an assessment.

A reasonable adjustment for a particular person may be unique to that individual and may not be included in the list of available Access Arrangements.

How reasonable the adjustment will depend on a number of factors including the needs of the disabled candidate/learner. An adjustment may not be considered reasonable if it involves unreasonable costs, timeframes or affects the security or integrity of the assessment.

There is no duty on the Awarding Bodies to make any adjustment to the assessment objectives being tested in an assessment.”

[JCQ website [An overview](#)]

Purpose of the policy

The purpose of this policy is to confirm that Blue Coat fulfils *“its obligations in respect of identifying the need for, requesting and implementing access arrangements.”*

[JCQ 'General regulations for approved centres'Chapter5]

This document is further referred to in this policy as [GR](#)

The policy is annually reviewed to ensure that arrangements 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
General and Vocational qualifications’*

This publication is further referred to in this policy as [AA](#).

Key Staff referred to

SENCo Mrs Nicola Broadbent

Head of Centre: Mrs V Shelley (Headteacher)

Deputy Headteacher responsible for exams: Mrs Lisa Henden

Examinations Officer: Mrs Maria Beaton

AA Coordinator: Mrs Joanne Earle

Identifying the need for access arrangements

Roles and responsibilities

The head of centre will:

- be familiar with the contents, refer to and direct relevant centre staff to annually updated JCQ publications including [GR](#) and [AA](#)
- ensure that processes for identifying the need for access arrangements and reasonable adjustments (referred to in this policy as 'access arrangements') for individual candidates is clearly defined and documented
- ensure that staff roles and responsibilities in identifying, requesting and implementing access arrangements are clearly defined in this policy
- ensure a qualified specialist assessor is appointed and that evidence of the appropriate qualification(s) of the person(s) appointed is held on file
- ensure that the assessment process is administered in accordance with the regulations
- ensure a disability policy showing the centre's compliance with relevant legislation is in place

The special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCo)/specialist teacher will:

- be familiar with the contents, refer to and direct relevant centre staff to annually updated JCQ publications including [AA](#)
- lead on the access arrangements process
- if not the qualified specialist assessor, will work with the person appointed, on all matters relating to assessing candidates and the administration of the assessment process
- ensure that all assessments carried out and arrangements put in place comply with JCQ and Awarding Body regulations and guidance
- ensure arrangements put in place reflect a candidate's *normal way of working*¹ within the centre
- ensure the need for access arrangements for a candidate will be considered on a subject by subject basis
- present when requested by the JCQ Centre Inspector, evidence of the specialist assessor's qualification

In addition the SENCo/specialist teacher will:

- provide and annually review a centre policy on the **use of word processors** in exams and assessments
- ensure criteria for candidates allowed **separate invigilation within the centre** is clear, meets the requirements of JCQ access arrangements and best meets the needs of individual candidates and remaining candidates in main exam rooms

Teaching staff will:

- inform the SENCo/specialist teacher of any support that might be needed by a candidate
- provide information to evidence the *normal way of working* of a candidate
- support the SENCo/specialist teacher as required in identifying the need for access arrangements

The specialist assessor will:

- conduct appropriate assessments to identify the need(s) of a candidate
- provide appropriate evidence to confirm the need(s) of a candidate
- complete appropriate documentation as required by the regulations of JCQ and the Awarding Body

¹Normal way of working as defined by JCQ

“The arrangement(s) put in place must reflect the support given to the candidate in the centre†, e.g.

- *in the classroom; or*
- *working in small groups for reading and/or writing; or*
- *literacy support lessons; or*
- *literacy intervention strategies; and/or*
- *in internal school tests and mock examinations.*

This is commonly referred to as ‘normal way of working’. For candidates with learning difficulties this is typically the background information recorded with Section A of Form 8.

†The only exception to this is where an arrangement is put in place as a consequence of a temporary injury or impairment (see section 8.3, page 95).”

[AA 4.2.4]

The Assessment Process

At Blue Coat all documentation relating to the Specialist Assessor and Access arrangements recommended are stored with Mrs Joanne Earle in SEND. A copy of all paperwork regarding the application of access arrangements to the boards are stored with Mrs Maria Beaton in the Exams Office.

Centres need to bear in mind all relevant JCQ regulations and guidance provided in [GR](#) and [AA](#) , including:

“Evidence of the specialist assessor’s qualification(s) must be held on file for inspection purposes. The documentation must be presented to the JCQ Centre Inspector by the SENCo.”

[JCQ [Criteria for a specialist assessor](#)]

*“...have a **written** process in place to not only check the qualifications of those assessing candidates but that the assessment process is administered correctly...”*

[JCQ [GR](#) 5]

Identifying the Needs of Candidates

The SENCO will identify those students with particular needs, arrange professional support and will liaise with the Examinations Officer to ensure that needs in relation to examination are properly identified and the necessary processes are followed to ensure that special consideration is given, where appropriate.

Centres need to bear in mind all relevant JCQ regulations and guidance provided in [GR](#) and [AA](#) , including:

“The centre agrees to:

- *ensure that it will recruit with integrity with regard to both general and vocational qualifications;*
- *ensure that learners will in an accessible format have the correct information and advice on their selected qualification(s) and that the qualification(s) will meet their needs. The recruitment process **must** include the centre assessing each potential learner and making justifiable and professional judgements about the learner’s potential to successfully complete the examinations/assessments and achieve the qualification(s). The centre’s assessment **must** identify, where appropriate, the support that will be made available to the learner to facilitate access to examinations/assessments”*

“...ensure that where a candidate with a learning difficulty requires an assessment of his/her needs, he/she is

assessed by an appropriately qualified specialist assessor **as appointed by the head of centre...**"

[JCQ [GR 5](#)]

By detailing the assessment process, you should be confirming "that the assessment process is administered correctly..."

[JCQ [GR 5](#)]

Recording evidence of need

The SENCO will keep secure record of the needs of individual students and will liaise with the Examinations Officer to ensure that the appropriate forms are completed and submitted for consideration by the Exam Boards.

JCQ forms might include, for example:

- Form 8 – Application for access arrangements
- Form 8A – Assessing candidates for access arrangements
- Form 9 – Arrangements permitted by the centre
- Form 11 – Notification of access arrangements Entry level
- Form 12 – Application for access arrangements Entry level
- Form VQ/EA – Application for reasonable adjustments; External assessments – Vocational qualifications
- Form VQ/IA - Application for reasonable adjustments; Internally assessed units – Vocational qualifications

<http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/access-arrangements-and-special-consideration/forms>]

Gathering evidence of normal way of working

Students are identified on entering the school by working with our feeder primary schools. Students are monitored by their teachers and any concern is notified to the SENCO, who will carry out appropriate procedures for ascertaining particular needs

Disability policy

A copy of our Disability policy is attached.

[JCQ [GR 5](#)]

Word processor policy

A copy of our Word Processor Policy is kept with this policy

[JCQ [AA5.8](#)]

Separate invigilation within the centre

The Exams Officer will liaise closely with the SENCO and her staff to ensure that students with particular needs are seated appropriately to that need.

[see JCQ [AA 5.16](#) plus centre-determined criteria]

Requesting access arrangements

Roles and responsibilities

The SENCo/specialist teacher will:

- determine if the arrangements identified for a candidate require prior approval from the Awarding Body before the arrangements are put in place or if approval is centre-delegated
- follow guidance in [AA](#) Chapter 8 to process approval applications for access arrangements for GCSE and GCE qualifications
- have a username and password for one or more Awarding Body secure extranet site in order to gain access to *Access arrangements online*² (AAO)
- apply for approval where this is required, through AAO, or through the Awarding Body where qualifications sit outside the scope of AAO
- ensure appropriate evidence is held on file to confirm validation responses in AAO; examples might include:
 - painting a picture of need on section A of JCQ form 8
 - a completed specialist assessment to substantiate the picture of need recorded on section C of form 8
 - a body of evidence to substantiate the candidate's normal way of working within the centre
- confirm by ticking the '*Confirmation*' box prior to submitting the application for approval that the '*malpractice consequence statement*' has been read and accepted
- make an *Awarding Body referral* through AAO where the initial application for approval may not be approved by AAO, where it is deemed by the centre that the candidate does not meet the criteria for the arrangement(s)
- ensure that arrangements, and approval where required, is in place before a candidate takes his/her first exam or assessment (which is externally assessed or internally assessed/externally moderated)
- ensure that where approval is required that this is applied for by the Awarding Body deadline
- maintain a file for each candidate that will include:
 - completed JCQ/Awarding Body application forms and evidence forms
 - appropriate evidence to support the need for the arrangement
 - appropriate evidence to support normal way of working within the centre
 - in addition, for GCSE and GCE qualifications (where approval is required), a print out of the AAO approval and a signed data protection notice (which provides candidate consent to their personal details being shared)
- will present the files when requested by the JCQ Centre Inspector

The EO will:

- order modified papers, where these may be required by a candidate for GCSE and GCSE qualifications, through AAO by the deadline date for the November (GCSE only) and summer exam series
- order modified papers, where these may be required by a candidate for Cambridge Nationals, Cambridge Progression, ELC and Functional Skills qualifications, by submitting *JCQ Form 7 – Application for modified papers* to the Awarding Body at least 10 weeks before the date of the assessment
- order modified papers, where these may be required by a candidate for vocational qualifications, by submitting *JCQ Form VQ/EA - Application for reasonable adjustments; External assessments – Vocational qualifications* to the Awarding Body no later than 10 weeks before the date of the assessment

- order modified papers, where these may be required by a candidate for any other qualifications, by identifying and following the Awarding Body process by the deadline date

²*Access arrangements online* is a tool provided by JCQ member awarding bodies for GCSE and GCE qualifications. This tool also provides the facility to order modified papers for GCSE and GCE qualifications.

“For GCSE and GCE qualifications, Access arrangements online enables centres to make a single on-line application for a candidate requiring access arrangements using any of the secure Awarding Body extranet sites. Access arrangements online will provide an instant response and will only allow a maximum of 26 months for any arrangement.”

Further information on *Access arrangements online* is available from:

<http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/aao-access-arrangements-online>”

[AA 8.1]

Implementing access arrangements

Roles and responsibilities

External assessments

These are assessments which are normally set and marked/examined by an Awarding Body which must be conducted according to Awarding Body and/or JCQ [Instructions for conducting examinations](#) (ICE).

The SENCo will:

- appoint appropriate centre staff as facilitators to support candidates who have been approved the use of:
 - a practical assistant
 - a prompter
 - an Oral Language Modifier
 - a reader
 - a scribe
 - a Sign Language Interpreter
- ensure facilitators supporting candidates are appropriately trained and understand the rules of the particular access arrangement(s)
- ensure candidates are aware of the access arrangements that are in place for their exams and assessments
- liaise with the EO regarding facilitation and invigilation of access arrangement candidates in exams
- ensure cover sheets are completed as required by facilitators
- liaise with the EO where a facilitator may be required to support a candidate requiring an emergency (temporary) access arrangement at the time of exams

The EO will:

- liaise with the SENCo regarding the facilitation and invigilation of access arrangement candidates
- liaise with the SENCo regarding rooming of access arrangement candidates
- ensure invigilators supervising access arrangement candidates are trained in their role and understand the invigilation arrangements required for access arrangement candidates as detailed in ICE 7 and 8
- provide cover sheets prior to the start of an exam where required for particular access arrangements and will ensure that these have been fully completed before candidates' scripts are dispatched to examiners/markers
 - print pre-populated cover sheets from AAO where this is required for GCSE and GCE qualifications
- will check in advance of dated exams/assessments that modified paper orders have arrived (and if not will contact the Awarding Body to ensure that papers are available when required)
- make modifications that are delegated to the centre (a question paper on coloured/enlarged paper) that may be required and will open the question paper packet in the secure room within 90 minutes of the published starting time for the exam
- ensure that where a candidate has been approved for a computer reader, will open the question paper packet in the secure room within 90 minutes of the published starting time for the exam
- ensure that where a candidate has been approved for an Oral Language Modifier, secure exam paper packets will not be opened earlier than 90 minutes prior to the published start time

- ensure that where the centre has granted the candidate a Live Speaker and/or a Sign Language Interpreter, secure exam paper packets will not be opened earlier than 90 minutes prior to the published start time
- have a process in place to deal with emergency (temporary) access arrangements as they arise at the time of exams in terms of rooming and invigilation
- where required for emergency (temporary) access arrangements, apply for approval through AAO or through the Awarding Body where qualifications sit outside the scope of AAO

Internal assessments

These are assessments which are normally set by a centre/awarding body, marked and internally verified by the centre and moderated by the Awarding Body.

The SENCo will:

- liaise with teaching staff to implement appropriate access arrangements for candidates

Teaching staff will:

- support the SENCo in implementing appropriate access arrangements for candidates

Internal exams

These are exams or tests which are set and marked within the centre; normally a pre-cursor to external assessments (exams).

The SENCo will:

- liaise with teaching staff to implement appropriate access arrangements for candidates

Teaching staff will:

- support the SENCo in implementing appropriate access arrangements for candidates