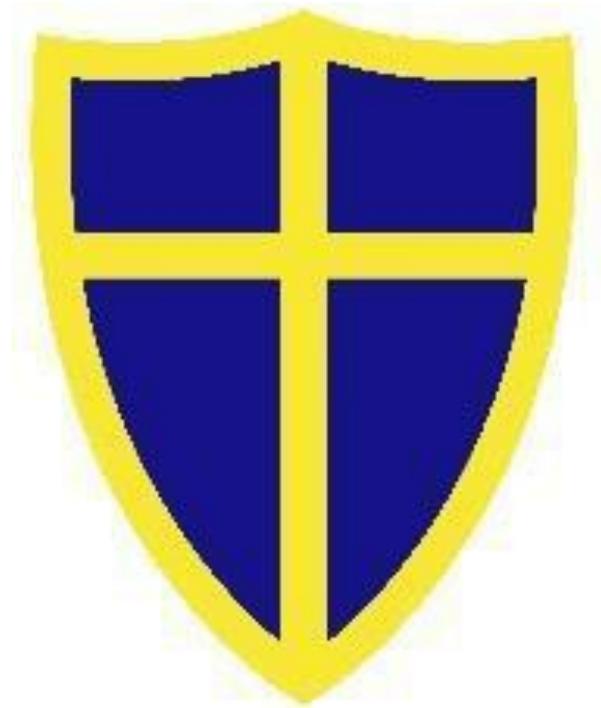


**BLUE COAT CHURCH OF ENGLAND  
SCHOOL AND MUSIC COLLEGE**



**ACCESS ARRANGEMENTS POLICY**

Updated: October 2020  
Policy duration: October 2021  
Committee: LGB

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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 Blue Coat 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 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)

We have a separate SEND policy, which is held in the with all the main academy 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 7.3.

### The qualification(s) of the current assessor(s)

Mrs J Earle

Certificate in Psychometric Testing: Assessment and Access Arrangements (CPT3A)

Member of the British Psychological Society, membership number: RQTU345189

Awarding Body – Real Training

Mrs J Powell

Level 7 Postgraduate Certificate in Assessment practice for Dyslexia and Literacy

Awarding Body – Dyslexia Action (University of Middlesex)

### 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 Head of Centre /SLT have appointed an Access Arrangements Co-ordinator whose job is to assess students within the centre. The Assistant Head teacher of Inclusion and SENDCo have seen the qualifications of the assessor and any Access arrangements course certificates that were/are undertaken.

The Head of centre/SLT will not only check the qualifications of any new assessors, but also that the correct procedures are followed as in Chapter 7 of the JCQ publication Access Arrangements and Reasonable adjustments (GR 5.4).

The head of centre will ensure that evidence of the assessor's qualification(s) is obtained at the point of engagement/employment and prior to the assessor undertaking any assessment of a candidate.

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

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

Evidence of the assessor's qualification(s) is held on file for inspection purposes and be presented to the JCQ Centre Inspector by the SENCo. This evidence is located in the SENDCo's office.

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

The SENDCo must:

- Arrange for the candidate to be assessed by an assessor.
- Ensure that applications are processed on time, not later than the published deadline;
- Ensure that the full supporting evidence is in place before an online application is processed;
- Review the evidence before an online application is processed ensuring that the candidate does meet the published criteria for the respective arrangement;
- Hold all supporting evidence and present such evidence to a JCQ inspector upon request and;
- Ensure that the agreed access arrangement has been put in place before the candidates first examination, eg internal school tests and mock examinations

The assessor must:

- The assessor is required to establish if the results of tests in literacy and/or cognitive abilities present evidence that the candidate has an impairment which substantially affects their performance.
- Assessments must personally conduct the assessments. They must not sign off assessments carried out by another professional.
- Carry out tests that are relevant to support the application.
- Current editions of nationally standardised tests which produce standardised scores must be used, where published.
- Report the results of their assessment within part 2 of Form 8;
- Provide the centre with evidence of their qualification(s) before assessing any candidate.
- The SENDCo and assessor working within the centre will 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.

## Painting a 'holistic picture of need', confirming 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 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)

Before testing, Part 1 of the Form 8 must be filled out. Reference should be made to:

- The history of difficulties, for example with the development of literacy skills;
- The results of screening tests;
- Individual education/learning plans or support plans in place for the candidate;
- School reports;
- Pupil tracking data;
- Information reported by subject teachers and/or support staff such as Learning Support Assistants.
- Where relevant, evidence will be collected from teachers via a pro-forma

Answer the three key statements in Part 1 of Form 8:

- What is the candidate's history of difficulties
- What are the candidate's current difficulties in the classroom, tests and examinations
- What support and adjustments are in place for the candidate in the classroom, tests and examinations

## 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.

The Assistant SENDCo (Access Arrangements co-ordinator) applies online for candidates who meet the criteria for access arrangements, after the testing process has been completed.

Students who meet the testing criteria are tested in Year 9, so their arrangements are in place for Years 10 and 11.

All information relating to a candidates application for access arrangement is kept on file. This includes:

- Form 8
- Signed data protection forms
- Copy of AAO paperwork
- Student Support Plans
- Relevant educational assessment paperwork (Eg: EP assessment/dyslexia diagnosis report)
- Medical letters from CAMHS Consultants for example

These files are kept in the SENDCo/Assistant SENDCo (Access arrangements co-ordinator) office

If a case is turned down by AAO, an application is made to the relevant awarding bodies, with the evidence needed.

### Centre-delegated access arrangements

For any centre delegated arrangements, the Assistant SENDCo (Access Arrangements Co-ordinator)/SENDCo has pro-formas which must be completed by relevant members of staff, such as the House Head, Form Tutor, Assistant SENDCo (Access Arrangements Co-ordinator)/SENDCo and/or a senior member of staff with pastoral responsibilities.

The Assistant SENDCo (Access Arrangements Co-ordinator)/SENDCo produces a short concise file note on centre headed paper, signed and dated for any centre-delegated arrangements.

To provide any centre delegated access arrangements, the SENDCo/Assistant SENDCo (Access Arrangements Co-ordinator)/Exams Officer must be satisfied that the candidate has an impairment which has a substantial and long term adverse effect, giving rise to persistent and significant difficulties and the candidate is disabled within the meaning of the Equality act.

The candidate's difficulties must be established within the centre and thus known to a Form Tutor, a Head of Year, the SENDCo and/or a senior member of staff with pastoral difficulties.

Any centre-delegated access arrangements must be the candidate's normal way of working within the centre.

Where relevant, medical information can be asked for.

## 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.

We have a separate Word Processor Use policy, which is held in the same location as this policy.

### 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 5.16](#))

For a candidate to be considered for separate invigilation within the centre, the candidate's difficulties must be established within the centre and thus known to a Form Tutor, a Head of Year, the SENCo and/or a senior member of staff with pastoral responsibilities. A Pro-forma must be filled out by the relevant member of staff and signed and dated.

Where relevant, medical information can be requested.

It must reflect the candidate's normal way of working within the centre (e.g.: mock exams etc.).

# ACCESS ARRANGEMENTS POLICY

**Reviewed by:**

M Beaton

March 2020

M Beaton

October 2020

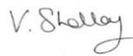
**Next Review Date:**

October 2021

**Approved by Governors:**

1 December 2020

Signed:



Signed:



VICTORIA SHELLEY  
Headteacher

LYN JOHNSON  
Chair of Governors

Date: 01.12.20

Date: 01.12.20