

Access Arrangements Policy

2020/21

This policy is reviewed annually to ensure compliance with current regulations

Approved/reviewed by	
Exams Officer	
Date of next review	01 Sep 2021

Key staff involved in the access arrangements process

Role	Name(s)
SENCo	Gill Thomas
SENCo line manager (Senior Leader)	Karen Bell
Head of centre	Jim Grant
Assessor(s)	Gill Thomas, Anne Peace, Gill Shrigley, Maggie McCouig, Gill Paterson

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What are access arrangements and reasonable adjustments?

Access arrangements

“Access arrangements are agreed before an assessment. They allow candidates with 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 particular 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, page 3]

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 is 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.”

[AA Definitions, page 3]

Purpose of the policy

The purpose of this policy is to confirm that Cirencester 6th Form College complies with its *“...obligation to identify the need for, request and implement access arrangements...”*

[JCQ General Regulations for Approved Centres, 5.5]

This publication 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’*.

This publication is further referred to in this policy as **AA**.

Disability policy (exams)

A large part of the access arrangements policy is covered in the Disability policy (Policy No 03 exams) which covers staff roles and responsibilities in identifying the need for, requesting and implementing access arrangements and the conduct of exams.

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)

All qualifications for current assessors are held by the college HR department and can be viewed on request by inspectors.

Checking the qualification(s) of the assessor(s)

All qualifications of assessors are checked as part of the vetting/employment process meeting all relevant JCQ regulations and guidance provided in [GR](#) and [AA](#), including that centres are required to

*“...have a **written** process in place to not only check the qualification(s) of their specialist assessor(s) but that the assessment process is administered correctly...*

*...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...**”* [[GR](#) 5.4]

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

[[AA](#) 7.3]

How the assessment process is administered

Parents must declare at the time of enrolment and when completing the college application forms if their child has any medical or psychological conditions, EHCP, previous EEA at another educational institution or any other issues that may require EEA. Failure to disclose this information negates Cirencester college from their responsibilities. Students will invited to attend assessment appointments with our Academic Learning Support Specialists. It is the responsibility of the student and/or their parent/carer to ensure they attend their appointment.

The college capture this information :

Application form

IAG Meetings

School Liaison information

Self Declaration

Note for private candidates the centre must will undertake the necessary and appropriate steps to gather an appropriate picture of need and demonstrate normal way of working for a private candidate. This includes distance learners and home educated students. The centre, where required, must lead on the assessment process. The candidate must be assessed by the centre’s appointed assessor. In some instances, depending on his/her needs, the candidate may have to be assessed away from the centre, for example at home.

[GR 5.4]

Recording evidence of need

All applications require evidence of need, and the centre will hold the evidence on file for inspection purposes.

Evidence of need include:

Recommendation by teaching staff

Educational Psychologist reports

Letter from outside agencies such as Children and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS), hospital or doctors

Information from Speech and Language Team (SALT)

Statement of Educational Needs or Educational Health Care plan (EHCP)

Permission from Exams Boards for arrangements

A signed copy of the form 8 by a designated tester

Data protection sheet signed by the student

A record of all occasions when a student has been supported by EAA

Only Form 8 is acceptable.

A privately commissioned assessment carried out without prior consultation with the centre cannot be used to award access arrangements and cannot be used to process an application using Access arrangements online.

The SENCo must complete at least a 'skeleton' Section A of Form 8 prior to the candidate being assessed (Section C of Form 8)... Where a privately commissioned report, or a report from an external professional, is rejected by a centre, the head of centre or a member of the senior leadership team should provide a written rationale supporting their decision to the parent/carer.

Gathering evidence to demonstrate *normal way of working*

Referrals are made direct to academic support either by staff or use of college Journal within CCSTARS

“The arrangement(s) put in place must reflect the support given to the candidate in the centre†, for example:

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

This is commonly referred to as 'normal way of working'. For candidates with learning difficulties this is typically the background information recorded within

Section A of Form 8 by the SENCo or the assessor working within the centre.
SENCos and assessors must refer to section 7.6.1, page 87, for information on how to confirm 'normal way of working'. †The only exception to this is where an arrangement is put in place as a consequence of a temporary injury or impairment ...”
[AA 4.2]

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 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 by logging in to any of the awarding body secure extranet sites. A single application is required for each candidate regardless of the awarding body used.

All AAO applications are submitted by the exams team on completion of assessment and submission of relevant documentation from Academic support. Each student granted approval whether by awarding body or centre delegated has their Access Arrangements file containing all relevant documentation.

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, see the centre's Word Processor Policy.

Separate invigilation within the centre

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]

See Centre Separate Invigilation Procedure.

Data Protection

When managing a student's personal data information it will be collected in accordance with the College's data protection policy. Data collected is held securely and accessed by, and disclosed to, individuals only for the purposes of information relating to this policy. Inappropriate access or disclosure of student data constitutes a data breach and should be

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reported in accordance with the organisation's data protection policy immediately. It may also constitute a disciplinary offence, which will be dealt with under the College's disciplinary procedure.

Equality

As with all College Policies and Procedures due care has been taken to ensure that this policy is appropriate to all students regardless of gender, age, race, ethnicity, disability, gender identity, sexual orientation or religion/faith. The policy will be applied fairly and consistently whilst upholding the College's commitment to providing equality to all.