



**Access arrangements policy**

2024/25

This policy is reviewed annually to ensure compliance with current regulations

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| Approved/reviewed by |
|  |
| Date of next review |  |

Key staff involved in the policy

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| --- | --- |
| **Role** | **Name(s)** |
| SENCo | **P Gardiner** |
| Senior Leader(s) | **L Cassels, S Reilly, J Watkinson, T Hughes** |
| Head of centre | **V Whitcombe** |
| Assessor(s) | **Kirsty Richards** |
| Exams Officer | **P Cleary** |
| Access arrangement facilitator(s)  | **P Gardiner, P Cleary, J Jacobs** |

Access arrangements policy template

**Delete this text box when the information contained below is understood**

**Changes made to the contents of this template since the previous (2018/19) version are highlighted for easy identification.**

There is no current JCQ regulation for centres to specifically have an **Access arrangement policy** in place. This template has been provided as an example **only** and is intended to provide you with a starting point/framework on which to build a policy to bring all aspects of the access arrangements process in your centre together in one place.

A table to record centre staff (job role and name) has been inserted at the beginning of the template. You may choose to delete this or use it as good practice by inserting names against roles identified in the policy (some example roles have been provided).

Quotes from JCQ publications are provided to support the understanding of a particular point. The general intention is that these quotes will be mainly removed before the policy is published, unless the centre has a particular desire to leave them in.

Roles, responsibilities and processes included in this template are suggestions **only**; they should be edited accordingly to reflect ways of working in your centre by

* deleting information that is not relevant to your centre
* amending information where a process runs differently in your centre
* adding information that you consider should be included in your policy.

The processes identified in this example policy are not exhaustive.

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Table of contents

**Delete this text box when the information contained below is understood**

The contents page has been produced by inserting a table of contents. The (**blue** and **orange**) bold headings in the template have been formatted in ‘heading style’ so that they appear in the automated contents page. If you make changes to any of these headings, delete them, add extra pages to the document or remove pages, your table of contents should be updated.

To do this, go to the beginning of the contents page and click on the word **Contents**– the tab below appears and should be selected.

  

If you wish to remove the automated table of contents – in the Reference menu, click on the drop down and select *Remove Table of Contents. You can then create your own contents page.*

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 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](http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/access-arrangements-and-special-consideration/regulations-and-guidance)RA 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 a number of 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’.

The centre must ensure that approved adjustments can be delivered to candidates. [[AA](http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/access-arrangements-and-special-consideration/regulations-and-guidance)RA Definitions]

Purpose of the policy

The purpose of this policy is to confirm that Castle Manor Academy 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, 5.4]

This publication is further referred to in this policy as [GR](http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/general-regulations)

This policy is maintained and held by the SENCo/Examination officer alongside the individual files of each access arrangements candidate. Each file 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](http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/access-arrangements-and-special-consideration/regulations-and-guidance)RA

General principles

The head of centre will appoint a SENCo, or an equivalent member of staff, who will coordinate the access arrangements process within the centre and determine appropriate arrangements for candidates with learning difficulties and disabilities, candidates for whom English is an additional language, as well as those with a temporary illness or temporary injury. (GR5.4)

The principles for the centre to consider are detailed in AARA (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 them from being placed at a substantial disadvantage due to persistent and significant difficulties. The integrity of the assessment is maintained, whist at the same time providing access to assessments for a disable candidate.
* The SENCo, or an equivalent member of staff must ensure that the proposed access arrangement does not unfairly disadvantage or advantage the candidate.
* A centre **must** make decisions on appropriate access arrangements for their candidates. Although professionals from other organisations may give advice, they **cannot** make the decision for the centre. They will not have a working knowledge of an individual candidate’s needs and how their difficulties impact in the classroom and/or in timed assessments. It is the responsibility of the SENCo to make appropriate and informed decisions based on the JCQ regulations.
* Access Arrangements/reasonable adjustments should be processed at the start of the course.
* Arrangements must always be approved before an examination or assessment.
* 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 their first examination.

Equalities Policy (Exams)

A large part of the access arrangements process is covered in the Equalities Policy (Exams) which covers staff roles and responsibilities in identifying the need for, requesting and implementing access arrangements and the conduct of exams.

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| The Equalities Policy can be found on the Castle Manor Academy website under policies**The head of centre/senior leadership team will**… recognise its duties towards disabled candidates, ensuring compliance with all aspects of the Equality Act 2010, particularly Section 20 (7)†. This **must** include a duty to explore and provide access to suitable courses, through the access arrangements process submit applications for reasonable adjustments and make reasonable adjustments to the service the centre provides to disabled candidates. Where the centre is under a duty to make a reasonable adjustment, the centre must not charge a disabled candidate any additional fee in relation to the adjustment or aid†or any legislation in a relevant jurisdiction other than England and Wales which has an equivalent purpose and effect [[GR](http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/general-regulations) 5.4]  |

This 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](http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/access-arrangements-and-special-consideration/regulations-and-guidance)RA section 7.3.

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

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| **Kirsty Richards*** **QTS**
* **Postgraduate Award of Proficiency in Assessment for Access Arrangements, PAPAA, 09/2016**
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Appointment of assessors

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](http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/access-arrangements-and-special-consideration/regulations-and-guidance)RA. This process is carried out prior to the assessor undertaking any assessment of a candidate.

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

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| When appointing an external assessor to the centre, evidence of qualification is checked and verified through copies of the certificates and registrations prior to the contract to assess is confirmed. On each occasion for testing (even if using the same assessor in subsequent years), qualifications and registrations are checked and copies of the relevant certificates taken for centre use, to be kept in each student file where assessment was undertaken. This is in regard to the following JCQ regulations and guidance that state that:**The head of centre/senior leadership team will**… have a **written** process in place to not only check the qualification(s) of their assessor(s) but that the correct procedures are followed as per **Chapter 7** of the JCQ document Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments… [[GR](http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/general-regulations) 5.4] The head of centre must 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) must be held on file for inspection purposes and be presented to the JCQ Centre Inspector by the SENCo**.** [[AA](http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/access-arrangements-and-special-consideration/regulations-and-guidance)RA 7.3]And with full regard to [AA](http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/access-arrangements-and-special-consideration/regulations-and-guidance)RA 7.3 *Appointment of assessors*  |

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

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| The location of the evidence of the assessor’s/assessors’ qualification(s):With full regard to [AA](http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/access-arrangements-and-special-consideration/regulations-and-guidance)RA 7.4 *Reporting the appointment of assessors* and record your process that reflects the requirements, we ensure that:* Evidence is held as a paper copy in each student(s) EAA file;
* This file is held securely and maintained by the Examination Officer;
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Process for the assessment of a candidate’s learning difficulties by an assessor

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| The process for the assessment of a candidate’s learning difficulties by an assessor is as follows:* The SENDco in collaboration with subject specialist teaching staff, Team Leaders and the HLTA responsible for internal screening monitors and tracks students where additional arrangements may need to be made, compiling a body of evidence to demonstrate evidence of need;
* Towards the end of Year 9, students who require specialist assessment for Exam Arrangements (where this cannot be undertaken by a suitably qualified member of centre staff) will be identified by the SENDco and parents and students contact to obtain consent;
* Where a candidate has learning difficulties and is not subject to a current *Education, Health and Care Plan* or *Statement of Special Educational Needs* that the SENCo is painting a picture of need and demonstrating the candidate’s normal way of working and completing Part 1 of Form 8 **prior** to the candidate being assessed.
* This is will full reference to [AA](http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/access-arrangements-and-special-consideration/regulations-and-guidance)RA 7.5 *Guidelines for the assessment of the candidate’s learning difficulties by an assessor* and7.6 *Completing Form 8 – JCQ/AA/LD, Profile of Learning Difficulties* ;
* Assessment dates are confirmed by the SENDco with the external assessor, who is subject to the qualification and registration checks as outlined above;
* Parents/Carers and students are contacted to ensure that consent to assess is given, and the relevant privacy/GDPR paperwork is completed;
* The SENDco completes Part 1 of the Form 8 prior to the assessment so that the assessor has a full picture of need. The SENDco and/or support staff are available during the screening process to answer queries and present the students’ evidence file if requested to confirm the details on Part 1 of the Form 8.

By detailing this, we confirm that the correct procedures are followed as per Chapter 7 of the JCQ publication *Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments*… [[GR](http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/general-regulations) 5.4]**Note**… SENCos and assessors working within the centre should 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. [[AA](http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/access-arrangements-and-special-consideration/regulations-and-guidance)RA 7.3]Also detail any process (where relevant) for private candidates, distance learners and home educated students (refer to the requirement in [GR](http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/general-regulations) 5.4) * We currently do not have any students that use the centre privately, through distance learning or home education.
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Picture of need/normal way of working

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| The centre’s process for painting a *picture of need* and gathering evidence to demonstrate *normal way of working* includes but is not limited to:* Seeking confirmation from teaching staff and support staff where appropriate that arrangements are made within the classroom for activities such as in class assessments and snap shots, in order to determine the ‘normal way of working’.
* Consideration is given to ensuring that this picture is captured on a subject by subject basis, clarifying where an additional arrangement for a student is not necessary;
* Staff within the SEND support team may gather evidence of student work, assessments or statements from staff that support the picture of need, to be stored within the student file held by the Examinations Officer.
* The Examinations Officer highlights any concerns, queries or gaps with the picture submitted and the picture of need is reviewed as necessary to ensure that it is accurate and up to date;

Where relevant include any additional information relating to **private candidates**. *Please see note above regarding access by private candidates at this time.*This is will full regard to [AA](http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/access-arrangements-and-special-consideration/regulations-and-guidance)RA 7.5 *Guidelines for the assessment of the candidate’s learning difficulties by an assessor* and7.6 *Completing Form 8 – JCQ/AA/LD, Profile of Learning Difficulties* and record your process that reflects the requirements:**Before the candidate’s assessment, the SENCo must provide the assessor with background information, i.e. a picture of need has been painted as required in 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. Additionally, the independent assessor must be approved by the head of centre to assess the candidate.****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/reasonable adjustments with the SENCo. The responsibility to determine and request appropriate and practicable access arrangements specifically lies with the SENCo**…  [[AA](http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/access-arrangements-and-special-consideration/regulations-and-guidance)RA 7.5]  |

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 covered by the tool. This tool also provides the facility to order modified papers for those qualifications included. (Refer to AARA (chapter 8) Processing applications for access arrangements and (chapter 6) Modified papers)

AAO is accessed within the JCQ Centre Admin Portal (CAP) using any of the awarding body secure extranet sites. A single application for approval is required for each candidate regardless of the awarding body used.

Online applications must only be processed where they are supported by the centre and the candidate meets the published criteria for the arrangement(s) with the full supporting evidence in place. (AARA 8 Summary)

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| Information relating to the centre’s processes for using AAO:With regards to [AA](http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/access-arrangements-and-special-consideration/regulations-and-guidance)RA 8 *Processing applications for access arrangements* and record your process that reflects the requirements:**The SENCo must keep detailed records, whether electronically or in hard copy paper format, of all the essential information on file**. This includes a copy of the candidate's approved application, appropriate evidence of need (where required) **and** a signed candidate personal data consent form for inspection by the JCQ Centre Inspection Service. [[AA](http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/access-arrangements-and-special-consideration/regulations-and-guidance)RA 8.6] * Applications are submitted by the Examinations Officer (EO), as soon as is practicable after the external assessment and when the EO and SENDco are satisfied that a complete and robust application is able to be made;
* All information relating to a students’ application is kept in paper copy, held securely in the Examinations Office, and available for scrutiny at any time;
* Where cases do not gain approval or where the Examinations Officer has raised a query prior to the application using AAO, the EO and the SENDco will discuss the case and if required, seek further information from staff and/or consult with the external assessor for professional guidance.
* Students, parents/carers and staff are made aware of the outcome of an assessment application and any follow up and/or ongoing actions that need to be made.
* Candidate’s signed personal data consent form; a completed Data protection confirmation by the examinations officer personal data consent form and the requirement for completion of the data protection confirmation by the exams officer and 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.
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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 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.

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| The Word Processor Policy can be found in the Z:Drive/Policies and held on the school’s website.  |