



Access Arrangement Policy

Version:	1.0
Date created:	March 2026
Centre Number	25128
Author:	Jane Bland
Review date:	March 2027

Revision History:

Version	Date	Author	Summary of Changes:
1.0	March 2025	JBL	New policy

Contents

1. Roles & Responsibilities Overview	3
2. Purpose of the Policy	3
3. What are access arrangements and reasonable adjustments?	3
4. General Principles	4
5. The assessment Process	4
6. Processing access arrangements and adjustments	6
7. Centre-Specific criteria for particular arrangements/adjustments	7

1. Key Roles & Responsibilities

Role	Name
Head of Centre	Vicky Barwell (Principal)
Senior Leaders	Priya Launa-Hewage (Assistant Principal - Lead for Exams) Jane Bland (Vice Principal) Shireen Takolia (SENDCO) Kajal Patel (Business Operations Manager)
Exams Manager	Anna Mrisi
Exams Officer	Emma Taylor
Access Arrangement Facilitator	Zainab Karim (Assistant SENDCO) Sumaya Seedat (Assistant SENDCO)
Other staff (if applicable)	Aasiyah Mohamed-Ilfan (Reading & Language Development Co-Ordinator) Jay Acharya (BTEC Quality Nominee) Holly Hinks (Assessor)

Head of Centre responsibilities:

- Ensures the centre has documented processes in place relating to access arrangements and reasonable adjustments
- Ensures the SENCo is fully supported in effectively implementing access arrangements and reasonable adjustments once approved
- Ensures that a policy demonstrating the centre's compliance with relevant legislation is in place
- Ensures staff roles, responsibilities and processes are clearly defined and documented

SENCo/Assistant SENCo responsibilities:

- Leads on the access arrangements process
- If not the qualified assessor, works with the person appointed on all matters relating to assessing candidates
- Presents evidence of the assessor's qualification when requested by a JCQ Centre Inspector
- Ensures applications are submitted by the published deadline
- Ensures that a file is presented for inspection containing downloaded approval, supporting evidence of need, and signed candidate personal data consent forms
- Ensures appropriate resources are in place at exam time to meet candidates' needs
- Works with teaching staff to gather evidence of normal way of working
- Determines candidate eligibility for centre-delegated arrangements

Exams Officer responsibilities:

- Applies centre-delegated and approved arrangements to examination entries
- Ensures invigilators and those acting as facilitators understand their role and what is/isn't permissible
- Provides cover sheets for access arrangement candidates' scripts where required

2. Purpose of the policy

The purpose of this policy is to confirm that Rushey Mead 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.

This policy is maintained and held by the learning support faculty, 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.

[\\rma-fs03\academyfiles\\$\Staff\Staff Area\Faculties data\Faculty of Inclusion Team\SEND\Access Arrangements\Year 11 2025](#)

Where the learning support faculty 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. (¹AARA 4.2) The policy is annually reviewed to ensure that processes are carried out in accordance with the current JCQ document 'Adjustments for candidates with disabilities and learning difficulties - **Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments**'.

All documentation relating to access arrangements and reasonable adjustments will be retained securely and made available for inspection by a JCQ Centre Inspector or awarding body representative where required.

3. 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'. (AARA¹, 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 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. (AARA¹, Definitions)

*References to legislation are to the Equality Act 2010. Separate legislation is in place for Northern Ireland (see [AARA](#) 1.8). The definitions and procedures in [AARA](#) relating to access arrangements and reasonable adjustments will also apply in Northern Ireland.

Access arrangements and reasonable adjustments will only be approved where they reflect the candidate's normal

way of working within the centre and are supported by evidence of need.

4. General Principles

The Assistant SENCo and RLDT leader will coordinate the access arrangements process within the centre and determine appropriate arrangements for candidates with learning difficulties and disabilities, those for whom English is an additional language and those with a temporary illness or temporary injury. (GR 5.4)

The principles for the centre to consider are detailed in AARA (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, whilst at the same time providing access to assessments for a disabled candidate.
- The Assistant SENCo and RLDT leader will ensure that the proposed access arrangement/reasonable adjustment 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 overall responsibility of the SENCo to make appropriate and informed decisions based on the JCQ regulations.
- Applications should be processed at the start of or during the first year of a two-year course having firmly established a picture of need and normal way of working.
- 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 their first examination.

5. The assessment process

Assessments are carried out by an assessor appointed by the head of centre. The assessor is appropriately qualified as required by JCQ regulations in AARA_7.3.

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

Holly Hincks: [SpLD Assessment Practising certificate \(Patoss\)](#)

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 AARA. This process is carried out prior to the assessor undertaking any assessment of a candidate.

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

- At the start of each academic year, annually, the SENCo/Assistant SENCo will contact the assessor to check they still hold the relevant qualifications and ask for evidence of these.
- The assessor will send updated evidence that they hold the relevant qualification in advance of any assessments, and this will be verified by the SENCo/Assistant SENCo and saved on file.
- Before any assessment at the start of a new academic year the assessor must present evidence of successful completion of a post graduate course in individual specialist assessment at or equivalent to Level 7 or a printout of a screenshot of HCPC or SASC registration.

Reporting the appointment of assessors

SENCos must hold on file, for inspection purposes, evidence that the assessor is suitably qualified. This can be drawn, for example, from the following sources:

- copy of current Assessment Practising Certificate (APC) issued by Patoss, Dyslexia Guild or British Dyslexia Association;
- copy of Level 7 assessment qualification certificate;

- screenshot of HCPC registration showing the Unique Registration Number;
- screenshot of SASC listing showing the APC code number and expiry date;
- screenshot of listing for PAPAA Graduates showing the certificate number;
- screenshot of listing for CPT3A Certificate Holders showing the certificate number;
- screenshot of listing for ETAAC Certificate Holders showing the certificate number; or
- screenshot of listing for Patoss AAA Certificate Holders showing the certificate number.

[Evidence for Rushey Mead Academy's assessor can be found here](#)

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

- The SENCo/Assistant SENCo/RLDT leader will arrange for the candidate to be assessed by the centre's appointed assessor.
- Before the candidate's assessment, the SENCo/Assistant SENCo/RLDT leader will 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/Assistant SENCo/RLDT leader and the assessor will work together to ensure a joined-up and consistent process.
- 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.
- The assessor must personally conduct the assessments. They must not sign off assessments carried out by another professional.
- The assessor must carry out tests which are relevant to support the application. Current editions of nationally standardised tests which produce standardised scores must be used, where published. Where a computer-based assessment tool is used to gather assessment evidence for Part 2 of Form 8, a suitably qualified assessor must be present to oversee the test's computerised administration, actively observe the candidate and monitor the candidate's engagement with the assessment.

Picture of need/normal way of working

Assistant SENCo/RLDT leader emails all teachers of the student who is applying for access arrangements, asking for feedback on the student's learning needs, classroom difficulties, during internal tests/mock examination and normal way of working.

Assessment evidence is also gathered such as **mock exams, class tests, performance under timed conditions**, where it is demonstrated that they have used their access arrangement, for example difficulties with finishing within time, errors linked to processing speed, reader being used, etc.

SEnCo/Assistant SENCo/RLDT leader may also provide further evidence, such as:

- intervention strategies in place,
- observations from teaching assistants,
- observations from learning walks/DDIs,
- pupil premium indicators,
- screening test results

The SENCo will exercise professional judgement when determining the appropriateness of access arrangements and reasonable adjustments, taking into account:

- the candidate's needs,
- normal way of working,
- teacher feedback,
- classroom observations,
- the candidate's views,
- available evidence of need.

Where 25% extra time is approved, the centre will retain evidence demonstrating:

- the candidate's need,
- the candidate's normal way of working,
- use of the arrangement in classroom practice and/or internal assessments where appropriate.

Evidence may include teacher comments, classroom observations, internal assessments, mock examinations and examples of completed work.

6. 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 8](#) (Processing applications for access arrangements and adjustments) and 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)

Part 1 of Form 8 must be completed by the SENCo/Assistant SENCo/RLDT leader prior to the assessment. The SENCo/Assistant SENCo/RLDT leader or the assessor working within the centre must detail the candidate's current difficulties in the classroom, internal tests and/or mock examinations and their normal way of working. The statements within Part 1 of Form 8 must be addressed prior to the assessment.

Part 1 of Form 8 is a pen portrait of the candidate's needs. It allows the SENCo to 'paint a holistic picture of need', confirming normal way of working and bringing together:

- any previously granted access arrangements;
- comments and observations across relevant subjects from teaching staff and Teaching Assistants.
- intervention strategies (e.g. advice cards) in place for the candidate;
- pupil premium indicators;
- screening test results;
- use of pupil baseline and tracking data;
- information about any differentiation in the classroom;
- observing the candidate in the classroom to see their style of learning;
- normal way of working in the classroom (where appropriate);
- arrangements made for end of year internal school examinations/mock examinations;
- review of the candidate's workbooks, checking their spellings, legibility of writing and whether classroom tasks have been completed.

SENCo/Assistant SENCo/RLDT leader responsible for:

- completing the Form 8 for all students who require access arrangements,
- saving the Form 8 and any appropriate evidence of need in the shared area, including:
 - a copy of the candidate's approved application;
 - appropriate evidence of need (where required);
 - evidence of the assessor's qualification (where required). (AARA 8.6)

[These files can be found here](#)

Exams Officer responsible for:

- ordering papers,
- ordering modified papers and checking they are the correct versions
- liaising with the exam board where necessary.

Candidates **must** be informed that an application for access arrangements will be processed using *Access arrangements online*, complying with the UK GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018.

Centre-delegated arrangements/adjustments

If centre delegated arrangements are required, the SENCo/Assistant SENCo/RLDT leader will record the

arrangements and save them in a student's individual file in the shared area. Examples of these are arrangements which may be granted by the centre or those arrangements that do not need to be recorded, such as a blank piece of paper for doodling if a candidate has persistent and significant concentration difficulties.

[These files can be found here](#)

Temporary injury/illness

Where a candidate experiences a temporary illness, injury or condition, the centre may implement temporary access arrangements in accordance with JCQ regulations and awarding body guidance.

Appropriate evidence, such as medical documentation, will be retained by the centre.

7. Centre-specific criteria for particular arrangements/adjustments

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.

Alternative Rooming Arrangements Policy

A decision where an exam candidate may be approved alternative rooming arrangements, e.g. a room for a smaller group of candidates with similar needs will be made by the SENCo/Assistant SENCo/RLDT leader.

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 ([AARA 5.16](#))

Students with access arrangements will sit all of their exams in a smaller venue, usually in A105 for SEND students and A106 for NTE students. This includes end of year exams and mock exams.

Where 1:1 invigilation or a separate room arrangement is deemed appropriate, the decision will be based on the candidate's individual needs, normal way of working and professional judgement in line with JCQ regulations.

Supervised Rest Breaks

Supervised rest breaks may be awarded where appropriate and where they reflect the candidate's normal way of working within the centre.

Decisions regarding supervised rest breaks will be based on:

- classroom observations,
- teacher feedback,
- the candidate's views,
- evidence of need,
- professional judgement exercised by the SENCo and/or assessor.

The centre recognises that supervised rest breaks may be appropriate for candidates with:

- concentration difficulties,
- anxiety,
- medical conditions,
- sensory needs,
- fatigue-related difficulties,
- significant processing difficulties.

The use of supervised rest breaks will be monitored through classroom practice, internal assessments and mock examinations where appropriate.