



Exmouth
Community
College
Academy Trust

ACCESS ARRANGEMENTS POLICY

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Policy Review by	Suzie Eden
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Key staff involved in the policy

Role	Name(s)
SENDCo	Ms Lyn Edmundson
SENDCo line manager (Senior leader)	Mr Nick Smith
Head of centre	Mr Andrew Davies
Assessor(s)	Ms Deborah Lynch (outside Assessor)
Access arrangement facilitator(s)	Ms Suzie Eden

Contents

Key staff involved in the policy	2
What are access arrangements and reasonable adjustments?	4
Access arrangements	4
Reasonable adjustments	4
Purpose of the policy	4
General principles	4
Equalities Policy (Exams)	5
The assessment process	5
The qualification(s) of the current assessor(s)	5
Ms Deborah Lynch – PGCE Dyslexia x 2.....	5
Appointment of assessors of candidates with learning difficulties	5
Processing access arrangements and adjustments	5
Arrangements/adjustments requiring awarding body approval	6
Centre-delegated arrangements/adjustments.....	6
Centre-delegated arrangements/adjustments do not require an application through the AAO, but do require evidence gathered from teaching/pastoral staff to confirm a history of need; these are recorded by the Assistant SENDCo – EAA and authorised by the SENDCo via a SENDCo’s note confirming that this is the Candidate’s normal way of working. A copy of this information will be held as a hard paper copy on the candidate’s file, or as a digital copy in an individual file on Microsoft SharePoint with access limited to essential personnel only.	
Centre-specific criteria for particular arrangements/adjustments	6
Word Processor Policy (Exams)	6
Separate Invigilation Policy	6

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'. (¹AA, 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 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'. (¹AA, Definitions)

*References to legislation are to the Equality Act 2010.

Purpose of the policy

The purpose of this policy is to confirm that Exmouth Community College 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's **General Regulations for Approved Centres**, section 4.2)

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

This policy is maintained and held by the SENDCo 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 SENDCo is storing 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. (¹AA, section 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**'.

¹This publication is further referred to in this policy as [AA](#)

General principles

The principles for the centre to consider are detailed in [AA](#) (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 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 disabled candidate.

The SENDCo will ensure that the proposed access arrangement/reasonable adjustment does not unfairly disadvantage or advantage the candidate.

Access arrangements/reasonable adjustments should be processed at the start of the course.

Arrangements will always be approved before an examination or assessment.

The arrangement(s) put in place will reflect the support given to the candidate in the centre.

The candidate will have had appropriate opportunities to practise using the access arrangement(s)/reasonable adjustment(s) before his/her first examination.

Equalities Policy (Exams)

A large part of the access arrangements/reasonable adjustments 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; this document can be found on the Exmouth Community College website – About us – 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](#), section 7.3.

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

Ms Deborah Lynch – PGCE Dyslexia x 2

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 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](#), section 7.3)

Reporting the appointment of the assessor(s)

The digital copy of the assessor's qualification certificates will be held on the Exmouth Community College EAA SharePoint and a copy will be held by the Examination Officer.

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

Prior to the assessment of a candidate's learning difficulties, the Assistant SENDCo – Exam Access Arrangements (EAA) will have gathered evidence from staff to confirm that there is evidence of need. Subsequently they will draft a Form 8 detailing the learning difficulties and this was be used by the assessor as the basis for selecting the tests to carry out to confirm the learning difficulties.

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 [AA](#), chapter 8 (Processing applications for access arrangements and adjustments) 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.

Once the assessments by the qualified assessor have been carried out and confirm a learning difficulty, the candidate will be asked to sign a form – Personal Data Consent – and confirm that they give consent for the required information to be submitted online through the CAP. Once consent is obtained, applications will be made through Access Arrangements Online (AAO) and/or Pearson Access Arrangements Online (PAAO) by the Assistant SENDCo – EAA. They will ensure that all applications are made in a timely fashion following assessment, candidates and/or parents are notified of the EAA obtained. Teaching/Pastoral staff are informed of successful candidates via the school's systems. Records of EAA are kept for a minimum of 5 years, from the candidate leaving the school. Paper copies of the EAA are kept in the EAA Office, which is a secure office and the records kept in a locked filing cabinet these files are transferred to the school office once a candidate leaves Exmouth Community College.

Changes to the (AAO) Candidate **Personal data consent form** and the requirement for completion of the [Data protection confirmation by the examinations officer or SENDCo](#), prior to the processing of the online application, which must be retained for 26 months from the date of the online application being approved.

The SENDCo will 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.

Centre-delegated arrangements/adjustments

Centre-delegated arrangements/adjustments do not require an application through the AAO, but do require evidence gathered from teaching/pastoral staff to confirm a history of need; these are recorded by the Assistant SENDCo – EAA and authorised by the SENDCo via a SENDCo's note confirming that this is the Candidate's normal way of working. A copy of this information will be held as a hard paper copy on the candidate's file, or as a digital copy in an individual file on Microsoft SharePoint with access limited to essential personnel only.

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. This policy can be found on the school's website – About Us – Policies.

Separate Invigilation Policy

A decision where an exam candidate may be approved separate invigilation within the centre will be made by the ALS lead/SENDCo.

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](#), section 5.16)

In the case of separate invigilation, the candidate's disability is **established within the centre** (see Chapter 4, paragraph 4.1.4). It is known to a Form Tutor, a Head of Year, the SENDCo or a senior member of staff with pastoral responsibilities. **For** example, a long-term medical condition which has a substantial and adverse effect; this will be evidenced by a letter at Consultant level, or similar.

Separate invigilation must reflect the candidate's normal and current way of working in internal school tests and mock examinations.

Nervousness, low level anxiety or being worried about examinations is not sufficient grounds for separate invigilation within the centre. ([AA](#), section 5.16).

