



# Access Arrangements Policy

## 2023/2024

This plan is reviewed annually to ensure compliance with current regulations

**Approved/reviewed by**

Tariq Mahmood - Principal

**Date of next review** Sept 2024

## Key staff involved in Access Arrangements

Role	Name(s)
Head of centre	Tariq Mahmood
Exams officer line manager (ALT)	Gillian Matthews
Exams officer	Tracey Turton
SENCo	Amy Thompson
Inclusion Manager	Claire Croker

## **What are access arrangements?**

Access Arrangements are pre-examination adjustments for candidates based on evidence of need and normal way of working. Access Arrangements fall into two distinct categories: some arrangements are delegated to centres; others require prior JCQ<sup>CIC</sup> awarding body approval.

Access Arrangements allow candidates/learners with special educational needs, disabilities or temporary injuries to access the assessment without changing the demands of the assessment. For example, readers, scribes and Braille question papers. In this way Awarding Bodies will comply with the duty of the Equality Act 2010 to make 'reasonable adjustments'.

## ***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.”

## **Purpose of the policy**

The purpose of this policy is to confirm that Oasis Academy Don Valley Academy fulfils *“its obligations in respect of identifying the need for, requesting and implementing access arrangements.”*

This policy is maintained and held by the ALS Inclusion Manager/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 efolder must hold each of the required documents for inspection. (AA 4.2)

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 General and Vocational qualifications*'

## **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)**

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

**The head of centre/Academy leadership team will...** recognise its duties towards disabled candidates, including private candidates, as defined under the terms of the Equality Act 2010†. 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

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 in JCQ regulations as follows (section 7.3 of JCQ regulations for AA).

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

Postgraduate Award of Proficiency in Assessment for Access Arrangements

**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 7.3)

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

The SENCo / Exams officer holds the evidence which shows that the assessor(s) is/are suitably qualified.

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

The specialist assessor working in the centre will follow the procedures set out in Chapter 7 of the JCQ publication *Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments* assessing a candidate's learning difficulties.

Before the candidate's assessment, the SENCo / specialist assessor who works in the centre, **completes part 1 of form 8** i.e. paint a picture of need The SENCo and the assessor work together to ensure a joined-up and consistent process

Where relevant any additional information relating to private candidates is included.

Subject teachers and learning support assistants provide feedback to the SENCO to help to establish normal way of working within the centre. Other information to support 'normal way of working' may include:

- Classroom support records
- Internal Exams records

## **Processing applications for access arrangements**

### **Arrangements requiring awarding body approval**

*Access arrangements online* is a tool provided by JCQ member awarding bodies for GCSE and GCE qualifications. This tool also provides the facility to order modified papers for GCSE and GCE qualifications.

SENCo is responsible for submitting applications. Currently this is implemented by Exams Office staff. Copies of the approval notice are printed and included in candidate's Access arrangements File which is kept by the SENCO

Centredelegated access arrangements

All centre delegated arrangements are approved by the SENCO and the relevant supporting evidence supporting this is held on the pupil's file by the SENCo.

### **Word processor policy**

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.

Use of a Word Processor in exams is authorised by SENCo. Authorisation documents and evidence of 'normal way of working' is held on candidate's Access arrangements File.

The word processor policy on the academy's website has further information on this.

### **Separate invigilation within the centre**

A decision where an exam candidate may be approved separate invigilation within the centre 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* The SENCo authorises the arrangement.