

ACCESS ARRANGEMENTS POLICY

2023/24

This policy is reviewed annually to ensure compliance with current regulations

Approved/reviewed by	
David Martin	
Date of next review	Autumn 24

Centre Name	Katherine Warrington School
Centre Number	17502
Date policy first created	November 2023
Current policy reviewed by	David Martin
Current policy approved by	David Martin
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Key staff involved in the policy

Role	Name(s)
ALS lead/SENCo	Abigail Grainger
ALS lead/SENCo line manager (Senior leader)	Grace Aikman
Head of centre	David Martin
Assessor(s)	Anita Barker
Access arrangement facilitator(s)	Abigail Grainger, Hannah McNally, Michelle Phillips

This policy is reviewed and updated annually to ensure that the access arrangements process at Katherine Warrington School is managed in accordance with current requirements and regulations.

References in this policy to GR, ICE and AA refer to the JCQ publications **General Regulations for Approved Centres, Instructions for conducting examinations** and **Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments**.

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

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 Katherine Warrington School 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 5.4) This publication is further referred to in this policy as GR.

This policy is maintained and held by the SENCo alongside the individual e-folders of each access arrangements candidate. Each 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 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 t for candidates with disabilities and learning difficulties - **Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments**'.

¹This publication is further referred to in this policy as AA

This policy should be read in conjunction with Katherine Warrington's Special Educational Need and Disability (SEND) policy, this sets out the procedures for identifying SEND and making and evaluation provision for pupils with SEND

1. General principles

The general principles of access arrangements for Katherine Warrington School to consider 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 a disabled candidate (AA 4.2.1)
- The person who leads on additional learning support/special educational needs, must ensure that the proposed access arrangement/reasonable adjustment does not unfairly disadvantage or advantage the candidate (AA 4.2.1)
- Although access arrangements are intended to allow access to assessments, they cannot be granted where they will compromise the assessment objectives of the specification in question (AA 4.2.2)
- Candidates may not require the same access arrangements/reasonable adjustments in each specification. Subjects and their methods of assessments may vary, leading to different demands of the candidate. The need for access arrangements/reasonable adjustments must be considered on a subject-by-subject basis (AA 4.2.3)
- Access arrangements/reasonable adjustments should be processed at the start of the course (AA 4.2.4)
- Arrangements must always be approved before an examination or assessment (AA 4.2.4)
- The arrangement(s) put in place must reflect the support given to the candidate in the centre (AA 4.2.5)
- The candidate must have had appropriate opportunities to practise using the access arrangement(s)/reasonable adjustments before their first examination (AA 4.2.7)
- The main elements of the process detailing staff roles and responsibilities in identifying the need for, requesting and implementing access arrangements/reasonable adjustments and the conduct of examinations are covered in The Equalities Policy (Exams).

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.

2. 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)

Anita Barker who possesses the following qualifications: Postgraduate Award of Proficiency in Assessment for Access Arrangements (PAPAA). It is a Level 7 qualification.

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.

A photocopy of the assessor's certificate(s) (or a printout of screenshot of HCPC or SASC registration, or screenshot of other relevant qualification listing) is kept on file.

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

Upon the first meeting with Katherine Warington's Exam's Officer and SENDCO, the assessor has their qualifications verified and a photocopy is made of the assessor's qualifications. The evidence that the assessors are suitably qualified is held on file for inspection purposes.

Reporting the appointment of the assessor(s)

Evidence that the assessor(s) are suitably qualified is held on file for inspection purposes. When requested, the evidence will be presented to the JCQ Centre Inspector by the Exams Officer.

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

Katherine Warington School confirms:

- The assessment process is led by the specialist external assessor, based on a referral by the centre's SENDCO.
- The SENDCO makes referrals based on observations and recommendations from teachers and support staff, observations that have been carried out in classes, and from consultations / request made by parents and carers.
- The assessor carries out confidential testing on a one-to-one basis with the candidate. The results of this will form the basis of an access arrangement applications.
- Guidelines for the assessment of the candidate's learning difficulties by an assessor will be followed and Form 8 – JCQ/AA/LD, Profile of Learning Difficulties will be completed. (Access arrangements 7.5, 7.6) 7
- Arrangements must be made for the candidate to be assessed by an assessor (Access arrangements 7.5 1)
- Assessors must personally conduct the assessments. They must not sign off assessments carried out by another professional. (AA 7.5.5)
- The assessor must carry out tests which are relevant to support the application. (Access Arrangements 7.5.6)
- 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. (Access Arrangements 7.3.6)
- 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. (Access Arrangements 7.3.6)

Picture of need/normal way of working

Katherine Warington confirms:

- Before the candidate's assessment, the SENDCO will provide the assessor with background information, i.e. a picture of need has been painted as per Part 1 of Form 8.
- The centre and the assessor must work together to ensure a joined-up and consistent process. (Access arrangements 7.5.2)
- 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.
- 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 with the person appointed in the centre.
- The responsibility to request access arrangements specifically lies with the centre. (Access arrangements 7.5.3).
- Teaching staff are asked to provide examples of candidates' work to demonstrate the need that has led to the application of an access arrangement being made. This work is stored in the student file in the access folder and made available for inspection.

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Since the application requires evidence of need, Katherine Warington will hold evidence in its files that can be inspected at short notice. This can include:

- Educational psychology reports.
- Speech Therapist reports.
- Occupational Therapist reports.
- Letters from outside agencies such as hospitals, doctors and CAMHS (Children and Adolescent Mental Health Service).
- Reports from Hearing Impairment (HI) and Visual Impairment (VI) advisory teachers.
- Copies of Education Health and Care Plans (EHCP).
- Permission from the exam board for the arrangements.
- A signed copy of Form 8 report by the Academy's designated assessor / tester.

Joint Council for qualifications (JCQ) deadlines are fully adhered to.

3. Processing access arrangements and adjustments

Parents must declare at the time of enrolment and when completing the school application form if their child has any medical or psychological conditions, SEND needs, previous exam access arrangements at another educational institution or any other issues that may require exam access arrangements. Failure to disclose this negates Katherine Warington School from their responsibilities

Arrangements/adjustments requiring awarding body approval

Access arrangements online (AAO) is used to apply for approval of arrangements/adjustments for the qualifications listed within the JCQ publication **Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments**.

AAO is accessed through 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.

Deadlines apply for each examination series for submitting applications for approval using AAO.

Centre delegated arrangements/adjustments

Decisions relating to the approval of centre delegated arrangements/adjustments are made by SENCO and Exams Officer. Appropriate evidence, where required by the arrangement, is held on file.

The use of a word processor

The Word Processor Policy Exams details the criteria Katherine Warington specifically uses to award and allocate word processors for examinations and assessments.

Alternative Rooming /Separate invigilation within the centre

The Separate Invigilation Policy details the criteria Katherine Warington uses to award separate invigilation within the centre.

Katherine Warington criteria for alternative rooming arrangements (which may include sitting the examination outside of the main examination hall/room e.g. a room for a smaller group of candidates with similar needs or one-to-one invigilation):

- In the case of alternative rooming arrangements, 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 SENCO or a senior member of staff with pastoral responsibilities. For example, a long-term medical condition which has a substantial and adverse effect.

- Alternative rooming arrangements **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)

Modified papers

Modified papers are ordered using AAO.

Modified papers must be ordered in advance of a specific examination series, no later than the published deadline for the series concerned (AA 6.1)

Modified papers are individually prepared for candidates for whom other adjustments are unsuitable. The modification of papers involves additional resources. Therefore, centres are required to provide the awarding bodies with early notification that a candidate will require a modified paper. (AA 6.1)

Modified papers must not be ordered for candidates unless the centre intends to enter them for the relevant examination series (AA 6.1)

For the adjustment to be effective, the candidate must have had appropriate opportunities to practise using an awarding body's past modified papers before his/her first examination (AA 6.1)

The Exams Officer applies for AAO and abides by the deadlines set for each examination series. Access arrangements may for example include: supervised rest breaks, extra time, reader, scribe, word processor, transcript, oral language modifier and prompter

Katherine Warrington School notes the requirements around completion of the Candidate Personal data consent form and the Data protection confirmation by the examinations officer or 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.

Katherine Warrington School SENCO keeps an electronic copy of a signed candidate personal data consent form; a completed *Data protection confirmation by the examinations officer or SENCo* form; a copy of the candidate's approved application; appropriate evidence of need (where required); evidence of the assessor's qualification (where required). (AA, section 8.6)

Evidence needed to apply for exam access arrangements

There are a number of pieces of evidence that can be used to apply for exam access arrangements to JCQ:

- Form 8 reports from specialist teachers carrying out exam access assessments / tests.
- Previous exam access arrangements from another school.
- Subject teachers – examples of work as appropriate and support given in class or evidence from tests or mock exams.
- Results from baseline assessments such as reading ages or writing tests.
- Medical reports outlining significant medical needs and disability.
- An Educational Psychology report which explicitly diagnoses the need for exam access arrangements.
- A Speech therapy report which diagnoses severe language impairment.

When granted access arrangements are valid for 26 months.

How do staff and parents know whether a student has access arrangements?

If a need for access arrangements have been identified, the relevant parties are informed:

- Parents are informed in writing – the letter outlines the type of arrangements that have been awarded.
- Students are informed verbally.
- A list of all students who receive access arrangements is made available to all staff. This information is also placed on Katherine Warington's relevant shared drives.