



Le Rocquier School

Learn, Respect and Succeed

Le Rocquier School

Access Arrangements Policy

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This policy is reviewed annually to ensure compliance with current regulations

Key staff involved in the policy

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What are access arrangements and reasonable adjustments?

Access arrangements

Access arrangements are established **prior** to an assessment to enable candidates with **specific needs**, such as special educational needs, disabilities, or temporary injuries, to participate fully and demonstrate their knowledge and skills without altering the core requirements of the assessment. The purpose of these arrangements is to accommodate the individual needs of candidates while maintaining the integrity of the assessment. They are a key mechanism through which awarding bodies fulfil their obligations under the Equality Act 2010* to make 'reasonable adjustments.'

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 Le Rocquier School maintains a written record that clearly demonstrates the school's leadership in the access arrangements process and its compliance with the obligation to identify, request, and implement access arrangements.

(JCQ's General Regulations for Approved Centres, section 5.4, referred to as GR in this policy.)

This policy is maintained by the SENDCo and Deputy SENDCo and includes individual files or e-folders for each candidate requiring access arrangements. These files contain detailed records of all essential information required under the regulations.

When documentation is stored electronically, the SENDCo creates an e-folder for each candidate, ensuring that it includes all required documents for inspection.

(JCQ Adjustments for Candidates with Disabilities and Learning Difficulties - Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments, section 4.2, referred to as AA in this policy.)

The policy is reviewed annually to ensure compliance with the latest edition of the JCQ guidance *'Adjustments for Candidates with Disabilities and Learning Difficulties - Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments.'*

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, or an equivalent member of staff, must 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 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 his/her first examination.

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

Clare Mansfield – Deputy SENDCO – Certificate of Competence in Educational Testing and Access Arrangements. Real Training- Validated by BPS and accredited by Middlesex University.

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.

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

The SENDCO and Deputy SENDCO gathers evidence to develop a full learning profile and detailed picture of need, including information from teaching staff, the student, parents and other professionals where appropriate. If a substantial need is identified, then the SENDCO and Deputy SENDCO will arrange for appropriate assessment of the student. (AA, sections 7.5 and 7.6)

JCQ regulations state that 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. However, SENDCOs 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. Any candidate entering as a private candidate will already be known to the school, as we only accept ex-students. We will therefore be aware of any access arrangements as they will have been conducted whilst the student was at school. (GR, section 5.4)

Picture of need/normal way of working

The SENDCo and Deputy SENDCo gathers information and evidence from teachers throughout the school year, including lesson observations, teacher feedback forms; pastoral information; student reports; discussions with the student and parents; discussions with external agencies; and from internal tests and exams. If an independent assessor contacts the centre regarding student assessment, then the school and assessor must work together to gain 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 considering 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 SENDCo. The responsibility to determine and request appropriate and practicable access arrangements/reasonable adjustments specifically lies with the SENDCo. (AA, section 7.5)

Processing access arrangements and adjustments

Arrangements/adjustments requiring awarding body approval

Access Arrangements Online (AAO) is a platform provided by JCQ member awarding bodies that allows centres to apply for approval of access arrangements for applicable qualifications. It also enables the ordering of modified papers for those qualifications. AAO is accessed through the JCQ Centre Admin Portal (CAP) by logging into one of the awarding body's secure extranet sites. Each candidate requires only a single application for approval, regardless of the awarding body involved.

Applications are processed as early as possible at the start of the course by the SENDCo and Access Arrangements Facilitator (AAF). The Form 8 or 9 and supporting evidence are securely stored in the exams office or AAT office. For applications requiring Awarding Body approval, the necessary evidence is submitted via Access Arrangements Online (AAO). The Exams Manager works closely with the SENDCo/AAF to coordinate the ordering of modified papers.

The SENDCo and Deputy SENDCo is responsible for maintaining detailed records, either electronically or in hard copy, which include:

- A copy of the candidate's approved application.
- Relevant evidence of need (as required).
- A signed candidate personal data consent form for inspection by the JCQ Centre Inspection Service.

Before processing the online application, the SENDCo must complete the Data Protection Confirmation and ensure the Personal Data Consent Form is signed. These documents must be retained for 26 months from the date the online application is approved.

Centre-delegated arrangements/adjustments

For centre delegated arrangements/adjustments, evidence of need is gathered and kept on file, confirming the need for the arrangements. This replaces the previous File Note.

Centre-specific criteria for 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.

The Word Processor Policy is held in the exams office and in the Exam Access Arrangement Folder.

Alternative Rooming Policy

The SENDCo and Deputy SENDCo will decide and approve any alternative rooming arrangements for exam candidates within the centre.

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 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 SENDCo 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)