Lea Manor High School

Access Arrangements & Equalities Policy (Exams) 2026/27

Date Reviewed	Body
October 2026	Jess Pather Headteacher
Next review date: October 2027	To be reviewed: Annually

Purpose of the policy

The purpose of this policy is to confirm that Lea Manor High Sschool 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...

(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 ALS lead/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 documentation electronically he/she **mus**t create an e-folder for each individual candidate. The candidate's e-folder must hold each of the required documents for inspection. (AA 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.

This publication is further referred to in this policy as AA

General principles

The policy outlines the criteria and process for applying to access arrangements for examinations, which are designed to prevent candidates with special educational needs, disabilities, or temporary injuries from being at a substantial disadvantage without altering the demands of the assessment.

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.

> The SENCO, or an equivalent member of staff within a FE college, **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.

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'. (AA 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'. (AA Definitions)

*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

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.

The head of centre/senior leadership team will… recognise its duties towards disabled candidates. 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. Where the centre is under a duty to make a reasonable adjustment, the centre **must no**t charge a disabled candidate any additional fee in relation to the adjustment or aid...

The assessment process

Assessments are carried out by Heledn Curr- Deputy Senco/Assessor, appointed by the Head of Centre.

The qualification of the current assessor : Certificate in Psychometric Testing and Access Arrangements: Level 7 (CPT3A)

Assessors's certificate is held electronically in Access Arrangement folder held by SENCO

Reporting the appointment of the assessor(s)

The name of the assessor , who are assessing candidates studying qualifications as listed within the Deadlines section , must be entered into Access Arrangements online to confirm his/her status

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

The SENCO must arrange for the candidate to be assessed by appointed assessor

Before the candidate's assessment, the SENCO must provide the assessor with background information, i.e. a picture of need has been painted as required in Part 1 of Form 8 and/or Form 9

Form 8 – JCQ/AA/LD, Profile of Learning Difficulties must be used to record information about a

candidate's access arrangements/reasonable adjustments and be presented by the

SENDCO/Coordinator for inspection. The candidate's name must be recorded on every page of Form

8 / Form 9 and the form must be stapled together.

Form 8 is required for candidates who:

- Have learning difficulties but do not have a current EHCP (England), Statement of SEN (Northern Ireland), or IDP (Wales)
- Require access arrangements such as a scribe, 25% extra time, a reader /computer reader (with 25% extra time and / or a scribe), or an Oral Language Modifier (OLM)
- Are progressing from GCSE to GCE or vocational qualifications and continue to need the same arrangements
- Require a Language Modifier due to difficulties in their first language that are not caused by limited English acquisition

Form 9 is used for candidates who:

- Have access needs that arise from medical, sensory, physical, communication, socialemotional, or certain learning needs that do not require Form 8. It evidences noncognitive needs and confirms the candidate's normal way of working.
- Communication and interaction needs (e.g., autism, social communication difficulties).
- Medical conditions formally diagnosed by a registered specialist (not a GP).
- Sensory or physical needs, including visual or physical impairments.
- Social, emotional, or mental health needs that impact exam performance.

- Speech, language and communication needs requiring adjusted exam support.
- Learning difficulties with an EHCP/Statement/IDP, where needs are broader than cognitive processing.
- Candidates needing a reader or computer reader but not extra time or a scribe
- All candidates requiring supervised rest breaks (no online application required).
- Candidates needing extra time due to medical, sensory, or physical conditions, rather than learning difficulties requiring Form 8.
- Candidates needing other nonstandard arrangements, such as:
- Access to a mobile phone for medical purposes
- Remote invigilation
- Timetable variations due to disability
- Listening to music/white noise due to substantial impairment

Form 8 and Form 9– JCQ/AA/LD is available from :http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/access-arrangements-and-special-consideration/forms

Painting a 'holistic picture of need', confirming normal way of working

Information received from the student's previous school.

On entry to the school in Year 7, students who bring SEN support needs with them (K Coded), have their abilities in Reading, Spelling, Comprehension, processing speed and Math number assessed. These initial results are used to identify pupils who may need additional support. If required support or intervention is put in place it is monitored regularly. This history will be recorded and noted as the student's normal way of working.

Students who are in other school years may be identified by teachers who have concerns around their learning. They will complete an SEN referral form and get Heads of Faculty to sign. These forms are sent to the Inclusion team who will discuss needs in a fortnightly professionals meeting. From these meetings specific actions are delegated including the observation and assessing the pupil to see if there are an underlying SEN needs. If underlying needs are found then further cognitive assessments and / or Educational Psychology assessments can be carried out.

Formal Access Arrangements are normally completed in the Summer term of Year 9 for all K coded pupils, this allows evidence to be built and consolidated for their normal way of working prior to and after assessment

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,(Processing applications for access arrangements and adjustments)

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.

SENCO to provide information to exams officer with regards to Access Arrangements. SENCO to provide a list of students with entitlements.

With information and support from SENCO, exams officer will submit Access Arrangement request online. Records of approval and unapproved cases will be kept in an Access Arrangement folder held by Exams officer. SENCO to check information are correct and up to date in order to submit an appeal where necessary.

Processing applications for access arrangements and adjustments

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. A signed candidate personal data consent form and Data protection confirmation by the examinations officer or SENCo form are no longer required.

It is important that SENCOs consider and, where appropriate, implement access arrangements that will prepare candidates for the workplace. 25% extra time may not always be the most appropriate arrangement. SENCos should instead consider alternative arrangements, such as assistive technology, listening to music/white noise, supervised rest breaks or a timer.

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

Access arrangements online enables centres to make a single online application for a candidate/s requiring access arrangements/reasonable adjustments using any of the awarding bodies' secure sites. Access arrangements online will provide an instant response and will only allow a maximum of 26 months for any arrangement. Once arrangement has been approved online, it must be put into effect in accordance with these regulations and without affecting the integrity of the qualification.

Arrangements for a late diagnosis of a disability or late manifestation of an impairment maybe processed as the needs arises with evidence of needs

Centre-specific criteria for particular arrangements/adjustments

Word Processor Policy

- **Remove Barriers:**

  Word processors are an access arrangement intended to remove barriers for candidates who would otherwise be at a disadvantage due to a learning difficulty, physical disability, or other medical condition.

- **Maintain Integrity:**

  The use of a word processor must not compromise the integrity of the exam or the assessment objectives of the subject.

  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 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.

  There is not a requirement to process an application for a word processor using Access arrangements online. No evidence is needed to support the

Separate Invigilation Policy

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

The decision will be based on:

- whether the candidate has a substantial and long term impairment which has an adverse effect **and**
- Individual room may be required to meet student's disability, therefore separate invigilator may be required
- **Separate invigilation must reflect the candidate's normal way of working in internal school tests and mock examinations as a consequence of a long term medical condition or long term social, mental or emotional needs.** (AA 5.16)

JCQ regulations must be used when processing applications using Access arrangements online. 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. Failure to comply with JCQ Access Arrangements regulations has the potential to constitute malpractice, which may impact on the candidate's result(s).

Examples of failure to comply include:

• putting in place access arrangements/adjustments that are not approved;

• failing to consider putting in place access arrangements (which may be a failure to comply with the duty to make reasonable adjustments);

• permitting access arrangements/adjustments within the centre which are not supported by appropriate evidence; or

• charging a fee for providing reasonable adjustments to disabled candidates.

The school must ensure that the access arrangements and special consideration regulations and guidance are always consistent with the law.