



# RICKMANSWORTH SCHOOL

## SEND Access Arrangements Policy

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## OVERVIEW

### Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to confirm that Rickmansworth 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..."

[Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) General Regulations (GR) for Approved Centres, 5.5]

This policy is maintained and held by the SENDCo alongside the individual files of each access arrangements candidate. Each file contains detailed records of all the essential information that is required to be held according to the JCQ regulations.

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 (AA) and Reasonable Adjustments (RA)'.

"The head of the centre/senior leadership team will...recognise its duties towards disabled candidates as defined under the terms of the Equality Act 2010†. This must include a duty to explore and provide access to suitable courses, submit applications for reasonable adjustments and make reasonable adjustments to the service the centre provides to disabled candidates or any legislation in a relevant jurisdiction other than England and Wales which has an equivalent purpose and effect"

[[GR 5.4](#)]

The access arrangements policy further covers the assessment process and related issues in more detail.

A reference copy of this document is kept on the shared drive and it will be brought to the attention of all members of staff.

### Review Process

This document will be reviewed in accordance with our policy review process on a yearly basis or on the introduction of new or amended relevant legislation. .



**Tony Walker**  
**CHAIR OF GOVERNORS**



**Matthew Fletcher**  
**HEADTEACHER**

## **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 particular 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, page 3]

### **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 a number of 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, page 3]

### **The assessment process**

Assessments are carried out by the SENDCo who is appropriately qualified as required by JCQ regulations in [AA](#) 7.3.

The qualification(s) of the current assessor:

- OCR Level 7 Diploma in Teaching & Assessing Learners with Dyslexia/SpLD

### **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) and reporting the appointment of the assessor(S)**

The SENDCo carries out the vast majority of assessments for Access Arrangements and has the required level of competence and training as set out by the JCQ.

Assessors are required to provide evidence of their relevant qualifications, copies of which are kept on file within the Learning Support Department. All assessors have an established working relationship with Rickmansworth School. The assessors details are entered into 'Access Arrangements online' to confirm their status.

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

Where a candidate has learning difficulties and is not subject to a current Education, Health and Care Plan, a detailed picture of need must be established prior to any assessment being carried out. Rickmansworth School meets this requirement through:

- Evidence of the candidates persistent and significant difficulties which includes a history of the difficulties
- Evidence of how the difficulty/disability has impacted on teaching and learning within the classroom
- Evidence of the candidate's normal way of working and the support provided within the classroom and for assessments & tests
- Involvement of the candidate's subject teachers

If a detailed picture of need is established, the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) Form 8, Section A, will be completed. The candidate will then be assessed in light of the picture of need and background information detailed within Section A of Form 8. The assessor will carry out tests which are relevant to support the application.

The assessor will use current editions of nationally standardised tests that produce standardised scores. Evidence of below average standardised scores must be demonstrated for many access arrangements to be awarded.

Following assessment, Form 8 will be completed and providing all of the requirements laid down by JCQ have been met, an application for the appropriate access arrangements will be made via Access Arrangements online.

A privately commissioned assessment carried out without prior consultation with Rickmansworth School cannot be used to award Access Arrangements or to process an application using Access Arrangements online.

Painting a *picture of need* and gathering evidence to demonstrate *normal way of working*

The following processes are carried out to paint a picture of need and gather evidence to demonstrate normal way of working:

- Screening test results
- Comments and observations collated from subject teachers, support staff and/or pastoral staff
- Relevant information from a student's EHCP or Student Profile
- Any differentiation in the classroom and/or interventions offered
- Student's views of their difficulties
- Monitoring of internal assessments/mock exams demonstrating the use of access arrangements
- Reports from external specialists such as an Educational Psychology report, Specialist Teacher report, Speech & Language Therapist report, Local Authority Specialist Service report eg a Hearing Impairment Advisor
- Relevant medical evidence obtained from CAMHS, a hospital consultant, a HCPC registered psychologist or Occupational Health Service

## **Processing access arrangements**

Arrangements 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 listed on page 92 of [AA](#). This tool also provides the facility to order modified papers for those qualifications listed on page 74 of the JCQ booklet.

AAO is accessed by logging in to any of the awarding body secure extranet sites. A single application is required for each candidate regardless of the awarding body used.

Access Arrangement applications will only be processed once the necessary evidence, as outlined by the JCQ in AA, has been collated and Form 8, if relevant, has been completed and signed.

Before making an application using AAO, Rickmansworth School is required to seek the consent of a student to record their personal data on-line. Consent is gained by the student signing a Data Protection Notice which is then held on file by the SENDCo.

The SENDCo and Exams Officer work closely together to process applications using AAO.

The SENDCo keeps detailed records of all essential information on file within the Learning Support Department. This includes a copy of the approved application, appropriate evidence of need and a signed Data Protection Notice.

If an application does not gain approval and an awarding body referral needs to be made, this will be done in accordance with the guidance on AAO and in AA.

Deadlines for submitting applications for access arrangements are set out on page 2 of [AA](#). Applications for a temporary injury/impairment such as a broken arm will be processed as the need arises. Appropriate documentation is required to support any temporary access arrangement made and will be held on file.

## **Centre-delegated access arrangements**

Evidence for Centre-delegated access arrangements are collated in the same way as any other arrangement, as previously outlined. The evidence, alongside a Centre File Note from the SENDCo, is held within the Learning Support Department.

## **Centre-specific criteria for particular access arrangements**

### **Word processor policy (exams)**

An exam candidate may be approved for 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.

The Word Processor policy is held on file within the Learning Support Department.

“Centres are allowed to provide a word processor (e.g. computer, laptop or tablet) with the spelling and grammar check/predictive text disabled to a candidate where it is their normal way of working within the centre, unless an awarding body's specification says otherwise.”

[ICE 14.20]

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

A decision where an exam candidate may be approved separate invigilation within the centre will be made by the 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 5.16]

“SENDCos must note that candidates are only entitled to the above arrangements if they are disabled within the meaning of the Equality Act. The candidate is at a substantial disadvantage when compared with other non-disabled candidates undertaking the assessment and it would be reasonable in all the circumstances to provide the arrangement. (The only exception to this would be a temporary illness, a temporary injury or other temporary indisposition which is clearly evidenced.)

For example, in the case of separate invigilation, the candidate's difficulties are established within the centre (see Chapter 4, paragraph 4.1.4, page 16) and known to a Form Tutor, a Director of Learning, the SENDCo or a senior member of staff with pastoral responsibilities.

Separate invigilation reflects 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]