London Design & Engineering UTC

Access Arrangements Policy

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Version Control Table

Version	Date	Amended by	Rationale
0.1	07/11/2023	Gloria Gold	New Policy
1.0	16/11/2023		The version approved by the Committee
1.1	23/04/2024	Ana Maria Grigore	Amended page 6 to include guidance on the use of mobile phones and remote invigilation. New section 5 on post-16 arrangements is included on page 7
2.0	24/10/2024		The version approved by the Committee
2.1	05/12/2025	Ana Maria Grigore	The new extra time requirements were updated on page 6.
3.0	18/12/2025		The version approved by the Board of Directors
3.1	12/10/2026	Ana Maria Grigore	Amendment made to page 7 to include a paragraph on supervised rest breaks. Also, a short section was added to page 11 about SENCOs using their professional judgement.
4.0	19/10/2026		The version approved by the Committee

Guidance on Version Control:
The above is an example of how to complete the Version control table.

Versions are 0.1, 0.2, etc., until the document is approved. Then it becomes version 1.0.

Subsequent edited versions become 1.1, 1.2, or, if it's a major update, 2.0. Do not worry about the numbers going up and up; it is about getting the policy right – it's all fine.

ACCESS ARRANGEMENTS POLICY

Policy Coverage

THE POLICY APPLIES TO OR COVERS THE FOLLOWING GROUPS			
Type of Learner	**Tick (✓)**	**Type of Stakeholder**	**Tick (✓)**
Key Stage 3 (KS3) Carousel	✓	Teaching Staff	✓
Key Stage 4 (KS4) GCSE	✓	Education Support Staff	✓
Key Stage 5 (KS5) Level 2	✓	Administrative Support Staff	✓
Key Stage 5 (KS5) Level 3	✓	Directors	✓
Key Stage 5 (KS5) A Levels	✓	Employers	
Apprentices	✓	Visitors / Contractors	

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1. Purpose of the Policy

The LDE UTC is complying with its obligations in respect of identifying the need for, requesting and implementing access arrangements.

This policy is maintained and held by the SENCo alongside the individual files/e-folders of each access arrangements candidate. Each file/e-folder contains detailed records of all the important 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 version of the JCQ publication Regulations and Guidance - JCQ Joint Council for Qualifications.

2. Access Arrangements

Access arrangements are agreed upon 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. This is set out on page 13 of the Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments 2024/2025 Regulations and Guidance - JCQ Joint Council for Qualifications, published by the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ).

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 main way in which awarding bodies comply with the duty under the Equality Act 2010 to make 'reasonable adjustments.' The SENCO must lead on these arrangements.

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. They will not have a working knowledge of an individual candidate's needs and how their difficulties impact them in the classroom and/or in timed assessments. It is the responsibility of the SENCo to make appropriate and informed decisions based on the JCQ regulations.

The head of centre must ensure that the SENCo has sufficient time to both manage the access arrangements process within the centre and familiarise themselves with the JCQ document Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments. They must also ensure that the SENCo and the centre's appointed assessor undertake regular CPD, such as attending an annual update course on these regulations.

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.

Candidates who may have a learning difficulty and may therefore require access arrangements are highlighted to the SENCo by teaching staff. Candidates may also **self-refer.**

An assessment is carried out by the SENCo, who is an appropriately qualified Specialist assessor as required by JCQ regulations in AA. Assessments are completed adhering to the timeframes required for regulations for external examinations.

Learners who may need access arrangements include those with, for example:

- Cognition and learning needs, such as dyslexia or dyscalculia
- Communication and interaction needs, such as autism or speech, language and communication needs
- Sensory and physical needs, such as a physical disability or vision or hearing impairment
- Social, mental and emotional needs, such as mental health conditions or attention deficit disorder
- In most cases, learners' impairments need to have a **substantial and long-term adverse effect on normal day-to-day activities**.
- For example:
- Persistent and significant difficulty in reading and understanding written material due to a learning difficulty or sensory impairment
- Difficulty operating a computer because of physical restrictions in using a keyboard
- Examples of factors that **wouldn't** count include:
- Minor problems with writing or spelling
- Inability to converse orally in a language which isn't the pupil's native spoken language

Access arrangements:

- Must reflect the learner's normal way of working (except in the case of temporary injury/impairment)
- Must be considered on a subject-by-subject basis – Learners may not need the same arrangements in each one
- Must not unfairly advantage or disadvantage the learner – they should meet the learner's needs without affecting the integrity of the assessment
- Must be agreed before the assessment and no later than the deadlines
- Late applications are allowed in the case of temporary injury/impairment or if a disability is diagnosed or a related impairment manifests after the deadline

Evidence of the candidate's normal way of working throughout his/her time at LDE UTC is collected from teaching staff. Teaching staff are encouraged to provide the SENCo with relevant copies of tests or classwork and to email the SENCo with any further information.

The SENCo will take into account the "normal way of working" as defined by JCQ: "The arrangement(s) put in place must reflect the support given to the candidate in the centre, e.g.

- in the classroom
- working in small groups for reading and/or writing
- literacy support lessons
- literacy intervention strategies
- mock examinations

The only exception to this is where an arrangement is put in place as a consequence of a temporary injury or impairment. These arrangements are processed as the need arises.

Medical evidence is retained within the department, together with a file note detailing the circumstances, a signed data protection form and a copy of the AAO Approval.

Many arrangements require that evidence of need be submitted when applying.

Where there is evidence of the need for access arrangements for a learner who will be taking Public Examinations in an exam season, the learner is assessed by the specialist assessor who will complete a JCQ Form 8. The Form 8 will be signed off by the SENCo.

Where a candidate has learning difficulties and is not subject to a current Education, Health and Care Plan, the SENCo will paint a picture of need and demonstrate the candidate's normal way of working by completing Part 1 of Form 8 prior to the candidate being assessed.

The SENCO:

- Must lead on the access arrangements process (she is also the designated assessor, which means she'll assess learners' needs, process applications for arrangements and keep the necessary evidence).
- Must work with teachers, support staff and the exams officer to put approved access arrangements in place for internal school tests, mock exams and exams
- Must work with teachers to identify the most appropriate published format of modified papers
- Will also work with specialist advisory teachers, educational psychologists and other external professionals, where appropriate

Teachers and senior leaders must support the SENCO in identifying, determining and implementing appropriate access arrangements and reasonable adjustments.

Some access arrangements can be "Centre-delegated," which means that an online application to JCQ is not required. Examples of such arrangements include:

- supervised rest breaks
- candidates who read aloud or use an examination reading pen
- use of a word processor
- use of a prompter
- coloured overlays
- alternative rooming arrangements (formerly known as separate invigilation)

The SENCo will complete a cover sheet to support the arrangement. The SENCo must be satisfied that there is a genuine need for the arrangement to be put in place.

Chapter 5 of the JCQ guidance provides detailed information about the different types of access arrangements.

The arrangements covered in Chapter 5 are:

1. Extra time for candidates with: physical disability, sensory impairment, medical condition (ADHD, ASD, etc.).

   For 25% extra time, in addition to a completed Form 9, the following will be required for inspection purposes:

   - a sample of internal school tests/mock exam papers across relevant subjects showing the application of 25% extra time

- comments and observations from teaching staff in relevant subjects as to why the candidate needs 25% extra time and how they use the 25% extra time awarded
- evidence that supervised rest breaks have been trialled and exhausted.

2. **Extra time** for learning difficulties (Dyslexia, Dyscalculia)

A fully completed Form 8, Parts 1, 2 and 3, with an assessment by the centre's appointed assessor from Year 9 onwards using current editions of nationally standardised tests (assessor selects tests)

- At least two below average standardised scores of 84 or less, or one below average standardised score (84 or less) and one low average standardised score (85–89), relating to two different areas of speed of working (cognitive processing/fluency, reading, writing)

- Only Form 8 is acceptable.

- Spreadsheets, email messages, centre-devised equivalents of Form 8, educational psychologists' reports, a diagnosis of Dyslexia, and diagnostic assessment reports are not acceptable for processing and inspection purposes

- For 25% extra time in addition to a completed Form 8, **the following will be required for inspection purposes**: a sample of internal school tests/mock exam papers across relevant subjects showing the application of 25% extra time, comments and observations from teaching staff in relevant subjects as to why the candidate needs 25% extra time and how they use the 25% extra time awarded.

    - Use of a reader or computer reader
    - Read aloud and/or use of an examination reading pen
    - Scribe or speech recognition technology
    - Use of a word processor
    - Braille transcripts
    - Use of a prompter
    - Use of a language modifier
    - Use of a live speaker (for pre-recorded components)
    - Use of a communication professional (for sign language)
    - Practical assistants
    - Use of alternative sites
    - Other arrangements that don't require an application or evidence, such as amplification equipment, coloured overlays and magnifiers
    - Exemptions
    - Bilingual translation dictionaries

- **Supervised rest breaks –** 'Where a candidate has an impairment other than a learning difficulty, the SENCo should consider the option of supervised rest breaks before making an application for 25% extra time.'

3. **Access to a mobile phone for medical purposes:**

An application must be processed using Access arrangements online. The SENCo must complete Form 9 confirming the candidate's medical condition and the need to access their mobile phone during an examination. Formal evidence must be available to confirm the candidate's medical condition.

Access arrangements online will approve applications where a candidate with a medical condition will be subject to 1:1 invigilation when in possession of their mobile phone to ensure the integrity of the examination.

Listening to music/white noise due to a substantial impairment:
This information provides an update to Chapter 4 (page 57).

This is an arrangement for a candidate with social, emotional and mental health needs or with a sensory impairment such as tinnitus or misophonia.
The centre must ensure that the candidate uses a device which is not connected to the internet and must check the music playlist to ensure that no advantage is conferred to the candidate. The relevant sections of Form 9 are completed, and this is accompanied by specialist evidence to confirm the candidate's condition. Approval must be gained through an AAO application.

4. **Remote invigilation:**

The remote invigilation of examinations may be acceptable in exceptional circumstances to support a candidate who would not otherwise be able to sit their examinations. The candidate has:

- a formally diagnosed medical or psychological condition; or
- a physical disability; or
- a very substantial temporary illness or temporary injury.

Formal evidence must be available to confirm the candidate's impairment. This is part of the online referral process. The SENCo must complete Form 9, confirming that all of the following have been exhausted:

- the candidate sitting their examinations at the centre through alternative rooming arrangements;
- an invigilator going to the candidate's home to conduct each examination;
- The candidate has not already completed some examinations and would therefore be able to meet the published criteria for special consideration.

The SENCo must also confirm that the candidate would be disadvantaged by not being able to sit their examinations using remote invigilation. Remote invigilation can only be used where an awarding body has given prior approval. Approval will not be granted on the day of an examination

Computer reader/reader. This information provides an update to Chapter 5

A candidate for whom English is an additional language may use a computer reader/reader. The computer reader/reader can help to support their reading in English. Previously, a candidate with EAL was not permitted this arrangement unless reading difficulties were present in their first language. However, this is no longer the case, and the decision to provide reading support can be based on their difficulties with reading English and their normal way of working in the centre.

Form 9 is used to record the evidence for a candidate with EAL to use a computer reader/reader. Approval must be gained through an AAO application.

5. **Education, Health and Care Plans:**

   Where a candidate has a current Education, Health and Care Plan, the SENCo must substantiate the documentation with a picture of the need. This must be completed using Form 9. (Form 8 is not required and must not be used.)

4. Processing Applications for Access Arrangements

Access Arrangements Online (AAO): Access Arrangements Online is a tool provided by JCQ member awarding bodies for GCSE qualifications. This tool is also used to apply for the required access arrangement approval for the qualifications listed on page 2 of AA. AAO is accessed within the JCQ Centre Admin Portal (CAP) by logging in to one of the awarding body's secure extranet sites. A single application is required for each candidate, regardless of the awarding body used. The SENCo must keep detailed records, whether electronically or in hard copy paper format, of all the essential information on file. AAO is now used to process applications for BTEC qualifications (BTEC Firsts, Level 2 Technicals, Nationals and Tech Awards), AQA and Pearson Functional Skills and Pearson T-Levels. (This information provides an update to Chapter 17 (page 193)).

5. Post-16 Access Arrangements

JCQ guidance will be adhered to when “rolling over” access arrangements from Key Stage 4 to Key Stage 5. Attention should be paid to whether testing results are still valid at the point of examination.

Teaching staff should refer newly identified Post 16 learners for assessment, ideally at the start of their course.

When a candidate progresses from GCSE to GCE AS/and or A-Level qualifications, a new online application for 25% extra time must be processed, but an assessment conducted no earlier than in Year 9 will still be valid, providing the candidate meets the current published criteria. When a candidate progresses from GCSE to GCE AS and/or A-level qualifications, and will continue to require a computer reader and/or a reader in addition to 25% extra time and/or a scribe, Form 8 may roll forward. The SENCo must complete Form 8RF.

Form 8:

For candidates with an existing Form 8 who move from Level 2 (GCSE) to Level 3 (A-level), the Form 8 can be rolled forward, with Form 8RF being completed to update the centre-based evidence of need and normal way of working.

Form 8RF is used to roll forward the following arrangements:

- 25% extra time
- Scribe/speech recognition technology, word processor with spellcheck
- Computer reader/reader in addition to 25% extra time and/or scribe
- Supervised rest breaks in addition to 25% extra time and/or scribe* *Where a candidate with learning difficulties had a file note or a Form 9 to support the use of

supervised rest breaks for GCSE examinations, if they are still needed for Level 3 (A level) examinations, Form 8RF can now be used.

Form 9:

Where a candidate has a Form 9 and is continuing to study at the same level, but:

- the AAO approval has run out (e.g. for GCSE resits in the same centre), or
- The candidate moves to a new centre (e.g. moves to an FE college for GCSE resits), the existing Form 9 can continue to be used for the candidate's access arrangements.

A new AAO application must be made to gain approval for a further 26 months.

If the candidate has moved centre, the new centre must ensure the Form 9 is in order and must have specialist evidence to confirm the candidate's condition. The candidate must sign a data consent form in the new centre before the AAO application is made.

Note that whilst an existing Form 9 can be used for resit examinations, a Form 9 cannot be rolled forward from Level 2 (GCSE) to Level 3 (A-level) qualifications. Whether the candidate remains in the same centre or moves to a new centre, a new Form 9 is required. This is because the centre-based evidence of need and the normal way of working must be updated.

6. Special Consideration

Special Consideration is a post-examination adjustment to a candidate's mark or grade to reflect temporary injury, illness or other indisposition at the time of the examination or assessment. This will be processed by the Exam Officer.

7. Centre-Delegated Access Arrangements

Alternative rooming arrangements within the centre: A decision on whether an exam candidate may be approved for alternative rooming arrangements within a centre will be made by the SENCo. The decision will be based on whether the candidate has a substantial and long-term impairment which has had an adverse effect on the candidate's normal way of working within the centre.

Alternative rooming arrangements reflect the candidate's normal way of working in internal college tests and mock examinations as a consequence of a long-term medical condition or long-term social, mental or emotional needs. The candidate's difficulties are established within the centre and known to a Form Tutor, Head of Year, the SENCo or a senior member of staff with pastoral responsibilities.

Two new arrangements have been delegated to the centre:

- Non-electronic headphones
- Timer on a candidate's desk – a small countdown clock, a small analogue or digital clock, or a digital timer. These arrangements can be provided to candidates according to their needs and the normal way of working in the centre. No formal evidence is required, and an online application does not need to be made.

Supervised Rest Breaks: This information provides an update to Chapter 4 (page 43) and Chapter 6 (page 66).

Either Form 8 or Form 9 is used to provide a statement confirming the need for supervised rest breaks. This enables all the candidate's access arrangements evidence to be recorded on a single form. Whether Form 8 or Form 9 is used, specialist evidence (e.g. a medical report) is not needed for inspection purposes, and an online application for supervised rest breaks is not required.

The AARA document provides guidance on the provision of supervised rest breaks:

- A rest break will not normally be needed within the first ten minutes of an exam and will often be shorter than this.
- A single rest break should be no more than 30 minutes in duration.
- Candidates cannot be given as many breaks as they like for as long as they like. The Access Arrangements Coordinator must determine the duration of supervised rest breaks based on the candidate's needs and normal way of working under timed conditions

8. Guidance for parents, carers and learners about access arrangements:

Parents and carers should let the SENCo know as soon as possible if their child has additional needs. Good and open communication is important.

- The SENCo will work with teachers and the learner to identify possible arrangements.
- Various access arrangements are available. For example, support for learners who have difficulties with reading, writing, speed of working and concentration.
- Not all learners with additional needs will require access arrangements. It depends on whether their difficulty affects their access to exams. Additional needs alone do not entitle a learner to access arrangements

Who will make the assessment?

- If a learner has learning difficulties, the college's appointed assessor must conduct the assessment to determine the need for access arrangements such as 25% extra time.
- If an external assessor diagnoses a learning difficulty (for example, dyslexia, dyscalculia), the assessment can only be used as evidence for access arrangements if the assessor has liaised with the college in advance and received the necessary access arrangements paperwork.
- Specialists (for example, a medical consultant, a psychiatrist) are responsible for providing a formal diagnosis. They are not responsible for decisions about access arrangements.
- The college must decide which access arrangements a learner has for their exams.

- Teachers must give evidence to show that an access arrangement is needed. The college will record how effective the arrangement is in the classroom, in internal tests or in mock exams

What else needs to be done?

- An access arrangement can only be granted where the centre has evidence that the arrangement is required. There is a 'picture of need', and it is the candidate's normal way of working. ('A centre must make decisions on appropriate access arrangements for its candidates. Although professionals from other organisations may give advice, they cannot make the decision for the centre. 'Online applications must only be processed where they are supported by the centre, the candidate meeting the published criteria for the arrangement(s) with the full supporting evidence in place.')
- If a learner has complex needs, the college can discuss their needs with the exam board.
- SENCos should always use their professional judgement to determine the most appropriate adjustment for the candidate's assessments. This would be based on classroom observations, feedback from teachers and the candidate's own views.

Finally

It is important that parents/candidates understand that the centre must work within the published regulations and that it would be malpractice for a candidate to be awarded an access arrangement without the required evidence in place. If you have any questions about access arrangements, please speak to the college / SENCo.

This policy links with the following policy

Word Processor Policy