



Access Arrangements Policy

Policy/Procedure creator: Cressida Harrington

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Key staff involved in the policy

Role	Name
Exams officer	Cressida Harrington
ALS lead/SENCo	Kelly Dighton
Senior leader(s)	Assessor: Michael Clarke
Head of centre	Michael Johnson
Other staff (if applicable)	SEN Administrator/Exams Officer

This policy is reviewed and updated annually to ensure that access arrangements process at Chulmeigh Community College 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**.

(updated 2021/22) 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.

Introduction

(AA Definitions)

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'.

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'.

Purpose of the policy

The purpose of this policy is to confirm that Chulmleigh Community College 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 (GR 5.5)
- has a written process in place to not only check the qualification(s) of its assessor(s) but that the correct procedures are followed as per Chapter 7 of the JCQ publication Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments (GR 5.4)

1. General principles

The principles for Chulmleigh Community College to consider include:

- (updated 2021/22) 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)
- (updated 2021/22) 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)

- (updated 2021/22) 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 (AA4.2.3)
- (updated 2021/22) 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)
- (updated 2021/22) 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 • Disability Policy (Exams).

2. The assessment process

At Chulmleigh Community College, assessments are carried out by:

- an appropriately qualified assessor(s) appointed by the head of centre in accordance with the JCQ requirements (AA 7.3)

Details and qualification(s) of the current assessor(s)

- Michael Clarke (Specialist Assessor)
- Assistant Test User: Educational
- Test User Educational: Ability and Attainment
- Certificate of Psychometric Testing, Assessment and Access Arrangements (CCPT3A)

Appointment of assessors of candidates with learning difficulties

At the point an assessor is engaged/employed at Chulmleigh Community College:

- Evidence of the assessor's qualification is obtained and checked against the current requirements (AA 7.3.4)
- This process is carried out prior to the assessor undertaking any assessment of a candidate (AA 7.3.4)
- A photocopy of the assessor's certificate(s) (or a printout of screenshot of HCPC or SASC registration) is kept on file (AA 7.3.1)

Additional information:

Not applicable

Reporting the appointment of the assessor(s)

- Evidence that the assessor(s) is/are suitably qualified is held on file for inspection purposes (AA 7.4.1)

When requested, the evidence will be presented to the JCQ Centre Inspector by • The Exams Officer.

- In the case of appropriately qualified psychologists (registered with the Health & Care Professions Council), or specialist assessors holding a current SpLD Assessment Practising Certificate, who are directly employed within the centre, there is no need to record the names of these individuals within **Access arrangements online**. (AA 7.4.2)
- (updated 2021/22) The names of all other assessors, who are assessing candidates studying qualifications as covered by AA must be entered into **Access arrangements online** to confirm their status (AA 7.4.3)

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

Chulmleigh Community College confirms:

- 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 (AA 7.5, 7.6)
- (updated 2021/22) Arrangements must be made for the candidate to be assessed by the centre's appointed assessor (AA 7.5.1)
- Assessors **must** personally conduct the assessments. They **must not** sign off assessments carried out by another professional (AA7.5.5)
- The assessor must carry out tests which are relevant to support the application. (AA7.5.6)
- 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**. (AA7.3.6)
- Relevant staff 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 (AA7.3.6)

Additional information:

- The assessment procedure is led by the specialist external assessor, based on a referral system by the centre's SENDCo
- Where a candidate has learning difficulties and is not subject to a current Education, Health and Care Plan or Statement of Special Educational Needs the SENDCo will gather a picture of need, demonstrate the candidate's normal way of working and complete Part 1 of Form 8 prior to the candidate being assessed
- The SENDCo makes a referral based on observations and recommendations from teachers and TAs, observations carried out within classes, and via consultation/requests made by parents and carers where we gather a picture of need
- This evidence is then considered in discussion with the SENDCo, SEND team and / or curriculum leaders. The independent external 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 application. The original tests are stored in the candidate's files in the access arrangements folder

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

Chulmleigh Community College confirms

- (updated 2021/22) Before the candidate's assessment, the person appointed in the centre must provide the assessor with background information, i.e. a picture of need has been painted as required in Part 1 of Form 8. The centre and the assessor must work together to ensure a joined-up and consistent process. (AA 7.5.2)
- (updated 2021/22) 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. Additionally, the independent assessor must be approved by the head of centre to assess the candidate.

All candidates must be assessed in the 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/reasonable adjustments with the person appointed in the centre. The responsibility to determine and request appropriate and practicable access arrangements/reasonable adjustments specifically lies with the centre. (AA 7.5.3)

Additional information:

The centre maintains a folder/e-folder of Access Arrangement information, including evidence of need, Form 8s and access arrangement application outcomes.

The folder is stored in the SEND Department and is updated by the SEND team and the SENDCo as necessary.

Evidence recorded includes, but is not limited to:

- Previous Access Arrangements from other schools
- Tests to measure reading comprehension, reading speed, and memory and learning
- Past papers completed under examination conditions
- Assessment profiles and reports
- Examples of class work and independent learning
- Doctors' letters and notes describing physical and/or mental needs

Before the candidate's assessment, the SENDCo will provide the assessor with background information as per Part 1 of Form 8. The SENDCo and assessor will work together to ensure a joined up and consistent process.

3. Processing access arrangements and adjustments

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 The SENDCo.

These arrangements include, but is not limited to:

- Separate accommodation
- Word processor
- Prompter
- Rest breaks
- Coloured paper

. Appropriate evidence, where required by the arrangement, is held on file by When a centre delegated arrangement is put in place then this is recorded by the SENDCo and the printed letter is stored in the Exam Access Arrangements folder, located in Pupil Support department and electronically in the candidate's e-file in the Access Arrangements folder maintained by the SEND Administrator.

- **The use of a word processor**

The • Word Processor Policy (Exams) details the criteria Chulmleigh Community College uses to award and allocate word processors in examinations/assessments.

- **Separate invigilation within the centre**

The Separate Invigilation Policy details the criteria Chulmleigh Community College uses to award separate invigilation within the centre.

Additional information:

The SENDCo will gather evidence and compile a portfolio for any candidate who may require separate invigilation, and then liaise with the exams officer to determine an appropriate venue within the centre. The evidence will be stored in the SEND Department.

The Exams Officer is then responsible for ensuring that the venue is appropriately prepared for separate invigilation, in accordance with JCQ regulations on the matter

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)
- (updated 2021/22) 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)

Roles and responsibilities

(updated 2021/22) When an access arrangement/reasonable adjustment has been processed on-line and approved, the evidence of need (where required) must be made available to a JCQ Centre Inspector upon request. An awarding body may also request evidence of need when considered necessary. This can either be in hard copy paper format or electronically. (AA 4.2.13)

Where documentation is stored electronically an e-folder for each individual candidate must be created. The candidate's e-folder must hold each of the required documents for inspection. (AA 4.2.13)

It is the responsibility of:

- Laura Mackie, SENDCo
Elizabeth Shaw, SEN Department EAA Coordinator
to collect a candidate's consent (a completed candidate personal data consent form) to record their personal data on-line through AAO
- Elizabeth Shaw, SEN Department EAA Coordinator to submit applications for approval using AAO
- Kelly Dighton, SENDCo
TBC - SEN Department EAA Coordinator
to hold the file/e-folder for each individual candidate containing a copy of the candidate's approved application, appropriate evidence of need (where required) and a signed candidate personal data consent form (AA 8.6)
- Laura Mackie, SENDCo
Elizabeth Shaw, SEN Department EAA Coordinator
to submit applications for approval directly to an awarding body for any qualification that does not fall within the scope of AAO
- Laura Mackie, SENDCo
Elizabeth Shaw, SEN Department EAA Coordinator
to order modified papers

Additional responsibilities:

Independent Specialist Assessor(s)

- To work with students at KS3 (and at KS4 in exceptional circumstances) to do basic assessments, give strategies and build a picture of need and provision
- To administer recognised psychometric testing after gathering evidence from teachers, student interviews and classroom observations
- To assist the SENDCo in the decision making process about EAA

Examinations Officer

- To ensure that external invigilators, readers and scribes are fully competent with JCQ requirements
- To ensure that the agreed EAA provisions are in place for exams and are communicated to the invigilators
- To ensure the agreed EAA provision is updated in SIMs Exams tool
- To manage any on the day questions and queries regarding EAA provision
- To put in place (in conjunction with the SEND department) any on day provisions – such as medical emergencies
- To ensure students are roomed suitably for their Access Arrangement

Teaching Staff/Teaching Assistants

- To provide relevant information/evidence of the candidate's persistent and significant difficulties
- To show how the candidate's disability/difficulty has impacted on teaching and learning in the classroom. Provide evidence of this for the SENDCo
- Detail the candidate's normal way of working within the centre, the support given and how this relates to the proposed arrangement.
- To ensure that the correct EAA are in place for assessments