



NITERE PORRO

Access Arrangements Policy

Review Responsibility: SENDCo & Specialist Assessor

Frequency of Review: 1 year

Date Approved: Jan 26

Approved By: Headteacher

Next Review Due By: Jan 27

Contents

Purpose of the Policy	3
Definition of Access Arrangements	3
Definition of Reasonable Adjustments	3
Definition of Disability	3
Key Staff Involved in the Access Arrangements Process	3
The Assessment Process	4
How the Assessment Process is Administered	4
Recording Evidence of Need and Normal Way of Working	4
Processing Access Arrangements	4
Arrangements Requiring Awarding Body Approval	4
Cases Which do not Gain Approval	5
Centre-delegated Access Arrangements	6
Centre-Specific Criteria for Particular Access Arrangements	6
The Use of Word Processors in Examinations	6
Alternative Rooming Arrangements Within the Centre	7

Purpose of the Policy

The purpose of this policy is to confirm that Borden Grammar School complies with its "...obligation to identify the need for, request and implement access arrangements..." (JCQ General Regulations for Approved Centres, 5.4 <https://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/general-regulations/>). This publication is further referred to in this policy as GR.

This policy is reviewed annually and updated to ensure the arrangements 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 (<https://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/access-arrangements-and-special-consideration/regulations-and-guidance/>). This publication is further referred to in this policy as AA.

Definition of Access Arrangements

Access arrangements are agreed before an external assessment (examination). They allow candidates with 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 principle way in which awarding bodies comply with the duty under the Equality Act 2010 to make 'reasonable adjustments'.

Definition of 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. 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.

Reasonable adjustments must not, however, affect the reliability or validity of assessment outcomes nor must they give the learner an unfair assessment advantage over other learners undertaking the same or similar assessments.

Definition of Disability

The Equality Act 2010 definition of disability is usually considered cumulatively in terms of:

- identifying a learning difficulty, physical, mental or sensory impairment;
- looking into adverse effects and assessing which are substantial (more than minor or trivial, in comparison to a person without an impairment);
- considering if substantial adverse effects are long term (the impairment has existed for more than 12months, or is likely to do so);
- judging the impact of long-term adverse effects on normal day to day activities.

Key Staff Involved in the Access Arrangements Process

Role	Name(s)
SENCo	Natalie Zarzycki

SENCo Line Manager (Leadership Group)	Michelle Brooker
Head of Centre (Head Teacher)	Ashley Tomlin
Specialist Assessor	Natalie Zarzycki
Access Arrangement Facilitators	Delia Mauldon (Examination Officer) Cindy Ayling (Assistant Examination Officer) Garry Mulligan (Deputy Head Teacher) Steve Dale (IT Technician)

The Assessment Process

Assessments are carried out by an assessor appointed by the head of centre. The assessor is appropriately qualified as required by JCQ regulations in AA 7.3. The specialist assessor at Borden Grammar School is the SENCo who holds qualified teacher status and post-graduate Level 7 certification in Psychometric Testing, Assessment & Access Arrangements (CPT3A) number 11189, accredited by BPS RQTU and Middlesex University. Evidence of qualification is held by the Head of Centre, SENCo and Examination Secretary.

How the Assessment Process is Administered

An assessment (no earlier than the start of Year 9) is usually initiated through teacher, head of year/key stage, student or parental/carer discussion with the SENCo. Evidence is gathered to form a picture of need and normal way of working; further information is sought through student files and discussions with staff, the young person, parents/carers and external professionals where appropriate. Specialist in-school Psychometric tests such as the Comprehensive Test of Phonological Processing (CTOPP-2), York Assessment for Reading Comprehension (YARC), Gray Oral Reading Tests (GORT5), Detailed Assessment of Speed of Handwriting (DASH/DASH16), The Beery-Buktencia Developmental Test of Visual Perception and Motor Coordination (Beery VMI) and the Graded Word Spelling Test (GWST) will be used to provide a profile of current abilities and indicate areas of underlying difficulty to support the requirement for access arrangements. Referral to external agencies may be required such as to Health Services or to an Educational Psychologist.

Recording Evidence of Need and Normal Way of Working

Background information and evidence is documented on either Form 8: Application for Access Arrangements - Profile of Learning Difficulties, Form 8RF: Evidence to accompany Form 8 when a candidate progresses from GCSE to GCE qualifications or Form 9: Profile of need (<https://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/access-arrangements-and-special-consideration/forms/>). Other information collected to support the identified need, such as arrangements for KS2 tests, screening test results, internal and external assessment reports, comments and observations from teaching and support staff, baseline data, school reports, intervention support plans, information about differentiation in the classroom, evidence of normal way of working and arrangements made for end of year internal school examinations/mock examinations are also held in a secure, locked file by both the SENCo and Examinations Secretary.

Processing Access Arrangements

Arrangements Requiring Awarding Body Approval

The SENCo must lead on the access arrangements process within her centre. *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 11 of AA. This tool also provides the facility to order modified papers for those qualifications listed on page 91 of AA.

AAO is accessed by logging in to any of the awarding body secure extranet sites. Before logging on, the candidate would have been informed that an application for access arrangements would have been processed using Access arrangements online complying with the UK GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018. A single application is required for each candidate regardless of the awarding body used. AAO will provide an instant response and will only allow a maximum of 26 months for any arrangement.

Access arrangements that must be applied for on-line include:

- Access to mobile phone for medical purposes
- Bilingual dictionary with 25% extra time (solely for those qualifications listed within Chapter 5, paragraph 5.18.2)
- Computer reader/reader
- 25% extra time
- Extra time over 25%*
- Exemption*
- Listening to music/white noise due to a substantial impairment.
- Practical assistant*
- Remote invigilation*
- Scribe/speech recognition technology
- Timetable variation on the day of the exam for a candidate with a disability
- Timetable variation requiring overnight supervision for a candidate with a disability

*The arrangement will be automatically rejected. Applications should be referred on-line to the relevant awarding body.

Applications must be processed and approved before an examination and no later than published deadlines (page 12 AA). Arrangements for a late diagnosis of a disability or late manifestation of an impairment may be processed as the needs arise. However, evidence of need will still be required to the same standard as if it was an application being processed by the published deadline. The appropriate evidence must be identified and processed with the application. For candidates with a temporary injury or temporary impairment (such as a broken arm), documentation must be held on file to support the temporary access arrangement made.

Where the candidate has been referred to CAMHS or a local NHS Trust by their centre or GP, is on the list to be screened and/or is likely to receive a formal diagnosis, the SENCo may in exceptional circumstances use a CAMHS/NHS Trust referral confirmation/acceptance letter. This would be due to the length of CAMHS/NHS Trust waiting lists. However, the SENCo must produce a compelling picture of need within Part 1 of Form 9. There will be a greater reliance on centre-based evidence such as comments and observations from teaching staff, support staff.

Whilst the awarding bodies will try to accommodate any arrangements for a late diagnosis or late manifestation, there may be occasions where otherwise reasonable adjustments cannot be made due to the limited time available.

The SENCo and Examinations Secretary both hold a candidate file containing core evidence, Form 8, Form 8RF and Form 9 (when required), AAO approval documentation and centre notes (when required). The candidate file is kept secure in a locked cabinet within a locked room.

Cases Which do not Gain Approval

AAO approves around 90% of all applications made by centres in the UK. If an application is not approved, the SENCo must consider whether this is because the candidate does not meet the published criteria for one of the arrangements requested and does not have a substantial and long-term impairment for the required arrangement.

Additionally, some individual and very substantial needs may not be accommodated by the on-line computer system, either because the reasonable adjustment is not listed or because the arrangement requires further exploration in relation to the competence being tested in the specification(s). In

these cases, the application will need to be discussed with the relevant awarding body and a written record kept by the SENCo.

Centre-delegated Access Arrangements

Centres are permitted to grant access arrangements without the need to process an on-line application, if it is evidenced that a candidate is disabled and has a persistent and significant disability (within the meaning of the Equality Act, 2010) and that the access arrangement is the candidate's normal way of working within the centre as a direct consequence of their disability. The SENCo would need to evidence that without the access arrangement, 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 being a temporary illness, a temporary injury or other temporary indisposition which is clearly evidenced). In these circumstances, evidence of need and normal way of working, alongside a centre note, will be held in a candidate file which will be kept securely within a locked room, in a locked cabinet by both the SENCo and Examination Secretary.

Centre delegated arrangements include:

- Alternative rooming arrangements e.g. a room for a smaller group of candidates
- Amplification equipment
- Bilingual dictionary (without extra time)
- Blank sheet of paper for doodling, where a candidate has persistent and significant concentration difficulties (This must be included with the candidate's completed answer booklet)
- Braille transcript
- Brailers
- Colour naming by the invigilator for candidates who are colour blind
- Coloured overlays
- Communication professional (for candidates using sign language)
- Examination on coloured/enlarged paper
- Fidget toys and stress balls
- Live speaker for pre-recorded examination components
- Low vision aid/magnifier
- Non-electronic ear defenders/ear plugs
- Non electronic headphones
- Optical Character Reader (OCR) scanners
- Prompter
- Read aloud (which can include an examination reading pen)
- Squared paper for visual spatial difficulties
- Supervised rest breaks
- Timer on a candidates desk – a small countdown clock, a small analogue or digital clock, digital timer, sand timer, stopwatch (The candidate must have an established difficulty and control the device themselves)
- Word Processor

Centre-Specific Criteria for Particular Access Arrangements

The Use of Word Processors in Examinations

Centres are allowed to provide a word processor for a candidate to use within examinations (with the spelling and grammar check facility/predictive text switched off) where it is their normal way of working within the centre.

A word processor cannot simply be granted to a candidate because he/she wants to type, can work

faster on a keyboard or because they use a laptop at home. Borden Grammar School sets out the types of candidates who are considered for the use of a word processor, within the school policy, 'The Use of Word Processors in Examinations'.

Alternative Rooming Arrangements Within the Centre

A decision where a candidate may be approved to sit examinations in an alternative room or separate invigilation within the centre, will be made by the SENCo and Leadership Group.

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

The SENCo must ensure that the proposed access arrangement does not disadvantage or advantage the candidate. AA 4.2.1

Where a candidate is subject to an alternative room or separate invigilation within the centre, the regulations and guidance within Instructions for Conducting Examinations (<https://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/ice--instructions-for-conducting-examinations/>) must always be adhered to. This is particularly so in relation to accommodation and invigilation arrangements (sections 11 and 12).

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 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 (AA p. 32).