



Examination Access Arrangements Policy

Sherburn High School

Centre name	Sherburn High School
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Key staff involved in the policy

Role	Name
Head of Centre	Mr Matt Gill
Senior leader(s)	Mr John Ralphs Ms Anna Kirkham
Exams officer	Ms Katrina Meadley

ALS lead/SENCo	Miss Charlotte Isaac
Other staff (if applicable)	Mrs Natalie Caldwell

This policy is reviewed and updated annually to ensure that access arrangements process at Sherburn High School is managed in accordance with current requirements and regulations.

References in this policy to GR, ICE and AARA refer to the JCQ publications **General Regulations for Approved Centers, Instructions for conducting examinations** and **Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments**.

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 AARA relating to access arrangements and reasonable adjustments will also apply in Northern Ireland.

Introduction

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'.

The centre must ensure that approved adjustments can be delivered to candidates.

Purpose of the policy

The purpose of this policy is to confirm that Sherburn High 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 (GR 5.4)
- 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 head of centre/senior leadership team will appoint a SENCo, or an equivalent member of staff, to coordinate the access arrangements process within the centre and determine appropriate arrangements for candidates with learning difficulties and disabilities, those for whom English is an additional language and those with a temporary illness or temporary injury. (GR 5.4)

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 4.2)

The principles for Sherburn High School to consider include:

- 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 (AARA 4.2)
- 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 (AARA 4.2)
- 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 (AARA 4.2)
- Applications for access arrangements/reasonable adjustments should be processed at the start of or during the first year of a two-year the course having firmly established a picture of need and normal way of working (AARA 4.2)
- Arrangement(s) **must** always be approved **before** an examination or assessment (AARA 4.2)
- The arrangement(s) put in place **must** reflect the support given to the candidate in the centre

(AARA 4.2)

- The candidate must have had appropriate opportunities to practice using the access arrangement(s)/reasonable adjustment(s) before their first examination (AARA 4.2)
- Extra time will not be permitted in examinations testing the time in which a skill is performed, such as a Dance or Drama practical assessment, a musical performance, or a sport, where timing is an explicit part of the assessment objective.
25% extra time would be awarded in a timed Art examination where a candidate has a formally diagnosed medical condition, a physical disability or a sensory impairment which has a substantial and adverse effect on their manual dexterity, their physical coordination. The candidate is demonstrably slower when, for example, mixing paints, painting and/or sketching. In rare and exceptional circumstances there may be candidates with substantially slower processing, poor memory skills, difficulties with sequencing and/or visual perceptual weaknesses which are impacting on their ability to perform the skill to their expected level when under timed conditions. (AARA 5.2)

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:

- Examination Access Arrangements Policy.

2. The assessment process

At Sherburn High School, assessments are carried out by:

An appropriately qualified assessor appointed by the Head of Centre, in accordance with JCQ requirements (AARA 7.3).

Details and qualifications of the current assessor:

Access arrangements assessments are currently carried out by an external, appropriately qualified specialist assessor.

The centre's Inclusion Leader is currently undertaking the Level 7 Assessment Practising Award and works alongside the external assessor as part of the assessment process.

Appointment of assessors:

At the point an assessor is engaged/employed at Sherburn High School:

- Evidence of the assessor's qualification is obtained and checked against the current requirements (AARA 7.3)
- This process is carried out prior to the assessor undertaking any assessment of a candidate (AARA 7.3)
- Evidence of successful completion of a post-graduate course in individual specialist assessment at or equivalent to Level 7 or a printout of a screenshot of HCPC or SASC registration is held on file for inspection purposes to evidence that the assessor(s) is/ are suitably qualified (AARA 7.3, 7.4)

Reporting the appointment of assessor(s)

- Evidence that the assessor(s) is/are suitably qualified is held on file for inspection purposes (AARA 7.4) When requested, the evidence will be presented to the JCQ Centre Inspector by

Inclusion Leader/SENCo or a member of SLT in their absence.

- In the case of appropriately qualified psychologists (registered with the Health & Care Professions Council), or specialist assessors holding a current SpLD Assessment Practicing Certificate, who are directly employed within the centre, there is no need to record the names of these individuals within **Access arrangements online**. (AARA 7.4)
- The names of all other assessors, who are assessing candidates studying qualifications as covered by the Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments document must be entered into **Access arrangements online** to confirm their status (AARA 7.4)

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

Sherburn High School 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 (AARA 7.5, 7.6)
- Arrangements must be made for the candidate to be assessed by the centre's appointed assessor (AARA 7.5)
- Assessors **must** personally conduct the assessments. They **must not** sign off assessments carried out by another professional (AARA 7.5)
- The assessor **must** carry out tests which are relevant to support the application (AARA 7.5)
- A privately commissioned assessment, where the centre has not been involved, **cannot** be used to award access arrangements and **cannot** be used to process an application using Access arrangements online (AARA 7.3)
- 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 (AARA 7.3)

Picture of need/normal way of working

Sherburn High School confirms:

- 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. (AARA 7.5)

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.

Arrangements/adjustments requiring awarding body approval:

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.

Centre delegated arrangements/adjustments

Decisions relating to the approval of centre delegated arrangements/adjustments are made by the Headteacher with advice taken from other Senior Leaders and SENCo. Appropriate evidence, where required by the arrangement, is held on file by our SENCo and Inclusion Leader.

The use of a word processor:

The Word Processor Policy details the criteria Sherburn High School specifically uses to award and allocate word processors for examinations and assessments.

Alternative rooming arrangements:

The Alternative Rooming Arrangements Policy details the criteria Sherburn High School uses to award alternative rooming arrangements, e.g. a room for a smaller group of candidates with similar needs or an alternative room with one-to-one invigilation.

Separate Invigilating:

- Invigilation and the use of an alternative room with one-to-one invigilation would apply where the candidate has a serious medical condition such as frequent seizures, Tourette's or significant behavioral issues which would disturb other candidates in the examination room.
- Students with a diagnosis of ADHD who it is evidenced can not stay still as this meets their sensory needs.
- Students with a history of anxiety with supporting evidence e.g GP letter
- Medical needs with supporting evidence e.g GP letter

Medical Evidence:

- 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.
- The SENCo may accept a medical diagnosis from an appropriate specialist working with either the NHS or a private practice.
- Although a specialist, e.g. a medical consultant, may recommend specific access arrangements, it is the SENCo who **must** determine the arrangements for the candidate's examinations. It is the SENCo's professional judgement which is based on their knowledge of the candidate's disability, the candidate's normal way of working in timed assessments and comments and observations from teaching staff.

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 (AARA 6.1)
- Modified papers are prepared for candidates for whom other adjustments are unsuitable. The modification of papers involves additional resources. Therefore centers must provide the awarding bodies with early notification that a candidate will require a modified paper. (AARA 6.1)
- Modified papers **must not** be ordered for candidates unless the centre intends to enter them for the relevant examination series (AARA 6.1)
- For the adjustment to be effective, the candidate must have had appropriate opportunities to practice using an awarding body's past modified papers before their first examination (AARA 6.1)

Roles and responsibilities:

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. (AARA 4.2)

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. (AARA 4.2)

It is the responsibility of:

- The SENCo must work with the centre's appointed assessor to ensure a consistent, joined-up process. This will also allow the SENCo to discuss individual candidate cases with the assessor before making final decisions.
- SENCo and Inclusion Leader to collect a candidate's consent (a completed candidate Personal data consent form) to record their personal data on-line through AAO
- The SENCo to inform candidates that an application for access arrangements will be processed using Access arrangements online, complying with the UK GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018
- Inclusion Leader and Exams Officer to submit applications for approval using AAO
- SENCo and Inclusion Leader to keep detailed records for inspection purposes, whether electronically or in hard copy paper format, of all the essential information on file. This includes a copy of the candidate's approved application, appropriate evidence of need (where required) and evidence of the assessor's qualification (where required) (AARA 8.6)
- Inclusion Leader and Exams Officer to submit applications for approval directly to an awarding body for any qualification that does not fall within the scope of AAO
- Exams Officer to order modified papers