



# Stowmarket High School

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## **Access Arrangements Policy**

This policy will be reviewed bi-annually

Policy Reviewed	November 2023
Next Review Due	November 2025

## Key staff involved in the policy

<b>Role</b>	<b>Name(s)</b>
SENCo	<b>Rachel Orton</b>
SENCo line manager (Senior Leader)	<b>Adam Pickering</b>
Head of centre	<b>Lucie Hernandez</b>
Assessor(s)	<b>May Mackay Morris</b> <b>Rachel Orton</b>
Access arrangement facilitator(s)	<b>SEND Department</b>

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## 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'. 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]

### Purpose of the policy

The purpose of this policy is to confirm that Stowmarket 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'.

[JCO General Regulations for Approved Centres, 5.5]

This publication is further referred to in this policy as [GR](#)

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 essential information that is required to be held according to the regulations.

The policy is annually reviewed to ensure that processes are carried out in accordance with the current edition of the JCO publication Adjustments for candidates with disabilities and learning difficulties Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments.

This publication is further referred to in this policy as [AA](#)

### Disability policy (exams)

A large part of the access arrangements process is covered in the Equalities Policy (Exams) which covers staff roles and responsibilities in identifying the need for, requesting and implementing access arrangements and the conduct of exams.

The policy can be found in section 3 of the Exams policy folder, held by the Examinations Officer.

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

## **The assessment process**

Assessments are carried out by an assessor(s) appointed by the head of centre. The assessor(s) is (are) appropriately qualified as required by JCQ regulations in [AA](#) 7.3.

### **The qualification(s) of the current assessor(s)**

Stowmarket High School currently commissions a specialist assessor to carry out exam access arrangements. The specialist assessor is a qualified Exam Access Assessor (Level 7 CPT3A) and British Psychology Society (BPS) recognised tester (RQTU). An internal assessor is also involved in the process, who holds a Postgraduate Award of Proficiency in Assessment for Access Arrangements, awarded by Include-ed, as endorsed by the CIEA.

### **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) of the assessor(s)**

A written process is in place to complete qualification checks before assessors are appointed to work at Stowmarket High School.

Evidence of the assessor's qualification(s) is held on file by the SENCo and Exams Officer for inspection purposes and will be presented to the JCQ Centre Inspector when required.

Stowmarket High School ensures that candidates with a learning difficulty have been assessed appropriately by a qualified assessor as appointed by the SENCo.

### **Reporting the appointment of the assessor(s)**

The assessors certificates are held in the Examinations Office for reference and the SENCo Office for reference and inspection.

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

Exam Access Assessment processes are administered with regard to the equality Act 2010 regulations and SEN code of Practice (2014).

The school makes every attempt to identify students needing exam access as early as possible for new students. Where applicable Form 8's are collected from feeder schools and as evidence for history of need.

Teachers and the SENCo identify students needing exam access through:

- Screening tests (Lucid)
- SATs Results
- Candidates self - reported difficulties
- Information from feeder schools
- Termly assessments and tracking information.
- Information collected in EHCP, EP reports or other documents.
- Parents and pastoral support teachers are also encouraged to identify any student who they feel has learning or other difficulties.

- The SEND Register is also used to help to identify potential needs and parental concerns are passed to the SENCo for review.

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

On admission students with an EHCP (Educational Healthcare Plan) are allocated appropriate in-class support by the SENCo. All students in Year 7 who achieve below expected in English are screened with Lucid Exact to identify need, while the maths department complete baseline assessments three times annually. In year transfer students will also be tested on arrival. 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 candidate's normal way of working and complete Part 1 of Form 8 prior to the candidate being assessed.

Access Arrangements assessments will be completed by the end of the Summer Half Term (yr10) and approved by Exam Boards before the appropriate deadline. (When making an application the school utilises all previous years' testing as evidence of the student's difficulties as well as being able to demonstrate the normal way of working within the classroom and during test situations, which is a JCQ requirement. Any application we make requesting Access Arrangements needs to include school-based evidence of need.) Students with approved applications for access arrangements will have these arrangements in class tests, mock exams and assessments. Details of measures provided in 'pre' exams and assessments are documented by the use access arrangement dispensation logs sheets collected by the Exams Officer and maintained by the Learning Support Department.

Once students have been identified, their class teachers are asked to complete a form detailing any arrangements that they need to make to ensure progress in the classroom or to allow them to succeed in school tests. These are then collated and if it is possible to build a picture of need, the student is tested to see whether we can evidence that need.

In exceptional circumstances, the student may need to be assessed in Year 11 however this is at the discretion of the SENCo and only if there is history of need and evidence of normal way of working throughout Key Stage 4.

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

AAO is accessed within the JCQ Centre Admin Portal (CAP) by logging in to one of the awarding body secure extranet sites. A single application is required for each candidate regardless of the awarding body used.

In line with JCQ regulations the SENCo makes the online applications by the published deadline of the 21st February 2020.

The SENCo keeps a record of the printed online application, letters from awarding bodies, Form 8's, a copy a data protection form, assessments and any additional forms or documents for inspection. The files for inspection are located in the learning support room.

Students are informed verbally of the outcome of their exam access assessment. Parents are informed by letter. Teachers are informed via email update. All Access Arrangements are logged on Pupil Passports.

A record of a candidate's access arrangements is maintained and held electronically by the SENCo.

### Centre-delegated access arrangements

The school follows JCQ guidance when providing centre delegated access arrangements.

The SENCo allocates candidates a prompter or rest breaks if;

- The need is a result of substantial and long-term impairment and it is their normal way of working
- There is medical evidence to substantiate this arrangement and it is their normal way of working.
- The SENCo keeps a record of all centre delegated access arrangements and evidence of need on file.

A record of arrangements are maintained and held electronically by the SENCo.

### Centre-specific criteria for particular access arrangements

#### Word processor policy (exams)

An exam candidate may be approved 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 school policy on the use of word processors is located on the school policy SharePoint:

<https://stowhigh.sharepoint.com/:b:/r/sites/StowmarketHighSchoolPolicies/Shared%20Documents/Word%20Processor%20Policy%20Exams%202019-20.pdf?csf=1&web=1&e=2OEYrf>

#### Separate invigilation within the centre

A decision where an exam candidate may be approved separate invigilation within the 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 an adverse effect; **and**
- **the candidate's normal way of working within the centre** [AA 5.16]
- The need for separate invigilation must be substantiated by appropriate evidence of need
- The evidence can take the form of a letter from the GP, CAMHS, EHCP, EP or SENCo instructions
- This must be provided to SENCo or Access Arrangements Facilitator by 30th March.