



THE COOPERS' COMPANY
AND COBORN SCHOOL

Love as Brethren

Access arrangements policy

2021/22

 	Name of School	The Coopers' Company and Coborn School
	Policy review Date	November 2021
	Date of next Review	November 2022
	Who reviewed this policy?	Mrs. R. Carron
	Approved by SLT	November 2021



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Key staff involved in the policy

Role	Name(s)
SENCo	Mrs. R. Carron
Assistant SENCo	Mrs. V. Bradley
SENCo line manager (Senior Leader)	Ms. S. Hay
Head of centre	Ms. S. Hay
Assessor(s)	Claire Douglas – Educational Psychologist

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 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](#))

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'. ([AA Definitions](#))

*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

Purpose of the policy

The purpose of this policy is to confirm that The Coopers' Company and Coborn 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...

[JQC General Regulations for Approved Centres, (section 5.4)]

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.

Where the SENCo is storing documentation electronically he/she must create an e-folder for each individual candidate. The candidate's e-folder must hold each of the required documents for inspection. (AA 4.2)

The policy is annually reviewed to ensure that processes are carried out in accordance with the current edition of the JQC 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](#)

General principles

The principles for the centre to consider are detailed in AA (section 4.2). These 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 disabled candidate.

The SENCo, or an equivalent member of staff within a FE college, must ensure that the proposed access arrangement / reasonable adjustment does not unfairly disadvantage or advantage the candidate.

Access arrangements / reasonable adjustments should be processed at the **start** of the course.

Arrangements **must** always be approved **before** an examination or assessment.

The arrangement(s) put in place must reflect the support given to the candidate in the centre.

The candidate **must** have had appropriate opportunities to practise using the access arrangement(s) / reasonable adjustment(s) before his/her first examination.

Equalities Policy (exams)

A large part of the access arrangements/reasonable adjustments 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 head of centre/senior leadership team will... recognise its duties towards disabled candidates, ensuring compliance with all aspects of the Equality Act 2010[†], particularly Section 20 (7). This **must** include a duty to explore and provide access to suitable courses, through the access arrangements process submit applications for reasonable adjustments and make reasonable adjustments to the service the centre provides to disabled candidates. Where the centre is under a duty to make a reasonable adjustment, the centre **must not** charge a disabled candidate any additional fee in relation to the adjustment or aid.....

for any legislation in a relevant jurisdiction other than England and Wales which has an equivalent purpose and effect [GR 5.4]

The Access Arrangements Policy further covers the assessment process and related issues in more detail.

Electronic version of the policy can be found on the school's intranet:-

- Shared (O);
- Exams;
- 2021-22 – Policies and JCQ material;
- Equalities Policy (exams) – 2021-22.

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](#), section 7.3.

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

- Dr Claire Douglas – Unique Registration Number: PYL26229
- CCET LEVEL A

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)

The head of centre/senior leadership team will have a **written** process in place to not only check the qualification(s) of their assessor(s) but that the correct procedures are followed as in per **Chapter 7** of the JCQ publication Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments... [AA 7.3] [GR 5.4]

The head of centre **must** ensure that evidence of the assessor's qualification(s) is obtained at the point of engagement/employment and prior to the assessor undertaking any assessment of a candidate.

Evidence of the assessor's qualification(s) **must** be held on file for inspection purposes and be presented to the JCQ Centre Inspector by the SENCo. [AA 7.3]

Reporting the appointment of the assessor(s)

Evidence of the assessor's qualifications are held on file by the Senco.

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

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 teachers and SLT will be painting a picture of need and demonstrating the candidate's normal way of working and completing Section A of Form 8 prior to the candidate being assessed, ensuring that the correct procedures are followed as per Chapter 7 (AA 7.3) of the JCQ publication Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments. (GR 5.4)

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

Individual staff roles and procedures are outlined in the school's exams specific **Equalities Policy**.

Electronic version of the policy can be found on the school's intranet:-

- Shared (O);
- Exams;
- 2021-22 – Policies and JCQ material;
- Equalities Policy (exams) – 2021-22.

The procedures strictly adheres to the regulations set out in the JCQ publications AA, ICE & GR. e.g:-

Before the candidate's assessment, Senco / Assistant Senco **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 Senco / Assistant Senco **must** work together to ensure a joined-up and consistent process.

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. In addition, the independent assessor **must** be approved by the head of centre to assess the candidate.

The candidate **must** be assessed in 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 Senco / Assistant Senco.

The responsibility to determine and request access arrangements/reasonable adjustments specifically lies with the Senco / Assistant Senco. (AA 7.5)

Processing access arrangements and adjustments

Arrangements/adjustments 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 covered by the tool. This tool also provides the facility to order modified papers for those qualifications included - AA, (chapter 8 – (Processing applications for access arrangements and adjustments) and chapter 6 (Modified papers)

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.

The Senco / Assistant Senco is responsible for applying for AAO and keeping detailed records in candidates individual folders, as outlined below:

“The SENCo **must** keep detailed records, 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** a signed data protection notice for inspection by the JCQ Centre Inspection Service.”

[AA 8.6]

Centre-delegated arrangements / adjustments

Where a student has got an EHCP, the Senco / Assistant Senco will make the relevant AAO and ensure sufficient evidence of 'normal way of working' is kept on file. Form 8 is not required and must not be used.

Centre-specific criteria for particular arrangements/adjustments

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 the candidate now wants to type rather than write in exams or can work faster on a keyboard, or because they use a laptop at home. The use of a word processor must reflect the candidate's normal way of working within the centre.

The school has a policy on the use of word processors which articulates to parents/carers, principally, that a word processor cannot simply be granted to a candidate because he/she now wants to type rather than write or can work faster on a keyboard, or because he/she uses a laptop at home. A copy of the policy on using a word processor in examinations can be accessed by students and parents/carers on the school's website. In addition, an electronic version of the procedure can be found on the school's intranet:-

- Shared (O);
- Exams;
- 2021-22 – Policies and JCQ material;
- Word processor policy (exams) – 2021-22.

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]
- ▶ Required request for separate invigilation / smaller venue in place:-
Electronic version of the procedure can be found on the school's website:-
- <http://www.cooperscoborn.co.uk/>
 - Students;
 - Examinations;
 - Exams 2021/22;
 - Request for separate invigilation / smaller venue 2021/22.

In the case of separate invigilation, the candidate's difficulties are **established within the centre** (see Chapter 4, paragraph 4.1.4) and known to a Form Tutor, a Head of Year, the SENCo or a senior member of staff with pastoral responsibilities.

Separate invigilation reflects the candidate's normal way of working in internal school tests and mock examinations as a consequence of a **long-term** medical condition or **long-term** social, emotional and mental health needs. [AA 5.16]