



STANGROUND ACADEMY

Access Arrangements Policy 2022-2023

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Key staff involved in the policy

Role	Name(s)
SENDCo	Jean Bloye
SENDCo line manager (Senior leader)	Lucy Heighton
Head of centre	Matthew Van Lier
Assessor(s)	External
Access arrangement facilitator(s)	Jean Bloye, Angie Coppin

Contents

Key staff involved in the policy.....2

What are access arrangements and reasonable adjustments?4

 Access arrangements4

 Reasonable adjustments4

Purpose of the policy.....4

General principles4

Equalities Policy (Exams)5

The assessment process.....5

 The qualification(s) of the current assessor(s)6

 Appointment of assessors of candidates with learning difficulties6

 Process for the assessment of a candidate's learning difficulties by an assessor6

 Painting a 'holistic picture of need', confirming normal way of working.....7

 An independent assessor must discuss access arrangements with the SENDCo. The responsibility to request access arrangements specifically lies with the SENDCo. (AA 7.5).....7

Processing access arrangements7

 Arrangements requiring awarding body approval7

 Centre-delegated access arrangements7

Centre-specific criteria for particular access arrangements8

 Word Processor Policy (Exams)8

 Separate Invigilation Policy8

What are access arrangements and reasonable adjustments?

Access arrangements

AA (JCQ Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments Booklet 2022-23, Definitions, page 7) state... **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'

Reasonable adjustments

AA (JCQ Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments Booklet 2022-23, Definitions, page state... 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 Stanground Academy 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...

[JCQ 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 SENDCo 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 SENDCo 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 4.2.13)

The policy is annually reviewed to ensure that processes are carried out in accordance with the current edition of the JCQ 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 general principles of access arrangements for the centre to consider are detailed in AA (section 4.2.1). These include:

The purpose of an access arrangement 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.

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

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) before his/her first examination.

Equalities 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.

It is the responsibility of the **head of centre** to ensure that his/her centre... has in place the following policies available for inspection... a written equalities policy

...delivers qualifications, as required by the awarding body, in accordance with relevant equality legislation. This includes but is not limited to ensuring that qualifications are made available to all candidates capable of undertaking them and seeking reasonable adjustments for disabled candidates

The head of centre/senior leadership team will... recognise its duties towards disabled candidates, including private candidates, as defined under the terms of the Equality Act 2010[†]. 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;

[†]or any legislation in a relevant jurisdiction other than England and Wales which has an equivalent purpose and effect (GR 5.3, 5.4)

Field Code Changed

The equalities policy is developed annually and shared with members of SLT, and all relevant staff and authorised by the Principal. The equalities policy is held in the Exams Office and publicised on the Stanground Academy website under the parents / exams tabs.

- Ensures a complaints and appeals procedure covering general complaints regarding the centre's delivery or administration of a qualification is in place and drawn to the attention of candidates and their parents/carers

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.

This procedure details the measures taken at Stanground Academy to verify the qualifications held by the external assessor.

The specialist centre assessor is appointed at the start of the academic year by the Head of Centre in conjunction with the SENDCo. The specialist assessor must either be:

- A qualified Psychologist registered with the Health & Care Professions Council (HCPC)
- A specialist assessor with a current SpLD Assessment Practising Certificate, awarded by BDA.
- A specialist assessor with the post-graduate qualification in individual specialist assessment at or equivalent to Level 7.

The Head of centre will check that the centre's specialist assessor's qualifications meet the JCQ required levels. The SENDCo will monitor that the assessment process is correctly carried out.

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

Our school's specialist assessor is Sue Deoraj who has the following qualifications:

B.Sc. PGCE. Dip. SpLD

Sue holds a SpLD assessment practising certificate and an OCR Level 7 Diploma in teaching learners with specific learning difficulties.

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)

Sue is a member of PATOSS and can be found in their directory online. Her membership number is IF2471

Reporting the appointment of the assessor(s)

The original certificate has been seen by SENDCo and copies of her certificates are kept on file in the Exams Office.

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

- Students' needs are identified through data analysis, class teachers and/or parents.
- SENDCo liaises with class teacher and scrutinise student classwork and any assessments.
- Students' Normal Way of Working is recorded.
- Students identified and parents notified that assessment will take place.
- Students sign Data Protection Forms.
- SENDCo prepares relevant sections of Form 8.
- Assessor is given details in advance of any assessments.
- Decision is made by SENDCo and Assessor as to which assessments are appropriate for each student.
- Students timetabled for assessment by Assessor.
- Assessment takes place.
- Assessor completes relevant section of Form 8.
- SENDCo completes agreed access arrangement for student on Form 8.
- Where appropriate a SENDCo file note is completed.
- Students are added to the SEND database if appropriate

Stanground Academy make full reference to AA Section 7.5 *Guidelines for the assessment of the candidate's learning difficulties by an assessor* and 7.6 *Completing Form 8 – JCQ/AA/LD, Profile of Learning Difficulties* and record the process that reflects the requirements.

By detailing this, we confirm ...that the correct procedures are followed as per Chapter 7 of the JCQ publication *Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments*...

(GR 5.4)

Note

... SENDCos and assessors 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 (AA 7.3)

External candidates (Former Students) follow the same procedure (refer to the requirement in GR 5.4)

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

Before the candidate's assessment, the SENDCo must provide the assessor with background information, i.e. a picture of need has been painted as per Part 1 of Form 8. The SENDCo and the assessor must work together to ensure a joined-up and consistent process.

The 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.

All candidates must be assessed in light of the picture of need and the background information as detailed within Part 1 of Form 8.

The independent assessor must discuss access arrangements with the SENDCo. The responsibility to request access arrangements specifically lies with the SENDCo. (AA 7.5)

Make full reference to AA 7.5 Guidelines for the assessment of the candidate's learning difficulties by an assessor and 7.6 Completing Form 8 – JCQ/AA/LD, Profile of Learning Difficulties and record your process that reflects the requirements.

Processing access arrangements

Arrangements requiring awarding body approval

Access arrangements online (AAO) and Pearson's Access Arrangements Online (PAAO) are tools provided by JCQ member awarding bodies for centres to apply for required access arrangement approval for the qualifications covered by the tools. These tools also provide the facility to order modified papers for those qualifications included. (Refer to AA, (chapter 8) **Processing applications for access arrangements** and (chapter 6) **Modified papers**)

AAO / PAAO is accessed within 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.

The SENDCo 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 candidate personal data consent form for inspection by the JCQ Centre Inspection Service. (AA 8.6)

Applications that do not gain approval should also be kept on file electronically or in hard copy paper format

Centre-delegated access arrangements

- Use of a word processor
- Supervised rest breaks – require short concise file note
- Examination Reader Pen
- Braille Transcript
- Prompter
- Small or separate room
- Coloured papers or overlay
- Non-electronic ear defenders or ear plugs and sensory tools.
- Seat preferences e.g. back of room

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.

A word processor cannot simply be granted to a candidate because he/she now wants to type rather than write in examinations or can work faster on a keyboard, or because he/she uses a laptop at home.

The use of a word processor **must** reflect the candidate's normal way of working within the centre. For example, where the curriculum is delivered electronically and the centre provides word processors to all candidates.

The particular types of candidates which Stanground Academy considers would benefit from the use of a word processor include the following:

- a candidate who has a learning difficulty which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to write legibly
- a medical condition
- a physical disability
- a sensory impairment
- planning and organisational problems when writing by hand
- poor handwriting

The list is not exhaustive.

A member of the centre's senior leadership team must produce a statement for inspection purposes which details the criteria the centre uses to award and allocate word processors for examinations.
(AA 5.8)

Separate Invigilation Policy

A decision where an exam candidate may be approved separate invigilation within the centre will be made by the SENDCo.

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.**
- For example, in the case of separate invigilation, the candidate's difficulties are established within the centre and known to a Form Tutor, a Head of Year, the SENDCo 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, mental or emotional needs.