



# **SARACENS** HIGH SCHOOL

## ACCESS ARRANGEMENTS POLICY

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Corner Mead, London, NW9 4AS

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## Key Staff

<b>Role</b>	<b>Names</b>
Head of Centre	Matthew Stevens
Exams Officer line manager (Assistant Principal: Assessment and reporting)	Wendy Mander
Exams Officer	Tamara Youssef
Data Manager	Nilofar Pathan
SENDCo	Maria Alexa
SLT members	Matthew Stevens, Sonia Green, Yanily Bonilla, Wendy Mander, Helen Morphitis, Claire Edwards, Simon Lindall, Jane Smallwood and Femi Olufola

# 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'.

## 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.'

## Purpose of the policy

The purpose of this policy is to confirm that Saracens 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 (JCQ [General Regulations for Approved Centres](#), 5.4, and detailed in JCQ [Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments](#) hereafter referred to as AA).

This policy is maintained and held by the SENDCO alongside the individual files of each access arrangements candidate. Each file 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 JCQ publication AA.

## The assessment process

Assessments are carried out by the SENDCO, who leads on the access arrangements process within the centre, as identified as best practice in AA (2020, p.i). The assessor will possess the qualifications and experience identified in section 7.3 of the guidance.

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

The current assessor is Maria Alexa, who possesses the following qualifications:

- OCR Level 5 Diploma in Teaching Learners with Dyslexia/Specific Learning Difficulties

- OCR Level 7 Diploma in teaching and assessing learners with Dyslexia/Specific Learning Difficulties
- Associate membership for British Dyslexia Association (AMBDA) since 2014
- National award for SEN Coordination
- Competence in Educational testing CET
- Access Arrangements course AAC
- Introduction to the JCQ changes for 2023/2024

### **Appointment of assessors of candidates with learning difficulties**

If an external assessor is required, 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 7.3). This process is carried out prior to the assessor undertaking any assessment of a candidate.

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

Upon the first meeting with the centre's SENDCO, the external assessor has his/her qualifications verified and a photocopy is made and stored in the access arrangements file. This is in accordance with AA guideline 7.4

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

The centre's SENDCO maintains the evidence of the assessor(s)'s qualifications in the Access Arrangements folder, and is therefore available upon request to JCQ inspectors

### **How the assessment process is administered**

- The assessment procedure is led by the SENDCO, or specialist external assessor, based on a referral system by the centre's SENDCO
- The SENDCO makes a referral based on observations and recommendations from teachers, observations carried out within classes, and via consultation/requests made by parents and carers
- The assessor carries out confidential testing on a one-to-one basis with the candidate. The results of this will form the basis of an access arrangement application.
- **Recording evidence of need**
  - The centre maintains a folder of Access Arrangement information, including evidence of need, form 8s, and access arrangement application outcomes
  - The folder is stored in the SENDCO's office. The folder is updated by the SEND team and the SENDCO as necessary
  - To hold the file/e-folder for each individual candidate containing a copy of the candidate's approved application, appropriate evidence of need (where required) and a signed candidate personal data consent form (AA 8.6)
  - 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 signed candidate personal data consent form; a completed Data protection confirmation by the examinations officer or SENCo form; a copy of the candidate's approved application; appropriate evidence of need (where required); evidence of the assessor's qualification (where required). (AA 8.6)

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

- Teaching staff are asked to provide examples of candidates' work to demonstrate the need that has led to the application of an access arrangement being made
- This work is then stored in the student file in the access arrangement folder and made available for inspection

## **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 5 of the AA. This tool also provides the facility to order modified papers for those qualifications listed on page 82.

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

The procedure for applying for access arrangements via AAO is as follows:

- The SENDCO will have identified candidates who would benefit from access arrangements, and have compiled evidence of need and evidence of normal way of working in the access arrangements folder
- Upon completion of a candidate's access arrangement portfolio, the SENDCO will meet with the exams officer, who will complete the application via AAO under supervision. The SENDCO will provide answers to necessary questions as part of the application process
- The results of completed applications are printed and kept in the candidate's access arrangement portfolio along with the appropriate evidence of need (where required) and a signed data protection notice
- The access arrangements folder is stored in the SENDCO's office and is available for inspection by the JCQ Centre Inspection Service.

### **Centre-delegated access arrangements**

Centre-delegated access arrangements refer to those which are granted by the centre.

- The centre offers a smaller, quieter examinations venue for candidates who may benefit from it, but do not have needs that require access arrangements with awarding body approval
- Candidates may be provided with this arrangement for reasons such as, but not limited to:
  - Having an identified SEND need that would be better served in the quiet venue
  - Recent physical injuries or sickness
  - Bereavement or other such upsetting that would impact a candidate's performance in the exam
  - Behaviour concerns that would necessitate closer supervision of the candidate, and to separate them from the main exam venue in order to minimise potential disruption to the majority of the cohort.

## **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.

### **Separate invigilation within the centre**

A decision where an exam candidate may be approved for separate invigilation within the centre will be made by the SENDCO and SLT.

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.

The SENDCO will gather evidence and compile a portfolio for any candidate who may require separate invigilation, and then liaise with the exams officer to determine an appropriate venue within the centre, likely to be an empty classroom. The exams officer is then responsible for ensuring that the venue is appropriately prepared for separate invigilation, in accordance with JCQ regulations on the matter.

The SENDCO and the exams officer will liaise to appoint an appropriately qualified member of the SEND team or an invigilator for the separate invigilation. Both the SENDCO and the exams officer will train the invigilator both to usual invigilation standard and to the individualised needs of the candidate, with the details recorded in the invigilator training log.