ROSELYN HOUSE SCHOOL

Access Arrangements Policy

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This Policy should be read in conjunction with Roselyn House School SEND Policy and Exams Equality Policy.

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'.

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. A candidate with a disability or difficulty which has a substantial and long-term effect on performance in examinations may qualify for access arrangements. An adjustment may not be considered reasonable if it involves unreasonable costs, timeframes or affects the security or integrity of the assessment.

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'. (AARA Definitions, page 3)

Definition of disability: Section 6 of the Equality act defines disability as 'physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on some one's ability to carry out normal day to day activities'.

Purpose of the policy

The purpose of this policy is to confirm that Roselyn House 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 4 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 SLC and 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 they must create an e-folder for each individual candidate. The candidate's e-folder must hold each of the required documents for inspection. (AARA, 4.2)

The policy is annually reviewed to ensure that processes are carried out in accordance with the current edition of the JCQ document 'Adjustments for candidates with disabilities and learning difficulties - Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments'. This publication is further referred to in this policy as AARA.

General principles

The head of centre/senior leadership team will appoint a SENCo, or an equivalent member of staff, who will coordinate the access arrangements process within the centre and determine appropriate arrangements for candidates with learning difficulties and disabilities, candidates for whom English is an additional language, as well as those with a temporary illness or temporary injury. (GR 5.4)

The principles for the centre to consider are detailed in section 4.2 of the JCQ document Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments

These include:

• The purpose of an access arrangement is to ensure, where possible, that barriers to assessment are removed for a disabled candidate preventing them 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 SENCo, or an equivalent member of staff, must ensure that the proposed access arrangement does not disadvantage or advantage the candidate.

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.

The SENCo must undertake the necessary and appropriate steps to gather an appropriate picture of need and demonstrate normal way of working for a private candidate. This includes distance learners and home-educated students. The centre, where required, must lead on the assessment process. The candidate must be assessed by the centre's appointed assessor. In some instances, depending on their needs, the candidate may have to be assessed away from the centre, for example at home. The centre must comply with the obligation to identify the need for, request and implement access arrangements/reasonable adjustments.

(*Adjustments for candidates with disabilities and learning difficulties Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments; 1 September 2025 to 31 August 2026*)

The SENCo must work with teaching staff to identify the most appropriate published format of modified papers (see Chapter 6, AARA) which will enable the candidate(s) to access their examinations.

Applications should be processed at the start of, or during the first year of a two-year course having firmly established a picture of need and normal way of working.

Arrangements must always be approved before an examination or assessment. Where there is a requirement for a late application on account of a temporary injury or impairment to the candidate that was unforeseen, the centre will liaise with the awarding body.

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 their 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.

This policy further covers the assessment process and related issues in more detail.

The assessment process

All learners at Roselyn House Svhooln have been awarded an ECHP and therefore an assessment by an external assessor is unnecessary for those sitting Functional Skill examinations. External assessment will take place for those learners sitting GCSE qualifications as appropriate.

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 AARA 7.3.

Appointment of assessors

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 AARA. This process is carried out prior to the assessor undertaking any assessment of a candidate.

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 AARA 7.3.

Assessors' qualifications are held with the school's Business Manager/ in student individual files

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

If a candidate is to be assessed, the SENCo/ teacher will paint a picture of need and demonstrate the candidate's normal way of working. They will complete Part 1 of Form 8 or Form 9, prior to the candidate being assessed.

As a centre we ensure full regard to the Access Arrangements (AARA) document sections 7.5

(Guidelines for the assessment of the candidates learning difficulties by an assessor) and 7.7 (Completing Form 8 – JCQ/AA/LD, Profile of Learning Difficulties) and that the correct procedures are followed as in Chapter 7 of the JCQ document Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustment (General regulations, section 5.4).

Note: The SENCo and assessor's 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, section 7.3)

Note: SENCo/SLT Lead for Exams will refer to the General Regulations (GR) section 5.4 for a private candidate such as a distance or a home educated learner

Picture of need/normal way of working

The SENCo (or equivalent role) will provide evidence that shows that there is clear demonstration of need and that this is the candidates normal way of working. This evidence may, for example include lesson plans, annotation of work, pictorial evidence, mock exams and individual folder/e-folder along with anything more that assists with the holistic picture of need. This is recorded on a Form 9.

In the event of an assessor being required, the 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 and the assessor must work together to ensure a joined-up and consistent process... (AA, section 7.5)

Processing access arrangements and adjustments

Arrangements/adjustments requiring awarding body approval

Access arrangements may for example include: supervised rest breaks, extra time, reader, scribe, word processor, transcript, language modifier and prompter.

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. (Refer to AARA 8 (Processing applications for access arrangements and adjustments) and 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 for approval is required for each candidate regardless of the awarding body used.

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. (AARA 8 Summary)

Centre-delegated arrangements/adjustments

For centre delegated arrangements/adjustments, evidence of need and normal way of working are gathered and kept on file, confirming the need for the arrangement(s).

• Decisions relating to the approval of centre delegated arrangements are made by the SENCo and Exams Officer. Appropriate evidence, where required by the arrangement, is held on file by the SENCo and Exams Officer.

• 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 a quiet venue, 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 arrangements/ adjustments

Use of Word Processor (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.

"Centres are allowed to provide a word processor (e.g. computer, laptop or tablet) with spelling and grammar check/predictive text disabled to a candidate where it it their normal way of working within the centre, unless an awarding body's specification says otherwise. For example, where the curriculum is delivered electronically and the centre provides word processors to all candidates. This also includes an electronic brailler or a tablet" (ICE 14.20)

Alternative Rooming Arrangements

A decision where an exam candidate may be approved alternative rooming arrangements, e.g. a room for a smaller group of candidates with similar needs will be made by the SENCo (or equivalent role).

The decision will be based on:

• whether the candidate has a substantial and long-term impairment which has an adverse effect and

• whether this is the candidate's normal way of working within the centre (AARA 5.16)

• the type of need:

Separate invigilation reflects the candidates 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 which is known about within the education setting

Alternative rooming arrangements must reflect the candidate's normal and current way of working in internal school/college tests and mock examinations.

Nervousness, low level anxiety or being worried about examinations is not sufficient grounds for separate invigilation within the centre.
The use of an alternative room with one-to-one invigilation must only apply where the candidate has a serious medical condition, such as frequent seizures, Tourette's or significant behavioural issues which would disturb other candidates in the examination room. (AARA 5.16)

Supervised rest breaks

Although this is not a requirement to process an application for supervised rest breaks using access arrangements online, the SENCo must confirm the nature of the candidate's impairment and that supervised rest breaks reflect their normal way of working within the Centre.

A JCQ Centre Inspector may ask to see the completed statement within either Part 1 of Form 8 or Part 1 of Form 9, confirming the need for supervised rest breaks.

As above, supervised rest breaks will be awarded on account of:

- cognition and learning needs;
- communication and interaction needs;
- a medical condition;
- sensory and physical needs;
- social, emotional and mental health needs.

A single supervised rest break should be no more than 30 minutes in duration. A supervised rest break will often be shorter than this. Candidates cannot be given as many supervised rest breaks as they like for as long as they like. A supervised rest break will not normally be required within the first 10 minutes of an examination but may be thereafter.

The SENCo must determine the duration of the supervised rest break based on their knowledge of the candidate's needs and the candidate's normal way of working when placed under timed conditions.

Modified papers

• Modified papers are ordered through 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). January 26th 2026 for Summer 2026 series.

• Modified papers are individually prepared for candidates for whom other access arrangements are unsuitable. The modification of papers involves additional resources. Therefore, centres are required to 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 they intend 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 practise using an awarding body's past modified papers before their first examination (AARA 6.1)

Roles and responsibilities

When an access arrangement 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 4.2.13)

Where access arrangements 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 4.2.13)

It is the responsibility of:

• The SENCo to collect and manage the appropriate evidence of need for an Access Arrangements application and to fill in the relevant documents (Form 8 parts 1 and 3 if applicable/ Form 9)

• The SENCo to hold the file/e-folder for each individual candidate (containing a copy of the candidate's approved application, evidence of need and a signed candidate personal data consent form) (AARA 8.6)

• The Exams Officer to collect candidates' completed JCQ personal data consent if applicable

• The Exams Officer/SLT to submit applications for approval through AAO

• The Exams Officer/SLT to submit applications for approval directly to an awarding body for any qualification that does not fall within the scope of AAO

• The Exams Officer/SLT to order modified papers

Written by: Kirsty Willacy May 2026

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