Access Arrangements Policy

LEADERSHIP RESPONSIBILITY: M HAZEL

DATE: FEBRUARY 2026

REVIEW DATE: FEBRUARY 2027

INTERIM HEADTEACHER: NICK BUTLER

Signed: 

Access Arrangements Policy

Candidate Identification Procedure

Centre Name	Bridge Learning Campus - Secondary
Centre Number	50609
Date policy first created	24/11/2023
Current policy approved by	Senior Leadership Team
Current policy reviewed by	Senior Leadership Team
Date of next review	21.01.2027

Key staff involved in the policy

Role	**Name**
Head of Centre	Nick Butler
Senior leader(s)	Marie Hazel
Exams officer	Kevin Hough/Helen Osborne
Acting SENCo	Carly Berry
Other staff (if applicable)	

This policy is reviewed and updated annually to ensure that access arrangements process at Bridge Learning Campus - Secondary is managed in accordance with current requirements and regulations.

References in this policy to GR, ICE and AA refer to the JCQ publications **General Regulations for Approved Centre's, Instructions for conducting examinations** and **Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments**.

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.

Access Arrangements Policy

Introduction

(AA Definitions)

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 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 Bridge Learning Campus - Secondary 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 (GR 5.4)
- has a written process in place to not only check the qualification(s) of its assessor(s) but that the correct procedures are followed as per Chapter 7 of the JCQ publication Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments (GR 5.4)

1. 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)

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. (AA 4.2)

The principles for Bridge Learning Campus - Secondary to consider 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 a disabled candidate (AA 4.2)
- Although access arrangements are intended to allow access to assessments, they cannot be granted where they will compromise the assessment objectives of the specification in question (AA 4.2)
- Candidates may not require the same access arrangements/reasonable adjustments in each specification. Subjects and their methods of assessments may vary, leading to different demands of the candidate.
  The need for access arrangements/reasonable adjustments must be considered on a subject-by-subject basis (AA 4.2)
- Access arrangements/reasonable adjustments should be processed at the start of the course (AA 4.2)
- Arrangements must always be approved before an examination or assessment (AA 4.2)
- The arrangement(s) put in place must reflect the support given to the candidate in the centre (AA 4.2)
- The candidate must have had appropriate opportunities to practise using the access arrangement(s)/reasonable adjustments before their first examination (AA 4.2)

The main elements of the process detailing staff roles and responsibilities in identifying the need for, requesting and implementing access arrangements/reasonable adjustments and the conduct of examinations are covered in the JCQ AARA.

2. The Assessment process

At Bridge Learning Campus - Secondary, assessments are carried out by:

- an appropriately qualified assessor(s) appointed by the head of centre in accordance with the JCQ requirements (AA 7.3)

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

- Ann Bruce: Associate membership of the British Dyslexia Association (teaching).
- Laura Rudd: Specialist Assessor.

Appointment of Assessors

At the point an assessor is engaged/employed at Bridge Learning Campus - Secondary:

- Evidence of the assessor's qualification is obtained and checked against the current requirements (AA 7.3)
- This process is carried out prior to the assessor undertaking any assessment of a candidate (AA 7.3)
- Evidence of successful completion of a post- graduate course in individual specialist assessment at or equivalent to Level 7 or a printout of a screenshot of HCPC or SASC registration is held on file for inspection purposes to evidence that the assessor(s) is/ are suitably qualified (AA 7.3, 7.4)

Additional information:

Not applicable.

Reporting the appointment of assessors

- Evidence that the assessor(s) is/are suitably qualified is held on file for inspection purposes (AA 7.4)

When requested, the evidence will be presented to the JCQ Centre Inspector by Laura Rudd, if absent Marie Hazel SLT.

- In the case of appropriately qualified psychologists (registered with the Health & Care Professions Council), or specialist assessors holding a current SpLD Assessment Practising Certificate, who are directly employed within the centre, there is no need to record the names of these individuals within **Access arrangements online**. (AA 7.4)
- The names of all other assessors, who are assessing candidates studying qualifications as covered by AA must be entered into **Access arrangements online** to confirm their status (AA 7.4)

Process for the Assessment of a candidate's learning difficulties by an Assessor

Bridge Learning Campus - Secondary confirms:

- Guidelines for the assessment of the candidate's learning difficulties by an assessor will be followed and Form 8 (JCQ/AA/LD - Profile of Learning Difficulties) will be completed (AA 7.5, 7.6)
- Arrangements must be made for the candidate to be assessed by the centre's appointed assessor (AA 7.5)
- Assessors **must** personally conduct the assessments. They **must not** sign off assessments carried out by another professional (AA 7.5)
- The assessor must carry out tests which are relevant to support the application (AA 7.5)
- A privately commissioned assessment, where the centre has not been involved, cannot be used to award access arrangements and cannot

be used to process an application using Access arrangements online (AA 7.3)

- Bridge Learning campus does not take private candidates, therefore private assessment is irrelevant.

Additional information:

Not applicable.

Picture of Need/Normal way of Working

Bridge Learning Campus - Secondary confirms:

- Before the candidate's assessment, the person appointed in the centre 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 centre and the assessor must work together to ensure a joined-up and consistent process. (AA 7.5)

Additional information:

The SENCo, or an equivalent member of staff within a FE college, fully supported by teaching staff and members of the senior leadership team, must lead on the access arrangements/reasonable adjustments process within his/her centre. Teaching staff and members of the senior leadership team must support the SENCo in identifying, determining and implementing appropriate access arrangements and reasonable adjustments. The SENCo must work with teaching staff, support staff (such as Learning Support Assistants and Teaching Assistants) and exams office personnel to ensure that approved access arrangements/ reasonable adjustments are put in place for internal school tests, mock examinations and examinations.
Where appropriate, the SENCo will also need to work with specialist advisory teachers, educational psychologists and medical professionals.

3. Processing access arrangements and adjustment arrangements / requiring awarding body approval

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.

Access arrangements online (AAO) is used to apply for approval of arrangements/adjustments for the qualifications listed within the JCQ publication Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments.
AAO is accessed through 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

Deadlines apply for each examination series for submitting applications for approval using AAO.

Centre delegated arrangements / adjustments

Decisions relating to the approval of centre delegated arrangements/adjustments are made by Laura Rudd.
Appropriate evidence, where required by the arrangement, is held on file by SENDco.

- The use of a word processor

Processor policy details the criteria Bridge Learning Campus - Secondary specifically uses to award and allocate word processors for examinations and assessments.

- Alternative rooming arrangements

The Alternative Rooming Arrangements Policy details the criteria Bridge Learning Campus - Secondary uses to award alternative rooming arrangements, e.g. a room for a smaller group of candidates with similar needs (formerly known as separate invigilation).

Additional information:

Not applicable.

Modified Papers

Modified papers are ordered using AAO.

- Modified papers must be ordered in advance of a specific examination series, no later than the published deadline for the series concerned (AA 6.1)
- Modified papers are individually prepared for candidates for whom other adjustments 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. (AA 6.1)
- Modified papers must not be ordered for candidates unless the centre intends to enter them for the relevant examination series (AA 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 his/her first examination (AA 6.1)

Roles and responsibilities

When an access arrangement/reasonable adjustment 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. (AA 4.2)

Where 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. (AA 4.2)

It is the responsibility of:

- SENDco/Assessor must be inform candidates that an application for access arrangements will be processed using Access arrangements online, complying with the UK GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018
- Kevin Hough to complete the Data protection confirmation by the examinations officer or SENCo, prior to the processing of the online application
- Kevin Hough or Helen Osborne to submit applications for approval using AAO
- Laura Rudd, Kevin Hough or Helen Osborne 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 copy of the candidate's approved application; appropriate evidence of need (where required); evidence of the assessor's qualification (where required) (AA 8.6)

- Laura Rudd to submit applications for approval directly to an awarding body for any qualification that does not fall within the scope of AAO
- Kevin Hough or Helen Osborne - Exams officer to order modified papers

Additional responsibilities

Not Applicable

Changes 2025 –2026

Removed: References to candidates' personal data consent form and Data Protection confirmation by the examinations officer or SENCO form

Added: Candidates must be informed that an application for access arrangements will be processed using Access arrangements online, complying with the UK GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018

Centre specific changes:

None