



Exam Access Arrangements Policy (Including use of Word Processors in exams)

Longsands Academy and Astrea 6th Form St Neots

Exam Access Arrangements Policy

(Including use of Word Processors in exams)

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Key staff involved in the policy

Role -Name(s) and Contact Details

SENDSCO- Mrs P Martin-Morales Patricia.Martin-Morales@astrea-longsands.org

SENDSCO line manager (Senior Leader) - Mr M Seymour Mark.Seymour@astrea-longsands.org

Head of centre- Mr H Jones (from April 2020 Mr N Owen) principal@astrea-longsands.org

Assessor(s) - Mrs P Martin-Morales, Mrs A Brodie Patricia.Martin-Morales@astrea-longsands.org , Annette.Brodie@astrea-longsands.org

Access arrangement facilitator(s) - Mrs P Martin-Morales, Mrs M Carpenter
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Exams Manager- Mrs M Carpenter Margaret.Carpenter@astrea-longsands.org

1. Purpose of the policy

This document is provided as an exams-specific supplement to the *centre-wide accessibility policy/plan* which details how the centre “*recognises its duties towards disabled candidates as defined under the terms of the Equality Act 2010†. This must include a duty to explore and provide access to suitable courses, submit applications for reasonable adjustments and make reasonable adjustments to the service the centre provides to disabled candidates...*

†for any legislation in a relevant jurisdiction other than England and Wales which has an equivalent purpose and effect”

[Quote taken directly from section 5.4 of the current JCQ publication *General regulations for approved centres*]

This publication is further referred to in this policy as GR.

This policy details how the centre facilitates access to exams and assessments for disabled candidates, as defined under the terms of the Equality Act 2010, by outlining staff roles and responsibilities in relation to

- identifying the need for appropriate arrangements, reasonable adjustments and/or adaptations (referred to in this policy as ‘access arrangements’)
- requesting access arrangements
- implementing access arrangements and the conduct of exams
- good practice in relation to the Equality Act 2010

2. The Equality Act 2010 definition of disability

A definition is provided on page 4 of the current 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.

The Equality Act 2010

The Equality Act 2010 states that the awarding bodies have a duty not to discriminate against individuals in conferring qualifications. They must make reasonable adjustments where a candidate is disabled within the meaning of the Equality Act 2010 and would be at a substantial disadvantage in comparison to someone who is not disabled. The Head of Centre, SLT, SENDCo and if appropriate, the SEN member of the TMB must familiarise themselves with the contents of the JCQ regulations 'Adjustments for candidates with disabilities and learning difficulties'. These staff and the Exams Manager, must ensure that the access arrangements and special consideration regulations and guidance are consistent with the law. The SENDCo will ensure that Access Arrangements are awarded in conjunction with the JCQ regulations and the Disability Act 2010 and that the student has a substantial disability '**beyond the limitations that go beyond the normal differences in ability that exist among people**', a long term disability '**that has existed for at least 12 months**' and that a substantial history of need and provision can be proven. The Access Arrangements **must be a candidate's normal way of working with the centre** and the centre must provide evidence of need to reflect this. Access Arrangements '**cannot suddenly be given to the candidate at the time of his/her provision.**'

Special educational needs and disabilities

A candidate's special needs requirements are determined by the subject teachers, SENDCo and educational psychologist/specialist teachers together with other medical professionals. The Centre ensures that all assessments are carried out by suitably qualified professionals. Copies of the relevant qualifications are kept on file by the Exams Manager and the SENDCo. The SENDCo administers or oversees all testing procedures.

The SENDCo ensures that:

- All qualifying students receive the appropriate support within the centre and for examinations, tests and assessments and in conjunction with the Exams Manager that all centre staff are aware of these.
- Follows JCQ regulations concerning access arrangements, including input from other teaching and support staff.
- Appropriate testing is used for Readers / scribes/ extra time / modified papers / overlays.

- Medical evidence may be requested at an appropriate level for these. For requests such as small group / separate invigilation, certain access arrangements such as readers /scribes might be seated in small groups.
- **Exam anxiety is NOT a sufficient need nor is a GP's note sufficient evidence of need.** As well as established need, there would need to be a letter from CAMHS, a NHS psychiatrist, a qualified counsellor AND recognisable difficulties identified by the SENDCo, form tutor, HOY, that the candidate is unable to sit in large groups.

Access Arrangements applications

Making special arrangements for candidates to take exams is the responsibility of the SENDCo and the Exams Manager.

Submitting completed access arrangement applications to the awarding bodies is the responsibility of the Exams Manager using Form 8 completed by the SENDCo.

Rooming for access arrangement candidates will be arranged by the Exams Manager with other designated staff.

Invigilation and support for access arrangement candidates will be organised by the Exams Manager with other designated staff.

If you wish to appeal against a decision for Access Arrangements, please contact in the first instance the SENDCo, who will be able to discuss the basis for which the access arrangements were approved / not approved. If you are still not satisfied, please contact the Head of Centre who can investigate further. The Centre will record all appeals and respond within a suitable time frame.

Identifying the need for access arrangements

1. Roles and responsibilities

Head of centre

- Is familiar with the entire contents, refers to and directs relevant centre staff to the annually updated JCQ publications including GR and AA
- Ensures an appropriately qualified assessor(s) is appointed and that evidence of the qualification(s) of the person(s) appointed is held on file
- Ensures a policy demonstrating the centre's compliance with relevant legislation is in place
- Ensure a policy is provided which details the criteria the centre uses to award and allocate word processors for exams
- Defines and documents roles, responsibilities and processes in identifying, requesting and implementing access arrangements (Access arrangements policy)

Senior leaders

- Are familiar with the entire contents of the annually updated JCQ publications including GR and AA

Special educational needs and disabilities coordinator (SENDCO)

- Has full knowledge and understanding of the contents, refers to and directs relevant centre staff to the annually updated JCQ publication AA
- Ensures staff roles, responsibilities and processes in identifying, requesting and implementing access arrangements for candidates are clearly defined and documented
- Ensures the qualified assessor(s) has access to the assessment objectives for the relevant specification(s) a candidate is undertaking
- Ensures arrangements put in place for exams/assessments reflect a candidate's normal way of working within the centre
- Ensures the need for access arrangements for a candidate will be considered on a subject by subject basis
- Works with teaching staff, relevant support staff and the exams officer to ensure centre-delegated and awarding body approved access arrangements are put in place for candidates taking internal and external exams/assessments
- Provide information to evidence the normal way of working of a candidate
- Conducts appropriate assessments to identify the need(s) of a candidate
- Provides appropriate evidence to confirm the need(s) of a candidate
- Completes appropriate documentation as required by the regulations of JCQ and the awarding body

Teaching staff

- Inform the SENDCO of any support that might be needed by a candidate
- Provide comments/observations/evidence to support the SENDCO in *painting a holistic picture of need* confirming *normal way of working* for a candidate

Support staff (for example, Learning Support Assistants)

- (where appropriate) Provide comments/observations to support the SENDCO in *painting a holistic picture of need* confirming *normal way of working* for a candidate

Assessor of candidates with learning difficulties

(An assessor of candidates with learning difficulties will be an appropriately qualified access arrangements assessor/psychologist/specialist assessor approved by the Head of centre)

- Has detailed understanding of the current JCQ publication AA
- Ensures the quality of the access arrangements assessment process within the centre
- Ensures the assessment process is administered in accordance with the regulations
- Support the SENDCO in determining the need for and implementing access arrangements

- Leads on the access arrangements process to facilitate access for candidates
- If not the appropriately qualified assessor, works with the person/persons appointed, on all matters relating to assessing candidates and the administration of the assessment process
- Ensures that all assessments carried out and arrangements put in place complies with JCQ and awarding body regulations and guidance
- Presents when requested by a JCQ Centre Inspector, evidence of the assessor's qualification

Requesting access arrangements

1. Roles and responsibilities

Special educational needs and disabilities coordinator (SENDCO)

- Determines if the arrangements identified for a candidate require prior approval from the awarding body before the arrangements are put in place or if approval is centre-delegated

Exams Manager

- Is familiar with the entire contents of the annually updated JCQ publication GR and is aware of information contained in AA where this may be relevant to the EM role
- Follows guidance in AA Section 8 to process approval applications for access arrangements for those qualifications listed on page 2 of AA
- Applies for approval where this is required, through Access arrangements online (AAO), or through the awarding body where qualifications sit outside the scope of AAO
- Ensures appropriate and required evidence is held on file to confirm validation responses in AAO including the completion of JCQ Form 8 (Application for access arrangements – Profile of learning difficulties), where required, and a body of evidence to substantiate the candidate's normal way of working within the centre
- Ensures where form 8 is required to be completed, the original form is signed by hand and dated as required prior to approval being sought and that the original form is provided for processing and inspection purposes
- Ensures the names of all other assessors, who are assessing candidates studying qualifications as listed on page 2 of AA, are entered into AAO to confirm their status including any professionals working outside the centre
- Confirms by ticking the 'Confirmation' box prior to submitting the application for approval that the 'malpractice consequence statement' has been read and accepted
- Makes an awarding body referral through AAO where the initial application for approval may not be approved by AAO, where it is deemed by the centre that the candidate does meet the criteria for the arrangement(s)

- Ensures that arrangements, and approval where required, are in place before a candidate takes his/her first exam or assessment (which is externally assessed or internally assessed/externally moderated)
- Ensures that where approval is required that this is applied for by the awarding body deadline
- Maintains a file for each candidate that will include:
 1. completed JCQ/awarding body application forms and evidence forms
 2. appropriate evidence to support the need for the arrangement where required
 3. appropriate evidence to support normal way of working within the centre
 4. in addition, for those qualifications listed on page 2 of AA (where approval is required), a print out of the AAO approval and a signed data protection notice (which provides candidate consent to their personal details being shared)
- Presents the files when requested by a JCQ Centre Inspector
- Liaises with teaching staff/SENDCo regarding any appropriate modified paper requirements for candidates
- Liaises with the SENCO to ensure arrangements are in place to either order a non-interactive electronic (PDF) question paper or to open question paper packets in the secure room within 90 minutes of the published starting time for the exam where the centre is permitted to modify a timetabled written component exam paper (copy on coloured paper, enlarge to A3 or copy to single sided print)
- Following the appropriate process (AAO for those qualifications listed on page 74 of AA; JCQ Form 7 or Form VQ/EA), orders published modified papers, by the awarding body's deadline for the exam series, where these may be required for a candidate

Implementing access arrangements and the conduct of exams

1. Roles and responsibilities

A- External assessments

These are assessments which are normally set and marked/examined by an awarding body which must be conducted according to awarding body instructions and/or the JCQ publication Instructions for conducting examinations (ICE).

Head of centre

- Supports the SENDCO, the exams manager and other relevant centre staff in ensuring appropriate arrangements, adjustments and adaptations are in place to facilitate access for disabled candidates to exams

Special educational needs and disabilities coordinator (SENDCO)

- Ensures appropriate arrangements, adjustments and adaptations are in place to facilitate access for candidates where they are disabled within the meaning

of the Equality Act (unless a temporary emergency arrangement is required at the time of an exam)

Exams Manager

- Is familiar with and follows the Checklist for heads of centre and examination officers – The Equality Act 2010 and conduct of examinations provided in the current ICE (page 44)

Other relevant centre staff, including teaching and support staff

- Support the SENDCO and the exams officer to ensure appropriate arrangements, adjustments and adaptations are in place to facilitate access for disabled candidates to exams

B- Internal assessments

These are non-examination assessments (NEA) which are normally set by a centre/awarding body, marked and internally verified by the centre and moderated by the awarding body.

“Externally marked and/or externally set practical examinations taken at different times across centres are classified as ‘NEA’.”

[Quote taken from the JCQ publication Instructions for conducting non-examination assessments, Foreword]

Special educational needs and disabilities coordinator (SENDCO)

- Liaises with teaching staff to implement appropriate access arrangements for candidates

Teaching staff

- Support the SENCO in implementing appropriate access arrangements for candidates

C- Internal exams

These are exams or tests which are set and marked within the centre; normally a pre-cursor to external assessments.

Special educational needs and disabilities coordinator (SENDCO)

- Liaises with teaching staff to implement appropriate access arrangements for candidates

Teaching staff

- Support the SENCO in implementing appropriate access arrangements for candidates

Facilitating access – examples

The following information confirms the centre’s good practice in relation to the Equality Act 2010 and the conduct of examinations.

On a candidate by candidate basis, consideration is given to

- adapting assessment arrangements
- adapting assessment materials
- the provision of specialist equipment or adaptation of standard equipment
- adaptation of the physical environment for access purposes

The table provides example arrangements, adjustments and adaptations that are considered to meet the need(s) of a candidate and the actions considered/taken by the centre for the purposes of facilitating access.

Example of candidate need(s)	Arrangements explored	Centre actions
A medical condition which prevents the candidate from taking exams in the centre	Alternative site for the conduct of examinations Supervised rest breaks	<p><i>SENDCO gathers evidence to support the need for the candidate to take exams at home</i></p> <p><i>Pastoral head provides written statement for file to confirm the need</i></p> <p><i>Approval confirmed by SENDCO; AAO approval for both arrangements not required</i></p> <p><i>Pastoral head discussion with candidate to confirm the arrangements should be put in place</i></p> <p><i>EM submits appropriate ‘Alternative site for the conduct of exams form’</i></p> <p><i>EM provides candidate with exam timetable and JCQ information for candidates</i></p> <p><i>Pastoral head confirms with candidate the information is understood</i></p> <p><i>Pastoral head agrees with candidate that prior to each exam will call to confirm fitness to take exam</i></p> <p><i>EM allocates invigilator(s) to candidate’s timetable; confirms time of collection of exam papers and materials</i></p>

		<p><i>Invigilator monitors candidate's condition for each exam and records any issues on incident log</i></p> <p><i>Invigilator records rest breaks (time and duration) on incident log and confirms set time given for exam</i></p> <p><i>Invigilator briefs EM after each exam on how candidate's performance in exam may have been affected by his/her condition</i></p> <p><i>EM discusses with pastoral head if candidate is eligible for special consideration (candidate present but disadvantaged)</i></p> <p><i>EM processes request(s) for special consideration where applicable; incident log(s) provides supporting evidence</i></p> <p><i>Pastoral head informs candidate that special consideration has been requested</i></p>
Persistent and significant difficulties in accessing written text	<p>Reader/computer reader</p> <p>25% Extra time</p> <p>Separate invigilation within the centre</p>	<p><i>Confirms candidate is disabled within the meaning of the Equality Act 2010</i></p> <p><i>Papers checked for those testing reading</i></p> <p><i>Computer reader/examination reading pen sourced for use in papers (or sections of papers) testing reading OR up to</i></p> <p><i>50% extra time awarded</i></p> <p><i>Original Form 8, signed by hand and dated, with Sections A, B and C completed; kept on file with body of supporting evidence, printed approval from AAO and signed data protection notice</i></p>
Significant difficulty in concentrating	<p>Prompter</p> <p>Separate invigilation within the centre</p>	<p><i>Gathers evidence to support substantial and long term adverse impairment</i></p> <p><i>Confirms with candidate how and when they will be prompted</i></p> <p><i>Briefs invigilator to monitor candidate and the method of prompting (call out his name to bring his attention back to the paper - confirms requirement for separate room)</i></p>
A wheelchair user	<p>Desk</p> <p>Rooms</p> <p>Facilities</p> <p>Seating arrangements</p>	<p><i>Applies for practical assistant to help candidate set up wheelchair and other equipment in a practical assessment; approval automatically fails so awarding</i></p>

	Practical assistant	<i>body referral lists the tasks that will be performed</i> <i>Provides height adjustable desk in exam room</i> <i>Allocates exam room on ground floor near adapted bathroom facilities</i> <i>Spaces desks to allow wheelchair access</i> <i>Seats candidate near exam room door</i> <i>Confirms arrangements in place to assist the candidate in case of emergency evacuation of the exam room</i> <i>Practical assistant cover sheet printed from AAO; to be completed by facilitator and inserted inside the candidate's work where this may be applicable to the assessment</i>
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Use of Word Processor in exams

1-Key staff involved in awarding and allocating word processors for exams

Mrs M Carpenter- Exams Manager
Mrs P Martin-Morales- SENDCo
Mr M Seymour and Mrs C Greaney- SLT Members
Mr H Jones-Head of centre

2-Introduction

This policy on the use of word processors in examinations and assessments is reviewed and updated annually, on the publication of updated JCQ regulations and guidance contained in the publications Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments and Instructions for conducting examinations.

References to 'AA' relate to JCQ *Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments 2019-2020* and ICE to JCQ *Instructions for conducting examinations 2019-2020*.

3-Purpose of the policy

This policy details how the centre manages and administers the use of word processors (including laptops and tablets) in examinations and assessments.

4-Principles for using a word processor

The SENDCo complies with AA chapter 4 *Adjustments for candidates with disabilities and learning difficulties* regulations and guidance as follows:

(AA 4.2.1)

- Candidates with access to word processors are allowed to do so in order to remove barriers for disabled candidates which prevent them from being

placed at a substantial disadvantage as a consequence of persistent and significant difficulties

- The use of word processors is only permitted whilst ensuring that the integrity of the assessment is maintained, at the same time as providing access to assessments for a disabled candidate

(AA 4.2.2)

- The use of a word processor is not granted where it will compromise the assessment objectives of the specification in question

(AA 4.2.3)

- Candidates may not require the use of a word processor in each specification. As subjects and their methods of assessments may vary, leading to different demands of our candidates, the need for the use of a word processor is considered on a subject-by-subject basis

(AA 4.2.4)

- The use of a word processor is normally considered and agreed where appropriate at the start of the course providing the centre has firmly established a picture of need and normal way of working for a candidate
- Candidates are made aware when they will have the use of a word processor for timetabled examinations and non-examination assessments

(AA 4.2.5)

- The use of a word processor for candidates is only granted if it reflects the support given to the candidate as their 'normal way of working', which is defined as support:

A- in the classroom (where appropriate); or

B- working in small groups for reading and/or writing; or

C- literacy support lessons; or

D- literacy intervention strategies; and/or

E- in internal school tests/examinations

F- mock examinations

The only exceptions to the above would be a temporary injury or impairment, or a diagnosis of a disability or manifestation of an impairment relating to an existing disability arising after the start of the course.

5-The use of a word processor

Longsands Academy and Astrea 6th Form St Neots comply with AA chapter 5

Access arrangements available as follows:

(AA 5.8.1)

- Provides a word processor with the spelling and grammar check facility/predictive text disabled (switched off)
- Only grants the use of a word processor to a candidate where it is their normal way of working (see 4.2.5 above) within the centre
- Only grants the use of a word processor to a candidate if it is appropriate to their needs (for example, the quality of language significantly improves as a result of using a word processor due to problems with planning and organisation when writing by hand)

(The above also extends to the use of electronic brailers and tablets)

(AA 5.8.2)

- Provides access to word processors to candidates in non-examination assessment components as standard practice unless prohibited by the specification

(AA 5.8.3)

- Allows candidates to use a word processor in an examination to type certain questions, i.e. those requiring extended writing, and handwrite shorter answers
- Are also aware that examinations which have a significant amount of writing, as well as those that place a greater demand on the need to organise thought and plan extended answers, are those where candidates will frequently need to type. Examinations which require more simplistic answers are often easier to handwrite within the answer booklet. The candidate avoids the difficulty of visually tracking between the question paper and screen

(AA 5.8.4)

- In all cases, ensures that a word processor cover sheet (Form 4) is completed and included with each candidate's typed script (according to the instructions issued by the individual awarding body)
- Does not simply grant the use of a word processor to a candidate because he/she prefers to type rather than write or can work faster on a keyboard, or because he/she uses a laptop at home

Centre specific processes

- A word processor cannot be granted just because a candidate prefers to use one (AA p 54). Students using word processors in exams at Longsands Academy/Astrea 6th Form St Neots will have been previously identified to the exam series and will have use of word processor in school as their normal way of working. These can include students with illegible handwriting who prefer to use a word processor instead of a scribe or those with a standardised score of 84 or below at tests of speed of handwriting or spelling accuracy, due to Specific Learning Difficulties, who are proficient at typing and prefer the use of word processor instead of a scribe.

6- Word processors and their programmes

The Academy and 6th Form comply with ICE 8.8 *Word processors* instructions by ensuring:

- word processors are used as a type-writer, not as a database, although standard formatting software is acceptable
- word processors have been cleared of any previously stored data, as must any portable storage medium used
- an unauthorised memory stick is not permitted for use by a candidate
- where required, candidates are provided with a memory stick, which has been cleared of any previously stored data, by a nominated member of centre staff
- word processors are in good working order at the time of the examination

- word processors are accommodated in such a way that other candidates are not disturbed and cannot read the screen
- where a candidate using a word processor is accommodated separately, a separate invigilator is used.
- word processors are either connected to a printer so that a script can be printed off, or have the facility to print from a portable storage medium
- documents are printed after the examination is over
- candidates are present to verify that the work printed is their own
- word processed scripts are inserted in/attached to any answer booklet which contains some of the answers (and according to instructions issued by the individual awarding body)
- word processors are used to produce scripts under secure conditions, and if they are not then the centre is aware that they may be refused by the awarding body
- word processors are not used to perform skills which are being assessed
- word processors are not connected to an intranet or any other means of communication.
- candidates are not given access to other applications such as a calculator (where prohibited in the examination), spreadsheets etc. when using a word processor
- graphic packages or computer aided design software is not included on a word processor unless permission has been given to use these
- predictive text software or an automatic spelling and grammar check is disabled unless the candidate has been permitted a scribe or is using voice recognition technology (the script must have a completed scribe cover sheet included), or the awarding body's specification permits the use of automatic spell checking
- voice recognition technology is not included on word processors unless the candidate has permission to use a scribe or relevant software
- word processors are not used on the candidate's behalf by a third party unless the candidate has permission to use a scribe

Centre specific processes

- Students have an exam specific log in, this limits the use of the word processor to word pad only with no internet connection. The students cannot access this at any other time.

7-Laptops and tablets

The Academy and 6th Form further comply with ICE 8.8 instructions by ensuring:

- All laptops are checked before the candidate's examination(s).
- All laptops are checked before the candidate's examination(s).
- Word processor candidates use exam only laptops without internet connection with a mains connection
- candidates are reminded that their centre number, candidate number and the unit/component code must appear on each page as a header or footer
- candidates using WordPad software (which do not allow for the insertion of a header or footer) are instructed to handwrite their details as a header or footer once they have finished the examination and printed off their typed script; candidates are also supervised to ensure that they are solely performing this task and not re-reading their answers or amending their work in any way

- candidates are instructed to appropriately number each page
- candidates are instructed to use a minimum 12pt font and double spacing
- invigilators remind candidates to save their work at regular intervals
- candidates are present at the end of the examination when their script is printed off so they can verify that the work printed is their own

Centre specific processes

- Laptops do not have internet connection and are held in the exams office for exam use only.

8-Accommodating word processors in examinations

Candidates using word processors (including laptops or tablets) are internally accommodated in the following manner:

- Exams on word processors are held in appropriate rooms
- Laptops are used in a small group setting only

Invigilation arrangements relating to the use of word processors include the following:

- In an exam room there are always 2 invigilators available.
- The invigilators have been trained on procedures relating to word processor use in exams and the printing requirements.