WOODBRIDGE HIGH SCHOOL ACCESS ARRANGEMENTS POLICY

2026-27

Key staff involved in the policy

Role	Name(s)
Head of Inclusion	**Elinor Fahy**
Head of Inclusion line manager (Senior leader)	**Kate Honeysett**
Head of centre	**Steven Hogan**
Assessor(s)	**Brian Dooley**

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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. 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'. ([1]AARA, section 1.2)

The centre **must** ensure that approved adjustments can be delivered to candidates. (AARA[1], Definitions)

*References to legislation are to the Equality Act 2010. Separate legislation is in place for Northern Ireland (see AARA 1.8). The definitions and procedures in AA relating to access arrangements and reasonable adjustments will also apply in Northern Ireland

Purpose of the policy

The purpose of this policy is to confirm that Woodbridge 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's **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 Head of Inclusion 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 Head of Inclusion is storing documentation electronically they **mus**t create an e-folder for each individual candidate. The candidate's e-folder **must** hold each of the required documents for inspection. ([1]AARA, section 4.2)

The policy is annually reviewed to ensure that processes are carried out in accordance with the current JCQ document 'Adjustments for candidates with disabilities and learning difficulties - **Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments**'.

[1]This publication is further referred to in this policy as AARA

General principles

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

The principles for the centre to consider are detailed in AARA (section 4.2). These 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 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 disabled candidate.

The Head of Inclusion **must** ensure that the proposed access arrangement/reasonable adjustment does not unfairly disadvantage or advantage the candidate.

Although access arrangements/adjustments are intended to allow access to assessments, they cannot be granted where they will compromise the assessment objectives of the specification in question.

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.

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 Head of Inclusion to make appropriate and informed decisions based on the JCQ regulations.

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.

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.

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 AARA, section 7.3.

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

Assessor: Ama Boaten-Rolfe (Head of Inclusion)

Qualifications: Certificate in Psychometric Testing, Assessment and Access Arrangements (CPT3A)

Awarding Body: Real Training (University of Middlesex)

Registration Bodies: Member of the British Psychological Society; Dyslexia Guild Member

Appointment of assessors

At the point any external assessor is engaged/employed in the centre, evidence of the professional's qualification is obtained and checked by the Head of Inclusion, against the current requirements in AARA. This process is carried out prior to the assessor undertaking

any assessment of a candidate.

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

Evidence that the relevant qualifications of assessors is sought and retained electronically on file for inspection purposes, alongside other exam documentation.

The professional must present evidence of successful completion of a post-graduate course in individual specialist assessment at or equivalent to Level 7.

The Head of Centre will appoint:

- an access arrangements assessor who has successfully completed a postgraduate course at or equivalent to Level 7, including at least 100 hours relating to individual specialist assessment
- a specialist teacher assessor with a current SpLD Assessment Practising Certificate, as awarded by BDA, the Dyslexia Guild or Patoss and listed on the SASC website, who may conduct assessments to be recorded within Part 2 of Form 8 and where necessary undertake full diagnostic assessments; and/or
- an appropriately qualified psychologist registered with the Health & Care Professions Council who may conduct assessments to be recorded within Part 2 of Form 8 and where necessary undertake a full assessment.

AARA, section 7.3 (Appointment of assessors of candidates with learning difficulties)

Reporting the appointment of the assessor(s)

Evidence that the assessor(s) is/are suitably qualified is held electronically, alongside individual student folders.

An access arrangements assessor must have successfully completed a postgraduate course at or equivalent to Level 7, including at least 100 hours relating to individual specialist assessment, which must include training in all of the following:

- the theoretical basis underlying psychometric tests, such as the concepts of validity and reliability; standard deviations and the normal curve; raw scores, standard scores, quotients, percentiles and age equivalent scores; the concept of statistically significant discrepancies between scores; standard error of measurement and confidence intervals;
- the appropriate use of nationally standardised tests for the age group being tested;
- the objective administration of attainment tests which can be administered individually. This must include tests of reading accuracy, reading comprehension, reading speed and spelling. Appropriate methods of assessing writing skills, including speed, must also be covered;
- the appropriate selection and objective use of tests of cognitive skills
- the ethical administration of testing including the ability to understand the limitation of their own skills and experience, and to define when it is necessary to refer the candidate to an alternative professional

AARA, section 7.4 (Reporting the appointment of assessors)

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

The Head of Centre will decide on candidates to be assessed by the centre's appointed assessor or external assessor.

Identification

- Students are identified for assessment according to their history of need and background information. Further students may be identified by teachers as needing assessment. In such cases, an online request form is completed for consideration by the Head of Inclusion and/or external assessor.

Process of assessment:

- **Before the candidate's assessment**, the Head of Inclusion will provide the assessor with background information, i.e. a picture of need has been painted as required in Part 1 of Form 8. The Head of Inclusion and the assessor must work together to ensure a joined-up and consistent process
- **During the assessment,** the assessor will assess the student according to the needs identified either through a history of need, or through the exam access arrangements questionnaire provided by teaching staff/other stakeholders.
- The student's scores are recorded electronically for future reference.
- **Following the assessment** the examiner will complete the remainder of Form 8, recording the relevant scores and arrangements issued.
- The parents/carers of the student are informed of the assessment outcome.

AARA, section 7.5

Picture of need/normal way of working

- An 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 the light of the picture of need and the background information as detailed within Part 1 of Form 8.
- An independent assessor must discuss access arrangements/reasonable adjustments with the Head of Inclusion. The responsibility to determine and request appropriate and practicable access arrangements/reasonable adjustments specifically lies with the Head of Inclusion.
- The assessor is required to establish if the results of tests in literacy and/or cognitive abilities present evidence that the candidate has an impairment which substantially affects their performance.

Assessors must personally conduct the assessments. They must not sign off assessments carried out by another professional AARA, sections 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)

Processing access arrangements and adjustments

Arrangements/adjustments requiring awarding body approval

Access arrangements online (AAO) is used to apply for approval of arrangements/adjustments for the qualifications listed within the JCQ document *Access Arrangements and Reasonable Asjustments*.

AAO is a shared digital service that enables centres to request and manage pre-agreed adjustments, such as extra time, readers, scribes or modified papers, for students with specific needs, disabilities or temporary injuries in a consistent and efficient way across JCQ member qualifications.

It sits within the JCQ Centre Admin Portal and is used by centres to submit a single application per student, rather than applying separately to each member, helping to streamline administration while supporting regulatory compliance and data protection requuirements

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 8.1)

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.

Head of Inclusion will 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 evidence of the assessor's qualification (where required) for inspection by the JCQ Centre Inspection Service. (AARA, section 8.6)

Centre-delegated arrangements/adjustments

Centre-delegated arrangements are put in place in line with a student's history of need. In circumstances when new needs have arisen, cases for centre-delegated arrangements will be considered by the Head of Inclusion.

Centre-specific criteria for particular arrangements/adjustments

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 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.

The Centre policy for the use of word processors is held in the electronic Exams folder. (AARA, section 5.8)

Alternative Rooming Arrangements Policy

A decision where an exam candidate may be approved alternative rooming arrangements within the centre (which may include sitting outside of the main examination hall/room, e.g. a room for a smaller group of candidates with similar needs or 1:1 invigilation) will be made by the Head of Inclusion.

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 (AARA, section 5.16)

In the case of alternative rooming arrangements, the candidate's disability is established with the centre (see chapter 4, paragraph 4.1.4). It is known to a Form Tutor, a Head of Year, the Head of Inclusion, Wellbeing team or a senior member of staff with pastoral responsibilities. For example, a long-term medical condition or mental health disorder which has a substantial and adverse effect.

Alternative rooming arrangements will be determined by the need of the candidate, alongside the provision available within the setting. This is not a prerequisite to individual invigilation or an individual room and invigilation.

Alternative rooming arrangements must reflect the candidate's normal and current way of working in internal school 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)

Policy Reviewers: Mr T. Bhullar (Associate Headteacher), Ms A. Boaten-Rolfe (Head of Inclusion) and Mrs J. Smith (Data and Examinations Assistant)

Approval: Approved by C&S Committee 05 Nov 2026

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