

St Paul's Catholic College



Access Arrangements Policy

2020/21

This policy is reviewed annually to ensure compliance with current regulations

Approved/reviewed by	
Dee Wood	
Date of next review	March 2021

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Access arrangements policy template (2017/18)
Hyperlinks provided in this document were correct as at October 2017

Key staff involved in the access arrangements process

Role	Name(s)
SENCo	Annette Chatfield
SENCo line manager (Senior Leader)	Dee Wood
Head of centre	James McNulty
Assessor(s)	Donna Dawson
Access arrangement facilitator(s)	Helda La Porte

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Contents

Key staff involved in the access arrangements process	2
What are access arrangements and reasonable adjustments?	4
Access arrangements.....	4
Reasonable adjustments.....	4
Purpose of the policy	4
Disability policy (exams).....	4
The assessment process.....	5
The qualification(s) of the current assessor(s)	5
Checking the qualification(s) of the assessor(s)	5
How the assessment process is administered	5
Recording evidence of need	5
Gathering evidence to demonstrate normal way of working	6
Processing access arrangements.....	6
Arrangements requiring awarding body approval	6
Centre-delegated access arrangements.....	7
Centre-specific criteria for particular access arrangements.....	7
Word processor policy (exams)	7
Separate invigilation within the centre.....	7

What are access arrangements and reasonable adjustments?

Access arrangements

“Access arrangements are agreed before an assessment. They allow candidates with 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’.”*

[AA Definitions, page 3]

Reasonable adjustments

“The Equality Act 2010 requires an Awarding Body to make reasonable adjustments where a disabled person would be at a substantial disadvantage in undertaking an assessment.

A reasonable adjustment for a particular person may be unique to that individual and may not be included in the list of available Access Arrangements.

How reasonable the adjustment is will depend on a number of factors including the needs of the disabled candidate/learner. An adjustment may not be considered reasonable if it involves unreasonable costs, timeframes or affects the security or integrity of the assessment.

There is no duty on the Awarding Bodies to make any adjustment to the assessment objectives being tested in an assessment.”

[AA Definitions, page 3]

Purpose of the policy

The purpose of this policy is to confirm that St Paul’s Catholic College complies with its “...obligation to identify the need for, request and implement access arrangements...”

[JCQ General Regulations for Approved Centres, 5.5]

This publication is further referred to in this policy as [GR](#).

The policy is annually reviewed to ensure that arrangements are carried out in accordance with the current edition of the 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](#).

Disability policy (exams)

A large part of the access arrangements policy is covered in the Disability policy (exams) which covers staff roles and responsibilities in identifying the need for, requesting and implementing access arrangements and the conduct of exams.

The Exams Policy is located on the school’s website:

http://www.stpauls.surrey.sch.uk/application/files/4915/2699/2604/Exams_Policy_March_2019.pdf

The access arrangements policy further covers the assessment process and related issues in more detail.

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The assessment process

Assessments are carried out by an assessor(s) appointed by the head of centre. The assessor is appropriately qualified as required by JCQ regulations in [AA](#) 7.3.

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

AMBDA / PGDip Dyslexia and Literacy / Practising Certificate for Disabled Student's Allowance Assessment / SpLD Assessor / STIP (Specialist Teacher for Inclusive Practice)

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

The assessor's qualification documents are held on file by both the SENCO and the Exams Officer and the Schools bursar checks all required qualifications.

How the assessment process is administered “...that the assessment process is administered correctly...” [\[GR 5.5\]](#)

Pupils are identified by Teaching Staff, Teaching Assistants, Heads of Year and the SEND team. Evidence is gathered with regards to the needs of the individual. Access Arrangement testing undertaken in Year 10 and Year 13 and assessed by a qualified assessor. Parents, Pupils and Exams Officer are notified of any access arrangements required as a result of the screening / testing. The student's normal way of working is reflected in the Access Arrangement which has been put in place. Our SpLD Assessor attends an annual up-date of her qualification to ensure compliance with any changes to the JCQ regulations ensuring that the assessment process is administered correctly. Form 8's are completed, signed and dated by hand, by our fully qualified Specialist Assessor.

Once the form 8 is completed the candidate has an individual meeting with the Specialist Assessor to explain the application process, what information about them will be shared and with whom and the law regarding Data Protection. The student is asked to complete a Data Protection Notice and a letter is sent home to explain to parents /carers the nature of the changes that have been made.

For private candidates we will “...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 his/her needs, the candidate may have to be assessed away from the centre, for example at home...”

[\[GR 5.4\]](#)

Recording evidence of need

All assessment evidence is retained and kept on individual files for each student who has Access Arrangements in place. All tests used are approved by the awarding body and marked against Standardised Scores. All tests and scoring are administered by our fully qualified Specialist Assessor.

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Information regarding scores is recorded on the JCQ form 8 by the Specialist Assessor.

*“A **privately commissioned assessment** carried out without prior consultation with the centre cannot be used to award access arrangements and cannot be used to process an application using Access arrangements online.*

If parents request a privately commissioned assessment, the SENCo completes a ‘skeleton’ Section A of Form 8 prior to the candidate being assessed (Section C of Form 8). When a privately commissioned report, or a report from an external professional, is rejected by a centre, the head of centre or a member of the senior leadership team should provide a written rationale supporting their decision to the parent/carer.

[[AA](#) 7.3]

Gathering evidence to demonstrate *normal way of working*

Teachers and support staff are asked to make individual comments with regard to those students who have been identified as having specific difficulties. They are asked to respond to the questions:

How has this student’s difficulty impacted on teaching and learning in the classroom?

What support is regularly provided for this student?

Staff are also asked to provide evidence of examples such as unfinished timed tests or handwriting samples which are kept on file. Information collected prior to year 10 and 13 testing and a record of the support that was put in place such as, in class support, small group or one to one support are kept on file.

Information regarding students specific circumstances or learning difficulties are kept on file along with reports from outside agencies, parents or students own concerns.

Those students who have been awarded an Access Arrangement will routinely be given that provision in the classroom as their normal way of working. The support given in the centre reflects the arrangement put in place for the examination series.

All background information, support and or interventions are recorded in Section A of form 8.

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 2 of [AA](#). This tool also provides the facility to order modified papers for those qualifications listed on page 74.

AAO is accessed 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 used.

The Specialist Assessor retains all original test papers, work samples and other supporting evidence along with a copy of the form 8 and correspondence with parents/carers/outside agencies. Copies are made and kept on file with the original F8 with the SENCO.

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Centre-delegated access arrangements

Use of a word processor, separate room and supervised rest breaks are dealt with internally on an individual needs basis, following referral from teaching staff, support staff or Heads of Year / Pastoral teams. Medical evidence required for non-standard room use and supervised rest breaks.

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.

The use of a word processor for examinations will reflect the candidate's normal way of practice. A word processor will not be granted because he/she now wants to type rather than write in examinations or can work faster on a keyboard, or because he/she uses a laptop at home.

We will consider particular types of candidates who would benefit from the use of a word processor if they present certain conditions or impairments that significantly impairs their ability to match the equivalent average handwriting rate. For example, candidates who present with:

- A learning difficulty which has a substantial and long term adverse effect on their ability to write legibly;
- A medical condition;
- A physical disability;
- A sensory impairment;
- Planning and organisational problems with writing by hand;
- Poor handwriting

The use of a word processor will reflect the candidate's normal way of working within St Paul's Catholic College and be appropriate to the individual candidate's needs

Separate invigilation within the centre

A decision where an exam candidate may be approved separate invigilation within St Paul's will be made by the SENCo. 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." [[AA](#) 5.16]

Pupils will be provided with separate invigilation if the candidate is at a substantial disadvantage in comparison to other candidates without a disability undertaking the assessment, or, if their disability puts others at a disadvantage if not offered separate invigilation.

These needs will be clearly identified by the SENCO or HOY and will be their normal way of working. Needs may take the form of a medical condition, or social and emotional needs. Evidence will be required.

[see [AA](#) 5.16 plus centre-determined criteria] [see [AA](#) 5.16 plus centre-determined criteria]