



MAIDEN ERLEGH SCHOOL

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Key staff involved in the access arrangements process

Role	Name(s)
SENCo	Mrs Stephanie Bendall
SENCo line manager	Mrs Alison Morgan (Senior Deputy Headteacher)
Head of centre	Mr Paul Gibson (Headteacher)
Assessor(s)	Mrs Susan King
Access arrangement facilitator(s)	Mr Jerry Godfrey (Examinations Officer) Ms Ali Came

What are access arrangements and reasonable adjustments?

Access arrangements (AA)

“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’.*

[[AA](#) Definitions, page 3]

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 a number of 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’.”

[[AA](#) Definitions, page 3]

Purpose of the policy

The purpose of this policy is to confirm that Maiden Erlegh 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...*”

[Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) General Regulations for Approved Centres, 5.5]
This publication is further referred to in this policy as [GR](#)

This policy is maintained and held by the Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCo) alongside the individual files of each access arrangements candidate. Each file contains detailed records of all the essential information that is required to be held according to the regulations.

The policy is annually reviewed to ensure that processes 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](#)

Equality Policy

The Access Arrangement Policy should be read in conjunction with our Equality Policy.

“The head of centre will recognise 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” [GR 5.4]

The Maiden Erlegh School Equality Policy, detailing how it will discharge its duties in respect of the Equality Act 2010 can be found here:

<http://www.maidenerleghschool.co.uk/page/?title=Key+Policies&pid=14>

The Access Arrangements Policy further covers the assessment process and related issues in more detail.

The referral procedures with regards to students being put forward for testing for Examination Access Arrangements are as follows:

- All students who have an Educational, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) are tested in Year 9 and again in Year 12 by the centre’s assessor. Whilst the JCQ guidelines do state that it is not necessary to retest in Year 12, substantial evidence is required for continuation of the concession.
- Students from the Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) register are reviewed by the SENCo and selected students are tested.
- Students who have transferred from another school and have been in receipt of examination access arrangements at their previous school (this normally applies to students joining Maiden Erlegh School Form, but could also include students completing an In Year Admission). The Form 8 may be requested from a feeder school, along with any relevant evidence which can be used to ‘support evidence of need’ and the students ‘normal way of working’. The JCQ stipulate that the candidate must be re-tested by the Centre entering them for the examinations.
- A teacher can refer a student by contacting the SENCo and providing evidence to support the reason for the referral.
- A written request from a parent/carer to the SENCo, outlining the reason for the request and attaching any relevant evidence to support the request.

This Access Arrangements Policy further covers the assessment process and related issues in more detail.

The Assessment Process

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

In advance of the testing Form 8 is completed and information gathered on the academic and SEND overview of the student. Once testing is completed, the scores are recorded on Form 8, this document and any supporting evidence is then reviewed by the SENCo in consultation with the Centre's Assessors and the Deputy Headteacher. At this point an application for the concession is made. It is important to note that even if an application is made, then approval is not guaranteed.

Parents are informed once the result of the application is received in writing by the SENCo.

The qualifications of the current assessors

Mrs Susan King - Qualification held on file.

Appointment of assessors of candidates with learning difficulties

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 [AA](#). This process is carried out prior to the assessor undertaking any assessment of a candidate.

Checking the qualification of the assessor

The Head of Centre will ensure that evidence of the assessor's qualifications is obtained at the point of engagement/employment and prior to the assessor undertaking any assessment of a candidate.

Evidence of the assessor's qualifications is held on file with HR for inspection purposes and be presented to the JCQ Centre Inspector when required. [\[AA 7.3\]](#)

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

Examination Access arrangements processes are administered with regards to the Equality Act 2010 regulations and the SEN Code of Practice.

Maiden Erlegh School makes every attempt to identify students needing alternative exam access arrangements as early as possible, in accordance with the processes previously described.

Where a candidate has learning difficulties and is not subject to a current *Education, Health and Care Plan* the SENCo describes a picture of need and demonstrates the candidate's normal way of working on completing Section A of Form 8 prior to the candidate being assessed.

The correct procedures are followed as per Chapter 7 of the JCQ publication Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments [\[GR 5.4\]](#)

The following assessments are carried out by the qualified Assessor in order to assess the student's performance within a range of areas. The following tests are JCQ approved:

- Reading Skills – WRAT 4, GORT 5. LUCID EXACT
- Spelling – WRAT 4
- Handwriting Speed – DASH
- Cognitive Processing – CTOPP2

The tests used are reviewed at the start of each Academic Year to reflect updated JCQ regulations and to ensure that they are still considered to be the most appropriate tests to assess need.

Painting a *picture of need* and gathering evidence to demonstrate *normal way of working*

Students will examination access arrangements will have these arrangements in class tests, pre-public examinations (PPEs) and assessments.

For students with hearing or visual impairments Maiden Erlegh Schools works closely with the Sensory Consortium for advice.

Teachers in each individual subject work with the SENCo and record what additional support is required by the student in the classroom and any specific difficulties they are having.

The access arrangements put in place for a student may also reflect the support given to the student:

- In the classroom (where appropriate)
- By Teaching Assistants
- When working in the Purple Pathway in smaller groups for additional literacy and numeracy.

This is recorded as background information on Form 8 by the SENCo or the assessor working within the centre.

The candidate is assessed in light of the picture of need and the background information as detailed within 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 92 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 SENCo and assessor keeps detailed records of all the essential information on file. This includes a copy of the candidate's approved application, appropriate evidence of need (where required) and a signed data protection notice for inspection by the JCQ Centre Inspection Service. These files can be located within the Inclusion Admin Office.

In line with JCQ regulations the SENCo or assessor makes the online applications by the published deadline.

Students and parents are notified in writing of the outcome of the exam access arrangement.

A record of all exam access arrangements are kept on a central register in school, made available to the exams team and to all teachers via the staff bulletin on a regular basis.

The range of concessions available include:

- Extra time
- Scribe
- Laptop
- Prompter
- Practical Assistance
- Reader (including a Computer Reader)
- Modified Papers
- Bi-lingual translation dictionary

Centre-delegated access arrangements

Maiden Erlegh School follows JCQ guidance when providing centre delegated access arrangements.

The SENCo allocates candidates rest breaks or an alternative venue based on:

- The need is a result of substantial and long term impairment and it is their normal way of working.
- There is medical evidence to substantiate this arrangement and it is their normal way of working.

Alternative Venues

Where there is clear evidence of need we will provide a smaller venue away from the main examination halls. Such venues are limited on the site and students would inevitably be grouped in these circumstances.

Students and parents are notified in writing of the outcome of the centre delegated access arrangements.

A record of all examination access arrangements (including centre delegated ones) are kept on a central register in school, made available to the exams team and to all teachers via the staff bulletin on a regular basis.

Other arrangements for candidates with disabilities

For the access arrangements detailed below, there is not a requirement to process an application using Access Arrangements Online (AAO), or to record the use of the arrangement. No evidence is needed to support the arrangement.

- Amplification Equipment

- Brailers
- Closed Circuit Television (CCTV)
- Colour naming by the invigilator for candidates that are colour blind (Maiden Erlegh requires parents to notify the school of this and this be recorded on the Medical Section of the SIMS system).
- Coloured Overlays (this would include reading rulers, virtual overlays and virtual reading rulers).
- Examination on coloured or enlarged papers
- Low vision aid/magnifier
- Optical Character Reader (OCR) Scanners
- Separate invigilation within the centre

The SENCo must make their decision 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.

SENCo's must note that candidates are only entitled to the above arrangements if they are disabled within the meaning of the Equality Act. The candidate is at a substantial disadvantage when compared with other non-disabled candidates undertaking the assessment and it would be reasonable in all the circumstances to provide the arrangement.

For example, in the case of separate invigilation, the candidates difficulties are established within the centre and know to a Head of Year, the SENCo or a senior member of staff with pastoral responsibilities.

Separate invigilation reflects the candidates normal way of working in internal school tests and Pre Public Examinations (PPEs) as a consequence of a long term medical condition or long term social, mental or emotional needs.

Centre-specific criteria for particular access arrangements

Word processor policy (exams)

An examination 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.

Centres are allowed to provide a word processor (e.g. computer, laptop or tablet) with the spelling and grammar check/predictive text disabled to a candidate where it is 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 braille or a tablet." [ICE 14.20]

Please refer to the Maiden Erlegh School: Procedure for the use of word processors in examinations.

Separate invigilation within the centre

A decision where an examination candidate may be approved separate invigilation within the centre 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](#)]

Candidates are only entitled to the above arrangements if they are disabled within the meaning of the Equality Act. The candidate is at a substantial disadvantage when compared with other non-disabled candidates undertaking the assessment and it would be reasonable in all the circumstances to provide the arrangement. (The only exception to this would be a temporary illness, a temporary injury or other temporary indisposition which is clearly evidenced.)

Separate invigilation reflects the candidate's normal way of working in internal school tests and mock examinations as a consequence of a long term medical condition or long term social, mental or emotional needs. [[AA 5.16](#)]

The needs for separate invigilation must be substantiated by appropriate and current medical evidence.

The evidence can take the form of a letter from the GP, CAMHS, etc.

A copy of the evidence will be held on file.

Special Consideration

Special consideration for examinations should not be confused with examination access arrangements. This is a post examination adjustment to a candidates mark or grade to reflect temporary illness, temporary injury or some other event outside the candidates control at the time of the assessment, which has had, or is reasonably likely to have had, a material effect on a candidates ability to take an assessment or demonstrate his or her normal level of attainment in an assessment.