

# Weald of Kent Grammar School

## Access Arrangements Process

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This process is reviewed annually to ensure compliance with current regulations

Key staff involved in the process

Role	Name(s)
SENDCos	<b>Matthew Simmons and Nia Smith</b>
Senior leader(s)	<b>Amie Jones, Aimee Beasley</b>
Head of centre	<b>Richard Booth</b>
Exams officer	<b>Sharon Dyos</b>
Assessor(s)	<b>Crystal Barnes</b>

## Contents

Key staff involved in the policy.....	1
What are access arrangements and reasonable adjustments?.....	2
Access arrangements.....	2
Reasonable adjustments.....	2
Purpose of the policy.....	2
General principles.....	3
Equalities Policy (Exams).....	3
The assessment process.....	3
The qualification(s) of the current assessor(s).....	3
Appointment of assessors.....	3
Process for the assessment of a candidate's learning difficulties by an assessor.....	4
Picture of need/normal way of working.....	6
Processing access arrangements and adjustments.....	6
Arrangements/adjustments requiring awarding body approval.....	6
Centre-delegated arrangements/adjustments.....	10
Centre-specific criteria for particular arrangements/adjustments.....	11
Word Processor Policy (Exams).....	11
Alternative Rooming Arrangements Policy.....	11
Appendices.....	13

## 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. (AARA<sup>1</sup>, Definitions)

### 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'.

The centre **must** ensure that approved adjustments can be delivered to candidates. (AARA<sup>1</sup>, Definitions)

\*References to legislation are to the Equality Act 2010.

### Purpose of the process

The purpose of this process is to confirm that Weald of Kent Grammar 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**, 5.4) This publication is further referred to in this process as GR

This process is maintained and held by the lead SENDCo alongside the individual files/e-folders of each access arrangements candidate. Each electronic file contains detailed records of all the essential information that is required to be held according to the regulations.

Weald of Kent Grammar School will store documentation electronically and **must** create an e-folder for each individual candidate. The candidate's e-folder **must** hold each of the required documents for inspection. (<sup>1</sup>AARA 4.2)

The process 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**'.

<sup>1</sup>This publication is further referred to in this process as AARA

## General principles

The head of centre/senior leadership team will appoint SENDCos or an equivalent member of staff and an Exams Officer 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 (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 a disabled candidate.
- The SENDCo, Exams Officer or an equivalent member of staff, **must** ensure that the proposed access arrangement/reasonable adjustment does not unfairly disadvantage or advantage the candidate.
- 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 SENDCo to make appropriate and informed decisions based on the JCQ regulations.
- As far as possible, applications for access arrangements 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.

## Equalities Process (Exams)

A large part of the access arrangements/reasonable adjustments process is covered in the Equalities Process (Exams) which covers staff roles and responsibilities in identifying the need for, requesting and implementing access arrangements and the conduct of exams.

This process 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 assessor is appropriately qualified as required by JCQ regulations in AARA 7.3.

## The qualification(s) of the appointed assessor

SpLD Assessment Practising Certificate (expires 29/09/2027)
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## Appointment of assessors

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 AARA. This process is carried out prior to the assessor undertaking any assessment of a candidate.

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

The school will obtain in writing copies of the assessors' Level 7 qualification certificate at the point of engagement/employment and prior to the assessor undertaking any
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assessment of a candidate. The school will check that it meets the standards of the Joint Council for Qualifications, as in Chapter 7 of the JCQ document *Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments* (GR 5.4). This will be retained on file in readiness for inspection (AARA 7.3).

## Reporting the appointment of assessors

The centre is compliant with all regulations in AARA 7.3 and 7.4

SENDCos hold on file for inspection purposes evidence that all assessors are suitably qualified. AARA 7.4 (Reporting the appointment of assessors).

The centre uses an appointed assessor, identified in this document. In accordance with AARA 7.3.5, SENDCos will collaborate with an external, privately commissioned assessor(s) who have contacted the centre prior to any candidate assessments. In such cases, it is the responsibility of the external assessor to initiate contact with the SENDCo and established a working relationship with the centre. At this stage, the SENDCo will seek approval by the head of centre and provide as a minimum a 'skeleton' Part 1 of Form 8 (JCQ/AA/LD, Profile of Learning Difficulties) - See *Appendix 4*

AARA 7.3.6 specifically states that 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. This would be where the assessor has not contacted the centre, has not established a working relationship with the centre, has not been approved by the head of centre and has not received as a minimum a 'skeleton' Part 1 of Form 8 from the SENDCo.

The centre complies with all requirements of AARA 7.3.6. In such cases, the SENDCo may consider referring the candidate for assessment with the centre's appointed assessor.

Assessors' certifications are stored electronically for inspection purposes and saved in a specific Assessor Certificates folder. Externally appointed assessors' certificates will also be stored in the relevant candidate folder.

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

The SENDCo will work with the centre's appointed assessor to ensure a consistent, joined-up process. This will also allow the SENDCo to discuss individual candidate cases with the assessor before making final decisions.

The centre complies with AARA 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). Typically, this is represented by the below process:

Entry data and supporting documentation for SEND is used to establish reasonable adjustments in Year 7. Baseline testing and CATs scores also inform this process. In Year 9, all students complete a Lucid processing screening and subsequent testing to identify need in readiness for GCSE study.



Parents or students report a concern to Learning Support or teachers make a Access Arrangements referral via our Staff Intranet

SENDCos and HOYs routinely monitor summative assessment results and academic attainment and progress.



SENDCos may arrange for an updated screening assessment, particularly for students now in Key Stages 4 or 5.



This screening assessment, along with historic data including previous screening assessments and summative assessment results, is used to inform the decision to make a referral to the appointed assessor. At this stage, the SENDCo will prepare a Form 8 and begin creating a picture of need in Part 1.

When the assessor has conducted assessments and completed Part 2 of a Form 8 recommending the provision of access arrangements, in accordance with AARA 7.6, the SENDCo will complete Part 3 of the Form 8, update Part 1 as required and add the candidate to the access arrangements spreadsheet, apply access arrangements in the school's management information system and inform the candidate's teachers and parents / carers.

Weald of Kent Grammar School ensures that the correct procedures are followed as in Chapter 7 of the JCQ document Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments (GR 5.4)

SENDCos and assessors working within the centre will always carefully consider any privately commissioned assessment to see whether the process of gathering a picture of need, demonstrating normal way of working within the centre and assessing the candidate themselves should be instigated.

## Picture of need/normal way of working

As previously set out in General Principles and detailed in AARA 4.2, applications should be processed at the start of the course. Arrangements must always be approved before an examination or assessment.

Before the candidate's assessment, the Lead SENDCo or SENDCo 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 SENDCo and the assessor will work together to ensure a joined-up and consistent approach.

Specifically, AARA 4.2.5 specifies:

The arrangement(s) put in place must reflect the support given to the candidate in the centre, for example:

- in the classroom (where appropriate).
- working in small groups for reading and/or writing.
- support lessons.
- intervention strategies.
- in internal tests/examinations.
- mock examinations.

This is commonly referred to as 'normal way of working'. For candidates with learning difficulties, this is typically the background information recorded within Part 1 of Form 8 by the SENDCo or the assessor working within the centre.

Weald of Kent is fully compliant with AARA 4.2, 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), including 7.6.1 for all candidates. This includes all considerations set out in AARA 7.2.

Normal Way of Working (often referred to as NWOW) is usually evidenced through internal round robins and / or other information gathering processes and captured in the relevant section of a candidate's JCQ Form 8 or Form 9 – see *appendix 5*.

## Processing access arrangements and adjustments

### Arrangements/adjustments 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 covered by the tool. This tool also provides the facility to order modified papers for those qualifications included. (Refer to AARA 8 (Processing applications for access arrangements and adjustments) and 6 (Modified papers).

AAO is accessed within the JCQ Centre Admin Portal (CAP) using any of the awarding body secure extranet sites. A single application for approval is required for each candidate regardless of the awarding body used.

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 Summary)

Teaching staff indicate a possible need for Access Arrangements via the Staff Intranet and the designated Microsoft Form. This information is stored on a central spreadsheet to record all requests and is followed up on by the Lead SENDCo or SENDCo in collaboration with our Learning Mentors. Teaching staff are contacted to ascertain where there is justification for a possible Access Arrangement to be put in place. Where teachers do not support this, this is

communicated with the student and parents and reference made to the JCQ guidance to provide a clear rationale.

Once the appropriate processes have been followed, and a candidate's picture of need has been evidenced, the SENDCo/relevant staff member will complete an online application form. Applications processed and approved online will be recorded in the candidate's e-folder.

The SENDCo **must** 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). (AARA 8.6)

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.

When completing access arrangements applications, the following arrangements must be applied for online:

- Access to a mobile phone for medical purposes
- Bilingual dictionary with 25% extra time (solely for those qualifications listed within Chapter 5, paragraph 5.18.2)
- Computer reader/reader
- 25% extra time
- Extra time over 25%
- Exemption
- Listening to music/white noise due to a substantial impairment
- Practical Assistant
- Remote invigilation
- Scribe/speech recognition technology
- Timetable variation on the day of the exam for a candidate with a disability
- Timetable variation requiring overnight supervision for a candidate with a disability

### **Supervised Rest Breaks (AARA 5.1)**

There is not a requirement to process an application for supervised rest breaks using Access arrangements online. However, **the SENDCo must complete the statement within either Part 1 of Form 8 or Part 1 of Form 9**, confirming the need for supervised rest breaks.

The SENDCo is allowed to provide a supervised rest break to a candidate where it is their normal way of working within the centre.

The SENDCo must be satisfied that the candidate has an impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect, giving rise to persistent and significant difficulties (the candidate is disabled within the meaning of the Equality Act); and there is a genuine need for the arrangement.

Supervised rest breaks will be awarded on account of:

- cognition and learning needs.
- communication and interaction need.
- a medical condition.
- sensory and physical needs.
- social, emotional and mental health needs.

**Exams Process for supervised rest breaks** - The timing of the exam should be paused and restarted when the candidate is ready to continue. During the supervised rest break, the candidate must not have access to the question paper/answer booklet. *The purpose of a supervised rest break is to provide a break from the examination and must not be used as*

'thinking time'. If the candidate needs to leave the examination room, an invigilator must accompany them.

**A single supervised rest break should normally be no more than 30 minutes in duration.**

Candidates cannot be given as many supervised rest breaks as they like for as long as they like. A supervised rest break will not normally be required within the first 10 minutes of an examination but may be thereafter. The duration of the supervised rest break must be determined by the SENDCo based on their knowledge of the candidate's needs and the candidate's normal way of working when placed under timed conditions.

*There a candidate requires supervised rest breaks and extra time; the supervised rest break(s) may be taken at any point during the examination.*

**25% Extra Time (AARA 5.2)**

**Candidates with learning difficulties**

To award 25% extra time the SENDCo must determine the needs of the candidate based on one of the following:

- a current Education, Health and Care Plan which confirms the candidate's disability or;
- a fully completed Form 8, with an assessment (Part 2 of Form 8) carried out no earlier than the start of Year 9 by an assessor, confirming a learning difficulty relating to secondary/further education. Form 8 must be supplemented by samples of evidence – see below.

**Candidates with a substantial impairment**

So as not to give an unfair advantage, Part 2 of Form 8 must confirm that the candidate has at least:

- two below average standardised scores of 84 or less; or
- one below average standardised score of 84 or less and one low average standardised score (85-89).

In either scenario, the two standardised scores must relate to two different areas of speed of working.

**The SENDCo must have completed Part 1 of Form 8 before the candidate is assessed.**

As a minimum, Part 1 of Form 8 must include teacher feedback and evidence of normal way of working.

**Candidates going from GCSE to GCE AS/A Level**

When a candidate with an existing Form 8 progresses from GCSE to GCE AS/A level, **a new online application for 25% extra time must be processed**. An assessment conducted no earlier than the start of Year 9 (Part 2 of Form 8) recommending 25% extra time for GCSE examinations will be valid for GCE AS and A level. A fully completed Form 8 (Parts 1, 2 and 3), signed and dated, may roll forward where the candidate meets the current published criteria for 25% extra time. **No further assessment is required.**

However, so as not to give an unfair advantage, the SENDCo or the assessor working with the centre must have available evidence, which clearly shows that 25% extra time is still needed. (This updated centre-based evidence must be completed using Form 8RF and must specifically relate to GCE AS/A Level).

The SENDCo must detail:

- the candidate's current difficulties to show how they impact on teaching and learning and performance in examinations, summarising evidence of feedback from teachers and/or support staff.
- the support and adjustments that are in place for the candidate in the classroom, tests and examinations.

In addition to Form 8 and Form 8RF there must be:

- a sample of internal school tests/mock exam papers across relevant subjects showing the application of 25% extra time.
- comments and observations from teaching staff in relevant subjects as to why the candidate needs 25% extra time and how they use the 25% extra time awarded.

The rolling forward of a Form 8 from GCSE to GCE AS, A level/can apply where the candidate remains within the same centre or moves to a different centre. Where the candidate changes centre, the original or a PDF of a fully completed Form 8, together with evidence of the assessor's qualification, must be provided.

*The Form 8 should be perceived as a 'passport to access arrangements' which travels with the candidate.*

### **Candidates with complex needs**

Where a candidate has complex needs, i.e.

- communication and interaction need; or
- a learning difficulty with a current EHCP; or
- sensory and/or physical needs; or
- social, emotional and mental health needs.
- a medical condition formally diagnosed by a registered specialist.

which have a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their speed of working, appropriate evidence of need (as below) must be available at the centre for inspection. **Form 8 is not required and must not be used. Standardised scores are not required.**

### **Substantial impairment – evidence of need**

So as not to give an unfair advantage, **the SENDCo must complete Form 9** to:

- detail the candidate's current difficulties to show how they impact on teaching and learning and performance in examinations, summarising evidence of feedback from teachers and/or support staff.
- confirm that 25% extra time is the candidate's normal way of working. Comments from parents cannot be recorded within Part 1 of Form 9.

**Form 9 will be supported by specialist evidence confirming the candidate's disability:**

- a letter/report from CAMHS, an HCPC registered psychologist, a medical consultant, a psychiatrist, a Speech and Language Therapist (SaLT); or
- a Neurodevelopmental Specialist GP or GP with an extended role in ADHD, who must have completed an RCGP framework for developing and maintaining an extended role specifically in ADHD. Evidence must be provided of this; or

- a letter/report from the Local Authority Specialist Service, Local Authority Sensory Support Service or Occupational Health Service; or
- a current EHCP which confirms the candidate's learning difficulty, medical condition, physical disability, sensory or multisensory impairment.

**and**

- a sample of internal school tests/mock exam papers across relevant subjects showing the application of 25% extra time.
- comments and observations from teaching staff in relevant subjects as to why the candidate needs 25% extra time and how they use the 25% extra time awarded.
- evidence that supervised rest breaks have been trialled and exhausted.

*Specialist evidence must confirm that the candidate has a disability. However, the specialist is not required to recommend 25% extra time in their report.*

The specialist evidence may relate to any age provided it remains current. The SENDCo may accept a medical diagnosis from an appropriate specialist working within either the NHS or a private practice.

### **Where a candidate with an existing Form 9 progresses from GCSE to GCE AS/A level**

When a candidate with an existing Form 9 progresses from GCSE to GCE AS/A level a new online application for 25% extra time must be processed. The SENDCo must have available evidence, which clearly shows that 25% extra time is still needed. As with a form 8 the SENDCo must obtain the correct evidence to support the Form 9.

**Note:** Extra time will not be permitted in exam testing the time in which a skill is performed, such as a Dance or Drama practical assessment, a musical performance or a sport, where timing is an explicit part of the assessment objective.

25% extra time would be awarded in a timed Art exam where a candidate has a formally diagnosed medical condition, a physical disability or a sensory impairment which has a substantial and adverse effect on their manual dexterity and/or their physical coordination.

**For information for candidates requiring more than 25% extra time see AARA 5.3**

### **Modified Papers (AARA 6)**

To apply for Braille papers, modified enlarged papers, modified language papers or papers adapted for the purpose of using a recording, the SENDCo must order papers **no later than ten weeks before the date of the assessment.**

**N.B.** If an application has **not been approved immediately, it can be referred online to the relevant awarding body for consideration using the awarding body referral section.** However, the SENDCo must always recheck the JCQ regulations to see if the candidate does meet the published criteria for the arrangement(s).

## **Centre-delegated arrangements/adjustments**

Where permitted by the specification, the following arrangements may be granted by the SENDCo / relevant staff member and do not need to be applied for or recorded. Evidence of need is not required to be held on file:

- Alternative rooming arrangements – sitting the examination outside of the main examination hall/room, e.g. a room for a smaller group of candidates

- Amplification equipment, taped questions and responses
- Bilingual dictionary
- Blank sheet of paper for doodling, where a candidate has persistent and significant concentration difficulties (This must be included with the candidate's completed answer booklet.)
- Braille transcript
- Braille writers
- Braille of non-secure assessment material
- Colour naming by the invigilator for candidates who are colour blind
- Coloured overlays
- Enlarge or photocopy the question paper onto coloured paper
- Fidget toys and stress balls
- Live speaker for pre-recorded examination components
- Low vision aid/magnifier
- Non-electronic ear defenders/ear plugs
- Non-electronic headphones
- Optical Character Reader (OCR) scanners
- Prompter
- Read aloud (which can include an examination reading pen)
- Sign Language Professional for written questions and responses (but not in MFL Speaking assessments)
- Squared paper for a candidate with visual-spatial difficulties
- Supervised rest breaks
- Timer on a candidate's desk – a small countdown clock, a small analogue or digital clock, digital timer, sand timer, stopwatch (The candidate must have an established difficulty and control the device themselves.)
- Word processor.

Where a candidate's disability has a substantial and long-term adverse effect, other adjustments, which are not listed, may be required. In the first instance, the SENDCo/ relevant staff member will contact the relevant awarding body at the earliest opportunity to discuss the candidate's needs.

## Centre-specific criteria for particular arrangements/adjustments

### Word Processor Process (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 Word Processor Policy is held within the Exams Office. Additionally, it can also be located on SharePoint and the school website. (AARA 5.8)

### Alternative Rooming Arrangements Process

A decision where an exam candidate may be approved alternative rooming arrangements, e.g. a room for a smaller group of candidates with similar needs will be made by the SENDCo.

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 5.16)

To award separate invigilation:

- The SENDCO or the relevant member of the Senior Leadership Team, must be satisfied that the candidate's substantial and long-term impairment has an adverse effect when they sit internal tests and mock examinations in the main examination hall/room.
- The candidate's difficulties must be well established. They must be known to relevant members of staff i.e. Form Tutor, Head of Year and those with pastoral responsibilities.
- Separate invigilation must reflect the candidate's current and normal way of working.

Nervousness, low level anxiety or being worried about examinations **is not** sufficient grounds for separate invigilation within the centre.

1:1 invigilation and the use of an alternative room **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)

<b>Author/s:</b>	A Jones	<b>Date:</b>	March 2026
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## Appendices

1. [Form 5](#) – Braille Transcript Cover Sheet
2. [Form 6](#) – Communication Professional Cover Sheet
3. [Form 6A](#) – Language Modifier Cover Sheet
4. [Form 8](#) – Profile of learning difficulties
5. [Form 8RF](#) – Evidence to accompany Form 8 when a candidate progresses from GCSE to GCE qualifications
6. [Form 9](#) – Profile of need
7. [Form 10](#) – Application for special consideration