



KING WILLIAM'S COLLEGE

King William's College (I)GCSE Access Arrangements Policy

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Clare Broadbent (Deputy Head Academic)

Susan Gibson (Examinations Officer)

Jacqueline Munro (Head of Learning Support)

Key staff involved in the access arrangements process

Role	Name(s)
SENCo	Jacqueline Munro, Head of Learning Support
SENCo Line Manager	Clare Broadbent, Deputy Head Academic
Head of Centre	Joss Buchanan, Principal
Assessor	Jacqueline Munro, Head of Learning Support
Access arrangement facilitator(s)	Susan Gibson, Examinations Officer Elena Sinclair, Examinations Assistant Karen Brew, Examinations Assistant

1. Background and Purpose

This policy is intended to provide guidance about the roles and responsibilities of all involved in the administration of Access Arrangements as part of the external public examinations system and to ensure that, as an examination centre, King William's College meets its "...obligation to identify the need for, request and implement access arrangements..." This policy is reviewed annually to ensure compliance with current regulation and refers to two documents in particular:

- *JCQ General Regulations for Approved Centres*
(This publication is further referred to in this policy as [GR])
- *JCQ: Adjustments for candidates with disabilities and learning difficulties. Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments.*
(This publication is further referred to in this policy as [AA])

This policy is held by the 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.

Note: where this policy makes reference to *The Equality Act*, both the UK Equality Act 2010 and the Isle of Man Equality Act 2017 should be considered. This policy should be read in conjunction with the King William's College and the Buchan School Equal Opportunities Policy.

"The head of centre/senior leadership team 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; or any legislation in a relevant jurisdiction other than England and Wales which has an equivalent purpose and effect" [GR 5.4]

2. What are access arrangements and reasonable adjustments?

2.1 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 to make ‘reasonable adjustments’.”

[AA Definitions, page 3]

2.2 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]

2. The assessment process

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

Current Assessor: Mrs Jacqueline Munro, Head of Learning Support (SENCo)

BA Combined Honours degree Spanish and Arabic (Exeter University, 1982)

PGCE ESL/EFL & MFL (Birmingham Polytechnic, 1986)

Diploma in Professional Studies in Education (SEN) (Manchester Polytechnic, 1990)

Certificate of Psychometric Testing, Assessment & Access Arrangements (CPT3A) Level 7, Real Training, 2015

RQTU Membership No. 356702

2.1 Appointment of assessors of candidates with learning difficulties

The Head of Centre (the Principal) is responsible for:

- the quality of the access arrangements process within the school; and
- the appointment of assessors, checking the qualifications of those assessing candidates

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]. Copies of official certificates are obtained and held on the assessor's file. This process is carried out prior to the assessor undertaking any assessment of a candidate.

"The head of centre/ senior leadership team will...have a written process in place to not only check the qualification(s) of their assessor(s) but that the correct procedures are followed as per Chapter 7 of the JCQ publication Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments..." [GR 5.4]

"The head of centre must ensure that evidence of the assessor's qualification(s) is obtained at the point of engagement/employment and prior to the assessor undertaking any assessment of a candidate. Evidence of the assessor's qualification(s) must be held on file for inspection purposes and be presented to the JCQ Centre Inspector by the SENCo." [AA 7.3]

The Head of Centre must appoint:

- an access arrangements assessor who has successfully completed a post-graduate course at or equivalent to Level 7, including at least 100 hours relating to individual specialist assessment

and/or:

- a specialist assessor with a current SpLD Assessment Practising Certificate, as awarded by BDA, the Dyslexia Guild or Patoss and listed on the SASC website

and/or:

- an appropriately qualified psychologist registered with the Health & Care Professions Council

All assessors must:

- have a thorough understanding of the current edition of the JCQ publication *Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments* and the principles, procedures and accountabilities involved
- be familiar with the Equality Act 2010 (and the Isle of Man Equality Act 2017) (although it is not their role to determine what is a 'reasonable adjustment' but rather to help identify access arrangements that might assist the candidate)
- either hold an appropriate qualification to teach and make recommendations for secondary aged learners who have learning difficulties or be a HCPC registered psychologist.

2.2 External Assessors

[AA 7.3.5] states that *"the assessor should ideally be applied within the centre."*

King William's College has an appointed assessor (Mrs Jacqueline Munro, Head of Learning Support) who has all of the required qualifications and is able to carry out appropriate and relevant assessments.

Where external assessors are involved, JCQ regulations state that this must be **"an external assessor *who has an established working relationship with the centre or, before an assessment, establishes a relationship with the centre.*"**

*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. The SENCo **must** provide the assessor with at least a 'skeleton' Section A of Form 8 **prior** to the candidate being assessed. [AA 7.3.6]*

Where 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.

2.3 Reporting the appointment of the assessor(s)

Copies of the internally appointed assessor's qualifications are held both on their HR file and by the assessor in the Learning Support room.

In the case of appropriately qualified psychologists (registered with the Health & Care Professions Council), there is no need to record the names of these individuals within *Access Arrangements online*.

The names of all other assessors (including all professionals working outside the centre) must be entered into *Access Arrangement online* to confirm their status.

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

- Prior to transmission, information relating to learning difficulties is gathered from feeder schools by the Head of Learning Support during visits or by the Admissions Team
- Literacy assessments are carried out with the new Lower 4 year group on transition to determine current standard and provide baseline data. Identification of pupils with learning needs takes place and support provision is put in place
- Further assessment using nationally standardised tests producing standardised scores is carried out each year for screening purposes and to monitor progress
- Specific standardised assessments required for access arrangements are carried out no earlier than the start of Lower 5 (Year 9)
- Subject teachers refer pupils via email if they have concerns, following which, monitoring, support provision and/or assessment takes place to establish the degree of difficulty
- External assessment by a further professional is advised by the Head of Learning Support if appropriate (when the expense incurred is accepted by parents). Discussion takes place beforehand regarding a pupil's background and normal way of working

It is imperative that any independent assessor contacts the College to discuss a pupil's history and normal way of working with the Head of Learning Support prior to an assessment. The Head of Learning Support should not be expected to act on the suggestions of external assessments alone without there being evidence within College of a substantial and persistent difficulty that meets the JCQ criteria.

- The Head of Learning Support (whose role is also that of internal assessor) uses assessment scores and all evidence of difficulties to complete each Form 8

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

- Evidence of a history of need may first be gathered prior to, or on, transition
- Pupils identified with a learning difficulty are given support either in withdrawal lessons from a MFL teacher or offered a lunchtime lesson. Some in-class support in English and Mathematics is also carried out although this is limited. The support provision allows the Head of Learning Support/assessor the opportunity to further build a picture of need and establish a normal way of working
- Subject teachers refer pupils about whom they have concerns and pass on examples of work. The Head of Learning Support/assessor discusses the nature of the difficulty, suggests possible strategies and offers support for further evidence to be gathered. In certain circumstances, a pupil may drop a MFL in order to receive support. This takes place following discussion with the HOD of MFL and the Deputy Head, Academic
- The Head of Learning Support/assessor provides regular, updated information and a Learning Support Register regarding pupils with learning needs
- Pupils receiving support or being monitored each have a pupil file containing information relating to any history of support, intervention and established way of working. Examples of evidence are added to the file on a regular basis. These may be examples of classwork, internal class tests, copies of internal and mock examinations and teacher comments or observations
- The Head of Learning/assessor carries out standardised assessments on a yearly basis to determine progress and the need to consider access arrangements . These assessments are added to the pupil file
- Prior to external exams and no sooner than the start of Lower 5 (Year 9), standardised assessments are carried out by the internal assessor who establishes if the results of tests in literacy and/or cognitive abilities present evidence that the pupil has an impairment which substantially affects their performance within the definitions of the Equality Act 2010 and the Isle of Man Equality Act 2017
- If the expertise of an external assessor were required, he/she would be invited in to College for discussion with the Head of Learning Support/assessor about the nature of the learning difficulty prior to any assessment taking place. In this case, a picture of need would be completed in Section A of Form 8 and the name of the external assessor would be entered into Access arrangements on line

“Before the candidate’s assessment, the SENCo must provide the assessor with background information, i.e. a picture of need has been painted as per Section A of Form 8. The SENCo and the assessor must work together to ensure a joined-up and consistent process.” [AA 7.5.2]

“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.

The candidate must be assessed in light of the picture of need and the background information as detailed within Section A of Form 8.

An independent assessor must discuss access arrangements with the SENCo.

The responsibility to request access arrangements specifically lies with the SENCo.” [AA 7.5.3]

3. Processing access arrangements

3.1 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.

- In King William’s College, the Head of Learning Support/assessor maintains files on all pupils who are receiving support or who are being monitored. These are kept in a secure cabinet in the Learning Support classroom.
- When an application is made for access arrangements, information from these files is used to paint the picture of evidence and, together with the scores from standardised assessments, show that a pupil’s need is substantial and persistent
- The Head of Learning Support/assessor requests that a member of the Exam Team completes page 1 of Form 8 which contains the pupil’s exam details.
- The Head of Learning Support/assessor completes sections A and B of the Form 8 and passes on to the Principal for his signature
- The Head of Learning Support/assessor and the Examination Officer together carry out the on-line application for each pupil
- The Head of Learning Support/assessor retains the hard copy paper format of Form 8 with the appropriate evidence, the candidates approved application and signed data protection form on file in the secure cabinet in the Learning Support classroom ready for inspection
- All evidence and assessment scores have been repeatedly checked in advance and meet the criteria for approval
- In the case of a late diagnosis, late manifestation of an impairment or a temporary injury/impairment, the Head of Learning Support/assessor must be satisfied that there is sufficient evidence, a substantial need and a compelling case to justify the application. Appropriate evidence will be gathered and the access arrangement determined to meet the pupil’s need. The application will be made by the Head of Learning Support/assessor and the Examination Officer.

“The SENCo must 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 a signed data protection notice for inspection by the JCQ Centre Inspection Service.” [AA 8.6]

3.2 Centre-delegated access arrangements

Through the evidence that is gathered, the Head of Learning Support/assessor identifies those pupils who are allowed to use the following:

- Word processor
- Coloured overlay / reading ruler
- Rest breaks
- Prompter
- Separate room for reading aloud or due to a medical condition

Evidence is held on file to support these arrangements

4. Centre-specific criteria for particular access arrangements

4.1 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.

- Use of the word processor complies with the KWC Policy regarding use of a word processor
- In cases where pupils are allowed the use of a word processor, practice has been carried out on machines maintained by the College. Specific word processors are maintained for use in external exams
- The use of a word processor is the candidate's normal way of working
- The spelling and grammar check/predictive text is disabled unless an application has been made, and approved, for a scribe. In this case, the pupil may have the spelling and grammar check facility and/or predictive text facility enabled but will not have access to marks awarded for spelling, punctuation and/or grammar

“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.”

4.2 Separate invigilation within the centre

A decision where an exam 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]

- The Head of Learning Support/assessor gathers evidence on file regarding the need to be accommodated separately
- She will liaise with the Examinations Officer in the delivery of this facility
- The pupil's difficulties will be established and known to subject staff and/or those with pastoral responsibilities
- Separate invigilation will be provided and arranged by the Examinations Officer

“SENCOs 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. (The only exception to this would be a temporary illness, a temporary injury or other temporary indisposition which is clearly evidenced.)

For example, in the case of separate invigilation, the candidate's difficulties are established within the centre (see Chapter 4, paragraph 4.1.4, page 16) and known to a Form Tutor, a Head of Year, the SENCo or a senior member of staff with pastoral responsibilities.

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]

5. Related Documents:

- JCQ General Regulations for Approved Centres
- JCQ: Adjustments for candidates with disabilities and learning difficulties. Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments.
- 2019 Cambridge Handbook – Cambridge Assessment International Education
- UK Equality Act 2010
- Isle of Man Equality Act 2017
- King William's College and the Buchan School Equal Opportunities Policy (including provision for students with particular religious, dietary, language or cultural needs)