



Ashfield Girls' High School



“Each different. Each talented. All valued.”

Access Arrangements Policy

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Contents

Executive Summary

Section A – Aim of the Policy

Section B – Legislation, Guidance and Linked Policies

Section C – Policy and Procedures

Section D – Roles and Responsibilities

Section E – Consultation, Communication, Monitoring and Review of the Policy



Executive Summary

The Access Arrangements Policy is an important internal school policy because it provides the processes and procedures for implementing and managing access arrangements across all key stages.

Access arrangements are necessary to ensure that pupils and staff are provided with the relevant information and support when needed, and to ensure that pupils have equal access to the curriculum and examinations.

The aim of the Access Arrangements Policy is to ensure that all teaching staff, pupils, and parents are aware of the processes and procedures for managing access arrangements. Clear and transparent processes and procedures promote transparency and fairness.

There are various legislative and guidance documents to consider when managing access arrangements. This policy does not include all the processes and procedures. The policy references and signposts relevant pieces of legislation and guidance documents, where more detailed information can be found.

The roles and responsibilities are outlined in the Access Arrangements Policy.

The process for consultation, communication, monitoring, and review is also outlined in the Access Arrangements Policy.



Section A – Aim of the Policy

The aim of this policy is to confirm that Ashfield Girls' High School has a written record which clearly shows the centre is leading on the Access Arrangements process and is complying with its obligations in respect of identifying the need for, requesting, and implementing access arrangements.

The main objective of the policy is to outline, in summary, the processes and procedures related to access arrangements. This includes the fair and consistent application of the policy to all pupils.

Section B – Legislation, Guidance and Linked Policies

The Board of Governors recognise the importance of access arrangements and their responsibility under the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 to provide equality of opportunity to all pupils, regardless of their disability or special educational need. They also recognise their responsibility to meet the statutory requirement of the Equality Act 2010.

The following publication was used to compile this policy:

- JCQ Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments

This guidance document is produced and published by JCQ on an annual basis, with updates. This guidance document should be referred to for annual updates to access arrangements.



Section C – Policy and Procedure

Definition of 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 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.’ The most common Access Arrangements include:

- 25% extra time
- Reading Pen
- Supervised Rest Breaks
- Alternative Rooming Arrangements
- Prompter
- Speech Recognition Technology

Definition of Reasonable Adjustments

The Equality Act 2010, Disability Discrimination Act and SENDO require an Awarding Body to make reasonable adjustments where a candidate, who has a disability within the meaning of the Equality Act 2010, would be at a substantial disadvantage in comparison to someone who has not got a disability. The awarding body is required to take reasonable steps to overcome that disadvantage. A reasonable adjustment 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 several factors including the needs of the SEND candidate/learner. An adjustment may not be considered reasonable if it involves unreasonable costs, timeframes or affects the security or integrity of the assessment.

The Assessment Process for Access Arrangements

Assessments are carried out by an assessor(s) appointed by the Head of Centre (Principal). The assessor(s) is (are) appropriately qualified as required by JCQ regulations. Three assessors have been appointed by the Head of Centre in Ashfield Girls’ High School: Mr Patterson, Mrs McLees and Mrs Watson. These assessors hold a **Level 7 equivalent certificate in Educational Assessment and Arrangements**. This qualification was awarded by Education Elephant: The National Assessment Agency Ltd. The qualification is seen and checked by the Head of Centre. A copy of the Access Arrangements assessor’s qualification/certificate is held on file and will be shown on request to the JCQ inspector.

How the assessment process is administered

All Year 10 students will be tested using the EXACT GL package in the June prior to the commencement of their Level 2 qualifications. EXACT will test the students in the following areas:

- Reading Comprehension Speed
- Word Recognition
- Spelling



- Typed Dictation
- Handwriting Speed

Based upon the standardised scores obtained in these assessments, and in line with JCQ requirements, the Assistant LSC's will then progress an application for Access Arrangements. Students who are at Stage 3 on the SEND Code of Practice do not need to complete the EXACT testing as their Statement of Educational Need will suffice for an application for appropriate Access Arrangements.

Timeframes

Due to the deadline for applications as set by JCQ, a timeframe must be adhered to in order to process applications in a timely manner. GL EXACT testing will take place in the June of the students YEAR 10, if a student is absent for their scheduled assessment they have until 30th September the following academic year to complete this assessment.

Where a candidate from our centre is supported by an external agency, requests for an Access Arrangements application will not be accepted or processed after 31st December of the candidates Year 11.

Applications will only be processed beyond these dates, where a candidate has a new diagnosis or has a temporary injury which would affect their ability to access assessments and examinations.

Assessments are completed adhering to the timeframes required for regulations for external examinations. If assessment results meet the criteria for Access Arrangements, they are combined with the candidate's history of need and supporting evidence gathered during their time at the centre to show examples of where arrangements are required and used as the candidate's normal way of working.

The Assistant LSC will make the decision to apply for Access Arrangements based on:

- whether the candidate has a substantial and long-term impairment which has an adverse effect.
- the candidate's normal way of working within the centre.

Gathering evidence of normal way of working

The centre gathers evidence of normal way of working as defined by JCQ in the following ways:

- Screening tests (typically EXACT)
- PTE/PTM data
- Candidates self-reported difficulties
- Information from feeder schools
- Comments on teacher questionnaires about candidate's difficulties
- Tracking information
- Information contained in Statements, PLP reports or other documents



Recording evidence of need

At Ashfield Girls' High School, where it is felt that Access Arrangements may be required in the classroom and for internal tests and examinations, a record of need is built up and recorded. This is initiated in KS3, where those students who are deemed suitable for an Access Arrangement, the use of these are recorded to build up a history of need to use when applying for formal access arrangements in KS4 and KS5.

Parents will be informed of the outcome of this assessment via letter and should the candidate meet the criteria for appropriate Access Arrangements, this will be discussed. The candidate will be added to the Access Arrangements Register and SIMS updated to allow teaching staff to implement these arrangements.

Centre-delegated Access Arrangements

Some access arrangements can be "Centre-delegated" which means that an online application to JCQ is not required. Examples of such arrangements include:

- candidates who read aloud – when a candidate is permitted to read the questions out loud to assist with processing disorders.
- use of a word processor – please see the separate policy on the use of word processors.
- use of a prompter – an adult who is available to prompt the candidate during an examination. These candidates will remain in the main exam hall and wear a yellow lanyard, to make them identifiable to the invigilation team.
- coloured overlays – provided to assist with reading questions in the examination. These must be supplied by the parent.
- alternative rooming arrangements – where the candidate is not able to sit the exam in the normal venue. Medical evidence and diagnosis must be provided, the decision is at the discretion of the centre. This must be given to the Assistant LSC by October half-term before the summer exam series. Only candidates who have a diagnosis of clinical anxiety or epilepsy will be permitted to sit their examinations in a separate venue. An alternative room may have up to 12 candidates.
- white noise – a candidate may be permitted the use of a device that does not connect to the internet, to listen to white noise during the exam. The invigilator will request to listen to the device prior to the exam. Candidates with this arrangement will be placed in the main exam hall.

The assessor will complete a cover sheet to support the arrangement. The Assistant LSC must be satisfied that there is a genuine need for the arrangement to be put in place. In addition, the candidate's difficulties must be established within the school and thus known to a form tutor, Head of Progress, the LSC and the curriculum Vice Principal. The only exception to this is where an arrangement is put in place because of a temporary injury or impairment.



Accepting Privately commissioned psychological reports

In accordance with JCQ regulations the school **cannot accept** privately commissioned psychological reports for the purpose of processing Access Arrangements, unless prior permission has been granted from the school and the psychologist has an established relationship with the school.

Temporary Injuries

Should a candidate sustain a temporary injury during the academic year, which may impact in their ability to complete internal or external examinations, a written letter from a GP/hospital/consultant should be provided to the Deputy LSC outlining the nature of the injury and period the impact is expected to last. On receipt of the letter the Deputy LSC will decide on the appropriate access arrangements to put in place to allow the student to access their examinations.

Section D – Roles and Responsibilities

Department of Education

The Department of Education is responsible for issuing circulars relating to Disability Discrimination and Equal Opportunities, should there be any changes in the legal framework. The Board of Governors should be provided with any new circulars relating to this area and are responsible for ensuring the Head of Centre (Principal) implements any changes.

Education Authority

The Education Authority provide operational support for the Principal and SEND team in relation to the administration of Access Arrangements, as well as providing or signposting centres to any updated training that is required.

Board of Governors

The Board of Governors have strategic responsibility for ensuring the review of the Access Arrangements policy in line with changes to legislation or new regulations/guidance issued by JCQ. The Board of Governors is responsible for making decisions, where decisions are to be made, in relation to any policy review. The day-to-day operational management and implementation of Access Arrangements is the responsibility of the Head of Centre (Principal) and the SEND team.

Principal

The Principal as Head of Centre, who has responsibility for ensuring the policy is applied fairly and consistently across all students in Key Stage 4 and 5. The Principal will also deal with any matters relating to appeals and complaints in relation to Access Arrangements.

SEND Team

The SEND Team is responsible for determining and implementing the appropriate Access Arrangements for any students who may be entitled to them. The SEND Team should have a comprehensive knowledge of the JCQ Access Arrangements Guidance and keep themselves updated on any annual changes, implementing these as they arise. The SEND Team is responsible for assessing pupils, compiling the necessary evidence, and completing the required paperwork. The Assistant LSCs will attend the annual JCQ update training.



Teacher

The teacher has responsibility for helping to identify any candidates that require Access Arrangements or further assessment, through classroom-based observation. The teacher is also required to provide the necessary evidence to support a referral for Access Arrangements; all referrals should be submitted to the SEND team using the SEN referral form. Subject teachers must make themselves fully aware of the Access Arrangements Register each academic year and ensure that all candidates on the list have access to their individual arrangements for all internal and non-examined assessments.

Examinations Team

The Examinations Team, consisting of the Examinations Officer and Assistant Examinations Officer have the responsibility to be aware of those students in Key Stage 4 and 5 who have been granted Access Arrangements for external examinations. The Examinations Team are required to implement these arrangements during external examinations and ensure that all candidates have access to their specific arrangement. The Examinations Team are also responsible for training invigilators annually on the implementation of each Access Arrangement during an examination.

Invigilators

Invigilators have the responsibility of engaging in training, on an annual basis to keep up to date on the implementation of each Access Arrangement during an examination. The invigilator is responsible for reporting any malpractice to the Examinations Team, in relation to the implementation of Access Arrangements.

Classroom Assistants

Classroom Assistants are responsible for acting as invigilators when required. This requires them to engage in annual training relating to Access Arrangements to ensure they are up to date on their implementation, and in line with JCQ requirements. A Classroom Assistant who supports a Statemented student in the classroom may not support this student during internal and external examinations.

Parents

Parents are responsible for reading the documentation sent home, relating to Access Arrangements, and contacting the SEND Team should they have any queries regarding to their daughter. Parents also have the responsibility of informing the SEND Team, as soon as possible after an incident, should their daughter require a temporary Access Arrangement following an injury.



Section E – Consultation, Communication, Monitory and Review of the Policy

Teaching and Non-Teaching staff were consulted on the Access Arrangements Policy in August 2025. The Access Arrangements Policy was ratified by the Board of Governors in September 2025. The Access Arrangements Policy will be monitored by the Head of Centre and SEND Team and reviewed bi-annually or in line with any changes in legislation.



Appendix

Access Arrangements Guidance for Staff/Parents

Please see below specific guidance relating to each Access Arrangement; the following guidance only applies to Key Stage 4 and 5 candidates, as per JCQ Regulations. The letter that you have received will indicate which arrangement your daughter is entitled to at the time of the examination. If you have any queries relating to these arrangements, please do not hesitate to contact either Mr Patterson or Mrs McLees who will clarify any uncertainties you may have.

Supervised Rest Break

During the supervised rest break the candidate will not have access to the question paper/answer booklet. The purpose of a supervised rest break is for a break from the examination and should not be used as 'thinking time'. The timing of the examination will be paused for the candidate and re-started when the candidate is ready to continue. The supervised rest break is not included in any extra time allowance. It is not considered a reasonable adjustment for the candidate to leave the exam venue during a supervised rest break.

25% Extra Time

The candidate will be entitled to 25% extra time for all her examinations, the full 25% does not need to be used for every examination. 25% extra time may be awarded for Mathematics examinations only, if the candidate meets the required criteria.

Examination Reading Pen

Where possible a candidate will be provided with a reading pen to use as and when they require during their examination. A permitted examination reading pen will not have an in-built dictionary or thesaurus, or a data storage facility. The use of an examination reading pen, provided by the centre, will benefit those candidates who wish to work independently.

Where a candidate is entitled to Speech Recognition Technology and a reading pen this will be accessed through the Read and Write software.

Scribe

This Access Arrangement will be fully replaced by Speech Recognition Technology from September 2026. In the academic year 2025/26, this arrangement will only be available to Year 14 candidates.

A scribe is a responsible adult who, in non-examination assessments and/or in an examination but not in a Speaking Test, writes a candidate's dictated answers to the questions. A scribe is not a practical assistant, a prompter or a reader. The same person may act as a practical assistant, a prompter, a reader and/or a scribe if permission has been given for these arrangements. A scribe will not be allowed in Modern Foreign Language papers, unless the candidate can dictate foreign words letter by letter.

The regulations have been changed by JCQ this year, moving forward a scribe can no longer be a pupil's classroom assistant.

In subjects where quality of written communication (QWC) is being assessed or where the candidate's spelling, punctuation, and grammar (SPaG) is specifically being assessed, a scribe will be allowed. A scribe will be allowed in the written papers of the following GCSE subjects:



- GCSE English Language (including the Writing section)
- GCSE English Literature
- GCSE Geography
- GCSE History
- GCSE Religious Studies.

However, where a scribe is used in an examination assessing spelling, punctuation and grammar, marks can only be awarded if the candidate can demonstrate that he/ she has carried out the skills being assessed.

The rules – the use of a scribe

- must write accurately, and at a reasonable speed, what the candidate has said
- must draw or add to maps, diagrams and graphs strictly in accordance with the candidate's instructions, unless the candidate is taking a design paper, in which case a scribe will only be permitted to assist with the written parts of the paper
- must abide by the regulations since failure to do so could lead to the disqualification of the candidate
- must immediately refer any problems in communication during the examination to the invigilator or examinations officer
- must not give factual help to the candidate or indicate when the answer is complete
- must not advise the candidate on which questions to do, when to move on to the next question, or the order in which questions should be answered
- may, at the candidate's request, read back what has been recorded.

Medical

The information below indicates what a student with a medical condition is entitled to within our centre:

- The only medical conditions that permits alternative rooming arrangements include a clinical diagnosis of anxiety or epilepsy.
- Candidates who are diabetic will complete their examinations in the main hall and will be permitted to bring with them a mobile phone (if this is the device, they use to monitor their BGC) which must be left with the invigilator, and a hypo kit which must be in a clear plastic bag/container. The hypo kit must also be left with the invigilator; however, the candidate can access this at any time they feel necessary. They may also bring with them a clear water bottle with the label removed; this can remain at their individual examination desk. Any time used during the examination, to manage their condition, will be added on to the end of the normal exam time.
- Any other serious medical condition will be assessed on an individual basis.



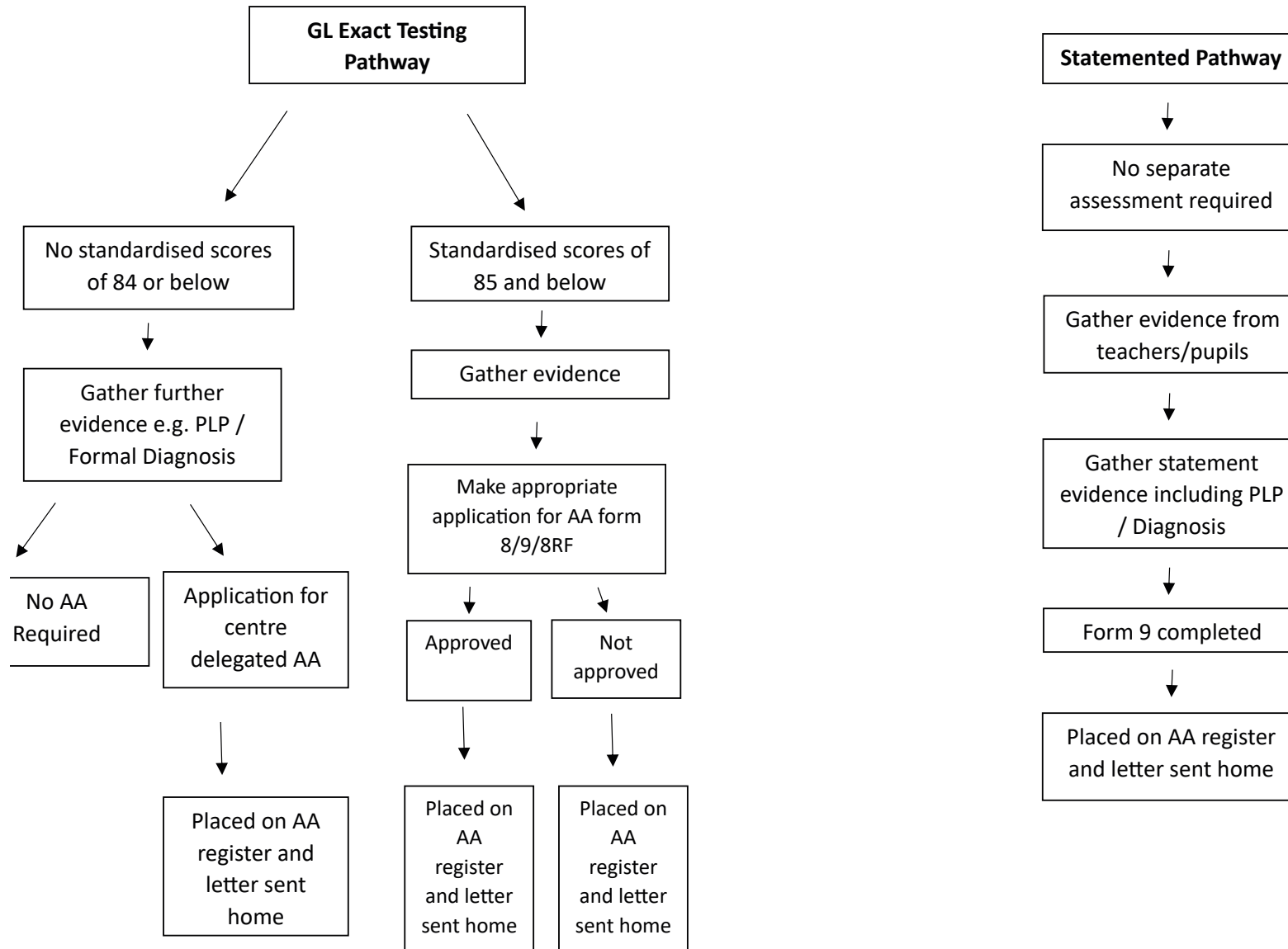
Speech Recognition Technology (SRT)

Where the centre has approved the use of SRT and where it reflects the candidate's normal way of working, the candidate will have access to the Read and Write software, where the candidate can dictate into a Word Processor. However, the candidate will not have access to marks awarded for spelling, punctuation, and grammar, unless they have independently dictated this. A candidate that has access to SRT will be placed in an alternative venue within the centre.

Prompter

A Prompter may be permitted if a candidate has a substantial and long-term adverse impairment resulting in persistent distractibility or significant difficulty in concentrating. A candidate may be assisted by a prompter who can keep them prompted on the need to answer a question and then move on to answer the next question.

Key Stage 4 Access Arrangements Flowchart



Challenging girls today; creating women of value in the future



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