

# Access Arrangements Policy

Policy/Procedure creator: Kahlen Spaulding

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Centre Name	Bradfield College
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Current policy reviewed by	Kahlen Spaulding Jessica Dickens
Current policy approved by	Neil Burch
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## Key staff involved in the policy

Role	Name
Exams officer	Jessica Dickens
ALS lead/SENCo	Kahlen Spaulding
Senior leader(s)	Neil Burch
Head of centre	Dr Chris Stevens
Other staff (if applicable)	Not Applicable

This policy is reviewed and updated annually to ensure that access arrangements process at Bradfield College is managed in accordance with current requirements and regulations.

References in this policy to GR, ICE and AA refer to the JCQ publications **General Regulations for Approved Centres, Instructions for conducting examinations** and **Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments**.

(updated 2021/22) References to legislation are to the Equality Act 2010. Separate legislation is in place for Northern Ireland (see AA 1.8). The definitions and procedures in AA relating to access arrangements and reasonable adjustments will also apply in Northern Ireland.

# Introduction

(AA Definitions)

## 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 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'.

## 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'.

## Purpose of the policy

The purpose of this policy is to confirm that Bradfield College 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 (GR 5.5)
- has a written process in place to not only check the qualification(s) of its 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)

## 1. General principles

The principles for Bradfield College to consider include:

- (updated 2021/22) The purpose of an access arrangement/reasonable adjustment is to ensure, where possible, that barriers to assessment are removed for a disabled candidate preventing him/her 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 (AA 4.2.1)
- (updated 2021/22) The person who leads on additional learning support/special educational needs, must ensure that the proposed access arrangement/reasonable adjustment does not unfairly disadvantage or advantage the candidate (AA 4.2.1)
- Although access arrangements are intended to allow access to assessments, they cannot be granted where they will compromise the assessment objectives of the specification in question (AA 4.2.2)

- (updated 2021/22) Candidates may not require the same access arrangements/reasonable adjustments in each specification. Subjects and their methods of assessments may vary, leading to different demands of the candidate. The need for access arrangements/reasonable adjustments must be considered on a subject-by-subject basis (AA4.2.3)
- (updated 2021/22) Access arrangements/reasonable adjustments should be processed at the start of the course (AA 4.2.4)
- Arrangements must always be approved before an examination or assessment (AA 4.2.4)
- The arrangement(s) put in place must reflect the support given to the candidate in the centre (AA 4.2.5)
- (updated 2021/22) The candidate must have had appropriate opportunities to practise using the access arrangement(s)/reasonable adjustments before their first examination (AA 4.2.7)

The main elements of the process detailing staff roles and responsibilities in identifying the need for, requesting and implementing access arrangements/reasonable adjustments and the conduct of examinations are covered in The Exam Access Arrangements policy.

## 2. The assessment process

At Bradfield College, assessments are carried out by:

- an appropriately qualified assessor(s) appointed by the head of centre in accordance with the JCQ requirements (AA 7.3)

### Details and qualification(s) of the current assessor(s)

The credentials on the assessors are held on file in the Support and Study Skills Department.

7.4.1 The SENCO holds a certificate of completion for the Patoss AAA: Assessing for Access Arrangements obtained 12th September, 2018 which is updated annually. See file of assessors and credentials.

7.4.2 We do not employ the Psychologist directly rather charter a Psychologist from the Helen Arkell Centre for Dyslexia whom we have an established relationship with. This relationship has been ongoing. Upon selection of a psychologist we request the credentials.

7.4.3 Keri Howells, Natasha Bell, Dr Lisa Lynch

### Appointment of assessors of candidates with learning difficulties

At the point an assessor is engaged/employed at Bradfield College:

- Evidence of the assessor's qualification is obtained and checked against the current requirements (AA 7.3.4)
- This process is carried out prior to the assessor undertaking any assessment of a candidate (AA 7.3.4)
- A photocopy of the assessor's certificate(s) (or a printout of screenshot of HCPC or SASC registration) is kept on file (AA 7.3.1)

Additional information:

Not Applicable

### Reporting the appointment of the assessor(s)

- Evidence that the assessor(s) is/are suitably qualified is held on file for inspection purposes (AA 7.4.1)

When requested, the evidence will be presented to the JCQ Centre Inspector by SENCo.

- In the case of appropriately qualified psychologists (registered with the Health & Care Professions Council), or specialist assessors holding a current SpLD Assessment Practising Certificate, who are directly employed within the centre, there is no need to record the names of these individuals within **Access arrangements online**. (AA 7.4.2)
- (updated 2021/22) The names of all other assessors, who are assessing candidates studying qualifications as covered by AA must be entered into **Access arrangements online** to confirm their status (AA 7.4.3)

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

Bradfield College confirms:

- Guidelines for the assessment of the candidate's learning difficulties by an assessor will be followed and Form 8 (JCQ/AA/LD - Profile of Learning Difficulties) will be completed (AA 7.5, 7.6)
- (updated 2021/22) Arrangements must be made for the candidate to be assessed by the centre's appointed assessor (AA 7.5.1)
- Assessors **must** personally conduct the assessments. They **must not** sign off assessments carried out by another professional (AA7.5.5)
- The assessor must carry out tests which are relevant to support the application. (AA7.5.6)
- 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**. (AA7.3.6)
- Relevant staff working within the centre should 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 ultimately assessing the candidate themselves should be instigated (AA7.3.6)

Additional information:

A full educational report is required and carried out by the assessor with whom the College has an established relationship with.

Appropriately qualified staff carry out any in-house assessments; each is appropriately qualified as required by JCQ regulations and attend yearly update courses. The qualifications are held in the Support and Study Skills Department.

The assessment process starts with the school wide screening process when a pupil joins Bradfield College. Every pupil's reference is reviewed in conjunction with his or her Common Entrance exam results. All pupils in Year 9 take the MidYIS test while all pupils in Year 12 take the ALIS. The results of the MidYIS and ALIS testing are reviewed by the SENCO. A monitoring list is devised for those scoring a D in the Skills area or scoring low across all subtests.

As evidence (teacher feedback and pupil performance data) becomes available, pupils are invited to the Support and Study Skills Department where an initial interview is conducted and next steps are discussed.

An assessment may be conducted to discover the pupils learning profile. The learning profile does not just drive the assessment process but is important for the young person to develop their own learning style as they cope with independent learning. The assessments which are administered vary depending on the young person, their age, previous assessments, and the purpose of the assessment.

The range of assessments which are available to the assessors are:

- DASH 11 – 16
- DASH 17+
- CTOPP 2
- WRAT 4
- TOMAL-2 (Test of Memory and Learning-Second Edition)
- TOWRE-2 (Test of Word Reading Efficiency-Second Edition)
- Signal Digit Modalities Test.
- HAST-2 (The Helen Arkell Spelling Test Version 2)
- Mathematics Competency Test
- Myself As a Learner Sale 8-16+ Analysing self-perception

The administration of the assessments is internally moderated yearly. Collaboration is established within the Rugby Group (a network of established schools similar to Bradfield College), and the

Update Courses from Communicate Ed, RTA (Regional Training Agency) and PATOSS to ensure assessments are correctly administered.

## Painting a 'holistic picture of need' confirming normal way of working

Bradfield College confirms

- (updated 2021/22) Before the candidate's assessment, the person appointed in the centre must provide the assessor with background information, i.e. a picture of need has been painted as required in Part 1 of Form 8. The centre and the assessor must work together to ensure a joined-up and consistent process. (AA 7.5.2)
- (updated 2021/22) 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. Additionally, the independent assessor must be approved by the head of centre to assess the candidate.

All candidates must be assessed in the light of the picture of need and the background information as detailed within Part 1 of Form 8.

An independent assessor must discuss access arrangements/reasonable adjustments with the person appointed in the centre. The responsibility to determine and request appropriate and practicable access arrangements/reasonable adjustments specifically lies with the centre. (AA 7.5.3)

Additional information:

Not Applicable

## 3. Processing access arrangements and adjustments

### Arrangements/adjustments requiring awarding body approval

Access arrangements online (AAO) is used to apply for approval of arrangements/adjustments for the qualifications listed within the JCQ publication **Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments**.

AAO is accessed through the JCQ Centre Admin Portal (CAP) by logging in to one of the awarding body secure extranet sites. A single application for approval is required for each candidate regardless of the awarding body used.

Deadlines apply for each examination series for submitting applications for approval using AAO.

### Centre delegated arrangements/adjustments

Decisions relating to the approval of centre delegated arrangements/adjustments are made by The SENCo . Appropriate evidence, where required by the arrangement, is held on file by The centre.

- **The use of a word processor**

The 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.

A pupil sitting an exam may be approved the use of a word processor where this is appropriate to the pupil's needs and not simply because this is the pupil's preferred way of working. A word processor cannot simply be granted to a pupil because he/she now prefers to type rather than write or can work faster on a keyboard, or because he/she uses a laptop at home.

The use of a word processor must reflect the pupil's normal way of working within the centre and be appropriate to the pupil's needs. In order to use a word processor in both internal and external exams, the pupil must show a significant and substantial need.

The example of the type of evidence for the use of a word processor in exams are one of more of the following:

- The handwriting is so messy and a high percentage of words are illegible so that someone unfamiliar

with the handwriting cannot read it fluently and easily.

- The pupil experiences extreme discomfort when handwriting at length and has a medical condition

diagnosed and confirmed by a practising medical professional.

- The pupil has legible handwriting but makes omissions and cannot order his/her ideas correctly so

that the sense gets lost and is difficult to decipher and will significantly impact the outcome.

- The content and expression of the typed work is of a significantly better quality than handwritten work.

Evidence is required in all cases.

Pupils using Word Processors at Bradfield College will be required to use the school's equipment in all examinations. We encourage pupils to disable their spell and grammar check unless they qualify for use of these tools within the JCQ guidelines as these functions will not be available in exams. All pupils allocated use of Word Processor for examinations purposes are seated in the IT suites together.

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]

A centre must have a policy on the use of word processors. A word processor cannot simply be granted to a candidate 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.

The use of a word processor must reflect the candidate's normal way of working within the centre. For example, where the curriculum is delivered electronically and the centre provides word processors to all candidates.

The centre may wish to set out the particular types of candidates which it considers would benefit from the use of a word processor.

A member of the centre's senior leadership team must produce a statement for inspection purposes which details the criteria the centre uses to award and allocate word processors for examinations. AA 5.8

details the criteria Bradfield College uses to award and allocate word processors in examinations/assessments.

- **Separate invigilation within the centre**

The 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]

Pupils' learning profiles and progress are reviewed to establish substantial and long-term impairments paired with their normal way of working within the centre as it relates to the need of separate invigilation. Teacher and pupil input is sought as is feedback from the Exam's Officer.

Normal way of working within the centre is documented by teachers, Housemistress/master, and SENCO.

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

details the criteria Bradfield College uses to award separate invigilation within the centre.

Additional information:

Not Applicable

### **Modified papers**

Modified papers are ordered using AAO.

- Modified papers must be ordered in advance of a specific examination series, no later than the published deadline for the series concerned (AA 6.1)
- (updated 2021/22) Modified papers are individually prepared for candidates for whom other adjustments are unsuitable. The modification of papers involves additional resources. Therefore centres are required to provide the awarding bodies with early notification that a candidate will require a modified paper. (AA 6.1)
- Modified papers must not be ordered for candidates unless the centre intends to enter them for the relevant examination series (AA 6.1)
- For the adjustment to be effective, the candidate must have had appropriate opportunities to practise using an awarding body's past modified papers before his/her first examination (AA 6.1)

## **Roles and responsibilities**

(updated 2021/22) When an access arrangement/reasonable adjustment has been processed on-line and approved, the evidence of need (where required) must be made available to a JCQ Centre Inspector upon request. An awarding body may also request evidence of need when considered necessary. This can either be in hard copy paper format or electronically. (AA 4.2.13)

Where documentation is stored electronically an e-folder for each individual candidate must be created. The candidate's e-folder must hold each of the required documents for inspection. (AA 4.2.13)

It is the responsibility of:

- SENCo to collect a candidate's consent (a completed candidate personal data consent form) to record their personal data on-line through AAO
- SENCo to submit applications for approval using AAO
- The centre to hold the file/e-folder for each individual candidate containing a copy of the candidate's approved application, appropriate evidence of need (where required) and a signed candidate personal data consent form (AA 8.6)
- SENCo to submit applications for approval directly to an awarding body for any qualification that does not fall within the scope of AAO
- Exams Officer to order modified papers

Additional responsibilities:

Not Applicable