



ACCESS ARRANGEMENTS FOR EXAMINATIONS POLICY

MIDDLEWICH HIGH SCHOOL

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Key staff involved in the policy

Role	Name(s)
SENDCo	Leanne Collins
SENDCo line manager (Senior Leader)	Alex Blackburn
Head of Centre	Lydia Naylor
Strategic Overview for Access Arrangements	Jay Lobina-Lal
Access arrangement facilitator(s)	Lisa Flavin (Exams Officer) Karen Worthington (Access Arrangements Assessor) Natalie Cottrell (Access Arrangements Assessor)

This document is written in accordance with the current edition of JCQ Access Arrangements and reasonable adjustments. Associated policies are Equality Information and Objectives Statements, Inclusion and SEND Policy and Examinations Policy.

The SENDCo, fully supported by teaching staff and members of the senior leadership team, leads on the access arrangements/reasonable adjustments process within our centre.

Teaching staff and members of the senior leadership team support the SENDCo in identifying, determining and implementing appropriate access arrangements and reasonable adjustments. The SENDCo works with teaching staff, support staff (such as Learning Practitioners) and exams office personnel to ensure that approved access arrangements/ reasonable adjustments are put in place for internal school tests, mock examinations and examinations. Where appropriate, the SENDCo will also work with specialist advisory teachers, educational psychologists and medical professionals.

The Head of Centre/SENDCo will also appoint the designated assessor and will thus ensure that candidates are assessed, process applications online and hold the evidence for inspection purposes for all qualifications. The SENDCo will work with teaching staff to identify the most appropriate published format of modified papers where required. These regulations must be used when processing applications using Access arrangements online.

Access arrangements/reasonable adjustments may cover the entire course. Ideally, they should be applied for at the start of the course. Access arrangements online must be used to process applications. Arrangements must be processed and approved before an examination or assessment, no later than the published deadlines by JCQ.

Access Arrangements Overview

Access Arrangements are pre-examination adjustments for candidates based on evidence of need and normal way of working. Access Arrangements fall into two distinct categories: some arrangements are delegated to centres, others require prior JCQ awarding body approval.

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'.

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.

Identifying the needs for access arrangements within Middlewich High School

Students who may qualify for formal Access Arrangements during KS4 are identified in KS3. At this stage needs are screened and identified, rather than formally assessed. Screening and monitoring takes the form of: KS2 scale scores, teacher assessment, reviews of interventions, EP reports, ST exam analysis and invigilator's log, biannual STAR reading tests and CATs. Adjustments to quality first teaching within lessons are then made, according to need, to enable a student to access their learning and make progress (in-line with the SEN Code of Practice 2015). All staff are involved in monitoring the adjustments.

Historic screening and ongoing monitoring determines the level of specific assessment required. These assessments are delivered in accordance with the JCQ guidance, by the appointed specialist assessor. Formal Access arrangements expire after 26 Months, after this period the student may be re-tested. The most recent testing is binding and determines any subsequent Access Arrangements (AA).

Where formal AA are determined and agreed these become part of 'normal practice'. This means that appropriate AA should be taken into consideration through Quality First teaching and formally applied in all lessons. If a student chooses continually not to use the agreed access arrangements, either because their needs change or they do not feel it aids their learning or achievement, then access arrangements can be removed by the centre (SENDCo and/or Headteacher).

Appointment of assessors of candidates with learning difficulties

At the point an assessor is engaged/employed in the centre, evidence of the assessor's qualification is obtained and checked, by the SENDCo, against the current requirements from JCQ. This process is carried out prior to the assessor undertaking any assessment of a candidate.

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

A copy of the Assessors Certificates are held by the SENDCo and will be available for the Inspector during their visit.

The Head of Centre must satisfy themselves that the assessor does have the required level of competence and training. The assessor must present evidence of successful completion of a post-graduate course in individual specialist assessment at or equivalent to Level 7. Further details are provided in the JCQ guidance section 7.3.

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

The SENDCo will adhere to JCQ guidance set out in the current document JCQ Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments:

The SENDCo must:

- ensure that applications are processed on time, no later than the published deadline;
- ensure that the full supporting evidence is in place before an online application is processed;
- review the evidence before an online application is processed, ensuring that the candidate does meet the published criteria for the respective arrangement;
- hold all supporting evidence and present such evidence to a JCQ Centre Inspector upon request; and
- ensure that the agreed adjustment has been put in place before the candidate's first examination, e.g. internal school tests and mock examinations.
- The SENDCo must provide the assessor with a fully completed Part 1 of Form 8 prior to the candidate being assessed (Part 2 of Form 8). Part 1 must include the candidate's current difficulties in the classroom, timed internal tests and/or mock examinations, teacher feedback and their normal way of working. A 'skeleton' Part 1 is not acceptable. The SENDCo must complete form 9 to establish needs of students requiring access arrangements. *Comments from parents cannot be recorded within Part 1 of Form 8 or Part 1 of Form 9. Only evidence from teaching staff and professionals should be included.*

The assessor must:

- record the results of any tests completed indicating that the impairment has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on the candidate's performance;
- only work within their area of expertise and in an ethical fashion;

- use current editions of nationally standardised tests appropriate to the candidate;
- report the results of their assessment within Part 2 of Form 8; and provide the centre with evidence of their qualification(s) before assessing any candidate
- Assessors must personally conduct the assessments. They must not sign off assessments carried out by another professional.

All assessments and forms are stored securely in appropriate files in the SEND department. Each file contains a combination of the following documentation to support the application as appropriate:

- The completed and analysed assessments,
- JCQ Form 8 – JCQ/AA/LD must be used to record information about a candidate's access arrangements/reasonable adjustments and be presented by the SENDCo for inspection. The candidate's name must be recorded on every page of Form 8 and the form must be stapled together. The form must only be used for candidates with learning difficulties or where a Language Modifier is required.
- Appendix 1 Evidence of Need form (provides supplementary information to the Form 8),
- Signed data protection notice (required for each application),
- Comments and observations from teaching staff regarding 25% extra time (where applicable)
- Evidence of supervised rest breaks being trialled (where applicable)
- Sample internal test/mock exam papers showing use of 25% extra time (where applicable)
- Evidence of consultation with subject teachers (for practical assistant applications)
- Teachers Referrals
- Academic Reports,
- Samples of work,
- Letters from parents,
- Reports/letter from other professionals,
- Medical evidence.
- Evidence of email correspondence between teachers and colleagues in the SEND department.

Evidence Requirements for 25% Extra Time

For all applications for 25% extra time processed from 1 September 2025 onwards (except for GCSE resits), the following additional evidence must be held on file:

- 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.

Supervised Rest Breaks

Where a candidate has an impairment other than a learning difficulty, the SENDCo must have trialled and exhausted the option of supervised rest breaks through timed internal tests and/or mock examinations before making an application for 25% extra time.

Supervised rest breaks are often more effective and appropriate than 25% extra time for candidates

who experience:

- Anxiety or attention difficulties
- Neurodivergent conditions such as ADHD or ASD
- Medical conditions
- Mental health needs

The SENDCo will ensure that supervised rest breaks are considered and trialled as the first option before applying for 25% extra time for these candidates.

Applying for Access Arrangements Online

The SENDCo is responsible for completing the online applications. A copy of the approved application must be given to the exams officer in order to facilitate any arrangements.

The SENDCo 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 and appropriate evidence of need (where required) for inspection by the JCQ Centre Inspection Service.

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. A signed candidate personal data consent form and Data protection confirmation by the examinations officer or SENDCo form are no longer required.

The SENDCo will inform the students of the outcome of the assessments and which arrangements they are entitled to, if at all. The SENDCo will advise students that the arrangements will be in place in forth-coming assessments and they should become part of their normal way of working (in class, key assessments, mock exams and external examinations). They are also made aware that if they do not use the arrangement then it will be withdrawn. A student does not have to make use of an arrangement that has been approved although if they choose not to, then they need to sign a form acknowledging this and which confirms that the arrangement is being withdrawn. The SENDCo must ensure that parents/carers are advised.

Centre-delegated access arrangements

Centre delegated access arrangements are those arrangements which may be granted by the centre with appropriate evidence held on file and/or those arrangements that do not need to be recorded). These will be applied as appropriate via the SENDCo and Exams Officer and do not need to be approved online. The Exam Officer will be notified of any centre delegated access arrangements via the Access Arrangements form.

Practical Assistant Applications

Before processing an online application for a practical assistant, subject teachers must be consulted to ensure the proposed tasks the practical assistant would perform in an examination or assessment would not invalidate the published assessment objectives.

The SENDCo will record evidence of this consultation and ensure that the practical assistant's role is clearly defined and appropriate for each examination.

Timetable Variations

Where a timetable variation is required, an online application must not be processed until it has been established which of the candidate's examinations will be subject to a timetable variation.

Full details of all the candidate's examinations which will be subject to a timetable variation must be recorded, including:

- The date of each examination
- The session for each examination

This information must be held on file for inspection purposes.

Modified Papers and Alternative Arrangements

The SENDCo must ensure that a question paper on coloured paper is appropriate to the candidate's needs. Alternative ways of working should be explored first, such as:

- The use of a coloured overlay
- The candidate wearing coloured glasses

Examination Reading Pens

Where candidates only require occasional words or phrases to be read, they may use an examination reading pen as an alternative to a reader or computer reader.

Appendix 1

Secure Storage

All confidential access arrangement application materials will be logged and stored as per current JCQ guidance.

Actions		Staff
Access test Materials	• Student access tests to be stored in a locked filing cabinet. • All evidence to be stored in secure files with access tests.	SENDCo Deputy SENDCo Access Arrangements Learning Practitioner
Transfer to secure room	• Files to be stored in a locked cabinet for 3 years. • Older material will be securely transferred using school procedures to the archive.	SENDCo Deputy SENDCo Exam Officer