

ACCESS ARRANGEMENTS POLICY

2025/26

This policy is reviewed annually to ensure compliance with current regulations

Approved/reviewed by	
Governors	
Date of next review	September 2026

Key staff involved in the policy

Role	Name(s)
Inclusion Lead/SENCo	Cassie Francis AP/SENCO
Inclusion lead/SENCo line manager (Senior leader)	Leon Wilson
Head of centre	Leon Wilson
Assessor(s)	Candy Clarkson
Access arrangement facilitator(s)	Katie Bryan/Sarah Pitchford

Contents

Key staff involved in the policy	2
What are access arrangements and reasonable adjustments?.....	4
Access arrangements	4
Reasonable adjustments.....	4
Purpose of the policy	4
General principles.....	4
Equalities Policy (Exams)	5
The assessment process	5
The qualification(s) of the current assessor(s).....	5
Appointment of assessors of candidates with learning difficulties.....	5
Process for the assessment of a candidate’s learning difficulties by an assessor	6
Picture of need/normal way of working	6
Processing access arrangements and adjustments	7
Arrangements/adjustments requiring awarding body approval	7
Centre-delegated arrangements/adjustments	7
Centre-specific criteria for particular arrangements/adjustments	7
Word Processor Policy (Exams)	7
Alternative Rooming Arrangements Policy.....	8

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'. (¹AA, 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'. (¹AA, Definitions)

*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

Purpose of the policy

The purpose of this policy is to confirm that The Hurlingham Academy 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**, section 5.4)

This publication is further referred to in this policy as GR

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

Where the ALS lead/SENCo is storing documentation electronically he/she **must** create an e-folder for each individual candidate. The candidate's e-folder **must** hold each of the required documents for inspection. (¹AA, section 4.2)

The policy is annually reviewed to ensure that processes are carried out in accordance with the current edition of the JCQ publication 'Adjustments t for candidates with disabilities and learning difficulties - **Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments**'.

¹This publication is further referred to in this policy as AA

General principles

The principles for the centre to consider are detailed in AA (section 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 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 disabled candidate.

The SENCo, or an equivalent member of staff within a FE college, **must** ensure that the proposed access arrangement/reasonable adjustment does not unfairly disadvantage or advantage the candidate.

Access arrangements/reasonable adjustments should be processed at the **start** of the course.

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 his/her first examination.

Equalities Policy (Exams)

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

The head of centre/senior leadership team will... recognise its duties towards disabled candidates, including private candidates, ensuring compliance with all aspects of the Equality Act 2010[†], particularly Section 20 (7). This **must** include a duty to explore and provide access to suitable courses, through the access arrangements process submit applications for reasonable adjustments and make reasonable adjustments to the service the centre provides to disabled candidates. Where the centre is under a duty to make a reasonable adjustment, the centre **must not** charge a disabled candidate any additional fee in relation to the adjustment or aid...

†or any legislation in a relevant jurisdiction other than England and Wales which has an equivalent purpose and effect (GR, section 5.4)

The Access Arrangements Policy further covers the assessment process and related issues in more detail.

The assessment process

Assessments are carried out by an assessor(s) appointed by the head of centre. The assessor(s) is (are) appropriately qualified as required by JCQ regulations in AA, section 7.3.

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 against the current requirements in AA. This process is carried out prior to the assessor undertaking any assessment of a candidate.

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

The Headteacher/SENDCo (usually the SENDCo) will check that the centre's specialist assessor's qualifications meet the required levels and will also monitor that the assessment process is correctly applied.

The Hurlingham Academy 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 in Chapter 7 of the JCQ publication *Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments*. (GR 5.4)

The Hurlingham Academy ensures 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) is held on file for inspection purposes and is presented to the JCQ Centre Inspector by the SENCo. (AA 7.3)

Reporting the appointment of the assessor(s)

All certifications of the assessor are held in the AA file within the SEND Department (in a locked filing cabinet)

A copy is also kept in each students separate AA file for inspection purposes and also for transition purposes.

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

Where candidates have an additional need that would require AA to be put in place (I.e., low reading age, MLD, physical need etc), background information is provided and discussed with the assessor to determine whether further assessment is required.

If assessment is required, Form 8's are completed alongside this, highlighting a student's learning difficulties as well as the specific test and score that achieved. Form 8's are part completed prior to assessment by an assessor.

The Hurlingham Academy ensures that the correct procedures are followed as in Chapter 7 of the JCQ publication *Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments*. (GR 5.4)

The Hurlingham Academy and assessors working within our centre 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 (AA 7.3) .

We do not take private candidates, distance learners or home educated students (refer to the requirement in GR, section 5.4)

Picture of need/normal way of working

Before the candidate's assessment, the SENCo 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 SENCo and the assessor must work together to ensure a joined-up and consistent process.

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 considering 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 SENCo. The responsibility to

determine and request appropriate and practicable access arrangements/reasonable adjustments specifically lies with the SENCo. (AA, section 7.5)

Evidence is gathered to confirm the student's normal way of working to ensure a holistic picture of need is presented.

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 AA, chapter 8 (Processing applications for access arrangements and adjustments) and chapter 6 (Modified papers)).

AAO is accessed within 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.

Applications using AAO are usually conducted during Year 10 of student's academic life. In certain situations, this may differ, however, this would be our standard practice. The SENDCo is responsible for overseeing this. Any non-approved applications will be discussed with the JCQ and where necessary additional actions from this will take place. In order to request modified papers, the exams officer and Assistant SENDCO meet to establish what subjects are required and then the exams officer orders them whilst both parties are at the computer.

The SENCo keeps 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 candidate **personal data consent form** and the **Data Protection confirmation Form** by the SENCO prior to the processing of the online application, which must be retained for 26 months from the date of the online application being approved for inspection by the JCQ Centre Inspection Service. (AA 8.6)

Centre-delegated arrangements/adjustments

Any centre delegated arrangements/adjustments are kept on file (electronically via ARBOR). Additional evidence for these arrangements, where necessary, will also be kept on file.

Centre-specific criteria for particular arrangements/adjustments

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 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. They must have undergone a touch-typing course to support their normal way of working.

The Hurlingham Academy has a policy on the use of word processors that was produced by a member of the senior leadership team that is available for inspection purposes which details the criteria the centre uses to award and allocate word processors for examinations. (AA 5.8)

The Word Processor Policy can be found - [The Hurlingham Academy > About Us > Policies](#)

Alternative Rooming Arrangements Policy

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 (formerly known as separate invigilation) will be made by the ALS lead/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, section 5.16)

Alternative Rooming Arrangements 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, emotional and mental health needs. (AA 5.16)

In the case of alternative rooming, the candidate's disability is established within the centre (see Chapter 4, paragraph 4.1.4). It is known to a Form Tutor, a Head of Year, the SENCo or a senior member of staff with pastoral responsibilities. For example, a long-term medical condition which has a substantial and adverse effect. The SENDCO/Assistant SENDCO will inform the EO of the candidates who require an alternative rooming arrangement.

Alternative Rooming Arrangements must reflect the candidate's normal and current way of working in internal school tests and mock examinations. Nervousness, low level anxiety or being worried about examinations is not sufficient grounds for separate invigilation within the centre. (AA, section 5.16) Students with similar needs may be sat together in an alternative venue.