



## Access Arrangements Policy

Approved and Adopted

Policy Author:	Exams Officer
Approved by:	Full Governing Body
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This policy is reviewed annually to ensure compliance with current regulations

Centre Name	<b>Cranbourne School</b>
Centre Number	<b>58421</b>
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### **Key staff involved in the policy**

<b>Role</b>	<b>Name(s)</b>
Head of Centre	<b>Miss Sarah Conlon</b>
SENCo (or equivalent role)	<b>Mrs Martha Horimoto/Mrs Vicki Ellis</b>
Assessor	<b>Catherine Baynton</b>
Senior Leaders	<b>Mrs Klara Reddy Mr Richard Pegler Mr Alastair Targett</b>
Exams Officer	<b>Mrs Jacky Head</b>
Access arrangement facilitator	<b>Mrs Martha Horimoto/Mrs Jacky Head</b>

## 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'. (AARA<sup>1</sup>, 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'.

The centre **must** ensure that approved adjustments can be delivered to candidates.  
(AARA<sup>1</sup>, Definitions)

\*References to legislation are to the Equality Act 2010. Separate legislation is in place for Northern Ireland (see [AARA 1.8](#)). The definitions and procedures in [AARA](#) 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 Cranbourne 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**, 5.4)  
This publication is further referred to in this policy as GR

This policy is maintained and held by SENCo (or equivalent role) 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 SENCo (or equivalent role) is storing documentation electronically they **must** create an e-folder for each individual candidate. The candidate's e-folder **must** hold each of the required documents for inspection. (AARA 4.2)

The policy is annually reviewed to ensure that processes are carried out in accordance with the current JCQ document 'Adjustments for candidates with disabilities and learning difficulties - **Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments**'.

<sup>1</sup>This publication is further referred to in this policy as AARA

## General principles

The head of centre/senior leadership team will appoint a SENCo, or an equivalent member of staff, to coordinate the access arrangements process within the centre and determine appropriate arrangements for candidates with learning difficulties and disabilities, those for whom English is an additional language and those with a temporary illness or temporary injury. (GR 5.4)

The principles for the centre to consider are detailed in AARA (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 them 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.

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

A centre **must** make decisions on appropriate access arrangements for their candidates. Although professionals from other organisations may give advice, they **cannot** make the decision for the centre. They will not have a working knowledge of an individual candidate's needs and how their difficulties impact in the classroom and/or in timed assessments. It is the responsibility of the SENCo to make appropriate and informed decisions based on the JCQ regulations.

Applications should be processed at the start of or during the first year of a two-year course having firmly established a picture of need and normal way of working.

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 their 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.

This policy can be found in the staff shared area and a hard copy is with the Exams Officer
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This 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 [AARA](#) section 7.3.

### The qualification(s) of the current assessor(s)

Catherine Baynton Access Arrangement Update 2024/Patoss SpLD Assessment Practising Certificate 31/10/2024-30/10/2027

### Appointment of assessors

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 [AARA](#). This process is carried out prior to the assessor undertaking any assessment of a candidate.

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

Specialist qualifications are checked by the school; applicants are required to bring original certificates to interview. Copies of these are kept on file.

If a pupil assessment has been completed by an Educational Psychologist, or other appropriately qualified assessor, outside school, the SENCo will request and check their qualifications to ensure that they comply with current JCQ/CIE/IB guidelines.

Bear in mind **all** relevant JCQ regulations and guidance provided in [GR](#) and [AA](#) including:

**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 in Chapter 7 of the JCQ document 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.** ([AARA, section 7.3](#))

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

Copies of the Assessors qualifications are kept on file in the AA folder.

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

Pupils on the SEND register are tested as a matter of course where required.

For all other pupils, teachers are asked to identify any pupils who they believe, through ongoing assessment, should be considered for access arrangements. Evidence is presented to the SENCo in the form of book/exam scrutiny and their normal way of working which would be required in any assessment or exam moving forward along with any other supplementary evidence.

Cranbourne School 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 (AARA 7.5, 7.6)
- Arrangements must be made for the candidate to be assessed by the centre's appointed assessor (AARA 7.5)
- Assessors **must** personally conduct the assessments. They **must not** sign off assessments carried out by another professional (AA 7.5)
- The assessor must carry out tests which are relevant to support the application (AA RA 7.5)
- A privately commissioned assessment carried out without prior consultation with the centre cannot be used to award access arrangements (AA 7.3)
- 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 (AARA 7.3)

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

Cranbourne confirms

- Before the candidate's assessment, the SENCo will provide the assessor with background information, i.e. a picture of need has been painted as per Part 1 of Form 8. The centre and the assessor must work together to ensure a joined-up and consistent process. (AARA 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.
- All candidates must be assessed in 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 with the person appointed in the centre. The responsibility to request access arrangements specifically lies with the centre. (AARA 7.5.3).
- Teaching staff are asked to provide examples of candidates' work to demonstrate the need that has led to the application of an access arrangement being made. This work is stored in the student file in the access folder and made available for inspection.

Since the application requires evidence of need, the school will hold evidence in its files that can be inspected at short notice. This can include:

- Educational psychology reports, dated no earlier than Y9.
- Speech Therapist reports, dated no earlier than Y9.
- Occupational Therapist reports, dated no earlier than Y9.
- Letters from outside agencies such as hospitals, doctors and CAMHS (Children and Adolescent Mental Health Service), dated no earlier than Y9.
- Reports from Hearing Impairment (HI) and Visual Impairment (VI) advisory teachers, dated no earlier than Y9.
- Copies of Education Health and Care Plans (EHCP).
- Permission from the exam board for the arrangements.
- A signed copy of Form 8 report by the schools designated assessor / tester. Joint Council for qualifications (JCQ) deadlines are fully adhered to.

## **Processing access arrangements**

Parents must declare at the time of enrolment and when completing the school application form if their child has any medical or psychological conditions, SEND needs, previous exam access arrangements at another educational institution or any other issues that may require exam access arrangements. Failure to disclose this negates Cranbourne from their responsibilities.

### **Arrangements/adjustments requiring awarding body approval**

Access arrangements may for example include: supervised rest breaks, extra time, reader, scribe, word processor, transcript, language modifier and prompter.

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 AARA 8 (Processing applications for access arrangements and adjustments) and 6 (Modified papers). AAO is accessed within the JCQ Centre Admin Portal (CAP) using any of the awarding body secure extranet sites. A single application for approval is required for each candidate regardless of the awarding body used.

Online applications can only be processed where they are supported by the centre and the candidate meets the published criteria for the arrangement(s) with the full supporting evidence in place. (AARA 8 Summary)

## Evidence needed to apply for exam access arrangements

There are a number of pieces of evidence that can be used to apply for exam access arrangements to JCQ:

- Form 8 reports from specialist teachers carrying out exam access assessments / tests.
- Previous exam access arrangements from another school with the relevant evidence of need.
  - Subject teachers' examples of work as appropriate and support given in class or evidence from tests or mock exams.
- Results from baseline assessments and psychometric tests completed no earlier than Y9.
- Medical reports outlining significant medical needs and disability dated no earlier than Y9.
- An Educational Psychology report which explicitly diagnoses the need for exam access arrangements, completed no earlier than Y9.
- A Speech therapy report which diagnoses severe language impairment completed no earlier than Y9.

Where documents constituting evidence of need (including medical evidence) predate the time when the student was in Y9, these documents must be updated to confirm that the students' requirements have not changed. When granted, access arrangements are valid for 26 months.

## How do staff and parents know whether a student has access arrangements?

On transition into school information is gathered around pupils who had existing access arrangements during KS2 SATS. These access arrangements are trialled during whole school baseline testing and end of unit testing during KS3. Across the course of KS4 pupils continue to trial their existing access arrangements as their normal way of working until these are formalised through the JCQ application.

If a need for access arrangements have been identified, the relevant parties are informed:

- Parents are informed in writing – the letter outlines the type of arrangements that have been awarded.
- Students are informed verbally.
- A list of all students who receive access arrangements is made available to all staff. This information is also placed on our schools' central data system, SIMS/Edulink

## Centre-delegated arrangements/adjustments

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

- Candidates may be provided with this arrangement for reasons such as, but not limited to:
- Bereavement, recent physical injuries or sickness, having an identified SEND need that would be better served in a quiet venue, behaviour concerns that would necessitate closer supervision of the candidate, and to separate them from the main exam venue in order to minimise potential disruption to the majority of the cohort.

### 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 wordprocessor must reflect the candidate's normal way of working within the centre.

Pupil's use of a laptop is listed on a register of use. This allows the SENCo to build a profile of how the laptop is used over time. This is reviewed by the SENCo in line with the SEND policy on intervention reviews. Pupils who meet the criteria for 'normal way of working' using a laptop are offered laptop access in examinations. The criteria for 'normal way of working' is daily use of the laptop to access learning and learning resources and use of the laptop for mock examinations due to a substantial and long term impairment. Use of a laptop for access arrangements will be due to a substantial impairment which could include a physical disability such as DCD or a processing difficulty.

### Alternative Rooming Arrangements

A decision where an exam candidate may be approved alternative rooming within the school 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 school (AA 5.16) For alternative rooming, the candidate's difficulties are established within the school (see Chapter 4, paragraph 4.1.4) and known to a Tutor, a Head of House, Head of Section, the SENCo or a senior member of staff with pastoral responsibilities. Alternative rooming reflects the candidate's normal way of working in internal school tests and mock examinations because of a long-term medical condition or long-term social, emotional and mental health needs. (AA 5.16)

## Modified papers

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 (AARA 6.1)

Modified papers are prepared for candidates for whom other adjustments are unsuitable.

The modification of papers involves additional resources. Therefore centres must provide the awarding bodies with early notification that a candidate will require a modified paper. (AARA 6.1)

Modified papers must not be ordered for candidates unless the centre intends to enter them for the relevant examination series (AARA 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 their first examination (AARA 6.1)

## Roles and responsibilities

When an access arrangement 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. (AARA 4.2.13)

Where access arrangements 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. (AARA 4.2.13)

It is the responsibility of:

- The SENCo to collect and manage the appropriate evidence of need for an Access Arrangements application and to fill in the relevant documents (Form 8 parts 1 and 3 / Form 9)
- The SENCo to hold the file/e-folder for each individual candidate (containing a copy of the candidate's approved application, evidence of need and a signed candidate personal data consent form) (AARA 8.6)
- It is the responsibility of the SENCo to inform candidates that an application for access arrangements will be processed using Access Arrangements Online (AAO), complying with the UK GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018
- The SENCo to submit applications for approval through AAO
- The SENCo to submit applications for approval directly to an awarding body for any qualification that does not fall within the scope of AAO
- The Exams Officer to order modified papers