Access Arrangements Policy 2017/18

This policy is reviewed annually to ensure compliance with current regulations

Approved/reviewed by	
Governors	
Date of next review	April 2019

Key staff involved in the access arrangements process

Role	Name(s)
Head of Centre	**Mrs J Polley**
Exams Officer (Senior Leader)	**Mrs N Geater**
SENDCo	**Miss S Brosnan**
SLT member(s)	**Mr J Polley**
	Mrs N Geater
	Mr A Wilkinson
	Mr M Ashcroft (SENDCo Line Manager)
	Mr C Barnett

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What are access arrangements and reasonable adjustments?

Access arrangements

*"**Access arrangements are agreed before an assessment**. They allow candidates with 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'."*
[AA *Definitions*, page 3]

Reasonable adjustments

"The Equality Act 2010 requires an Awarding Body to make reasonable adjustments where a disabled person would be at a substantial disadvantage in undertaking an assessment.

A reasonable adjustment for a particular person 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 a number of factors including the needs of the disabled candidate/learner. An adjustment may not be considered reasonable if it involves unreasonable costs, timeframes or affects the security or integrity of the assessment.

There is no duty on the Awarding Bodies to make any adjustment to the assessment objectives being tested in an assessment." [AA *Definitions*, page 3]

Purpose of the policy

The purpose of this policy is to confirm that The Wensleydale School & Sixth Form complies with its *"...obligation to identify the need for, request and implement access arrangements..."*

[JCQ *General Regulations for Approved Centres,* 5.5]

This publication is further referred to in this policy as GR.

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

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

Disability Policy (exams)

A large part of the access arrangements policy is covered in the Disability Policy (exams) which covers staff roles and responsibilities in identifying the need for, requesting and implementing access arrangements and the conduct of exams.

The Wensleydale School & Sixth Form's Exam Contingency Plan can be accessed from the school website and is stored in the Master Policy Document file in the Business Manager's office. Electronically it can be accessed by admin and SLT via J:Documents/Exams/2017/18/June_2018/Exam_Policies.

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 7.3.

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

The SENDCo, Miss S Brosnan, has successfully completed a post graduate course at Sunderland University. Her qualification certificate is held on her personnel file and is available to the JCQ Centre Inspector upon request. The school also employs the services of Mr R Pierson, who is also a qualified assessor. Copies of Mr Pierson's qualifications are held in school on the Single Central Record and are made available to the JCQ Centre Inspector upon request.

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

Mrs J Jackson – HLTA, is responsible for requesting the specialist assessor's qualifications which are checked and verified by the SENDCo. The qualifications are entered on to the Single Central Record by the School Administrator and held securely in the main school office

How the assessment process is administered

Students at The Wensleydale School & Sixth Form are literacy tested annually using ART (Access Reading Test) online and results are analysed (Key Stage 3 and 4.) Students who show a deficit are given literacy intervention and support to enable them to achieve. Students with interventions are re-tested half termly to look for clear improvement.

When students are in Year 9 if they are still highlighted as below their chronological age or expected standardised scoring level, students are tested using Lucid Exact which gives accurate test results for six key areas of literacy. Students who score below a standardised score of 85 in any section of the assessment are then put forward for a Specialist Exam Arrangement test using an external assessor (currently.) Once results are in school they are collated and summarised by the HLTA SEND and shared within school for all staff to access and abide by.

This process is overseen by the school SENDCo to ensure that the process is administered correctly.

Recording evidence of need

Initial results of annual ART testing are stored in a central encrypted spreadsheet which is regularly updated and analysed by the SEND team.

Form 8s are completed by the SENDCo and are kept electronically in a secure area of the school network and updated when necessary. These are currently 'signed off' by our external assessors.

Individual student consent forms are signed and retained in a specific exam lever arch folder and locked away in a secure filing cabinet in school.

In the event that a privately commissioned report, or a report from an external professional, is rejected by a centre, the head of centre or a member of the senior leadership team will provide a written rationale supporting their decision to the parent/carer.

Gathering evidence to demonstrate *normal way of working*

The Wensleydale School & Sixth Form use a referral system to the SEND team for students where there are any concerns regarding examinations and assessment. Concerns can be medical, academic or social, emotional or mental health (SEMH) related.

Any specialist exam arrangements apply to all assessments and classroom situations. Teaching staff are asked to report back to the SEND team regarding the success of these arrangements. For example, a Post 16 student who has a 'normal way of working' using a laptop has this resource in all lessons and is encouraged to use it.

The use of extra time/readers/scribes in any assessment is carefully considered and applied by the subject teacher, who also organises for a support member of staff to facilitate the arrangement. The evidence of this being the 'normal way of working' is in teachers' planning, where it is noted that a student entitlement is used/adhered to. Staff also report back to the SEND team if they feel a student is not using their entitlement in the best way possible. Students, throughout their time at The Wensleydale School & Sixth Form, become accustomed to using their entitlements, and by the whole staff approach to SEND this becomes their 'normal way of working.'

Literacy interventions and support lessons led by both faculty and SEND staff ensure that targeted support is in place for students who need it. This in turn supports and gives evidence of a normal working practice. These interventions can include preparation for the assessments and examinations- such as getting a student used to using a shared reader etc.

Mock examinations are run as close to 'reality' as possible and throughout Key Stage 4 and 5 special exam arrangements are closely followed to ensure that they become 'normal way of working' and students are used to the procedure followed.

Processing access arrangements

Arrangements 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 listed on page 2 of AA. This tool also provides the facility to order modified papers for those qualifications listed on page 74.

AAO is accessed by logging in to any of the awarding body secure extranet sites. A single application is required for each candidate regardless of the awarding body used.

The School Administrator (Exams), with the assistance of the SENDCo submits all applications for Special Exam Arrangements. The information is collated and dealt with by the SENDCo and her team prior to going to the external specialist assessor and then to the Exams Officer for submission.

The information required is literacy test results (ART/Lucid Exact), any formal written documentation from teaching staff, external professionals or Parents/Carers as well as a Form 8 where appropriate. Files are kept largely electronically and secured using internal passwords or stored on encrypted hard drives. Any printed copies are kept securely in the SENDCo's office in a locked filing cabinet. Our external assessor's qualifications are kept in the central school safe in the main admin office.

Mr Pierson (Specialist Assessor) has, in the past, given 'not enough evidence' to some applications. Where this applies, copies of these rejected applications are stored securely for 24 months.

Centre-delegated access arrangements

Centre-delegated access arrangements are authorised by the SENDCo and Exams Officer where students have a specific medical need, supported in writing by a medical professional. This includes access to a smaller, shared room or 1:1 space. Students with an individual need including the need for movement breaks or 'time out' are housed separately from the main cohort on a 1:1 basis to avoid disruption to any other student.

Any temporary injuries or SEMH needs affecting students at the time of their exams are attended to as they arise. Decisions regarding centre-delegated access arrangements are made by the Exams Officer based on evidence available. For example, a student with a writing hand injury may be given access to an appropriate adjustment such as a scribe or laptop. We would then retrospectively seek medical supporting evidence.

Centre-specific criteria for particular access arrangements

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 this is the candidate's preferred way of working within the centre. Our Word Processor Policy can be found at Appendix 1.

The Wensleydale School & Sixth Form complies with AA chapter 4 *Adjustments for candidates with disabilities and learning difficulties* regulations and guidance as follows:

- Candidates with access to word processors are allowed to do so in order to remove barriers for disabled candidates which prevent them from being placed at a substantial disadvantage as a consequence of persistent and significant difficulties
- The use of word processors is only permitted whilst ensuring that the integrity of the assessment is maintained, at the same time as providing access to assessments for a disabled candidate
- The use of a word processor is not granted where it will compromise the assessment objectives of the specification in question
- Candidates may not require the use of a word processor in each specification. As subjects and their methods of assessments may vary, leading to different demands of our candidates, the need for the use of a word processor is considered on a subject-by-subject basis
- The use of a word processor is considered and agreed where appropriate at the start of the course. Candidates are subsequently aware that they will have the use of a word processor for examinations and controlled assessments/coursework
- Candidates are made aware that they will have the use of a word processor for examinations and non-examination assessments (including controlled assessments/coursework)
- The use of a word processor for candidates is only granted if it reflects the support given to the candidate as their 'normal way of working', which is defined as support in the classroom; or
    - working in small groups for reading and/or writing; or
    - literacy support lessons; or
    - literacy intervention strategies; and/or
    - in internal school tests and mock examinations

The only exception to this is where an arrangement may need to be put in place as a consequence of a temporary injury or impairment at the time of an exam or assessment.

Separate invigilation within the centre

A decision where an exam candidate may be approved separate invigilation within the centre will be made by the SENDCo.

The decision will be based on whether the candidate has a substantial and long term impairment which has an adverse effect <u>and</u> the candidate's normal way of working within the centre.

Special Exam Arrangements for students at The Wensleydale School & Sixth Form are as follows:

- Post 16 students with an extra time allowance only will go into the main exam room
- Students in Year 11 with an extra time allowance and using Read, Write, Gold computer reader software will go into E4
- Students with a 1:1 or 2:1 or small group reader entitlement will go in a separate room
- Students with a 1:1 scribe entitlement will go in a separate room
- Students with a SEMH entitlement will either join a small group or go in a room of their own, depending on need
- Students using a laptop will either go in a separate room or in the back of the main exam room depending on whether the laptop is likely to disturb other candidates

Appendix 1 – Word Processor Policy

Introduction

This policy on the use of word processors in examinations and assessments is reviewed and updated annually, on the publication of updated JCQ regulations and guidance contained in the publications Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments and Instructions for conducting examinations.

References to 'AA' relate to JCQ *Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments 2016/17*and ICE to JCQ *Instructions for conducting examinations 2016/17*.

Purpose of the policy

This policy details how the centre manages and administers the use of word processors (including laptops and tablets) in examinations and assessments.

Principles for using a word processor

The Wensleydale School & Sixth Form complies with AA chapter 4 *Adjustments for candidates with disabilities and learning difficulties* regulations and guidance as follows:

- Candidates with access to word processors are allowed to do so in order to remove barriers for disabled candidates which prevent them from being placed at a substantial disadvantage as a consequence of persistent and significant difficulties
- The use of word processors is only permitted whilst ensuring that the integrity of the assessment is maintained, at the same time as providing access to assessments for a disabled candidate
- The use of a word processor is not granted where it will compromise the assessment objectives of the specification in question
- Candidates may not require the use of a word processor in each specification. As subjects and their methods of assessments may vary, leading to different demands of our candidates, the need for the use of a word processor is considered on a subject-by-subject basis
- The use of a word processor is considered and agreed where appropriate at the start of the course. Candidates are subsequently aware that they will have the use of a word processor for examinations and controlled assessments/coursework
- Candidates are made aware that they will have the use of a word processor for examinations and non-examination assessments (including controlled assessments/coursework)
- The use of a word processor for candidates is only granted if it reflects the support given to the candidate as their 'normal way of working', which is defined as support in the classroom; or
    - working in small groups for reading and/or writing; or
    - literacy support lessons; or
    - literacy intervention strategies; and/or
    - in internal school tests and mock examinations

The only exception to this is where an arrangement may need to be put in place as a consequence of a temporary injury or impairment at the time of an exam or assessment.

The use of a word processor

The Wensleydale School & Sixth Form complies with AA chapter 5 *Access arrangements available* as follows:

(AA 5.8.1)

- Provides a word processor with the spelling and grammar check facility/predictive text disabled (switched off)

- Only grants the use of a word processor to a candidate where it is their normal way of working (see 4.2.5 above) within the centre

- Only grants the use of a word processor to a candidate if it is appropriate to their needs (for example, the quality of language significantly improves as a result of using a word processor due to problems with planning and organisation when writing by hand)

(The above also extends to the use of electronic braillers and tablets)

(AA 5.8.2)

- Provides access to word processors to candidates in non-examination assessments (including controlled assessments or coursework) components as standard practice unless prohibited by the specification

(AA 5.8.3)

- Allows candidates to use a word processor in an examination to type certain questions, i.e. those requiring extended writing, and handwrite shorter answers
- Are also aware that examinations which have a significant amount of writing, as well as those that place a greater demand on the need to organise thought and plan extended answers, are those where candidates will frequently need to type. Examinations which require more simplistic answers are often easier to handwrite within the answer booklet. The candidate avoids the difficulty of visually tracking between the question paper and screen

(AA 5.8.4)

- In all cases, ensures that a word processor cover sheet (Form 4) is completed and included with each candidate's typed script
- Does not simply grant the use of a word processor to a candidate because he/she prefers to type rather than write or can work faster on a keyboard, or because he/she uses a laptop at home

Word processors and their programmes

The Wensleydale School & Sixth Form complies with ICE 8.8 *Word processors* instructions by ensuring:

- word processors are used as a type-writer, not as a database, although standard formatting software is acceptable
- word processors have been cleared of any previously stored data, as must any portable storage medium used
- an unauthorised memory stick is not permitted for use by a candidate
- where required, candidates are provided with a memory stick, which has been cleared of any previously stored data, by a nominated member of centre staff
- word processors are in good working order at the time of the examination
- word processors are accommodated in such a way that other candidates are not disturbed and cannot read the screen
- where a candidate using a word processor is accommodated separately, a separate invigilator is used
- word processors are either connected to a printer so that a script can be printed off, or have the facility to print from a portable storage medium
- documents are printed after the examination is over
- candidates are present to verify that the work printed is their own
- word processed scripts are inserted in any answer booklet which contains some of the answers
- word processors are used to produce scripts under secure conditions, and if they are not then the centre is aware that they may be refused by the awarding body
- word processors are not used to perform skills which are being assessed
- word processors are not connected to an intranet or any other means of communication.
- candidates are not given access to other applications such as a calculator (where prohibited in the examination), spreadsheets etc when using a word processor
- graphic packages or computer aided design software is not included on a word processor unless permission has been given to use these

- predictive text software or an automatic spelling and grammar check is disabled unless the candidate has been permitted a scribe or is using voice recognition technology (the script must have a completed scribe cover sheet included), or the awarding body's specification permits the use of automatic spell checking
- voice recognition technology is not included on word processors unless the candidate has permission to use a scribe or relevant software
- word processors are not used on the candidate's behalf by a third party unless the candidate has permission to use a scribe

Laptops and tablets

The Wensleydale School & Sixth Form further complies with ICE 8.8 instructions by ensuring:

- tablets used during examinations/assessments are designed to run for a long period of time once fully charged and are 'free-standing'
- the battery capacity of all laptops and/or tablets is checked before the candidate's examination(s) with the battery sufficiently charged for the entire duration of the examination
- candidates with fully charged laptops or tablets are given the opportunity to be seated within the main examination hall without the need for separate invigilation and power points
- candidates are reminded that their centre number, candidate number and the unit/component code must appear on each page as a header or footer
- candidates using Notepad or Wordpad software (which do not allow for the insertion of a header or footer) are instructed to handwrite their details as a header or footer once they have finished the examination and printed off their typed script; candidates are also supervised to ensure that they are solely performing this task and not re-reading their answers or amending their work in any way
- candidates are instructed to appropriately number each page
- candidates are instructed to use a minimum 12pt font and double spacing
- invigilators remind candidates to save their work at regular intervals
- where it is possible 'autosave' is set up on each laptop/tablet
- candidates are present at the end of the examination when their script is printed off so they can verify that the work printed is their own

Accommodating word processors in examinations

Candidates using word processors (including laptops or tablets) are internally accommodated separately from the main cohort, either individually or as a small group, whichever is relevant to the exam in question.

Candidates requiring the use of word processors will be invigilated on a 1:1 or 1:6 ratio, or, if they are unlikely to disturb other candidates, the main exam Hall, whichever is relevant to the exam in question. In addition, there will be a roving invigilator covering all rooms where students are being invigilated separate from the main cohort. The roving invigilator's job is to spot check the invigilation arrangements in each room throughout the duration of the examination to ensure compliance with **AA** and **ICE**.