

Access Arrangements Policy (Local)

Domain of application	Lift Winton
Review cycle	One year
Approved by	R Clark - Principal
Date of last review	March 2025
Date of next review	March 2026

1. Introduction

At Lift Winton, we are committed to ensuring that all students have fair access to examinations and assessments in line with the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) regulations and other relevant awarding bodies. This policy outlines the rules regarding Access Arrangements, the process for applying, and what the school can and cannot do.

2. What Are Access Arrangements?

Access Arrangements are reasonable adjustments made for students with specific needs to ensure they are not disadvantaged during exams. These may include:

- Extra time (e.g. 25%)
- A reader or scribe
- Use of a word processor
- Supervised rest breaks
- Enlarged or modified papers
- Separate or smaller room arrangements

Access Arrangements are not designed to give an unfair advantage but to ensure that students can demonstrate their knowledge and skills fairly.

3. Who Qualifies for Access Arrangements?

Students may be eligible for Access Arrangements if they have a long-term, significant difficulty that affects their ability to complete exams under standard conditions. This may include:

- Specific learning difficulties (e.g. dyslexia, dyspraxia, dyscalculia)
- Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)
- Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)
- Sensory or physical impairments
- Mental health conditions (e.g. anxiety disorders)

All arrangements must be evidence-based and supported by formal assessments, which the school will conduct in accordance with JCQ regulations.

4. Consideration of External Professional Reports

The school acknowledges that parents may obtain external professional reports (e.g. from an educational psychologist or a private assessor). While these reports can be taken into consideration, they do not automatically entitle a student to Access Arrangements. The key principles are:

- Any arrangements recommended in an external report must be the student's normal way of working within the school environment.
- The school must have recorded evidence that supports the need for these arrangements over time.
- All Access Arrangements must comply with JCQ regulations, meaning the school must complete its own assessments to verify the need for adjustments.
- The final decision on whether an Access Arrangement is granted rests with the school and the awarding body.

5. Access Arrangements for Students with an EHCP

Students with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) may be entitled to Access Arrangements if their identified needs impact their ability to sit exams under standard conditions. However:

- The Access Arrangements must be consistent with the provisions outlined in the EHCP.
- The student must have consistently used these arrangements as their normal way of working in school.

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- The school is required to submit evidence to JCQ to justify the requested arrangements.
- Having an EHCP does not automatically guarantee specific Access Arrangements. Each case is reviewed based on individual needs and JCQ regulations.

6. What the School CAN Do:

1. Conduct assessments by a qualified specialist teacher or an educational psychologist.
2. Apply for appropriate Access Arrangements via JCQ or the relevant awarding body.
3. Implement approved arrangements in internal tests and mock exams where possible.
4. Ensure that students receive appropriate support within the classroom where applicable.
5. Inform parents and students about the Access Arrangements process.

5. What the School CANNOT Do:

- ✗ Provide Access Arrangements without formal assessment and approval.
- ✗ Allow Access Arrangements that have not been used as a normal way of working.
- ✗ Approve Access Arrangements based solely on a parent's request or an external report not commissioned by the school.
- ✗ Offer arrangements that do not meet JCQ criteria, even if they were previously in place at another school.
- ✗ Allow students to have extra time or other adjustments in non-exam situations, unless this is part of their usual support plan.

6. What if a student does not want to use their Access Arrangements?

According to JCQ regulations, *“if a candidate has never made use of the arrangement granted to him/her... then it is not his/her normal way of working. The arrangement should not be awarded for examinations.”* This means that if a student does not utilise their Access Arrangement in any of their exams, we are required to withdraw it for future examinations. Continuing to provide an Access Arrangement that is not a student's normal way of working would constitute a breach of regulations and be considered malpractice.

7. Who Has the Final Say on Access Arrangements?

The final decision on whether Access Arrangements are granted rests with the awarding body (e.g. JCQ or the exam board), based on the evidence submitted by the school.

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While the school is responsible for conducting assessments and submitting applications, the JCQ regulations and exam board requirements must be met. The Head of Centre (usually the Headteacher) and the Exams Officer have overall responsibility for ensuring all Access Arrangements comply with regulations.

8. How to Apply for Access Arrangements

1. The SEND team or Exams Officer will identify students who may require Access Arrangements based on school evidence and professional assessments.
2. A formal assessment will be conducted by a qualified professional in accordance with JCQ guidelines.
3. If the student qualifies, the school will submit an Access Arrangements application to JCQ or the relevant awarding body.
4. Parents will be informed of the outcome. If approved, arrangements will be implemented in mock exams to ensure familiarity.

9. Key Deadlines

- Applications for Access Arrangements must be submitted well in advance of external exams (deadlines vary each year).
- Late applications can only be considered in exceptional circumstances, such as sudden injury or illness.

10. Contact Information

For further information regarding Access Arrangements, please contact:

Miss R Mapes – Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCo)

Email: rmapes@wintoncommunityacademy.org

Mr T Dixon - Assistant SENCo

Email: tdixon@wintoncommunityacademy.org

Holly Edmonds – Exams Officer

Email: hedmonds@wintoncommunityacademy.org