



The Judd School

Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments Procedure

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Key staff involved in this procedure:

- Head of Centre: J Wood
- SENDCo: T Kemp
- Access Assessor: S Flynn
- Access Assessor Co-ordinator: M Forrester
- Senior Examinations Officer: L MacAdam
- SLT Examinations: J Dunn

This policy is reviewed annually after the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) publishes its Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustment regulations for the academic year. The school complies with JCQs current published regulations.

1. The Purpose of the Procedure

This procedure details how The Judd School facilitates access to exams and assessments for disabled candidates, as defined under the terms of the Equality Act 2010. The procedure outlines procedures, staff roles and responsibilities in relation to:

- identifying the need for appropriate arrangements, reasonable adjustments and/or adaptations (referred to in this procedure as 'access arrangements')
- requesting access arrangements and reasonable adjustments (AARA)
- implementing access arrangements and the conduct of exams
- good practice in relation to the Equality Act 2010

This procedure for Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments is written in line with the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) *Access Arrangements and reasonable Adjustments* regulations applicable 1st September 2023 to August 31st 2024. These are the regulations with which the school must comply.

2. 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 Act, 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. The disability must be substantial and long term unless it is a temporary injury. 'Substantial' means 'more than minor or trivial'. 'Long term' means the 'impairment has existed for at least twelve months or is likely to do so'.

An adjustment will not be reasonable if it involves unreasonable costs, or timeframes, affects the validity of the assessment or it gives the learner an unfair assessment advantage.

All arrangements must be processed and approved before an examination or assessment, and before the published deadline apart from applications due to temporary injury or impairment. With the exception of applications due to temporary injury or impairment, access arrangements can only be applied for if the candidate meets all of the following criteria:

- Candidates must be disabled within the meaning of the Equality Act 2010
- A candidate's disability is persistent and significant
- The arrangement being applied for is the candidate's normal way of working in class and internal tests across a range of subjects. Evidence must exist of this normal way of working. Normal way of working is defined as how the student works in lessons and tests. Evidence of normal way of working is provided by teachers.
- There must be evidence from teachers across a range of subjects about how the candidate's difficulties due to their disability substantially impacts on teaching and learning in the classroom. Evidence includes teacher statements and may include samples of work.
- Supporting evidence must be provided to say that without the arrangement applied for the candidate would continue to be at a substantial disadvantage

3. Identifying the need for an access arrangement

A student's access needs are reviewed according to information made available from:

- diagnosis of a disability or condition by an appropriately qualified professional (not a GP)
 - cognition and learning needs
 - communication and interaction needs
 - sensory and physical needs
 - social, emotional and mental health needs
 - a medical condition diagnosed by a registered specialist
- Statement of Educational Need or Educational and Health Care Plan
- documentation of a previous access arrangement that meets current published criteria
- Results from baseline data in year 7, 9 and 12

- Subject teacher, Head of House/Year, Head of Department referral
- Student Support staff referral
- Information from a previous school
- Information from parents/carers/student

When a student is brought to the attention of the access arrangements staff in one of the above ways, further investigation may result. Students who have been brought to the attention of the relevant staff will be monitored in class for a reasonable period of time. This will enable teachers to identify needs, persistent and significant difficulties and normal way of working. It may be necessary for the student to be assessed on a one to one basis. The outcomes of this review will be made available to the student, parent/carer and relevant staff in school.

A diagnosis of need from a medical professional or external assessor does not automatically confer an access arrangement or the access arrangement that the report writer states. The decision regarding an access arrangement and/or the type of access arrangement is the responsibility of the school which will apply the current Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments current regulations.

Priority for investigation is according to need and it may be that the student has to wait until their needs can be reviewed. It is not possible to review the need for an access arrangement at the last minute or put in place an access arrangement just before a public exam.

Parents and carers/students are reminded to submit documentation in a timely manner.

Medical reports and private assessments

An access arrangement is not awarded purely on the basis of receiving a private or medical report.

Medical reports and external private assessments may trigger further investigation into the student's classroom needs. If further investigation is thought reasonable, the student is monitored, and evidence of their needs and normal way of working gathered. If there is substantial evidence of need and normal way of working, the medical report may form part of an application for an access arrangement. It is not possible to accept letters from a GP.

Educational psychologist reports, specialist assessor reports and reports from those holding a Practising Certificate are used to inform further assessments. A further assessment may be conducted after six months have elapsed. This is to ensure that subsequent data is not affected by previous testing. The further assessment is conducted by the school's appointed access assessor. The school has a full range of up to date psychometric and other tests relevant to assessing for access arrangements. The most relevant tests are used to assess a student. The school will not offer repeated testing of a student, specifically using the same test twice. The information from this is reviewed alongside information about the student's classroom needs and normal way of working.

The school has a member of staff who is the access assessor; therefore, we do not complete part 1 of Form 8 for external assessors. The school's access assessor has been appointed by the headteacher and is appropriately qualified under current regulations.

The school may choose to reject an external and/or private report. This may be because it conflicts with evidence gathered at school or the assessor lacks the necessary qualifications or there is a conflict of interests. In this case, a written response giving reasons for rejecting the report will be made available.

Deadlines for Access Arrangements investigations

An Access Arrangement for the June 2024 series will have been approved before 21st March 2024. Requests made after this date will be in response to temporary injury or impairment.

The school deadline to submit evidence to trigger an investigation into a possible need for an access arrangement is the end of October for students in year 11 and year 13. This time frame ensures that JCQ regulations can be met. In exceptional circumstances information will be considered but it may not be possible to put in place arrangements which do not allow the school to fulfil JCQ current regulations.

Temporary access arrangements may be required for a student suffering from unforeseen illness or injury. These last for one exam series only. In these cases, school must be informed at the earliest possible opportunity and a letter presented from a GP or consultant outlining the condition. Please note, it is not always possible to accept a letter from a GP.

In all cases the school is entitled to reasonable notice to carry out its responsibilities.

4. When the criteria for an Access Arrangement and reasonable adjustment has been fulfilled

An access arrangement will be agreed with the candidate if the evidence fulfils all the current JCQ regulations. Access arrangements are applied on a subject by subject and paper by paper basis and may vary between subjects.

The student and their parents/carers will be issued with a letter and the student with a green card and normal way of working card. The letter states the agreed access arrangement/s, explains what normal way of working means, explains the green card and normal way of working card and gives information about access arrangements. Additional information is given about some access arrangements. This letter and supporting documents should be kept in case it is needed by the candidate in the future. The green card is issued to remind the student of their access arrangement. They should place this on their desk every lesson.

The student's access arrangement/s is entered onto the school's register of those with an access arrangement. This is available to all teaching, exam and student support staff.

Teachers are required to monitor the student's normal way of working in class and tests. Teachers and exam staff do this regularly. If the student does not use their access arrangement in class and tests as their normal way of working it will be removed for public exams .

Students who had an access arrangement at GCSE have their need for an access arrangement reviewed at the start of year 12. The review process takes into account current JCQ regulations, the documents used to apply for an access arrangement for GCSE and made available to school at the time of the review process, their current classroom needs in their chosen GCE subjects, teacher evidence of need and their normal way of working. The candidate's access arrangements may change for their GCEs; this may mean an arrangement previously held by the student is removed or an arrangement is changed or an arrangement is added. The student and their parent/carer will be notified of their access arrangements at GCE. A green card and normal way of working card will be issued.

5. Different types of access arrangements and reasonable adjustments

The JCQ identifies a number of different arrangements and adjustments which include: supervised rest breaks, extra time, reader/computer reader, prompt, a word processor, alternative room invigilation, a scribe/speech recognition software, coloured overlays, enlarged papers etc. An access arrangement may be unique to the individual. Some access arrangements are centre designated and others are applied for online.

Evidence held and malpractice

Schools are regularly inspected to ensure they have followed JCQ regulations. The school is required to hold evidence in its electronic files that can be inspected at short notice. The evidence required is specified in the current JCQ regulations.

The consequences of malpractice can be severe. This may include disqualification of the student from one or more exams. Examples of malpractice include:

- students being granted an access arrangement which is not the student's normal way of working
- an access arrangement being granted when there is no history of need or provision
- access arrangements being granted without sufficient evidence.

Special consideration

This is a post examination adjustment to a candidate's grade to reflect temporary injury, or other indisposition at the time of the exam. The candidate will have been fully prepared for the exams but due to an unforeseen circumstance could not demonstrate what they know.

Appealing a decision about an access arrangement

An appeal may be considered if the current regulations have been breached.

Word processor policy

The use of a word processor is considered an access arrangement and/or reasonable adjustment. This policy on the use of word processors in class, internal tests and examinations is reviewed and updated annually, on the publication of the *Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments Regulations*.

Purpose of the policy

This policy details how the school manages and administers the use of word processors in lessons, tests and examinations.

Using a word processor

The school allows a word processor in response to a diagnosed persistent and significant learning need which places the learner at a substantial disadvantage and where there is evidence that it helps the student learn in class.

The school will consider allowing a student to use a word processor as part of their normal way of working in a number of situations, including the following:

- a learning difficulty which has a substantial and long term adverse effect on their ability to write continuous prose
- a medical condition
- a physical disability
- a sensory impairment
- planning and organisational problems when writing by hand
- slow speed of handwriting
- illegible handwriting as described by a number of teaching staff
- a medical condition diagnosed by a registered specialist

In the first instance, a teacher who has been presented with illegible work reminds the student of the need to write legibly. A teacher should reward what they can read. The student has responsibility to write so their script can be read and it may be that with greater care they can present legible writing. Some students are casual when handwriting in class tests and some write so fast that it is unsurprising their writing cannot be read. Reminders about legible writing are given at the start and during lessons and tests emphasising that teachers can reward what they can read.

The student's needs may be reviewed if there is sufficient evidence. Evidence of the above disabilities will be provided along with evidence from teaching staff about the student's classroom needs. Information will be reviewed and a decision made.

The use of a word processor in tests and exams must reflect the candidate's normal way of working within lessons. If the student does not use a word processor in lessons, they will not be allowed to use it in exams.

Normal way of working would in almost all circumstances be established throughout the two year period leading up to a public examination. However, this should certainly be for a minimum of one year, unless there are exceptional circumstances. In all cases, normal way of working necessarily entails the candidate having used a word processor for the internal and/or mock examinations of the qualification in question. 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.

A word processor cannot simply be granted to a candidate because they want to type rather than write in examinations or can work faster on a keyboard, or because they use a word processor at home.

The use of word processors in non-examination assessment components will be considered standard practice unless prohibited by the specification.

It is permissible for a candidate using a word processor in an examination to type certain questions: for example, those requiring extended writing, and hand-write shorter answers. 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 as the candidate avoids the difficulty of visually tracking between the question paper and computer screen.

The use of a word processor in tests and exams is without access to the internet, predictive text, spelling and grammar check functions, or any other technological assistance. A specific word processor and software is provided for the exam candidate.

Candidates may not require the same access arrangements in each specification. As subjects and their methods of assessments may vary, the need for the use of a word processor is considered on a subject-by-subject basis in discussion with the Access Arrangements staff.

Bring Your Own Device Sixth Form WP use

The school operates a Bring Your Own Device to school policy for sixth formers. Students are allowed to use their own device in study areas. Unless they are allowed to use a word processor in lessons because they have an access arrangement, they should be using pen and paper to make notes. Using a WP in a sixth form lesson would not qualify as normal way of working for tests and exams.

Experts agree that very different cognitive processes underpin writing by hand and typing. Working on a word processor in a lesson and then handwriting in a test/exam disadvantages students as they have to switch their way of working and processing information. This may affect a student's exam results.

Reasons why a student should handwrite in lessons unless they have an agreed access arrangement to use a word processor in lessons and therefore exams:

- the student is unfamiliar with handwriting in tests: their unfamiliarity with this way of working can have a detrimental impact which potentially affects their grade
- students become out of practice working with pen and paper
- planning is different on paper than on a screen
- editing is different on a WP than paper
- handwriting may become harder
- handwriting may become slower
- handwriting may become messier
- spelling ability can deteriorate when not having handwriting practice
- the stamina of handwriting needs practice built through lesson work
- how the brain works on paper is different that on a WP

Students who are allowed to use a WP for one or two subjects are allowed to borrow a chromebook on a lesson by lesson basis from Student Support if they do not have their own word processor. A chromebook is borrowed from student support.

Students who have a short term injury affecting their ability to write in lessons may borrow a chromebook from Student Support for the period of their temporary injury.