

Notre Dame Catholic College

180 Great Homer St,
Liverpool L5 5AF



Access Arrangements Policy

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Opening Hearts, Minds and Doors

Access Arrangements Policy

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Key Staff Involved in the Policy

Role	Name(s)
SENCo	Mr A McVerry
Assistant SENCo	Mrs Kathryn Sweeney
SENCo line manager (Senior leader)	Mrs A M Costello
Head of centre	Mr P Duffy
Assessor(s)	Mrs L Martin
Access arrangement facilitator(s)	Ms C Edwards, Ms S Mathiassen, Ms L Dixon

What are Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments?

Access Arrangements

[AA](#) (Definitions, page 3) state... **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'.

Reasonable Adjustments

[AA](#) (Definitions, page 3) state... 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'.

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Purpose of the Policy

The purpose of this policy is to confirm that Notre Dame Catholic College 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 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 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. For inspection, e--folders must hold each of the required documents for the individual candidate.

The policy is annually reviewed to ensure that processes 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](#)

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 a 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.

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Equalities Policy (Exams) – see separate policy

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 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)

Patoss AAA: Assessing for Access Arrangements (15/6/18)

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)

Copy of the certificate is stored in the current AA folder, it is checked annually against the current requirements.
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Process for the Assessment of a Candidate's Learning Difficulties by an Assessor

Gather evidence of concerns about students who may be disadvantaged in external exams from class teachers and other professionals. The assessor will follow the guidelines for the assessment of the candidate's learning difficulties and complete Form 8. Students, carers/parents, staff will be informed of outcomes.

Painting a 'Holistic Picture of Need', Confirming Normal Way of Working

The Assistant SENCo will request any access arrangements and work with the assessor to ensure a consistent process. Before the candidate is assessed the Assistant SENCo will provide the assessor with background information, i.e. a holistic picture of need has been painted as required in Part 1 of Form 8.
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Before the candidate is assessed, the assessor will distribute a survey for evidence of the candidate's normal way of working and relevant background information.

All candidates must be assessed in light of the picture of need and the background information as detailed within Part 1 of Form 8 and the results will be discussed by the assessor and Assistant SENCo

Processing Access Arrangements and Adjustments

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 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 (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.

The Assistant SENCo will keep detailed records 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 for inspection by the JCQ Centre Inspection Service.

Centre-Delegated Arrangements/Adjustments

The EO will keep records of any arrangements made for internal exams in early years that might impact on future arrangements eg a seat in a smaller venue or at the back of a room / near a door due to severe anxiety. These will be reflected by and detailed in the seating plans in external exams.

See also word processor policy.

Centre-Specific Criteria for Particular Arrangements/Adjustments

Word Processor Policy (Exams) – see separate document

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 way of working within the centre.

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Separate Invigilation Policy

A decision where an exam candidate may be approved separate invigilation within the centre will be made by the 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](#) 5.16)

The EO will keep records of any arrangements made for internal exams in early years that might impact on future arrangements eg a seat in a smaller venue due to severe anxiety. These will be reflected by and detailed in the seating plans in external exams.

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