



Cardinal Langley RC High School

Exams Policies & Procedures 2025-26

ACCESS ARRANGEMENTS POLICY

This policy is reviewed annually to ensure compliance with current regulations

Reviewed by	Mrs L Barton
Approved by	Mr A Bridson
Date of next review	Autumn 2026 / Spring 2027

Key staff involved in the policy

Role	Name(s)
SENDCo (or equivalent role)	Mrs S Lord
Senior Leader(s)	Mr A Bridson
Head of Centre	Mr A Bridson
MIS/Data Manager Exams Manager	Mrs L Barton / Mr M Neville
Assessor(s)	Mrs S Lord
Access Arrangement Facilitator(s)	Mrs S Lord/Mrs K Foster

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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'. (AARA¹, 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. (AARA¹, 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 Cardinal Langley RC High School 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. (¹AARA 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**'.

¹This 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, who will coordinate the access arrangements process within the centre and determine appropriate arrangements for candidates with learning difficulties and disabilities, candidates for whom English is an additional language, as well as 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.

<https://www.clrchs.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2026/05/7-Equalities-Policy-2025-26.pdf>

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 7.3.

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

Mrs S Lord: Certificate of Psychometric Testing, Assessment and Access Arrangements (CP3TA)

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)

The Head of Centre at Cardinal Langley RC High School is responsible for:

- The quality of the access arrangements process in school
- The appointment of assessors, and checking the qualifications of those assessing candidates

The Head of Centre will appoint:

- An assessor who has successfully completed a post-graduate course at or equivalent to Level 7, including at least 100 hours relating to individual specialist assessment. This can include lecture, seminar and tutorial time, study time, assessment time and time spent completing assignments
- A specialist assessor with a current SpLD Assessment Practising Certificate as awarded by BDA, the Dyslexia Guild or Patoss and listed on the SASC website
- An appropriately qualified psychologist registered with the Health & Care Professions Council

Reporting the appointment of assessors

The credentials of assessors used by the school will be held on file in the Additional Needs department

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

Where a candidate has learning difficulties and is not subject to a current *Education, Health and Care Plan* or *Statement of Special Educational Needs* the SENCo will paint a picture of need and demonstrate the candidate's normal way of working and complete the relevant JCQ form where required prior to the candidate being assessed.

All candidates will be assessed in light of the picture of need and relevant background information.

The assessor will establish if the results of tests in literacy and/or cognitive abilities present evidence that the candidate has an impairment which **substantially** affects their performance.

The assessor will carry out tests which are relevant to support the application. Current editions of nationally standardised tests which produce standardised scores will be used, where published.

For candidates potentially requiring a Language Modifier reading comprehension will be assessed using a recognised test of text or sentence comprehension.

Reading speed will be tested in various ways depending on the individual candidate.

Candidates will be allowed the use of a scribe where they have a substantial impairment:

- A below average standardised spelling accuracy score with unrecognisable spelling attempts; or
- A below average standardised score for writing speed.

Cognitive processing assessments will include a range of assessments as determined appropriate for the candidate by the assessor.

Picture of need/normal way of working

The SENCo will work closely with Heads of Departments, subject teachers, Heads of Year, teaching assistants and other centre staff to gather information to paint a picture of need for candidates. Statements regarding the candidate's normal way of working in the classroom and in internal assessments will be held on file.

Processing access arrangements and adjustments

Arrangements/adjustments 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 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 **must** 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)

Applications will be processed for both long-term and temporary conditions.

The approval will be filed alongside the candidate's EHCP/Statement of Educational Needs, the relevant JCQ form where appropriate, any statements gathered to evidence the candidate's normal of working, and the signed consent and data protection forms.

For cases that are not approved, the SENCo will consider whether this is because the candidate does not meet the published criteria, whether the reasonable adjustment is not listed, and consider further exploration in relation to the competence being tested.

Centre-delegated arrangements/adjustments

Centre-delegated arrangements will be looked at on a case-by-case basis. Candidates with anxiety will be seated in the main examination room (after discussion with the exams officer, seating will be allocated appropriately in the room, alternative rooming will not be allocated).

Centre-specific criteria for particular arrangements/adjustments

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 word processor must reflect the candidate's normal way of working within the centre.

<https://www.clrchs.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2026/05/13-Word-Processor-Policy-2025-26.pdf>

Alternative Rooming Arrangements Policy

A decision where an exam candidate may be approved alternative rooming arrangements, e.g., a room for a smaller group of candidates with similar needs will be made by the SENCo (or equivalent role).

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 (AARA 5.16)

<https://www.clrchs.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2026/05/16-Alternative-Rooming-Arrangements-Policy-2025-26.pdf>