

# Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments Policy

Luton Adult Learning

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# Context

## 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 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'.

## 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 a number of factors which will include, but are not limited to:

- the needs of the candidate;
- the effectiveness of the adjustment;
- the cost of the adjustment;
- 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;
- affects the security and integrity of the assessment.

This is because the adjustment is not 'reasonable'.

## Purpose of the policy

The purpose of this policy is to confirm that Luton Adult Learning 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 as described in Jcq General Regulations for Approved Centres, 5.4 (GR).

This policy is maintained by the Adult Skills Delivery Manager and held by the Examinations Officer 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. 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 (AA).

## Identifying need for access arrangements

Disability or learning difficulty that may affect assessment or exam performance should be identified at learner enrolment and initial Assessment. The initial collection of information should be recorded on the centre Additional Learning Support (ALS) form by Curriculum Support Officers (CSOs). Delivery staff should meet with the learner to discuss and explore support requirements if not before, within the first week of class. Details of this support should be documented within the planning section (section 1) of the centre Normal Way of Working Report (NWOW).

If disability or learning difficulty is not disclosed at enrolment or is suspected by teaching staff, a disability and disclosure form should be completed with the learner to explore and capture the need for support and access arrangements.

## Requirements

### Normal Way of Working (NWOW)

The NWOW report is a live document completed by teaching staff to paint a picture of need and to gather evidence of the learners' normal way of working. Teachers should document in section 2 (delivery) of the NWOW report showing both how the learner has been supported in teaching and learning along with examples of how they have worked that may influence the need for access arrangements or reasonable adjustment to be made in assessment or examinations. Once the need has become clear, the request for access arrangements should be made in line with the information within the processing access arrangements section of this document. This document will also be utilised to enable a SENco to complete part 1 of form 8 if required under current access arrangement regulations.

### Evidence of Need

For all awarding bodies we will follow the Guidance within AA section 5:

#### Learning Difficulty:

- Education, Health and Care Plan
- **Current** Statement of Special Educational Needs **or**
- A fully completed Form 8 with an assessment (Part 2 of Form 8) completed by a qualified SEN assessor appointed by the centre to confirm a learning difficulty relating to secondary/further education (supplemented by a detailed picture of need - see page 29 of AA).

#### Complex Needs:

SenCo will complete Form 9 confirming:

- the candidate's normal way of working within the centre
- Evidence from teaching staff that the candidate has persistent and significant difficulties and how these impact upon teaching and learning.

This will be supported by specialist evidence confirming candidates disability:

- A letter/report from CAMHS, a HCPC registered psychologist, a medical consultant, a psychiatrist or a Speech and Language Therapist (SaLT); **or**
- A letter/report from the Local Authority Specialist Service, Local Authority Sensory Impairment Service or Occupational Health Service; **or**

- A current Statement of Special Educational Needs, or an Education, Health and Care Plan, which confirms the candidate's learning difficulty, medical condition, physical disability, sensory or multi-sensory impairment.

*Form 8 should not be used for complex needs. The specialist evidence is not required to recommend 25% extra time but to simply confirm the candidate's disability. The specialist evidence may relate to any age provided it remains current.*

## The Assessment Process

Assessments utilised within form 8 and form 9 (including AA online) will be carried out by a SEN assessor appointed by the Adult Skills Delivery Manager. The assessor will be appropriately qualified as required by JCQ regulations in AA. At the point the SEN assessor is engaged 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 learner.

## Checking the qualifications of the assessor

The Adult Skills Delivery Manager will be satisfied that the AA assessor will meet all regulations outlined within 7.3.2 to 7.3.4 with the AA. The Assessor will:

- Have completed a post-graduate course at or equivalent to L7 including at least 100 hours relating to individual specialist assessment.
- Be 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
- Be an appropriate qualified psychologist registered with the Health & Care Professions Council.
- In addition, all assessors will have a thorough understanding of the current JCQ Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments, be familiar with the Equality Act 2010 and hold either an appropriate qualification to teach and make recommendations for adult learners who have learning difficulties or be a HCPC registered psychologist.

## Reporting the appointment of the assessor

We will hold evidence that all assessors are suitably qualified and record names into form 8 and 9/Access Arrangements Online to confirm their status.

## Processing Access Arrangements

### **Centre Delegated Access Arrangements:**

- Alternative rooming arrangements
- Amplification equipment
- Bilingual dictionary
- Braille transcript
- Braille
- Closed Circuit Television (CCTV)
- Colour naming by the invigilator for candidates who are colour blind
- Coloured overlays
- Examination on coloured/enlarged paper
- Fidget toys and stress balls

- Live speaker for pre-recorded examination components
- Low vision aid/magnifier
- Non-electric ear defender/ear plugs
- Optical Character Reader (OCR) scanners
- Prompter
- Read aloud
- Separate invigilation within the centre
- Sign Language Interpreter
- Supervised rest breaks
- Word processor

Evidence of need: Evidence of need should be apparent within NWOW Document only

How to Apply: Not required but keep list of Access Arrangements

Documents Required: Good practice to have NWOW but doesn't need to be held on file

### **Self-Approval Access Arrangements**

- 25 % Extra Time
- 10% Extra time with Bilingual Dictionary

For Entry Level Only:

- Computer Reader/Reader
- Practical Assistant
- Scribe

Evidence of need: Separate evidence of need

Normal Way of Working

How to Apply: Self-Approval on Awarding Body Website

Documents Required: Evidence of need and Normal Working held on individual learner file for 3 years. *Entry level candidates need SENCo statement plus normal way of working – no requirement for separate evidence of need.*

### **Access arrangements requiring awarding body approval**

- Access to mobile phone for medical purposes
- Bilingual dictionary with 25% extra time (for qualifications listed AA 5.18.2)
- Computer reader/human reader
- Exemptions
- Extra time over 25%
- Practical Assistant
- Remote invigilation
- Scribe/speech recognition technology
- Timetable variation for candidate with a disability

Evidence of need: Specific evidence of need – consult with awarding bodies

Normal Way of Working

How to Apply: Prior approval from Awarding Body

Documents Required: Evidence of need and Normal Working held on individual learner file for 3 years.

# 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.

Centres are allowed to provide a word processor (e.g. computer, laptop or tablet) with the spelling and grammar check/predictive text disabled to a candidate where it is their normal way of working within the centre, unless an awarding body's specification says otherwise. For example, where the curriculum is delivered electronically and the centre provides word processors to all candidates.

A word processor cannot simply be granted to a candidate because he/she now wants to type rather than write in examinations or can work faster on a keyboard, or because he/she uses a laptop at home.

The use of a word processor must reflect the candidate's normal way of working within the centre. For example, where the curriculum is delivered electronically and the centre provides word processors to all candidates.

## **Separate Invigilation within Centre**

A decision where an exam candidate may be approved separate invigilation within the centre will be made by the Adult Skills Delivery Manager. 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

Separate invigilation reflects the candidate's normal way of working in internal tests and mock examinations as a consequence of a long term medical condition or long term social, mental or emotional needs.