

	Policy Name: Access Arrangements Policy Owner: Director of Studies
	Review Date: September 2020 Next Review: September 2021 Policy revised annually or as regulations or review demands.

Rationale

Our Access Arrangements policy explains the activity undertaken to ensure inclusion throughout the school for all girls with learning support needs, which will include those with formally diagnosed Special Educational Needs Disabilities (SEND). The policy supports and facilitates Mayfield's aim to create a learning environment in which every girl can fulfil her full potential.

Access Arrangements

Access arrangements are pre-examination adjustments for candidates based on evidence of need and normal way of working. Some are delegated to schools whereas others require prior approval by JCQ awarding body.

Access arrangements allow candidates with specific needs, such as SEN (special educational needs), disabilities or temporary injuries to access assessments without changing the demands of the assessment. In this way Awarding Bodies comply with the duty of the Equality Act 2010 to make "reasonable adjustments".

Principles

As a Catholic School, it is important that every girl have the opportunity to fulfil her potential. The purpose of Access Arrangements is to meet the needs of individual girls without affecting the integrity of the assessment. The Head of Learning Support must ensure that the proposed access arrangements does not unduly disadvantage or advantage the candidate.

Candidates might not require the same arrangements in each specification. The Head of Learning Support should consider Access Arrangements on a subject-by-subject basis. As subjects and the methods of assessment vary, so the demands on the candidate will vary. e.g. extra time may not be appropriate in practical examinations or non examination assessments where the impairment has a minimal effect on the assessment. Extra time will not be permitted in examinations testing the time in which a skills is performed, such as expressive arts, a musical performance or a sport, where timing is an explicit part of the assessment objective.

Whether an adjustment will be considered reasonable will depend on several factors which will include, but are not limited to:

- the needs of the girl;
- the effectiveness of the adjustment;
- the cost of the adjustment; and
- the likely impact of the adjustment upon the girl and other candidates.

An adjustment will not be considered if it:

- involves unreasonable costs to the awarding body or the school;
- involves unreasonable timeframes; or

- affects the security and integrity of the assessment.

Access Arrangements that are available

Some candidates are likely to have a number of needs and might require a range of access arrangements. The examples given are not exhaustive and are illustrative only:

- Extra time
- Separate invigilation within the centre
- Supervised rest breaks
- A computer reader or a reader
- Read aloud or an examination reading pen
- A word processor
- A scribe
- A prompter
- Coloured overlays
- Coloured/enlarged papers

Computer readers, reading pens, speech recognition technology and word processors will be preferred instead of human readers and scribes. This is in recognition that they allow candidates to work independently, but that they are also a better preparation for Higher Education and the world of employment.

We recognise that some girls who have found the COVID 19 situation stressful may need separate invigilation away from the main exam room even if they have not had this before.

The Assessment process

Stage 1: Early screening and identification

Students who may qualify for formal access arrangements during Key Stage 4 are preferably identified early in Key Stage 3 (Year 7 or 8). At this stage, needs are screened and identified with the Lucid Exact screening test. Adjustments to teaching within lessons are made according to need to enable students to access their learning and make progress. All teaching staff are involved in monitoring these adjustments.

Identification can also be prompted by concerns about attainment, classroom observations, and correspondence with parents or conversations with the pupils. Once alerted to an issue, the Head of Learning Support will start gathering evidence from tutors and subject teachers (See Annex A)

Stage 2: Formal testing

Screening and ongoing monitoring determines the level of specific assessment required. The Head of Learning Support liaises closely with the Director of Studies, Heads of School and subject teachers to identify candidates who might need Access Arrangements. Assessments are delivered in accordance with the JCQ guidelines and permission from parents will be sought before carrying out any assessment.

Stage 3: Formal Application for Access Arrangements

The Head of Learning Support will consider all the information and evidence available for a pupil and will make a decision about what Access Arrangements to apply for, if any. The Head of Learning Support process the application using AAO. Access Arrangements are processed during the first year of the course (Year 10 for those pupils taking GCSE, Year 12 for those pupils taking A level) having firmly established a picture of need and the normal way of working during previous years. (See Annex B) However, there will be circumstances, especially when needs become gradually apparent, when Access Arrangements might need to be processed later than this. They will be carried out as soon as it is practical for them to be done.

The arrangements put in place must reflect the support given to each candidate in the classroom, during internal tests and in mock examinations. This is referred to as the “normal way of working”. The candidate must have had appropriate opportunities to practise using the access arrangement(s) before their first examination. This is particularly so where a computer reader, modified enlarged papers, a scribe, speech recognition technology or a word processor will be used in examinations. Access arrangements must always be approved before an examination or assessment; they cannot suddenly be granted to a candidate at the time of her examinations. This is recorded in Part 1 of Form 8 by the Head of Learning Support. The amount of centre based evidence to paint a picture of need and demonstrate normal way of working may be more limited this academic year (2020-21) in light of the disruption in recent months.

When Access Arrangements are processed on-line and approved for GCSE and GCE qualifications, the evidence of need is filed by the Head of Learning Support and is available to JCQ Centre Inspectors upon request. Signed Data Protection Notices confirming the candidate’s consent to the processing of the Access Arrangements are also filed. Documentation can be filed in either hard or electronic form (but not a mixture of both for each candidate).

The decision evidence is filed by the Head of Learning Support who then informs the candidate and their parent.

Where a person is appointed to facilitate an access arrangement (i.e. a prompter, reader or scribe), he/she is responsible to the Headmistress and must be acceptable to the Headmistress. This person must not be the candidate’s subject teacher or a relative, friend or peer of the candidate. The Headmistress must ensure that this person is appropriately trained (including safeguarding training) and fully understands the rules of particular Access Arrangements. These responsibilities are delegated to the Examination Officer (in conjunction with the DSL).

Rolling forward of approved applications – GCSE and A-level examinations

Where a candidate will be returning to her former school to sit examinations, an approved application for an access arrangement which would have experienced prior to, during or after the June 2020 examination series may now roll forward until 27 November 2020. The centre does not have to process a new online application but the Head of Learning Support must ensure that the evidence to support the online application remains on file and is available for inspection purposes.

Access arrangements assessments of candidates

Candidates must be assessed by an assessor who is specially trained in line with regulations. JCQ recommends that assessors should be employed within the centre, but alternatively an external assessor that has an established working relationship with the centre can also be used. Guidance on this choice is given to parents/guardians (see Annex C Access Arrangements for Examinations – Parental Guidance). At the point an assessor is engaged by the centre (after following the usual safe

guarding procedures), evidence of the assessor's qualification is obtained and checked against the current requirements in JCQ AA (Chapter 7). This process is carried out prior to the assessor undertaking any assessment of a candidate. A photocopy of the qualification certificate(s) or a printout or screenshot of the SASC or HCPC registration will be held on file for inspection purposes by the Head of Learning Support and must be available to be presented to the JCQ Centre Inspector during their visit.

External assessors must work with the Head of Learning Support to ensure a joined up approach and be provided with at least a skeleton of Part 1 of Form 8 prior to the assessment. They must discuss arrangements with the Head of Learning Support but the responsibility to request arrangements lie with the Head of Learning Support.

Assessors might need to consider carrying out assessment with social distancing measures in place or, as a last resort, remotely via an online video call. Where assessments can be delayed (rather than be conducted remotely) assessors should wait until it is possible to meet with the candidate.

Assessors must personally conduct the assessments. They must not sign off assessments carried out by another professional.

Privately commissioned assessments carried out without prior consultation with the school cannot be used to award access arrangements or to process applications. The Head of Learning Support reserves the right to reject privately commissioned assessments as evidence. When this happens, a written rationale will be provided to parents.

Policy for the use of word processors

This policy details how Mayfield School complies with JCQ AA (Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments) (chapter 4) 'Adjustments for candidates with disabilities and learning difficulties' and (chapter 5.8) 'Word processor' when awarding and allocating a candidate the use of word processor in their exams.

Mayfield values good handwriting and imposes high standards on presentation of work, expecting that most students will handwrite in exams. However, there are exceptional circumstances where students might benefit from using a word processor and in these cases, the school will allow use of a word processor for lessons, study and internal and public examinations.

Students with access to word processors in examinations are allowed to do so in order that barriers to assessment are removed for disabled or SEN candidates, preventing them from being placed at a substantial disadvantage as a consequence of persistent and significant difficulties. Word processors (e.g. computer, laptop or tablet) cannot be granted to a candidate simply because she wants to type rather than write in examinations or if she feels she can work faster using a keyboard or because she uses a laptop at home, during remote lessons or during face to face lessons to ensure social distancing from teachers and to prevent the spread of COVID 19.

The word processor must reflect the candidate's normal way of working within the centre. Candidates who might be granted the use of a computer in examinations must meet at least one of the following criteria:

- The candidate has a specific learning difficulty/disability (such as dyslexia, dyspraxia, ASD etc.) which has a substantial and long term adverse effect on their ability to write legibly and the use of a word processor is both appropriate to their needs and reflects their normal way of working;

- The candidate's speed of handwriting is below average and the use of word processor is appropriate to their needs and reflects their normal way of working.
- The candidate has a physical difficulty/ medical condition (such as hypermobility / juvenile arthritis etc.) and the use of a word processor is both appropriate to their needs and reflects their normal way of working;
- The candidate has a sensory impairment (such as a vision or hearing impairment) and the use of a word processor is both appropriate to their needs and reflects their normal way of working;
- The candidate has very poor handwriting and would lose marks due to the examiner finding their answers illegible and the use of word processor reflects their normal way of working;
- The candidate has significant planning and organisational problems when writing by hand, the quality of language significantly improves as a result of using a word processor and the use of a word processor reflects their normal way of working.

The use of a word processor must be considered and agreed by the Head of Learning Support and will be considered on a subject to subject basis.

The only exception to the above where the use of a word processor may be considered for a candidate would be on a temporary basis as a consequence of a temporary injury at the time of the assessment.

Arrangements at the time of the assessment for the use of a word processor

To comply with regulations, the Centre will ensure the word processor (and any portable storage medium) is in good working order and cleared of any previously stored data. The word processor will have had the spelling and grammar check facility disabled. It will be accommodated in such a way that other candidates are not disturbed and cannot read the screen.

Candidates using word processors will be reminded to ensure that the centre number, candidate number and the unit/component code appear on each page as a header or footer and that each page of typed script must be numbered out of the total number of pages (e.g. page 1 out of 3 etc.). They will also be instructed to use a minimum of 12pt font and double spacing in order to assist examiners when marking. Candidates are also reminded to save work at regular intervals.

Once the examination has been completed, the candidate must ensure the script is saved to the laptop desktop and onto a School memory stick. The memory stick will then be taken by the invigilator to the Examination Officer who will print out a copy of the script which will be then placed in the secure exam packet with the rest of the examination scripts. A copy of the script will also be saved as a secure file on our School system. Once this is completed the laptop will be cleared of data. The responsibility for any IT or Systems failure lies with the Director of Systems (cross reference the Examination Policy, Annex C (Examination Contingency Plan)).

Accountabilities

The Examinations Officer is responsible for:

- Ensuring that the agreed EAA (Examination Access Arrangement) provisions are in place for examinations and are communicated to the invigilators

- Ensuring that pupils are roomed suitably for their Access Arrangements and to ensure no resulting disruption for other pupils also sitting examinations

The Head of Learning Support is responsible for:

- Making sure that applications are processed on time, no later than the School's published deadline
- Ensuring that full supporting evidence is in place before an on-line application is processed
- Reviewing the evidence before an on-line application is processed, ensuring that the candidate meets the criteria for the respective arrangements
- Holding all supporting evidence and presenting this to JCQ Centre Inspectors upon request
- Liaising with departments, the Director of Studies and the Heads of Lower and Middle School or the Head of Sixth Form to ensure that the agreed Access Arrangements have been put in place before the candidates' first examination (e.g. internal school examinations).

External assessors must:

- Record the results of tests completed indicating that the impairment has a substantial and long term adverse effect on the candidate's performance
- Use age appropriate, nationally standardised and up-to-date tests appropriate to the individual
- Report the results of their assessment in Part 2 of Form 8
- Assist the Head of Learning Support in the decision making process about EAA
- Provide the School with evidence of their qualifications

The Headmistress is responsible for:

- The quality of the Access Arrangements process within the school
- The appointment of external assessors, checking their qualifications and keeping a photocopy of their certificates

Teaching staff are responsible for:

- Providing Learning Support with relevant information and evidence of the candidate's persistent and significant difficulties
- Showing how the candidate's difficulties have impacted on teaching and learning in the classroom and providing evidence of this for the Head of Learning Support
- Detailing the candidate's normal way of working within the centre, the support given and how this relates to the proposed arrangements. Teaching staff must record any support regularly provided in the classroom

ANNEX A. EXAM ACCESS ARRANGEMENTS – SUBSTANTIAL IMPAIRMENT

DETAILED FILE NOTE: SUBJECT TEACHER EVIDENCE

Exam Access Arrangements – Substantial Impairment

Detailed File Note: Subject Teacher Evidence

Student name _____ Date _____

Subject: _____ Teacher name _____

- *Subject teachers have indicated that this student is struggling in the classroom*
- *Teachers now need to provide evidence that the student meets the following conditions to support an application for Access Arrangements*

Conditions for Candidates with a Substantial Impairment: JCQ regulations

In order to provide access arrangements (25% extra time/computer reader/reader and/or scribe) for a candidate, the centre must:

- 1) confirm that:
 - 25% extra time
 - access to a computer reader/reader
 - access to a scribe

is the candidate's normal way of working within the centre.

- 2) Provide evidence from teaching staff that the candidate has persistent and significant difficulties, and how these substantially impact on teaching and learning.

Please answer the following questions:

Does this candidate run out of time when completing timed tasks, or work more slowly than their peers?	Yes	No
Does this candidate receive support with reading in your classroom and/or in tests and assessments?	Yes	No
Does this candidate receive support with writing in your classroom and/or in tests and assessments?	Yes	No

Please comment:

<p>Where you have responded 'YES' to the questions above, please confirm that the candidate has persistent and significant difficulties when:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • accessing and processing information (25% extra time) and /or • accessing written text (computer reader/reader) and/or • writing (scribe) <p>and that these substantially impact on teaching and learning.</p>		
Please comment:		
Does the candidate need to use a word processor?	Yes	No
Is the candidate competent and confident in using a word processor (with spelling or predictive text and grammar check switched off) in your subject?	Yes	No
Please comment:		

Form completed by:

Signed:

Role:

Date:

ANNEX B.

Exam Access Arrangements – Substantial Impairment

Detailed File Note Evidence: SENCo version

Student name:

Date of Birth:

Year Group:

Date:

Conditions for Candidates with a Substantial Impairment: JCQ regulations

A) Confirmation of the candidate's disability.

Please attach document(s) from an appropriately qualified professional, confirming that the Candidate has persistent/significant difficulties and is disabled within the definition of the Equality Act 2010, e.g. a letter from:

- CAMHS
- a HCPC registered psychologist
- a medical consultant
- a psychiatrist
- a Speech and Language Therapist (SaLT)
- Local Authority Specialist Service (e.g. Sensory Impairment Service or Occupational Health
- a **current** Statement of Special Educational Needs, or an Education, Health and Care Plan, **which confirms the candidate's disability**

Please confirm the exact nature of the candidate's disability:

B) Evidence of the normal way of working in the centre:

Questions below are based on pages 26 and 45 of the JCQ booklet 'Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments', providing evidence for 25% extra time, and scribes. For more information about 26 to 50% extra time (p28/29) and more than 50% extra time (p30).

- 1) Is 25% extra time/support with writing the candidate's normal way of working within the centre?

Please comment:

- 2) Do teaching staff confirm that the candidate has persistent and significant difficulties when:
 - accessing and processing information (25% extra time)
 - writing (scribe)and that these substantially impact on teaching and learning?

Please comment:
<p>3) In the case of a scribe: Can you confirm that the candidate is not sufficiently competent or confident in using a word processor with the spelling and grammar check or predictive text facility disabled (switched off) in every subject (i.e. they will need a scribe in one or more subjects).</p>
Please comment:
C) Access Arrangements requested:
Please list:
This statement is based on evidence from the following teachers:
Please list name and subject taught:

Form completed by:

Signed:

Role:

Date:

ANNEX C: ACCESS ARRANGEMENTS FOR EXAMINATIONS – PARENTAL GUIDANCE

Access Arrangements are arrangements approved before the examinations take place to enable candidates with specific needs, such as special educational needs, disabilities or temporary injuries to access assessments.

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.

When applying for Access Arrangements, we are obliged to work within the framework laid down by the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ). These regulations are very complex and changes are made each academic year. The current guidance can be viewed on the JCQ website.

Some parents provide the school with either a private report from an educational psychologist and/or a letter from a consultant. It should be noted that neither of these on their own is a guarantee that a student will receive the Access Arrangements requested.

Candidates must be assessed by an assessor. This ensures that the access arrangements approved allow the candidate to access the assessment, but do not result in the candidate gaining an unfair advantage. Access arrangement assessors are appointed by the Headmistress. Access arrangements assessors are specially trained in line with regulations.

JCQ recommends that assessors should be employed within the centre. From this year, Mayfield's access arrangements assessor will be Mrs Emma Martin, Head of Learning Support, who has successfully completed a Level 7 Postgraduate Award of Proficiency in Assessment for Access Arrangements (PAPAA). Assessments are tailored to the particular access arrangement(s) being sought. Candidates' general ability is not assessed and no formal diagnosis can be given as full diagnostic testing will not be given. The assessment session lasts approximately 1 ½ - 2 hours. A summary report is written and results are also recorded in Part 2 of Form 8, as per JCQ regulations. The total cost of is £300.

Alternatively, candidates could be assessed by external assessors who have an established working relationship with the centre or, before an assessment, establishes a relationship with the centre. The cost of referral to an external assessor is £300. Any parent wishing to use the services of one of our external assessors should make this request known the Head of Learning Support. Please note, that privately commissioned assessments carried out without prior consultation with the centre cannot be used to award access arrangements and cannot be used to process an application using Access arrangements online.