

Catch22 Independent Schools Policy

Exams Access Arrangement Policy

Catch22 Include Norfolk School

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This policy will be reviewed annually.

Catch22 reserves the right to amend this policy, following consultation, where appropriate.

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Catch 22 Independent Schools

Education Intent Statement

Catch22's Vision:

To deliver better social outcomes through transforming public service through the 3Ps:

Place

Supporting people to find, retain, transition safely into homes and communities

Purpose

Working with people to achieve their purpose in education, employment or training

People

Building networks of people around individuals

Our Education Mission:

To enable young people to progress and succeed in sustained education, training or employment.

We do this through engaging young **people** positively with their **purpose** through learning and future life aspirations. All our pupils achieve positive outcomes, thrive and enjoy a quality education that is delivered by skilled, passionate **people** with high expectations in a **place** that is safe, high quality and appropriate.

Our schools cater for young people aged 4-16 who are outside of mainstream education, many of whom have troubled and challenging backgrounds. We embody our vision in all we do to ensure our pupils are supported fully to achieve these goals.

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'.

Purpose of the policy

The purpose of this policy is to confirm that The Catch22 Include Norfolk 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 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 the SENCo alongside the individual files/e-folders of each access arrangements candidate. Each file/e-folders contains detailed records of all the essential information that is required to be held according to the regulations.

Where the SENCo is storing access arrangements documentation electronically he/she **must** create an e-folder for each individual candidate. The candidate's e-folder must hold each of the required documents for inspection. ([AA](#) 4.2)

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 general principles of access arrangements for the centre to consider are detailed in [AA](#) (section 4.2). These include:

The purpose of an access arrangement 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 does not disadvantage or advantage the candidate.

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) before his/her first examination.

Equalities Policy (Exams)

A large part of the access arrangements 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.

See Equalities Policy

The head of centre/senior leadership team will... recognise its duties towards disabled candidates, including private candidates, as defined under the terms of the Equality Act 2010†. This **must** include a duty to explore and provide access to suitable courses, through the access arrangements process submit applications for reasonable adjustments and make reasonable adjustments to the service the centre provides to disabled candidates...

†for any legislation in a relevant jurisdiction other than England and Wales which has an equivalent purpose and effect ([GR](#) 5.4)

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 is appropriately qualified as required by JCQ regulations in [AA](#) 7.3.

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

CCET & CPT3 obtained through REAL Training

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)

Certificate is checked by Philip Hinchliffe on an annual basis. Copy of certificate is kept in Access Arrangements file.

The head of centre/senior leadership team will... have a **written** process in place to not only check the qualification(s) of their assessor(s) but that the correct procedures are followed as in Chapter 7 of the JCQ publication Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments... ([GR 5.4](#))

The head of centre **must** ensure that evidence of the assessor's qualification(s) is obtained **at the point of engagement/employment** and prior to the assessor undertaking any assessment of a candidate.

Evidence of the assessor's qualification(s) **must** be held on file for inspection purposes and be presented to the JCQ Centre Inspector by the SENCo. ([AA 7.3](#))

Reporting the appointment of the assessor(s)

The assessors qualifications are held in the Access Arrangements file

Make full reference to [AA 7.4](#) Reporting the appointment of assessors and record your process that reflects the requirements.

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

Significant effort is made to ensure that the assessment process is administered correctly. Students are identified as requiring Access Arrangements by the referring school, baseline assessments or by classroom teachers. This is confirmed through the gathering of evidence by the classroom teacher. Once sufficient evidence is gathered students are asked to sign Data Protection statements and the first section of the form eight is completed. The assessments are made by an individual who holds the appropriate qualification who is then able to make recommendations regarding the appropriate access arrangements. The Form eights are then completed and the online applications are made.

"... that the correct procedures are followed as per Chapter 7 of the JCQ publication Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments..." [[GR 5.4](#)]

Note... SENCos and assessors working within the centre should always carefully consider any privately commissioned assessment to see whether the process of gathering a picture of need, demonstrating normal way of working within the centre and ultimately assessing the candidate themselves should be instigated ([AA 7.3](#))

Also detail any process (where relevant) for private candidates, distance learners and home educated students - refer to the requirement in [GR 5.4](#)

Painting a 'holistic picture of need', confirming normal way of working

All Evidence is kept within the Exams Officer's examination cupboard. The evidence is discussed on a half termly basis with the SEN meeting held between the heads of department and the ALS lead/SENCo to determine quality and relevance. There is an expectation that these files are added to as more evidence is gathered through all departments.

Students are supported in lessons through laptops, e-readers, overlays and modified tasks. The outcome of these tasks is used to produce an evidence file that is kept within the English department. This evidence can be used to demonstrate a student's normal way of working as defined by JCQ.

Before the candidate's assessment, the SENCo must provide the assessor with background information, i.e. a picture of need has been painted as per Part 1 of Form 8. The SENCo and the assessor must work together to ensure a joined-up and consistent process.

An independent assessor must contact the centre and ask for evidence of the candidate's normal way of working and relevant background information. This must take place before the candidate is assessed.

All candidates must be assessed in light of the picture of need and the background information as detailed within Part 1 of Form 8.

An independent assessor must discuss access arrangements with the SENCo. The responsibility to request access arrangements specifically lies with the SENCo. ([AA 7.5](#))

Make full reference to [AA 7.5](#) Guidelines for the assessment of the candidate's learning difficulties by an assessor and 7.6 Completing Form 8 – JCQ/AA/LD, Profile of Learning Difficulties and record your process that reflects the requirements.

Processing access arrangements

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 listed on page 2 of [AA](#). This tool also provides the facility to order modified papers for those qualifications listed on page 74.

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 is required for each candidate regardless of the awarding body used.

All assessments and data are kept within the exam officer's office within the Access Arrangement file along with the applications and their outcomes. Data and evidence pertaining to student for which access arrangements were applied for but not awarded are kept within the access arrangements file. The ALS lead/SEnCo has responsibility for the information.

The SENCo must keep detailed records, whether electronically or 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. ([AA 8.6](#))

Make full reference to [AA 8](#) *Processing applications for access arrangements* and record your process that reflects the requirements.

Centre-delegated access arrangements

All centre delegated access arrangements are provided on the basis of relevant and applicable evidence being gathered through the departments and a clear indication that the arrangement provided represents the students normal way of working.

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.

See Appendix 2 of Exams Policy

A centre must have a policy on the use of word processors... A member of the centre's senior leadership team must produce a statement for inspection purposes which details the criteria the centre uses to award and allocate word processors for examinations. ([AA](#) 5.8)

Separate invigilation within the centre

A decision where an exam candidate may be approved separate invigilation within the centre will be made by the ALS lead/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 centre will provide invigilation for all students where it is evident that being within a room with other students will impact upon their own or others attainment. Invigilators may be in the room in a one to one situation although a second invigilator will be in the very near vicinity if required.

For example, in the case of separate invigilation, the candidate's difficulties are established within the centre (see Chapter 4, paragraph 4.1.4) and known to a Form Tutor, a Head of Year, the SENCo or a senior member of staff with pastoral responsibilities.

Separate invigilation reflects the candidate's normal way of working in internal school tests and mock examinations as a consequence of a long term medical condition or long term social, mental or emotional needs. ([AA](#) 5.16)