

Access Arrangements Policy

Policy Control Page

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Approved By	Education leadership Team (ELT)
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Policy Applicable to	Education
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Date	Version	Person	Change / Action
March 2019	V1	Salena Hutton	Adoption of Policy
October 2020	V2	Salena Hutton	Review and update policy to meet JCQ requirements
October 2021	V3	Salena Hutton	Review and update policy to meet JCQ requirements
October 2022	V4	Salena Hutton	Review policy - no update required
January 2024	V5	Salena Hutton	Review and update policy to meet JCQ requirements
October 2024	V6	Megan Pease	Review and update policy to meet JCQ requirements

Purpose of the policy

The purpose of this policy is to confirm that Exeter Royal Academy for Deaf Education (The Academy) 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 (GR) and JCQ Adjustments for candidates with disabilities and learning difficulties - Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments (AARA)). Additionally to show compliance with Signature (Awarding Body for BSL qualifications) requirements for a reasonable adjustment process.

General Principles

The general principles that the Academy will consider, for both JCQ and Signature purposes, are detailed in AARA (section 4.2), which includes:

- 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.
- Candidates may not require the same access arrangements/reasonable adjustments in each specification and needs will be considered on a subject-by-subject basis.
- 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.
- The 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.
- 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 their first examination.

Additionally, the head of centre/senior leadership team recognises its duties towards disabled candidates, ensuring compliance with all aspects of the Equality Act 2010.

The Head of Centre will ensure that there is appropriate accommodation for candidates requiring access arrangements in the centre for all examinations and assessments and that the Assistant Principal with SEN responsibility is fully supported in effectively identifying, applying for, and implementing access arrangements & reasonable adjustments once approved.

Profile of Academy Students

The Academy does not accept private candidates.

All Academy students are d/Deaf or have auditory processing needs.

The majority of students have additional needs over and above their deafness. These needs include sensory needs, including dual and Multi- sensory impairment such as CHARGE syndrome, neuro developmental disorders such as autistic spectrum condition, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, Learning needs and disabilities or cognitive and learning difficulties. Speech and language disorders such as Auditory Processing Disorder. Some students have physical needs, such as Cerebral Palsy. A small number of students are regarded as vulnerable learners as a result of their social, emotional and mental health impairments and/or cognitive and learning difficulties. A significant minority of all Deaf and 'Hearing impaired' young people experience mental health problems that require provisions.

All students have an Education, Health and Care plan (EHCP) and are considered disabled within the meaning of the Equality Act 2010.

The Assessment Process

Given that all students have an EHCP, there is no requirement for completion of Form 8 – JCQ/AA/LD, Profile of Learning Difficulties. The Academy does not employ/engage an access arrangements assessor.

The Assistant Principal with SEN responsibility carefully considers all evidence (showing an holistic picture of need and confirming the candidate's normal way of working) and determines the appropriate access arrangements in line with JCQ regulations.

Evidence considered may include:

- EHCP
- Teacher completed checklist showing candidate's normal way of working in the classroom
- Mock exams and classroom tests
- Verbal evidence from teachers, support staff, care staff and exams officer
- Internal therapy support information

Processing access arrangements and reasonable adjustments

The Exam Officer will:

- For JCQ regulated awarding bodies:
 - apply for approval through Access Arrangements Online (AAO) via the Centre Admin Portal (CAP), where required or through the awarding body where qualifications sit outside the scope of AAO, within the published deadlines
 - ensure completion of the relevant forms for centre delegated access arrangements

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.

Paper copies of evidence of need, copies of applications and approvals are retained on file; EHCPs are stored electronically within the individual student's personal file; the candidate personal data consent form is a section within the Academy "Permissions Booklet" (covering permissions for all aspects of Academy life) and is stored electronically within the individual student's personal file.

- For Signature qualifications:
 - apply for approval through the Signature Iris portal, providing supporting evidence of need and details of the adjustments the Academy is making in the course of teaching the candidate