



Access & Special Arrangements Policy (Exams)

Calthorpe Park School

May 2025

No substantial changes made to previous version

Access & Special Arrangements Policy (Exams)

Centre name	Calthorpe Park School
Centre number	58333
Policy Date	May 2025
Policy produced by	Sian Cosgrove
Policy reviewed by	Emma Jones
Date of next review	March 2026

Key staff involved in the policy	
Role	Name
Head of centre	Kevan John
Senior leader(s)	Emma Jones
Exams officer	Sarah Carr-Crompton
ALS lead/SENCo	Sian Cosgrove

This policy is reviewed and updated annually to ensure that access arrangements process at Calthorpe Park School is managed in accordance with current requirements and regulations.

References in this policy to GR, ICE and AA refer to the JCQ publications General Regulations for Approved Centres, Instructions for conducting examinations and Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments.

References to legislation are to the Equality Act 2010. Separate legislation is in place for Northern Ireland (see AA 1.8). The definitions and procedures in AA relating to access arrangements and reasonable adjustments will also apply in Northern Ireland.

This policy should be read in conjunction with Calthorpe Park Disability policy.

1. Introduction & Definitions

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 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'.

2. Purpose of the policy

The purpose of this policy is to confirm that Calthorpe Park 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 (GR 5.4)
- has a written process in place to not only check the qualification(s) of its assessor(s) but that the correct procedures are followed as per Chapter 7 of the JCQ publication Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments (GR 5.4)

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 (AA 4.2)
- Modified papers must be ordered in advance of a specific examination series, no later than the published deadline for the series concerned (AA 6.1)
- Although access arrangements are intended to allow access to assessments, they cannot be granted where they will compromise the assessment objectives of the specification in question (AA 4.2)
- Candidates may not require the same access arrangements/reasonable adjustments in each specification. Subjects and their methods of assessments may vary, leading to different demands of the candidate. The need for access arrangements/reasonable adjustments must be considered on a subject-by-subject basis (AA 4.2)
- Access arrangements/reasonable adjustments should be processed at the start of the course (AA 4.2)
- Arrangements must always be approved before an examination or assessment (AA 4.2)
- The arrangement(s) put in place must reflect the support given to the candidate in the centre (AA 4.2)
- The candidate must have had appropriate opportunities to practise using the access arrangement(s)/reasonable adjustments before their first examination (AA 4.2)

3. Roles and responsibilities

When an access arrangement/reasonable adjustment has been processed on-line and approved, the evidence of need (where required) must be made available to a JCQ Centre Inspector upon request. An awarding body may also request evidence of need when considered necessary. This can either be in hard copy paper format or electronically. (AA 4.2)

Where documentation is stored electronically an e-folder for each individual candidate must be created. The candidate's e-folder must hold each of the required documents for inspection. (AA 4.2)

It is the responsibility of the Assessor: Sian Cosgrove

- to collect a candidate's consent (a completed candidate Personal data consent form) to record their personal data on-line through AAO
- to complete the Data protection confirmation by the examinations officer or SENCo, prior to the processing of the online application
- to submit applications for approval using AAO
- to keep detailed records for inspection purposes, whether electronically or in hard copy paper format, of all the essential information on file. This includes a signed candidate personal data consent form; a completed Data protection confirmation by the examinations officer or SENCo form; a copy of the candidate's approved application; appropriate evidence of need (where required); evidence of the assessor's qualification (where required) (AA 8.6)
- to submit applications for approval directly to an awarding body for any qualification that does not fall within the scope of AAO
- with the Exams Team, to order or print modified papers

4. The assessment process

At Calthorpe Park School, assessments are carried out by the Assessor who is appropriately qualified, in accordance with the JCQ requirements (AA 7.3). Evidence of the assessor's qualification is held on file for inspection purposes (AA 7.4)

In the case of appropriately qualified psychologists (registered with the Health & Care Professions Council), or specialist assessors holding a current SpLD Assessment Practising Certificate, who are directly employed within the centre, there is no need to record the names of these individuals within Access arrangements online. (AA 7.4)

The names of all other assessors, who are assessing candidates studying qualifications as covered by AA, must be entered into Access arrangements online to confirm their status (AA 7.4)

When requested, assessment evidence will be presented to the JCQ Centre Inspector by

- Emma Jones - SLT
- Sian Cosgrove - Assessor.

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

Calthorpe Park School confirms:

- Guidelines for the assessment of the candidate's learning difficulties by an assessor will be followed and Form 8 (JCQ/AA/LD - Profile of Learning Difficulties) will be completed (AA 7.5, 7.6)
- Arrangements must be made for the candidate to be assessed by the centre's appointed assessor (AA 7.5)
- Assessors must personally conduct the assessments. They must not sign off assessments carried out by another professional (AA 7.5)
- The assessor must carry out tests which are relevant to support the application (AA 7.5)
- A privately commissioned assessment carried out without prior consultation with the centre cannot be used to award access arrangements (AA 7.3)
- Relevant staff 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)

Picture of need/normal way of working

Calthorpe Park School confirms:

- Before the candidate's assessment, the person appointed in the centre must provide the assessor with background information, i.e. a picture of need has been painted as required in Part 1 of Form 8. The centre and the assessor must work together to ensure a joined-up and consistent process. (AA 7.5)

5. Processing access arrangements and adjustments

Access arrangements online (AAO) is used to apply for approval of arrangements/adjustments for the qualifications listed within the JCQ publication Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments.

AAO is accessed through the JCQ Centre Admin Portal (CAP) by logging in to one of the awarding body secure extranet sites. A single application for approval is required for each candidate regardless of the awarding body used.

Deadlines apply for each examination series for submitting applications for approval using AAO.

Centre delegated arrangements/adjustments

Decisions relating to the approval of centre delegated arrangements/adjustments are made by Sian Cosgrove. Appropriate evidence, where required by the arrangement, is held on file by Sian Cosgrove and the AEN Department.

The use of a word processor

The Exams Word Processor Policy details the criteria Calthorpe Park School specifically uses to award and allocate word processors for examinations and assessments.

The School Exams Policy Special Considerations in Exams Policy details the criteria Calthorpe Park School uses to award alternative rooming arrangements, e.g. a room for a smaller group of candidates with similar needs (formerly known as separate invigilation).

Modified papers

Modified papers are ordered using AAO.

Modified papers must be ordered in advance of a specific examination series, no later than the published deadline for the series concerned (AA 6.1)

Modified papers are individually prepared for candidates for whom other adjustments are unsuitable. The modification of papers involves additional resources. Therefore, centres are required to provide the awarding bodies with early notification that a candidate will require a modified paper. (AA 6.1)

Modified papers must not be ordered for candidates unless the centre intends to enter them for the relevant examination series (AA 6.1)

For the adjustment to be effective, the candidate must have had appropriate opportunities to practise using an awarding body's past modified papers before his/her first examination (AA 6.1)

May 2025