

Catch22 Independent Schools Policy

Exams Access Arrangement Policy

Catch22 Include London 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 MAT and 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 school caters for young people aged 14-17 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

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

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

Purpose of the policy

The purpose of this policy is to confirm that The Catch22 Include London 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-folder 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."*

[JCQ General Regulations for Approved Centres, 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/reasonable adjustment is to ensure, where possible, that barriers to assessment are removed for a disabled candidate preventing them 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.

Although access arrangements/adjustments are intended to allow access to assessments, they cannot be granted where they will compromise the assessment objectives of the specification in question (see Chapter 3).

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.

Access arrangements/reasonable adjustments should be processed at the start of the course.

The arrangement(s) put in place must reflect the support given to the candidate in the centre... This is commonly referred to as ‘normal way of working’.

The SENCo and/or the assessor must work with teaching staff, support staff and exams office personnel to ensure that approved access arrangements are put in place for internal school tests, mock examinations and examinations.

If a candidate has never made use of the arrangement granted to them, e.g. 25% extra time or supervised rest breaks, then it is not their normal way of working. The SENCo may consider withdrawing the arrangement, provided the candidate will not be placed at a substantial disadvantage.

Where non-examination assessment is marked by teachers, credit must only be given for skills demonstrated by the candidate working independently.

Where a person is appointed to facilitate an access arrangement/reasonable adjustment... they are responsible to the exams officer and must be acceptable to the head of centre. The person appointed must not normally be the candidate’s own subject teacher, Learning Support Assistant or teaching assistant. However, where the candidate’s own subject teacher, Learning Support Assistant or teaching assistant is used, a separate invigilator must always be present.

Failure to comply with the regulations contained in this document has the potential to constitute malpractice which may impact on the candidate’s result(s)

The JCQ and the awarding bodies can only enter into discussions over access arrangements/reasonable adjustments with the candidate’s centre and not with parents/carers

When an access arrangement/reasonable adjustment has been processed online and approved for GCSE and GCE qualifications, the evidence of need (where required) must be made available by the SENCo 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.

Equalities Exams Policy

A large part of the access arrangements process is covered in the Equalities Exams Policy 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... appoint a SENCo, or an equivalent member of staff, who will coordinate the access arrangements process within the centre and determine appropriate arrangements for candidates with learning difficulties and disabilities, candidates for whom English is an additional language, as well as those with a temporary illness or temporary injury.

...recognise its duties towards disabled candidates, including private candidates, ensuring compliance with all aspects of the Equality Act 2010†, particularly Section 20 (7). 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. Where the centre is under a duty to make a reasonable adjustment, the centre must not charge a disabled candidate any additional fee in relation to the adjustment or aid; †or any legislation in a relevant jurisdiction other than England and Wales which has an equivalent purpose and effect.

ensure there are appropriate resources in place at the time of examinations/ assessments to meet candidates' needs, e.g. sufficient readers and scribes.

([GR 5.4](#))

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)

Allocated assessor to be Level 7

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 Jazmin Marrison on an annual basis and a 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)

Assessors will be outsourced externally. The assessors' qualifications are held in the Access Arrangements file.

SENcos must hold on file for inspection purposes evidence that the assessor(s) is/ are suitably qualified.

The names of all other assessors, who are assessing candidates studying qualifications as listed within the Deadlines section, must be entered into Access arrangements online to confirm their status.

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 and 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)

*"ensure that the SENCo undertakes the necessary and appropriate steps to gather a picture of need and demonstrate normal way of working for a private candidate such as a **distance learner or a home educated student**. The centre, where required, must lead on the assessment process. The candidate must be assessed by the centre's appointed assessor. In some instances, depending on their needs, the candidate may have to be assessed away from the centre, for example at home. The centre must comply with the obligation to identify the need for, request and implement access arrangements"*

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

All evidence is kept within the Exams Officer's examination cupboard. There is an expectation that these files are added to as more evidence is gathered.

Students are supported in lessons through laptops, e-readers, overlays and modified tasks as required. The outcome of these tasks is used to produce an evidence file that is kept within the examination cupboard. 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 required in Part 1 of Form 8. The SENCo and the assessor must work together to ensure a joined-up and consistent process.

...The SENCo or the assessor working within the centre must detail the candidate's background and history of support.

...Part 1 of Form 8 is a pen portrait of the candidate's needs. It allows the SENCo to 'paint a holistic picture of need', confirming normal way of working bringing together:

- *any previously granted access arrangements;*
- *comments and observations across relevant subjects from teaching staff and support staff (i.e. Learning Support Assistants, Teaching Assistants and Communication Support Workers);*
- *intervention strategies (e.g. individual education/learning plans) in place for the candidate;*
- *pupil premium indicators;*
- *screening test results;*
- *use of pupil baseline and tracking data;*
- *information about any differentiation in the classroom;*
- *normal way of working in the classroom (where appropriate);*
- *arrangements made for end of year internal school examinations/mock examinations.*

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 in 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 SENCo and Exams Officer have responsibility for this information.

The SENCo must keep detailed records for inspection purposes, whether electronically or in hard copy paper format, of all the essential information on file.

There is not a requirement to process an application for an alternative site using Access arrangements online. Centres must not process an online application using 'Other'. However, the examinations officer must submit an online alternative site form using the Centre Admin Portal (CAP). This is only a notification process and not an approval process.

Exams officer completes applications for access arrangements on the JCQ website.

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 SENCO and discussed with the Exams Officer.

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](#))