



Lancing College

Access Arrangements Policy 2023/24

This policy is reviewed annually to ensure compliance with current regulations.

Approved/reviewed by - CXM	
Head of Learning Support	
Date of next review	September 2024

Key staff involved in the access arrangements process

Role	Name(s)
SENCo & Learning Support Teacher	Claire Martin & Linda Rice
SENCo line manager (Senior Leader)	John Herbert
Head of Centre	Dominic Oliver

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Key staff involved in the access arrangements.

Linda Rice – Learning Support Teacher - level 7 access arrangements assessor

Claire Martin – SENCO - The National Award for SEN Co-ordination (NASENCO)

Purpose of the policy

The purpose of this policy is to confirm Lancing College complies with its “...obligation to identify the need for, request and implement access arrangements...” *JCQ General Regulations for Approved Centres, 5.5]*

This publication is further referred to in this policy as GR.

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 because of persistent and significant difficulties.

Candidates may not require the same access arrangements in each specification. Subjects and their methods of assessments may vary, leading to different demands of the candidate. The need for access arrangements must be considered on a subject-by-subject basis.

(AARA 4.2.1 page 24)

What are access arrangements and reasonable adjustments?

Access arrangements

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.

Access arrangements/reasonable adjustments **must** always be approved **before** an assessment or examination.

(AARA, 4.2.4 page 24)

Access arrangements 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'.

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 (AARA 4.2)

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 support students to overcome substantial disadvantage.

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'.

(AARA Definitions, page 7)

Evidence of need

The evidence of need will vary depending on the disability and the access arrangements being applied for. Lancing College Learning Support Department are required to collect core evidence of need for each access arrangement. Failure to produce the appropriate evidence will lead to the application for access arrangements being rejected.

(AARA Definitions, page 8)

Disability policy (exams)

A large part of the access arrangements policy is covered in the Disability policy (exams) which covers staff roles and responsibilities in identifying the need for, requesting, and implementing access arrangements and the conduct of exams.

The access arrangements policy further covers the assessment process and related issues in more detail.

The assessment processes

Assessments are carried out by an assessor(s) appointed by the head of centre. The assessor(s) is (are) appropriately qualified as required by JCQ regulations in AARA 7.3.

Qualifications of the current assessors

Linda Rice – Learning Support Teacher - Level 7 assessor PATOSS registered.

Claire Martin – SENCO - The National Award for SEN Co-ordination (NASENCO)

Copies of all the qualification(s) of the assessor(s) (including those of the Head of Learning Support) are held by the Exams officer and the Head of Learning Support. All assessors are appointed by the Head of Learning Support in accordance with AARA (7.3)

How the assessment process is administered

Where a student is referred to Learning Support, the Head of Learning Support will collect evidence of need and then do an assessment for exam arrangements if appropriate.

The Head of Learning Support reserves the right to approve an external assessor and to accept/ or not the recommendations for Access Arrangements and assessment scores from that external assessor. This is to comply with *JCQ General Regulations for Approved Centres, 5.5* to ensure “that the assessment process is administered correctly.” All arrangements must be carried out in accordance with the JCQ publication *Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments*, 1 September 2022 to 31 August 2023.

(GR 5.5)

PLEASE NOTE

A privately commissioned assessment 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*.

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 counter themselves should be instigated.

(AARA 7.3.6, page 83)

Evidence of need

Evidence of need is collected by the Learning Support Department through two methods. One is a Lancing College referral form (based on the Professional Association of Teachers of Students with Specific Learning Difficulties model - PATOSS) and the second is an electronic evidence of need form which is available to the staff on the VLE. The Head of Learning Support is responsible for collecting and collating the evidence which is then kept in the student’s confidential personal file. The evidence (along with initial screening and any baseline assessments scores) is then used to build up a picture of need and normal way of working which is then recorded on Part 1 of a Form 8.

The Head of Learning Support completes at least a ‘skeleton’ Part 1 of Form 8 prior to the candidate being assessed (Part 2 of Form 8). Where a privately commissioned report, or a report from an external professional, is rejected by the College, the Head of Centre and/or a member

of the Senior Leadership Team will jointly provide a written rationale supporting their decision to the parent/carer. (AARA 7.3.6, page 83)

Gathering evidence to demonstrate *normal way of working*.

The Learning Support Department is also responsible for gathering evidence to demonstrate *normal way of working*.

Normal way of working as defined by JCQ might be:

- *in the classroom (where appropriate).*
- *working in small groups for reading and/or writing.*
- *literacy support lessons.*
- *literacy intervention strategies.*
- *in internal school tests/examinations.*
- *mock examinations.*
- The Head of Learning Support and assessors will refer to AARA Chapter 5, for information on how to confirm 'normal ways of working' and corresponding access adjustments and arrangements. The only exception to this is where an arrangement is put in place because of a temporary injury or impairment.
- The Head of Learning Support can also refer to other sources of information to 'paint a holistic picture of need'.
- The candidate's self-reported difficulties e.g., questionnaire completed by the candidate.
- Comments from teaching staff and support staff familiar with the candidate
- Use of baseline and tracking data

Students who feel they have cause to query the outcome of a referral to Learning Support should contact the Head of Learning Support in the first instance who will be able to explain the outcome and/or resolve the matter. Alternatively, students can talk to their Tutor or HMM if they do not wish to talk directly with the dept.

In all cases the College's decision is final.

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 5 of [AARA](#). AAO is accessed by logging in to any of the awarding body secure extranet sites. A single application is required for each candidate regardless of the awarding body used.

The Head of Learning Support will submit applications anytime up to the deadline in the year that the public examinations are to be taken. The information to support each application (Form 8, data protection notices and AAO approval form) are kept in year group folders in the Learning Support Office. The Exams Officer has access to all of these. Evidence (teacher evidence and exam evidence) is kept in the students' individual folders in a locked filing cabinet in the Learning Support Department.

Lancing College assessors must personally conduct assessments for access arrangements and the Head of Learning Support cannot sign off assessments carried out by an external registered professional unless that professional has been engaged by Lancing College. (AARA, 7.5)

Centre-delegated access arrangements

Centre-delegated arrangements (those arrangements which may be granted by the centre and for which an application to an exam board is not necessary) such as an alternative rooming arrangement and/or **rest breaks** are recorded on the ACCESS document and any evidence is kept in the Centre Delegated file and in the students' individual folders in a locked filing cabinet in the Learning Support Department.

Centre-specific criteria for 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. The College's Word Processing Policy is attached to this document but is also available on the VLE. Staff are regularly reminded of the procedures to follow for a word processing referral and evidence is collected and stored in the students' individual folders in a locked filing cabinet in the Learning Support Department.

Alternative rooming arrangements

A decision where an exam candidate may be approved alternative rooming arrangements within the centre will be made by the Head of Learning Support. The decision will be based on whether the candidate has a substantial and long-term impairment which has an adverse effect. It must also be the candidate's normal way of working within the centre. Alternative rooming arrangements within the centre will only be granted only after evidence has been gathered along with any other supporting documentation. All evidence is stored in the students' individual folders in a locked filing cabinet in the Learning Support Department. Adjustments relating to mental health and anxiety must be substantiated by a suitably qualified medical profession (this cannot be a GP) and must constitute a long term or substantial need for adjustment.

Other centre-delegated arrangements include:

- Supervised rest breaks
- Prompter
- Coloured overlays and paper
- Modified exam papers
- Read aloud computer software and pens.

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Lancing College

Senior School & Sixth Form

Word Processing Policy

This policy is reviewed annually to ensure compliance with current regulations and guidance of the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ)

Approved/reviewed by: Claire Martin (Head of Learning Support)

Date of next review: September 2024

Lancing College values good handwriting and imposes high standards on presentation of work and expects that most students will handwrite in exams. However, there are exceptional circumstances, as identified by the College, where students may benefit from using a word processor and in these cases the College will allow use of a word processor for note-making in class, for evening school, and for internal and public examinations.

Students with access to word processors in exams are allowed to do so in order that barriers to assessment are removed for disabled candidates, preventing them from being placed at a substantial disadvantage because of persistent and significant difficulties.

JCQ states “*that a word processor cannot simply be granted to a candidate because they*

- *Prefer to type rather than write.*
- *Can work faster on a keyboard.*
- *Uses a laptop at home”.*

Lancing College will allow students to use word processors in exams when they meet at least one of the following criteria:

- **The student has a specific learning difficulty/disability (such as dyslexia, dyspraxia, ASC) and the use of a word processor is both appropriate to their needs and reflects their normal way of working;** The College may require diagnosis of disability or an educational psychologist’s report dated Year 9 or later. The Head of Learning Support is required to substantiate any external reports and recommendations with current evidence, internal testing, and teacher observation,
- **The student has a physical difficulty/medical condition such (such as hypermobility/juvenile arthritis) and the use of a word processor is both appropriate to their needs and reflects their normal way of working;** The College may require medical evidence.
- **The student has a sensory impairment (such as 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 College may request medical evidence.
- **The student has very poor handwriting and would lose marks due to the examiner finding his/her answers illegible;** The Learning Support Department

would need to collect handwritten examples of work from teachers. A referral for an adjustment of this kind is likely to come from teaching staff and will need to be substantiated by a below average handwriting speed as measured by the Lancing College Learning Support Department.

- **The student's quality of language significantly improves as a result of using a word processor due to problems with planning and organisation when writing by hand.** The Learning Support Department would need to collect evidence that supported the significant improvement when work was typed. The department may need to observe the student using a word processor to see how organisational difficulties are overcome by its use.

This use of a word processor also extends to the use of electronic braille's and tablets. Students permitted to use word processors in public exams (i.e., GCSEs, BTEC, Cambridge Nationals) must have been using a word processor as their normal way of working for classes, evening school, internal tests, and internal exams.

Students who were allowed to use a laptop by their prep or primary schools will not necessarily be permitted to do so at Lancing College. The College will need to re-assess student's physical or educational needs and permission to continue using previous access arrangements will always be in line with guidelines set out by JCQ for public examinations.

Using a laptop or a personal electronic device in class does not mean the use of a word processor is automatically the student's normal way of working for exam purposes. Often students use laptops and devices as a learning resource but are still required to handwrite in some lessons, non-examination assessments and internal and external exams.

It is not school policy to provide a word processor for a student solely on the basis that they prefer to type or that they can work faster on a keyboard because they use a laptop at home.

Whilst pupils will occasionally need to use a laptop in class (e.g., for coursework), the continual day to day use of a word processor should not occur without Learning Support Department scrutiny. Those who are authorised to use a word processor are shown on the LS register and the central management system iSAMs as having had this arrangement agreed with Learning Support. To support staff with addressing student need in classroom settings, arrangements for use of a word processor will also be promoted through Pupil Passports for students categorised as Wave 2 or Wave 3.

A student may also use a word processor on a temporary basis because of a temporary injury.

The school will provide word processors with spelling and grammar checkers and predictive text facility removed for use in internal exams and public exams. These word processors are not able to connect to the internet.

The use of a word processor is considered and agreed where appropriate at the start of the course. Students are subsequently aware that they will have the use of a word processor for examinations and controlled assessments/coursework.

The need for the use of a word processor is considered on a subject-by-subject basis. Students who have permission to use a word processor in exams do not have to use it in all

exams, e.g., they may opt to use it in subjects with extended writing demands only. The provision will be agreed with the Head of Learning Support during mock/practice exams and recorded on the central Learning Support register and data management systems. Handwriting speed will always be tested prior to any agreement that a student can use a word processor.

In internal tests and public exams, students may use their answer booklet in addition to the word processor if they wish to do so. For example, a student may type certain questions and handwrite shorter answers.

Where a student is awarded the use of a word processor in exams and internal tests, they are expected to follow and complete a touch-typing course to make the most of the adjustment and to ensure that the use of a word processor is a helpful adjustment.

The use of a word processor is not granted where it will compromise the assessment objectives of the specification in question.

Where possible students using word processors in external exams are internally accommodated together in a smaller room within the school.

Signed: Claire Martin

Dated: 3/10/2023