



# **Access Arrangements Policy**

Medeshamstede Academy

## Access Arrangements Policy

Centre name	Medeshamstede Academy
Centre number	22376
Date policy first created	22/11/2023
Current policy approved by	Mr M Bloodworth-Flatt
Current policy reviewed by	Mrs A Charlton
Date of review	27/10/2025
Date of next review	27/10/2026

### Key staff involved in the policy

Role	Name
Head of centre	Mr M Bloodworth-Flatt
Senior leader(s)	Mrs N Maker (AP) Mrs S Johnson (AP) Mrs R Houghton (AP) Mrs A Charlton (AP) Mrs R Chagger (AP)
Exams officer	Mrs A Charlton
SENCo (or equivalent role)	Matthew Bloodworth-Flatt
Other staff (if applicable)	N/A

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

References in this policy to GR, ICE and AARA refer to the JCQ documents **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 AARA 1.8). The definitions and procedures in AARA relating to access arrangements and reasonable adjustments will also apply in Northern Ireland.

## Introduction

(AARA 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 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'.

The centre must ensure that approved adjustments can be delivered to candidates.

## Purpose of the policy

The purpose of this policy is to confirm that Medeshamstede 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 (GR 5.4)
- has a written process in place to check the qualification(s) of its assessor(s) and that the correct procedures are followed, as in Chapter 7 of the JCQ document *Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments* (GR 5.4)

## 1. General principles

The head of centre/senior leadership team will appoint a SENCo, or an equivalent member of staff, to coordinate the access arrangements process within the centre and determine appropriate arrangements for candidates with learning difficulties and disabilities, those for whom English is an additional language and

those with a temporary illness or temporary injury. (GR 5.4)

A 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. (AA 4.2)

The principles for Medeshamstede Academy to consider 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 (AARA 4.2)
- 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 (AARA 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 (AARA 4.2)
- Applications for access arrangements/reasonable adjustments should be processed at the start of or during the first year of a two-year the course having firmly established a picture of need and normal way of working (AARA 4.2)
- Arrangements **must** always be approved **before** an examination or assessment (AARA 4.2)
- The arrangement(s) put in place **must** reflect the support given to the candidate in the centre (AARA 4.2)
- The candidate **must** have had appropriate opportunities to practise using the access arrangement(s)/reasonable adjustment(s) before their first examination (AARA 4.2)

The main elements of the process detailing staff roles and responsibilities in identifying the need for, requesting and implementing access arrangements/reasonable adjustments and the conduct of examinations are covered in:

- the Equalities Policy for Exams.

## 2. The assessment process

At Medeshamstede Academy, assessments are carried out by:

- an appropriately qualified assessor(s) appointed by the head of centre in accordance with the JCQ requirements (AARA 7.3)

### Details and qualification(s) of the current assessor(s)

Mrs Caroline Spaxman - Arts Award

### Appointment of assessors

At the point an assessor is engaged/employed at Medeshamstede Academy:

- Evidence of the assessor's qualification is obtained and checked against the current requirements (AARA 7.3)
- This process is carried out prior to the assessor undertaking any assessment of a candidate (AARA 7.3)
- Evidence of successful completion of a post- graduate course in individual specialist assessment at or

equivalent to Level 7 or a printout of a screenshot of HCPC or SASC registration is held on file for inspection purposes to evidence that the assessor(s) is/are suitably qualified (AARA 7.3, 7.4)

Additional information:

Not applicable

### **Reporting the appointment of assessors**

- Evidence that the assessor(s) is/are suitably qualified is held on file for inspection purposes (AARA 7.4)

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

- Mr M Bloodworth-Flatt (SENCO)
- In the case of appropriately qualified psychologists (registered with the Health & Care Professions Council), or specialist teacher 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*. (AARA 7.4)
- The names of all other assessors, who are assessing candidates studying qualifications as covered by the *Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments* document must be entered into *Access arrangements online* to confirm their status (AARA 7.4)

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

Medeshamstede Academy confirms:

- All pupils at Medeshamstede have an EHCP plan so detailed notes from year 9 EHCP reviews and needs to enabling access are kept as part of Exam Access Arrangement evidence electronically and a hard copy is with the EO. A full Profile sheet of evidence and test results forms part of this evidence.
- Arrangements must be made for the candidate to be assessed by the centre's appointed assessor (AARA 7.5)
- Assessors **must** personally conduct the assessments. They **must not** sign off assessments carried out by another professional (AARA 7.5)
- The assessor **must** carry out tests which are relevant to support the application (AARA 7.5)
- A privately commissioned assessment, where the centre has not been involved, **cannot** be used to award access arrangements and **cannot** be used to process an application using *Access arrangements online* (AARA 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 (AARA 7.3)

Additional information:

Access assessments can be commissioned for Private candidates if applicable in line equal opportunities policies.

### **Picture of need/normal way of working**

Medeshamstede Academy confirms:

- Before the candidate is assessed the assessor is given a clear picture of needs through the EHCP for the students and any professional reports and assessments that may give further relevant information

ensuring a consistent process (AA7.5.2.)

Additional information:

- Medeshamstede collect evidence forms in Autumn term each year for year 10 and 11 for all core subjects a round what support and access arrangements form part of the students normal way of working.
- All assessments are discussed with the centres delegated SENDCO and EO.
- The responsibility to determine and request appropriate and practicable access arrangements/reasonable adjustments specifically lies with the centre. (AA 7.5.3)
- The academy will complete the access arrangements picture of need and normal way of working documentation (Form 8 must NOT be used as every pupil attending Medeshamstede Academy has an EHCP) and gather all appropriate evidence so the exam officer can make an application.

### **3. Processing access arrangements and adjustments**

#### **Arrangements/adjustments requiring awarding body approval**

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

AAO is accessed through the JCQ Centre Admin Portal (CAP) by using any 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.

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

#### **Centre delegated arrangements/adjustments**

Decisions relating to the approval of centre delegated arrangements/adjustments are made by:

- SENCO.

Appropriate evidence, where required by the arrangement, is held on file by:

- the EO.
- **The use of a word processor**

The details the criteria Medeshamstede Academy specifically uses to award and allocate word processors for examinations and assessments.

- **Alternative rooming arrangements**

The details the criteria Medeshamstede Academy uses to award alternative rooming arrangements, e.g. a room for a smaller group of candidates with similar needs or an alternative room with one-to-one invigilation.

Additional information

- Throughout their time at the Academy the needs of the students are continually reviewed through the EHCP SEND review process where the support that required is also discussed and recorded as required applications for the candidate.
- A robust framework of evidence will be sourced not only through picture of need in the centre and the specialist assessors diagnostic screening tests but also from Educational Psychology, Occupational Therapy and Speech and Language Therapy reports alongside their EHC plans. It is in the best interests of our students

to ensure we can give them the full support they need to access their accreditations.

- Subject leaders with the appointed SENDCo will provide a portfolio evidence per access arrangement in place for each student to demonstrate normal way of working within the centre. Signed statements may be obtained from the subject teacher/candidate to evidence normal way of working.

- SENDCo will liaise with subject leaders to provide tracking and evidence for the specialist assessor in order to ensure that the testing is in relation to the candidates normal way of working.

- The provision detailed in an EHCP, teachers evidence, assessor evidence and SENDCo information will then all be used to create a statement profile on centre headed paper which details a candidates normal way of working.

- This information will be stored within the candidates file/e-file and a copy with EO for evidence for inspection if required.

### **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 (AARA 6.1)
- Modified papers are prepared for candidates for whom other adjustments are unsuitable. The modification of papers involves additional resources. Therefore centres must provide the awarding bodies with early notification that a candidate will require a modified paper. (AARA 6.1)
- Modified papers **must not** be ordered for candidates unless the centre intends to enter them for the relevant examination series (AARA 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 their first examination (AARA 6.1)

### **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. (AARA 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. (AARA 4.2)

It is the responsibility of:

- to inform candidates that an application for access arrangements will be processed using *Access arrangements online*, complying with the UK GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018
- 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 copy of the candidate's approved application, appropriate evidence of need (where required) and evidence of the assessor's qualification (where required) (AARA 8.6)
- to submit applications for approval directly to an awarding body for any qualification that does not fall within the scope of AAO
- to order modified papers

Additional responsibilities:

Exams officer will present the files when requested by the JCQ Centre Inspector



## **Changes 2025/2026**

References to AA changed to AARA

(Added/Removed) Under heading **Roles and responsibilities:**

Added new bullet point to reference the requirement to comply with the UK GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018.

Removed reference to a signed candidate personal data consent form and Data protection confirmation by the examinations officer or SENCo form which are no longer required.

This section will therefore need to be edited when reviewing and updating this policy for 2025/2026.

## **Centre-specific changes**

Upon review in Oct 2025 there are no changes to centre specific arrangements