



Access Arrangements Policy

September 2023

(To be reviewed August 2024)

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Safeguarding Statement

SupaJam is a post-16 specialist provider, specialising in Music, Maths, English and Life Skills. All staff, volunteers and partners are committed to safeguarding the welfare of every person within SupaJam. Our mission is to help young people to engage and achieve within a safe and inclusive environment.

Key staff involved in the policy

Role	Name(s)
SENCOs	Keir Williams + Charlotte Francis-Finch
SEND Director (Senior leader)	Richard Dwyer
Head of Centre	Becca Walker
Assessor (L7)	Keir Williams
Access arrangement facilitator Exams Officer Maths and English Manager	Natalie Rose Woods

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'. (¹AA, Definitions)

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'. (¹AA, Definitions)

*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.

Purpose of the policy

The purpose of this policy is to confirm that SupaJam Education In Music and Media 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's **General Regulations for Approved Centres**, section 5.4) This publication is further referred to in this policy as [GR](#).

This policy is maintained and held by the SENCO and SEND Director.

Each file on record contains detailed records of all the essential information that is required to be held according to the regulations.

Where the SENCO is storing 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. (¹AA, section 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 principles 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 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 the disabled candidate.

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.

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. Within SupaJam this can be conducted by the student's normal ways of working document, as well as behaviour logs taken within the establishment.

The candidate **must** have had appropriate opportunities to practise using the access arrangement(s)/reasonable adjustment(s) before his/her first examination.

These are conducted during mock examinations and practiced within the student's normal ways of working within the centre.

Equalities Policy (Exams)

A large part of the access arrangements/reasonable adjustments process is covered in the Equalities Policy (Exams) which covers staff roles and responsibilities in identifying the need for, requesting and implementing access arrangements and the conduct of exams.

The Head of Centre /senior leadership team will 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.

†for any legislation in a relevant jurisdiction other than England and Wales which has an equivalent purpose and effect ([GR](#), section 5.4)

The Equalities Policy (Exams) can be found on the SupaJam website at www.semmuk.com. The Access Arrangements Policy further covers the assessment process and related issues in more detail.

The assessment process

Assessments are carried out by an assessor(s) appointed by the Head of Centre.

The assessor(s) are appropriately qualified as required by JCQ regulations in [AA](#), section 7.3. Training is refreshed yearly where appropriate.

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 or experience 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)

The Head of Centre will request evidence of the qualification(s) of the assessor in the form of official certificates, or the relevant experience of the assessor in the form of personal

statements corroborated by professional references. Copies of certificates and/or experience will be taken and placed on the assessor's personnel file and will be made available to JCQ upon request. Our current L7 assessor's certificates are available in our Examination Manual.

In the absence of a member of staff having the appropriate qualifications in order to apply access arrangements, SupaJam will refer to the SEND Director for their experience and expertise OR work with an external consultant within a reasonable timeframe to be able to provide the necessary evidence that students have been correctly assessed as per the JCQ publication Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments, whichever is the more appropriate.

The Head of Centre will 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.

This process is in reference to [AA](#), section 7.3 (Appointment of assessors of candidates with learning difficulties).

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

Within SupaJam Education in Music and Media the majority of our students currently hold an EHCP. This often outlines the needs of the student which then can be implemented into their access arrangement needs.

From students' EHCP documents our EHCP administrators provide us with a provision plan which all staff follow within the classroom.

When deciding the correct access arrangements for students we also present the following documents which are created by the SENCO and Exams Officer:

- Summary of need
- Normal ways of working (Maths and English lessons and Rock School Learning lessons)
- Normal ways of working observations (ALS lead and Maths and English Manager)
- Behaviour observations
- Behaviour record sheets
- Complete pupils of concern form
- Take into consideration any medical history notes we have on file that may contribute to an access arrangement need to be considered.

Where a student doesn't have a current EHCP

If a student doesn't have a current EHCP in place, the SENCO will follow [AA](#), sections 7.5 (Guidelines for the assessment of the candidate's learning difficulties by an assessor) and 7.6 (Completing Form 8 – JCQ/AA/LD, Profile of Learning Difficulties)

The SENCO would complete the Form 8, detailing the candidate's background and history of known support.

Our SENCO understands that the three questions within Part 1 of Form 8 must be addressed.

The SENCO within the centre will use the correct procedures as in Chapter 7 of the JCQ publication Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments. ([GR](#), section 5.4)

Whereby the SENCO is not qualified to complete specific tests to prove the students' need, we aim to hire the correct external candidate to complete these.

Picture of need/normal way of working

Before the candidate's assessment, the Exam's Officer **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 Exam's Officer and the assessor **must** work together to ensure a joined-up and consistent process.

Within SupaJam this process is completed by EHCP administrators who create a student profile which contains all of the student's needs for the SENCO and Exams Officer to work from.

Within SupaJam, student EHCPs often outline what a student's needs are to support their normal way's working. Following this student's provision plans give the SENCO a good overview of the student's needs.

An independent assessor **must** contact the centre and ask for evidence of the candidate's normal way of working and relevant background information. This **must** take place **before** the candidate is assessed. Additionally, the independent assessor **must** be approved by The Head of Centre to assess the candidate.

All candidates **must** be assessed in light of the picture of need and the background information as detailed within Part 1 of Form 8.

An independent assessor **must** discuss access arrangements/reasonable adjustments with the Exams Officer or Director of SEND. The responsibility to determine and request appropriate and practicable access arrangements/reasonable adjustments specifically lies with the SENCO. ([AA](#), section 7.5)

Processing access arrangements and adjustments

Arrangements/adjustments 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 covered by the tool.

This tool also provides the facility to order modified papers for those qualifications included. (Refer to [AA](#), chapter 8 (Processing applications for access arrangements and adjustments) and chapter 6 (Modified papers).

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 for approval is required for each candidate regardless of the awarding body used.

The Exams Officer and SENCO work together to put through AAO, following the completion of each student's personal data consent form. These forms will be retained for 26 months from the date the application is approved.

The SENCO and Exams Officer has detailed records in hard copy format kept within the secure storage facility folder named 'Access arrangements'.

This includes candidate approved applications, appropriate evidence of need (where required), normal ways of working forms, behaviour management logs, and a signed candidate personal data consent form. This will be read for inspection by the JCQ centre inspection service. ([AA](#), section 8.6)

Centre-specific criteria for particular arrangements/adjustment

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 the candidate now wants to type rather than write in exams or can work faster on a keyboard, or because they use a laptop at home. The use of a word processor must reflect the candidate's normal way of working within the centre.

A policy outlining the use of Word Processors within exams can be found on the SupaJam website at www.semmuk.com/

Separate Invigilation

A decision where an exam candidate may be approved for separate invigilation within the centre will be made by the SENCO and 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, section 5.16)

Within SupaJam Education In Music and Media, if it is identified that a student needs to be in a separate examination room away from the main examination room this is decided by SENCO and Exams Officer collaboratively.

Separate invigilation within the centre is an available access arrangement as defined in the JCQ regulations. This is an arrangement where a candidate with an established difficulty may be eligible to take an examination accommodated in another room separate to the main cohort.

Decisions are based on:

- Whether the candidate has a substantial and long term impairment which has an adverse effect (AA 5.16)
- The candidate's normal way of working within the centre (AA 5.16)
- Ensuring the proposed arrangement does not disadvantage or advantage the candidate (AA 4.2.1)

Separate invigilation will be considered where the arrangement would prevent a candidate from being placed at a substantial disadvantage and where the following conditions are met:

- The candidate has an established difficulty as defined in section 5.16 of the JCQ's Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments publication (ICE 14.18)
- The candidate has a long-term medical condition or long term social, mental or emotional need (AA 5.16)
- The candidate's difficulties are established within the centre and known to relevant staff or a senior member of staff with pastoral responsibilities (AA 5.16)
- Separate invigilation reflects the candidate's normal way of working in internal tests and mock examinations because of a long term medical condition or long term social, mental or emotional needs (AA 5.16)

Where a candidate is subject to separate invigilation within the centre, the regulations and guidance within the JCQ publication Instructions for conducting examinations will be adhered to, particularly in relation to accommodation and invigilation arrangements (ICE 14.18)

Nervousness, low level anxiety or being worried about examinations is not sufficient grounds for separate invigilation within the centre. (AA, section 5.16)

At SupaJam Education In Music and Media, arrangements for seating candidates in rooms separate to the main cohort may be put in place in other circumstances. As and when applicable, these circumstances include:

Candidates using Word Processors are seated with the main cohort Candidates with Readers and/or Scribes are seated in Learning Support or EFL.