



Wallington High School for Girls

Access Arrangements Policy

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Policy Notes

Policy may be subject to review and revision at any time by the Wallington Local Governing Body notwithstanding that the next review date has not been reached.

Review dates are for guidance only and whilst the intention is always to arrange reviews within the stated time frame all Policy Notes will remain in force until this has taken place and been formally approved by the Wallington Local Governing Body.

References in this policy to GR, ICE and AARA 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.

1. Aims and rationale of policy

Definitions of “Access Arrangements” and “Reasonable Adjustments” as referred to throughout this policy can be found in **Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments (JCQ)**.

The purpose of this policy is to:

- confirm that Wallington High School for Girls:
 - has a written record which clearly shows the centre is leading on the access arrangements process
 - is complying with its obligation to identify the need for, request and implementation access arrangements (GR 5.4)
 - has a written process in place to not only check the qualification(s) of its assessors(s) but that the correct procedures are followed as per Chapter 7 of the JCQ publication Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments (GR 5.4)
- detail how the centre facilitates access to examinations and assessments for disabled candidates, as defined under the terms of the Equality Act 2010.
- outline staff roles and responsibilities in relation to identifying the need for access arrangements/reasonable adjustments, requesting and implementing access arrangements and good practice in relation to regulations.

This policy should be read in conjunction with JCQ publications, including:

- General Regulations for Approved Centres
- Instructions for Conducting Examinations
- Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments
- Suspected Malpractice in Examinations and Assessments

2. Principles

Wallington High School for Girls adopts a centre-led and evidence-based approach to access arrangements, ensuring decisions are consistent, proportionate and aligned with JCQ guidance. The following principles underpin all decisions:

- The centre must make decisions on appropriate access arrangements. External professionals may give advice but cannot make the decision for the centre.
- 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)
- Access arrangements cannot be granted where they will compromise the assessment objectives of the specification in question (AARA 4.2)
- Access arrangements must reflect the candidate’s normal way of working within the centre.
- Candidates may not require the same access arrangements/reasonable adjustments in each specification. Subjects and their methods of assessment 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)
- The award of access arrangements is based on need, not labels. A diagnosis or external report

does not in itself guarantee access arrangements.

- It is the responsibility of the SENCo to make appropriate and informed decisions based on the JCQ regulations. (AARA 4.2)
- Access arrangements/reasonable adjustments should be processed at the start of the course wherever possible (AARA 4.2)
- Arrangements must always be approved before an examination or assessment (AARA 4.2)
- The candidate must have had appropriate opportunities to practice using the access arrangement(s)/reasonable adjustments in advance (AARA 4.2)
- It is centre malpractice to grant an access arrangement if this is not supported by appropriate evidence (AARA 4.2.11)

3. Roles and Responsibilities

Role	Key Responsibilities
Headteacher	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has overall responsibility for the school as an examination centre, including correct implementation of Access Arrangements/Reasonable Adjustments Is familiar with the entire contents, refers to and directs relevant centre staff to the annually updated JCQ publications: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> General Regulations for Approved Centres Instructions for Conducting Examinations Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments Suspected Malpractice in Examinations and Assessments Instructions for Conducting Non-Examination Assessments A Guide to the Special Consideration Process Supports the SENDCo, the Examinations Manager and other relevant centre staff in ensuring appropriate arrangements, adjustments and adaptations are in place to facilitate access for disabled candidates to exams 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. (GR 5.4)
SENDCo	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has full knowledge and understanding of the contents, refers to and directs relevant centre staff to the annually updated JCQ publication AARA Ensures appropriate arrangements, adjustments and adaptations are in place to facilitate access for candidates where they are disabled within the meaning of the Equality Act (unless a temporary emergency arrangement is required at the time of an exam) Collecting evidence for students who require an Access Arrangement/Reasonable Adjustment for SEND reasons Approving all Access Arrangements Ensuring the correct administration of Access Arrangements in conjunction with the Examinations Manager, keeping evidence and making applications online for Access Arrangements Identification and testing of candidates' requirements for Access Arrangements for SEN reasons, including ensuring that the assessor is suitably qualified 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 Submitting applications for approval using AAO Keeping detailed records for inspection purposes, whether electronically or in hard copy paper format, of all the essential information on file. Submitting applications for approval directly to an awarding body for any qualification that does not fall within the scope of AAO Confirming with the Examinations Manager the need for modified papers Liaising with teaching staff to implement appropriate access arrangements for candidates, including for internal assessments and non-examination assessments

Head of Year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collecting evidence for students who require an Access Arrangement/Reasonable Adjustment for medical or pastoral reasons Communicating with the student and parent/carer Seeking approval from SENDCo to award the AARA Completing the necessary paperwork required by JCQ/examination boards (e.g. file note, Form 9)
Examinations Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understands and follows instructions for <i>Invigilation arrangements for candidates with access arrangements</i> and <i>Access arrangements</i> in ICE Administers Access Arrangements, including allocating appropriate resources such as rooms, invigilators and other required support Confirm in writing to students the Access Arrangement before a public examination series and the specifics around how this will be administered Ordering modified papers once need is confirmed by the SENDCo Communicating with Head of Year and SENDCo how Access Arrangements are administered Making applications for special consideration in accordance with the JCQ publications GR, ICE and AARA Keeping a record of use of Access Arrangements during mocks and internal exams
Lead invigilator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Administration of examinations in the exam venue in accordance with JCQ regulations and school procedures, including administering the access arrangement(s)/reasonable adjustment
Teaching and support staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implementing any access arrangement/reasonable adjustment in all assessments (including internal assessments and non-examined assessment) to support a candidate's normal way of working Supporting the SENDCo in collecting evidence which paints a holistic picture of need and confirms a normal way of working, e.g. through Round Robins, comments and observations Highlighting to the SENDCo or Head of Year any students who may fit the criteria of needing an access arrangement/reasonable adjustment in a timely fashion Providing exam materials that may need to be modified for a candidate for internal assessments
Students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reviewing their timetable and communications to ensure they are aware of their access arrangements, including seating, etc.
Parents/Carers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advising the SENDCo or Head of Year of changes to their child's condition
Assessor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides the centre with evidence of their qualification(s) and registration(s) Having a detailed understanding of the JCQ publication AARA Completing the assessments of students as directed by the SENDCo

4. Assessment process

At Wallington High School for Girls, assessments for access arrangements are carried out by an appropriately qualified assessor(s) appointed by the Head of Centre in accordance with the JCQ requirements. At the point an assessor is engaged evidence of the assessor's qualification is obtained and checked against 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)

Wallington High School for Girls confirms:

- Guidelines for the assessment of the candidate's learning difficulties by an assessor will be followed and Form 8 will be completed (AARA 7.6, 7.6)
- 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)

Privately commissioned assessments will be considered to see whether the process of gathering a picture of need, demonstrating normal way of working within the centre and assessing the candidate themselves should be instigated (AARA 7.3)

Before a candidate's assessment the SENDCo will provide the assessor with background information, i.e. a picture of need has been painted.

A candidate's normal way of working (NWOW) and entitlement to access arrangements will be reviewed and reassessed at the start of any new course or qualification.

Exam access arrangements are only confirmed for public examinations once sufficient evidence has been gathered through internal assessments and mock examinations. Access arrangements trialled during the course of study do not automatically guarantee their use in final public examinations.

Where an access arrangement has not been used, or has been demonstrated to be ineffective or unnecessary during internal assessments, the centre reserves the right to amend or withdraw the arrangement prior to the final examination series, in line with JCQ guidance and evidence of normal way of working.

5. Processing access arrangements and adjustments

Decisions regarding access arrangements are made following consultation between relevant staff and confirmed by the SENDCo on behalf of the Head of Centre, in accordance with JCQ regulations. Appropriate evidence, where required for the specific arrangement, is held on file by the SENDCo and is available for inspection.

Access arrangements are considered on a candidate-by-candidate and subject-by-subject basis, taking into account:

- the candidate's picture of need
- the candidate's normal way of working within the centre
- the demands of the specific qualification or component
- the requirement that arrangements are proportionate and do not compromise the integrity of the assessment

On an individual basis, consideration may be given to:

- adapting assessment arrangements (for example, rest breaks or supervised rest)
- adapting assessment materials (for example, modified papers)
- the provision of specialist equipment or adaptation of standard equipment
- adaptation of the physical environment for access purposes
- The centre will adhere to all JCQ published deadlines for access arrangements applications and requests for modified papers. Decisions and applications will be informed by JCQ supporting materials and guidance.

Example arrangements, adjustments and adaptions that are considered to meet the need(s) of a candidate can be found in AARA.

Where a candidate or parent/carer disagrees with a decision, they may request a review in writing to the Headteacher within five working days of being notified of the decision.

The Headteacher will review whether the correct processes were followed, whether the evidence supports the decision, and whether the decision is reasonable and in line with JCQ guidance. The outcome of the review will be communicated in writing.

If the candidate or parent/carer remains dissatisfied following the outcome of the review, the matter may be escalated in accordance with the school's formal complaints procedure.

6. Word Processors

The use of a word processor in exams and assessments is an available access arrangement/reasonable adjustment.

Wallington High School for Girls complies with AARA, chapter 4 (Managing the needs of candidates and principles for centres), section 5.8 (Word processor) and ICE, sections 14.20-27 Word processors (computers, laptops and tablets) when awarding and allocating a candidate the use of word processor in examinations. The term 'word processor' is used to describe for example, the use of a computer, laptop or tablet.

The 'normal way of working' for exam candidates, as directed by the Head of Centre, is that candidates handwrite their exams unless there are exceptions.

Principles for awarding the use of a word processor

A candidate may be awarded the use of a word processor in examinations where:

- the candidate may have an approved access arrangement in place, for example the use of a scribe/speech recognition technology
- the candidate has a firmly established need, it reflects the candidate's normal way of working and by not being awarded a word processor would be at a substantial disadvantage to other candidates

If these conditions are met, Wallington High School for Girls will:

- allocate the use of a word processor to a candidate with the spelling and grammar check facility/predictive text disabled where it is their normal way of working within the centre (AARA 5.8.1)

- award the use of a word processor to candidates where appropriate to their needs 9aa 5.8.4).

For example, a candidate with:

- a learning difficulty which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to write legibly
- a medical condition
- a physical disability
- a sensory impairment
- planning and organisational problems when writing by hand
- poor handwriting

(This list is not exhaustive).

- Only permit the use of a word processor where the integrity of the assessment can be maintained (AARA 4.2.1)
- Not grant the use of a word processor where it will compromise the assessment objectives of the specification in question (AARA 4.2.2)
- Consider on a subject-by-subject basis if the candidate will need to use a word processor in each specification (AARA 4.2.3)
- Process access arrangements/reasonable adjustment at the start of the course, or as soon as practicable having firmly established a picture of need and normal way of working, ensuring arrangements are always approved before an examination or assessment (AARA 4.2.4)
- Provide the use of word processors to candidates in non-examination assessment components as standard practice unless prohibited by the specification (AARA 5.8.2)
- Allow candidates to use a word processor in an examination to type certain questions, i.e. those requiring extended writing, and handwrite shorter answers (AARA 5.8.3)

Wallington High School for Girls will not:

- Simply grant the use of a word processor to a candidate because they now want to type rather than write in examinations or can work faster on a keyboard, or because they use a laptop at home (AARA 5.8.4)

Additionally, the use of a word processor would be considered for a candidate:

- In the event of a temporary injury or impairment, or a diagnosis of a disability or manifestation of an impairment relating to an existing disability arising after the start of the course (AARA 4.2.4)
- Where the curriculum is delivered electronically and the centre provides word processors to all candidates (AARA 5.8.4)

Arrangements for using a word processor

In its compliance with the regulations, Wallington High School for Girls:

- Provides a word processor with the spelling and grammar check facility/predictive text disabled (switched off) unless an awarding body's specification says otherwise (ICE 14.20)
- In the case of not having a mains power source available, will check the battery capacity of the word processor before the candidate's exam to ensure that battery is sufficiently charged for the entire duration of the exam (ICE 14.21)
- Ensures the candidate is reminded to ensure that the centre number, candidate number and the unit/component code appear on each page as a header or footer (ICE 14.22)
- If the candidate is using a software application that does not allow for the insertion of a header or footer, once the candidate has completed the examination and printed off their typed

script, they are instructed to handwrite their details as a header or footer; the candidate is supervised throughout this process to ensure that they are solely performing this task and no re-reading their answers or amending their work in any way (ICE 14.22)

- Ensures the candidate understands that each page of the typed script must be numbered (ICE 14.23)
- Ensures the candidate is reminded to save their work at regular intervals (if an ‘autosave’ has not been set up on the device) (ICE 14.24)
- Instructs the candidate to use a minimum of 12pt font and double spacing to make marking easier for examiners (ICE 14.24)

Wallington High School for Girls will ensure the word processor (ICE 14.25):

- Is only used in a way that ensures a candidate’s script is produced under secure conditions
- Is not used to perform skills which are being assessed
- Is in good working order at the time of the exam
- Is accommodated in such a way that other candidates are not disturbed and cannot read the screen
- Is used as a typewriter, not as a database, although standard formatting software is acceptable
- Is cleared of any previous stored data
- Does not give the candidate access to other applications such as a calculator (where prohibited in the examination) e-mail, the internet, social media sites, spreadsheets
- Does not include graphic packages or computer aided design software unless permission has been given to use these
- Does not have any predictive text software or an automatic spelling and grammar check enabled unless the candidate has been permitted a scribe or is using speech recognition technology (a scribe cover sheet must be completed), or the awarding body’s specification permits the use of automatic spell checking
- Does not include computer reading (text to speech) software unless the candidate has permission to use a computer reader
- Does not include speech recognition technology unless the candidate has permission to use a scribe or relevant software
- Does not include AI tools
- Is not used on the candidate’s behalf by a third party unless the candidate has permission to use a scribe

Wallington High School for Girls complies with ICE 14.20-14.27 *Word processors* instructions:

- Candidates using word processors are accommodated separately at the rear of the exam venue.
- Candidates are allocated an exam account for the duration of the exam season. This will normally be the same account they have used during mock/internal examinations.
- Exam accounts are ‘locked down’ with no access to the network or internet.
- Exam accounts have access only to WordPad/ExamScreen, not Microsoft Word.
- Instructions are provided to each candidate outlining their exam account details and the procedure for saving their work. Candidates are also reminded that the centre number, candidate number, and unit/component code must be written at the top of the first page.
- At the end of the examination candidates are accompanied by the invigilator to the Examinations Office.
- From here the Examinations Manager or Assistant will access the exam account and print the candidate’s script in the Examinations Office.

- The candidate will then number the printed pages of the script and sign the back-page to confirm this is their work and is complete.

Wallington High School for Girls will ensure that:

- any portable storage medium (e.g. memory stick) used is provided by the centre and is cleared of any previously stored data.
- Where an awarding body may require a word processor cover sheet, this is included with the candidate's typed script (ICE 14.26)
- The word-processed script is inserted into the candidate's answer booklet.

Wallington High School for Girls may retain electronic copies of word-processed scripts as the electronic copy of a word-processed script may be accepted by an awarding body where the printed copy has been lost, if certain conditions are met. (ICE 14.27)

In exceptional circumstances where the number of compliant word processors may be insufficient for the cohort of candidates approved to use them in an exam session:

- The cohort will be split into two groups
- One group will sit the exam earlier than or later than the awarding body's published start time
- The security of the exam will be maintained at all times and candidates will be supervised in line with section 7.2 of ICE

7. Alternative Rooming arrangements

Alternative rooming arrangements 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 their examinations in a smaller environment away from the main examination room or in a separate room on their own.

Decisions on awarding of the arrangement are made by the SENDCo, in consultation with the Head of Year. Decisions are based on:

- Whether the candidate has a substantial and long-term impairment which has an adverse effect (AARA 5.16)
- The candidate's normal way of working within the centre (AARA 5.16)
- Ensuring the proposed arrangement does not unfairly disadvantage or advantage the candidate (AARA 4.2.1)
- Nervousness, low level anxiety or being worried about examinations is not sufficient grounds for separate invigilation within the centre (AARA 5.16)
- 1:1 invigilation and the use of an alternative room would apply where the candidate has a serious medical condition such as frequent seizures, Tourette's or significant behavioural issues which would disturb other candidates in the examination room (AARA 5.16)

Alternative rooming arrangements 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** publications (ICE 14.18)
- The candidate's disability is established within the centre and known to relevant staff or senior

- member of staff with pastoral responsibilities (AARA 5.16)
- Alternative rooming arrangements reflects the candidate's normal and current way of working in internal tests and mock examinations (AARA 5.16)
- Where a candidate sits their examinations in a smaller environment away from the main examination room, 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).

At Wallington High School for Girls, the maximum number of students in a smaller environment is 16.

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 a Word Processor/laptop
- Where there is insufficient space to accommodate all candidates in an appropriate main venue
- Candidates requiring a reader/scribe
- Candidates with medical needs such as epilepsy

The use of an alternative room with one-to-one invigilation must only apply where the candidate has a serious medical condition, such as frequent seizures, Tourette's or significant behavioural issues which would disturb other candidates in the examination room.

8. Extra Time

Extra time is an access arrangement which may be awarded where a candidate has a substantial and long-term difficulty that places them at a significant disadvantage in timed assessments.

The award of extra time is not automatic and is not granted solely on the basis of a diagnosis or external report. Decisions must be supported by appropriate evidence demonstrating both a clear picture of need and that the use of extra time reflects the candidate's established normal way of working within the centre.

Where a candidate's difficulty is not primarily a "cognition and learning need", as defined by JCQ, the centre must trial and exhaust the option of supervised rest breaks or other appropriate reasonable adjustments before awarding extra time.

The amount of extra time awarded will be proportionate to the level of difficulty experienced and supported by evidence.

Extra time must reflect the candidate's normal way of working in the centre and must have been used in internal assessments and mock examinations prior to being applied in external assessments. Evidence will be collected to demonstrate that the extra time is required.

9. Monitoring

The Access Arrangements Policy will be reviewed annually, or more regularly in the light of any significant new JCQ regulations or incidents that have taken place.

The Access Arrangements Policy has been written by the Senior Leader with responsibility for examinations and the SENDCo and is current and appropriate for its intended audience and purpose.

The policy and has been agreed by the SLT and approved by Governors.

10. Links with other policies

The Access Arrangements Policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies:

- Examinations Policy
- Girls' Learning Trust Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Statement and Equality Objectives
- Accessibility Plan