

The Grove Partnership

Access Arrangements Policy

2026/27



Approved by: School Governors

Date Approved: September 2026

Next review due by: September 2027

Headteacher's Signature:

Signature of Chair of Governors:

Key staff involved in the policy

Role	Name(s)
SENDCo	Carol Nedderman
Head of centre	Emmett Patel
Specialist Assessor	Ailsa Robinson (Oldham Council)
Exams Officer	Niki Unsworth
Access arrangement facilitators	Carol Nedderman

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

References in this policy to GR, ICE and AA refer to the JCQ publications General Regulations for Approved Centres, Instructions for conducting examinations and Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments.

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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’.” (AA Definitions, page 3)

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’. (AA Definitions)

Purpose of the policy

The purpose of this policy is to confirm that The Grove Partnership complies with its “obligation to identify the need for, request and implement access arrangements...” (JCQ General Regulations for Approved Centres, section 5.5).

This policy is maintained and held by the ALS lead/SENDSCO alongside the individual files/e-folders of each access arrangements candidate. Each e-folder contains detailed records of all the essential information that is required to be held according to the regulations (AA 4.2.14).

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*.

General principles

The general principles of access arrangements for The Grove Partnership 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 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 a disabled candidate (AA 4.2.1).

- The SENDCO must ensure that the proposed access arrangement/reasonable adjustment does not unfairly disadvantage or advantage the candidate (AA 4.2.1).
- Access arrangements/reasonable adjustments should be processed at the start of the course (AA 4.2.4).
- Arrangements must always be approved before an examination or assessment (AA 4.2.4)
- The arrangement(s) put in place must reflect the support given to the candidate in the centre (AA 4.2.5).
- The candidate must have had appropriate opportunities to practise using the access arrangement(s)/reasonable adjustment(s) before his/her first examination (AA 4.2.7)

Equalities Policy (Exams)

A large part of the access arrangements/reasonable adjustments process is covered in the Equalities Policy (Appendix A) 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.

Types of access arrangements

Access arrangements may include:

1. Supervised rest breaks
2. Extra time of up to 25%
3. Extra time of up to 50%
4. Extra time of over 50%
5. Reader/Computer reader
6. Read aloud
7. Scribe/Voice to text software
8. Word processor
9. Braille transcript
10. Prompter
11. Oral Language Modifier
12. Live speaker for pre-recorded examinations components
13. Sign Language Interpreter
14. Practical Assistant
15. Alternative accommodation away from the centre
16. Other arrangements for candidates with disabilities

In line with JCQ regulations, The Grove Partnership will make all decisions with regard to access arrangements based upon whether the candidate has a substantial and long term impairment which has an adverse effect, in conjunction with the access arrangement being the candidate's normal way of working at The Grove Partnership – demonstrating the involvement of the teaching staff in determining the need for the access arrangement.

Appropriate evidence of need will be available for inspection.

The assessment process

Assessments are carried out by an assessor appointed by the head of centre. The assessor is appropriately qualified as required by JCQ regulations in AA, section 7.3.

The assessor must hold a post-graduate qualification in individual specialist assessment at or equivalent to Level 7.

Appointment of assessors of candidates with learning difficulties

Current assessor: Ailsa Robinson

The qualifications of the current assessor:

- **OCR Diploma for Teachers of Learners with Specific Learner Difficulties**
- **Post Graduate Certificate in Specific Learning Difficulties (Dyslexia) with Merit**
- **Specific Learning Difficulties Assessment Award – Assessment Practicing Certificate**

Checking the qualifications of the assessor

At the point an assessor is engaged/employed at The Grove Partnership:

- Evidence of the assessor's qualification is obtained and checked against the current requirements (AA 7.3.4)
- This process is carried out prior to the assessor undertaking any assessment of a candidate (AA 7.3.4)
- A copy of the assessor's certificates is kept in both the physical AA folder and e-Folder (AA 7.3.1)

Reporting the appointment of the assessor

The exams officer will ensure that the assessor, who is assessing candidates for AA, is entered into Access Arrangements online to confirm their status. This would also include any other professional working outside the centre (AA 7.4.3)

If circumstances change and an individual who is employed directly by the centre was appropriately qualified, there would be no need to record their names on Access Arrangement online (AA 4.4.2)

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

The Grove Partnership confirms:

- Guidelines for the assessment of the candidate's learning difficulties by an assessor will be followed and Form 8 (JCQ/AA/LD - Profile of Learning Difficulties) will be completed (AA 7.5, 7.6/GR 5.4)
- Arrangements must be made for the candidate to be assessed by an assessor (AA 7.5.1)
- Assessors must personally conduct the assessments. They must not sign off assessments carried out by another professional. (AA7.5.5)
- The assessor must carry out tests which are relevant to support the application. (AA7.5.6)
- 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. (AA7.3.6)
- 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 7.3.6)

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

The Grove Partnership confirms

- Before the candidate's assessment, the SENDCo must provide the assessor with background information, i.e. a picture of need has been painted as per Part 1 of Form 8. The centre and the assessor must work together to ensure a joined-up and consistent process. (AA 7.5.2)
- 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.
- 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 with the SENDCO. The responsibility to request access arrangements specifically lies with the centre. (AA 7.5.3)

Additional information:

- Reference made to AA 7.5 Guidelines for the assessment of the candidate's learning difficulties by an assessor
- Reference made to 7.6 Completing Form 8 JCQ/AA/LD, Profile of Learning Difficulties

Processing access arrangements and adjustments

Arrangements/adjustments requiring awarding body approval

Access arrangements online (AAO) is a used to apply for approval of arrangements for the qualifications within the JCQ publication Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments.

AAO is accessed within the JCQ Centre Admin Portal (CAP) by logging in to one of the awarding body secure extranet sites. Within the portal, the exams officer and a member of SEND will:

- Complete a single application for approval for each candidate regardless of the awarding body used.
- Print of a copy of the candidate's approved application to be placed in the AA e-Folder.
- The appropriate evidence of need and a signed candidate personal data consent form for inspections by the JCQ Centre Inspection Service will also be kept in the AA e-Folder (AA 8.6).
- Centre-delegated arrangements/adjustments

Decisions relating to the approval of centre delegated arrangements are made by Emmett Patel (SENDCO).

Appropriate evidence, where required by the arrangement, is kept in an e-folder file by the SEND Team.

- The use of a word processor

The Word Processor Policy details the criteria The Grove Partnership uses to award and allocate word processors in examinations/assessments.

- Separate invigilation within the centre

The Separate Invigilation Policy details the criteria The Grove Partnership uses to award separate invigilation within the centre.

- Modified papers are ordered through AAO

Modified papers must be ordered in advance of a specific examination series, no later than the published deadline for the series concerned (AA 6.1)

Modified papers are individually prepared for candidates for whom other access arrangements are unsuitable. The modification of papers involves additional resources.

Therefore, The Grove Partnership confirms:

- They would provide the awarding bodies with early notification that a candidate will require a modified paper. (AA 6.1)
- They would not order a modified paper for candidates unless they intend to enter them for the relevant examination series (AA 6.1)
- They agree that for the adjustment to be effective, the candidate must have had appropriate opportunities to practise using an awarding body's past modified papers before his/her first examination (AA 6.1)

Roles and Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of:

- The SEND Team to collect a candidate's consent (a completed candidate personal data consent form) to record their personal data online through AAO
- The Exams Officer to submit applications for approval through AAO
- The SEND Team to hold the file/e-folder for each individual candidate containing a copy of the candidate's approved application, appropriate evidence of need (where required) and a signed candidate personal data consent form (AA 8.6)
- The Exams Officer to submit applications for approval directly to an awarding body for any qualification that does not fall within the scope of AAO
- The exams officer to order modified papers