



# **Access Arrangement Policy**

Kendal College

## Access Arrangement Policy

Centre name	Kendal College
Centre number	42327
Date policy first created	01/12/2025
Current policy approved by	Craig Owen
Current policy reviewed by	Craig Owen
Date of review	01/12/2025
Date of next review	01/09/2026

### Key staff involved in the policy

Role	Name
Head of centre	Jason Turton
Senior leader(s)	David Francis - Interim Director for Inclusion and Safeguarding  Beth Lowery - Currently on Maternity leave - Due to return in January part time.  Vickie Williamson - Currently on reduced duties for medical reasons.
Exams officer	Chloe Chatting-Walters
SENCo (or equivalent role)	Neal Banner
Other staff (if applicable)	Lucy Carter- Exams Access Arrangement Assessor

This policy is reviewed and updated annually to ensure that access arrangements process at Kendal College 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 Acesss 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 Kendal College 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 Kendal College 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 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:

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## 2. The assessment process

At Kendal College, 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)

#### Appointment of assessors

At the point an assessor is engaged/employed at Kendal College:

- 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:

The qualifications will be requested upon employment and before any assessments are carried out. Qualifications will be checked by Learning Services Manager to ensure they meet JCQ criteria. Certificates will be kept on file with the Exam Officer for inspection purposes. Assessors are expected to have a full understanding of the JCQ regulations and be familiar with any updates.

#### 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:

- Chloe Chatting-walters or Lucy Carter
- 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

Kendal College 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 (AARA 7.5, 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)
- 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:

The process of assessment begins at the point of application.

On application – students who have a learning difficulty or disability are asked to provide details and provide evidence of this. Evidence can be from Educational Psychologist or Specialist Tutor, for those with a specific learning difficulty (SpLD) or from a Medical Practitioner for those with an impairment or disability.

Initial Advice and Guidance Interview : A member of the Learning Services Team are available at the students interview with their vocational course team. Through meeting with the prospective student the Learning

Services Team can identify what measures will need to be put in place by the College. Contact may be made with the previous school, college or agency to provide further information. Previous arrangements and a need for assessment would be recorded on the enrolment form.

**Following Interview:** The arrangements for assessment will be logged onto the Exam arrangement database.

**At Enrolment:** Details of any previous access arrangements will be requested if not already provided.

**At Induction:** An Exam Arrangement Student Information Sheet will be completed by all students to ensure that all students requiring exam access arrangements are identified.

**Initial Assessment - first 6 weeks:** All new students will complete an Initial Assessment carried out by the Learning Services team and the results will be analysed to identify any students who may require exam access arrangements.

**Referrals:** Tutors must submit referrals for candidates by 7th October for exams in January. Examinations have varying EAA submission deadlines. Tutors **MUST** familiarise themselves with these deadlines and ensure that Learning Support have the necessary paperwork before this deadline. All student and tutor requests must be given to the Learning Services Team by the 7th October for exams in January 2024.

**Further Diagnostic Assessments:** All students who have previously had access arrangements and all those identified as possibly requiring arrangements via the Initial Assessment process will be given appointments with the Learning Services Team to undertake additional diagnostic assessments.

**Access Arrangement Reports Forms:** All students identified as requiring exam access arrangements from their diagnostic assessments or from their medical evidence will be followed up by the Learning Services Team and an Access Arrangement Report Form and a Form 8 will be completed. Form 8's will be saved on the Learning Services Drive: under 'Exam

**Access Arrangements:** These can be accessed by staff members within the Learning Services Team. The individual Learning Access Arrangements Form will be stored in the Learning Services Office with the original assessments completed by the student.

**Application to Awarding Bodies:** The Specialist Assessors and the Exams Officer will make applications for exam access arrangements on AAO or to other relevant exam board.

**Notification of Access Arrangements:** The Learning Services Team will notify the students, their vocational Course Tutor and the English and Maths Tutors of the approved arrangements by email and details of the arrangements will be placed on each student's ProMonitor.

**Prior to Examinations:** Examination room notifications are placed on the exams notice board. Students will be notified prior to any examination as to where they will be sitting their exam and the agreed arrangements that have been put in place.

**Renewal of Access Arrangements:** Access Arrangement Reports are valid for 26 months. Tutors will complete a continuation of need form when applications have expired.

**Late notification of exam access requirements:** A student, or a tutor on behalf of a student, can request an exam access arrangement. Tutors must submit the necessary exams paperwork in order for their request to be processed. The Exams Team require 6 weeks notice of Access Arrangements prior to an examination in order to put in place additional arrangements. For A level and GCSE the deadline is detailed in the JCQ guidelines.

**Work-based Learners:** Work-based learners are encouraged to disclose any learning difficulty on their application form and at interview. A member of the Work-based team will follow up any disclosure and arrange exam access arrangements (as detailed above) in liaison with the Learning Services team.

**Home educated students/Distance learners:** Students who have not previously taken any formal examinations as a result of being home educated will be screened during induction week. Evidence will be collected from private tutors when possible. Assessments will only be carried out once the candidates normal way of working has been established and a referral from tutors has been submitted.

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

Kendal College confirms:

- Before the candidate's assessment, the person appointed in the centre **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 centre and the assessor **must** work together to ensure a joined-up and consistent process. (AARA 7.5)

Additional information:

In order to paint a 'holistic picture of need' and gather evidence to demonstrate normal way of working, tutors must submit a referral to Learning Services outlining the learner's difficulties and how they are supported in class and in exams. For learners who need additional time, evidence of a timed assessment must be submitted with the referral. To establish a picture of need, evidence will come from initial screening and testing completed at the start of their time at Kendal College, information from secondary schools, subject tutor referral, history of need, specialist diagnostic testing that indicates a significant Learning Need - either specific or general. To establish the normal way of working of a learner, tutors will monitor the learner's performance in the classroom; working in small groups for reading and/or writing; literacy support lessons literacy; intervention strategies; in internal College assessments, tests and mock examinations.

### **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:

- Lucy Carter

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

- Lucy Carter
- **The use of a word processor**

The Word Processor policy is kept by exams details the criteria Kendal College specifically uses to award and allocate word processors for examinations and assessments.

- **Alternative rooming arrangements**

The details the criteria Kendal College 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

#### **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:

- Lucy Carter 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
- Lucy Carter to submit applications for approval using AAO
- Lucy Carter 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)
- Lucy Carter to submit applications for approval directly to an awarding body for any qualification that does not fall within the scope of AAO
- Lucy Carter to order modified papers

Additional responsibilities:

## **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**