

OXFORD INTERNATIONAL COLLEGE BRIGHTON

ACCESS ARRANGEMENTS POLICY

POLICY INTENDED FOR:	All Staff
CATEGORY:	Exam
POLICY IMPLEMENTED BY:	Deputy Principal Academic
REVIEWED BY:	Exams and Academic Support Officer
REVIEWED DATE:	August 2025
NEXT REVIEW:	August 2026

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INTRODUCTION AND AIMS

1.1 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 particular 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'.

1.2 Reasonable adjustments

Under the Equality Act 2010, awarding bodies must make reasonable adjustments for disabled candidates where they would otherwise be at a substantial disadvantage. Whether an adjustment is reasonable depends on (among other factors) the candidate's needs, the effectiveness of the adjustment, cost, and likely impact on the candidate and others. Adjustments will not be approved where they involve unreasonable cost or time, or compromise assessment integrity.

2. PURPOSE OF THE POLICY

This policy confirms that Oxford International College Brighton:

- Leads the access arrangements process across the centre (identify need → gather evidence → request → implement → review).
- Meets GR 5.4 by maintaining procedures to identify, request and implement access arrangements, and to verify assessor qualifications.
- Complies with JCQ AARA 2025/26, including rules on evidence of need, normal way of working, use of Forms 8/9, and records for inspection.
- Meets data-protection expectations: candidates are informed that their data is processed via Access Arrangements Online (AAO) in line with UK GDPR/Data Protection Act 2018; no signed consent or data-confirmation forms are required.

3. GENERAL PRINCIPLES

- Arrangements remove barriers without compromising assessment objectives or awarding credit for skills not demonstrated.
- Decisions are centre-led (AA 4.2): the SENCo determines arrangements based on evidence and normal way of working; external professionals may advise but do not decide.
- Needs are considered on a subject-by-subject basis according to specification and assessment method.
- Approved arrangements must reflect established classroom/test practice ("normal way of working") and be used in internal tests and mocks.
- Arrangements are processed and approved in advance of exams/assessments and by JCQ deadlines.
- Candidates have opportunities to practise using their arrangements ahead of first examinations.

4. THE ASSESSMENT PROCESS

4.1 Details and qualifications of the current assessor(s)

The centre appoints appropriately qualified assessor(s) (e.g., Level 7 specialist assessor; HCPC-registered psychologist; or holder of a current SpLD Assessment Practising Certificate). Evidence of qualifications is held on file for inspection. Staff names are not published in this policy; records are maintained internally.

4.2 Appointment of assessors of candidates with learning difficulties (AA 7.3)

Assessors personally conduct assessments and must not sign off assessments completed by another professional. Qualification evidence is checked at engagement and retained on file. A privately commissioned assessment cannot be used to award access arrangements; the centre must establish picture of need and normal way of working.

4.3 Reporting the appointment of the assessor(s) (AA 7.4)

Evidence that centre-employed assessors are suitably qualified is held on file and presented upon request during JCQ inspections. Where applicable, the names of external assessors are recorded in AAO to confirm status. Appropriately qualified psychologists and APC-holding assessors directly employed by the centre do not need to be recorded in AAO.

4.4 Process for the assessment of a candidate's learning difficulties by an assessor (AA 7.5 & 7.6)

Before the assessment, the SENCo compiles Form 8 Part 1 with meaningful teacher feedback and centre evidence of normal way of working (a "skeleton" Part 1 is not acceptable). The assessor completes Form 8 Part 2 using current editions of nationally standardised tests. Submissions meet the criteria for the arrangement sought (e.g., for 25% extra time: two standardised scores ≤ 84 in different areas of speed of working, or one ≤ 84 and one 85–89). Form 8 Part 3 is completed by the assessor.

For complex/medical/sensory/physical needs (or where a learning difficulty is recorded in an EHCP/Statement/IDP), Form 9 is used with appropriate specialist evidence.

4.5 Picture of need / normal way of working

Evidence includes teacher commentary, weekly SCIT tests, mock examinations, intervention strategies and any internal trials. Arrangements must not be granted solely for examinations without a history of use, except for temporary injury or late manifestation, where separate JCQ provisions apply.

5. PROCESSING ACCESS ARRANGEMENTS AND ADJUSTMENTS REQUIRING AWARDING BODY APPROVAL

Applications are submitted via Access Arrangements Online (AAO) for qualifications covered by AARA. One application per candidate covers all JCQ awarding bodies. Applications must be supported by required evidence (Forms 8/9, teacher feedback, test/mock samples, specialist reports where relevant), reflect normal way of working, and be submitted before JCQ deadlines. If auto-approval is not granted, the SENCo refers the application to the awarding body with full justification and evidence. Approved arrangements are implemented consistently in internal tests and mocks. Candidates are informed that their data is processed via AAO under UK GDPR/DPA 2018 (no signed consent or data-confirmation forms are required).

6. CENTRE-DELEGATED ARRANGEMENTS/ADJUSTMENTS

- Word processor (with spell/grammar check off unless scribe criteria are met per AARA).
- Supervised rest breaks.
- Alternative Rooming Arrangements (formerly “separate invigilation”).
- Read aloud; Examination Reading Pen.
- Prompter.
- Non-electronic aids (e.g., overlays, coloured paper, ear defenders, timers, fidget items).

7. MODIFIED PAPERS (AA 6.1)

Formats include Braille, modified enlarged print, modified language, non-interactive electronic PDF papers and tactile diagrams, selected to match the candidate’s need and normal way of working. Orders are placed via AAO by published deadlines and only for candidates the centre intends to enter. Candidates must have opportunities to practise using modified papers before their first exam. When considering coloured/enlarged papers, alternatives (e.g., overlays, tinted lenses) are explored where appropriate. Extra time may be appropriate alongside particular modified formats where justified by reading/processing needs.

8. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Head of Centre

Ensures compliance with JCQ regulations and awarding-body requirements; resources integrity and security; provides SLT oversight and contingency planning.

SEnCo

Leads the access arrangements process; coordinates with assessor(s) and teaching staff; ensures Form 8 Part 1 is completed with teacher feedback before assessment; confirms arrangements reflect

normal way of working and subject-specific needs; informs candidates of AAO/GDPR; maintains inspection-ready records (AAO approval/order, evidence of need, assessor qualification evidence where required, samples of internal tests/mock papers showing the arrangement in use, and teacher comments). Submits and tracks AAO applications/approvals and files required cover sheets

Examinations Officer

Plans rooms, invigilation and resources; coordinates required cover sheets; manages secure receipt/storage/distribution of modified papers.

Appointed Assessor (usually the SENCo)

Personally conducts assessments with current editions of nationally standardised tests; completes Form 8 Part 2 and liaises with the SENCo for Parts 1 & 3; does not sign off assessments by others.

Teaching Staff

Provide timely, specific feedback on normal way of working and performance under timed conditions; implement approved arrangements in class tests and mocks.

Access Arrangement Facilitators

Appropriate, trained adults (normally not relatives/friends/peers) who follow the specific AARA rules for each arrangement (e.g., readers do not explain; scribe cover sheet; Language Modifier limits). "Sign Language Professional" terminology applies (replacing "Communication Professional").

10. CHANGES 2023/2024 (historic)

Privately commissioned assessments cannot be used to award access arrangements. Requirements for independent assessors to contact/seek approval prior to assessment were removed. "Separate invigilation" updated to Alternative Rooming Arrangements.

10. CHANGES 2024/2025 (historic)

Re-stated AA 4.2: centre-led decisions; external professionals may advise but cannot decide for the centre.

11. CHANGES 2025/2026 (current)

- Data/records (AA 8.6): removed signed candidate data-consent and data-confirmation forms; inform candidates of AAO/GDPR instead.
- Form 8/9 evidence: Form 8 Part 1 must include teacher feedback before assessment; "skeleton" Part 1 is not acceptable. For 25% extra time, retain teacher comments and mock/test evidence showing use/impact. Parents' comments must not be recorded in Form 8/9 Part 1.
- Supervised rest breaks: where the need is not a learning difficulty, trial rest breaks before applying for 25% extra time.

12. CENTRE-SPECIFIC CHANGES

All staff names removed from the published policy; roles only are used. Word Processor Policy and Alternative Rooming Arrangements Policy are stored in the Exams folder/exams drive and aligned to AARA 2025. Equality/Exams policies cross-references updated to reflect centre-led decisions and normal way of working. Internal workflow added for teacher feedback before assessment (Form 8 Part 1), mock/internal test sampling to demonstrate use of arrangements, and a rest-breaks trial process where appropriate.

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VERSION CONTROL

Policy Owner: Deputy Principal Academic

Operational Leads: SENCo; Examinations Officer

Review Cycle: Annual (or sooner if JCQ issues in-year updates)

Next Scheduled Review: August 2026

Due to section renumbering in the AA publication, references to AA sections in this policy have been changed to 2 places, e.g. AA 7.3.1 changed to AA 7.3 etc.

(Changed) Under **Process for the assessment of a candidate's learning difficulties by an assessor:**
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. (AA 7.3) (To) A privately commissioned report, or an assessment from an external professional, cannot be used to award access arrangements. (AA 7.3)

(Removed) Under **Process for the assessment of a candidate's learning difficulties by an assessor:**
An independent assessor will be instructed to contact the centre and ask for evidence of the candidate's normal way of working and relevant background information. This will take place before the candidate is assessed. Additionally, the independent assessor will be approved by the head of centre to assess the candidate (AA 7.5)

(Removed) Under **Picture of need/normal way of working:**

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 the 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 person appointed in the centre. The responsibility to determine and request appropriate and

practicable access arrangements/reasonable adjustments specifically lies with the centre. (AA 7.5)

(Changed) Under **Centre delegated arrangements/adjustments** all reference to Separate invigilation within the centre (To) Alternative rooming arrangements and re-worded the section accordingly.

(Changed) Under **Roles and responsibilities**: 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) (To) 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 signed candidate personal data consent form; a completed Data protection confirmation by the examinations officer or SENCo form; a copy of the candidate's approved application; appropriate evidence of need (where required); evidence of the assessor's qualification (where required). (AA 8.6)

CHANGES 2024/2025

(Added) 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)

CENTRE-SPECIFIC CHANGES