



Access Arrangements Policy 2025-2026

Equality Impact Assessment: Askham Bryan College recognises the importance of the Equality Act 2010 and its duties under the Act. This document has been assessed to ensure that it does not adversely affect staff, students or stakeholders on the grounds of any protected characteristics.

1. POLICY STATEMENT

- 1.1 Askham Bryan College is committed to the success and achievement of all of our students and is committed to supporting students to achieve their full potential, inclusive of those with learning difficulties and disabilities. Askham Bryan College recognises its responsibilities in ensuring reasonable adjustments are made to allow fair and equal access to examinations and assessments for students without changing the demand of the assessment.

2. PURPOSE

- 2.1 The purpose of this policy is to provide clarity to students, staff, and parents/carers in relation to the College's provision of exam access arrangements informed and guided by the legislation.
- 2.2 To ensure the planning and management of access arrangements and examinations is conducted efficiently and in the best interest of the candidates.
- 2.3 To ensure the operation of an efficient system, with clear guidelines for all relevant staff.

3. SCOPE

- 3.1 It is the intention that all staff should read, understand and implement this policy.
- 3.2 Askham Bryan College operates from the following centers:
- York
 - Middlesbrough
 - Gateshead
 - Saltaire
 - Wakefield
- 3.3 The scope of this policy relates to all non-HE students and apprentices.

4. WHAT ARE ACCESS ARRANGEMENTS?

- 4.1 Access arrangements are a process by which Awarding Organisations and JCQ may permit alternative arrangements in exams. They are reasonable adjustments, as defined by the Equality Act 2010, and by their nature, specific to the individual learner. The process is managed by the College but strictly regulated by the Awarding Organisations and JCQ, as outlined in the JCQ 'Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments' regulations.
- 4.2 All final decisions on regulation changes and student level approvals are made by the Awarding Organisations and JCQ. The Centre must comply with these decisions; any deviation is considered Centre malpractice and can lead to significant sanctions for the Centre.
- 4.3 The College will abide by the various Awarding Organisations and JCQ regulations and will ensure that all procedures and examination regulations are adhered to.
- 4.4 The College will ensure every student has the opportunity to access formal assessments on a level playing field to their peers.
- 4.5 Every effort will be made to identify access arrangements and provide appropriate support for such students. Students with learning difficulties and disabilities will be identified initially through the College application and admissions interview, followed by initial assessment, Course Managers and subject teachers.
- 4.6 The College will ensure that all students entered for their appropriate external examinations will receive access arrangements where evidenced and approved by the Awarding Organisations and JCQ.

5. REASONABLE ADJUSTMENTS

- 5.1 The Equality Act 2010 requires an Awarding Organisations to make reasonable adjustments where a disabled person would be at a substantial disadvantage in undertaking an assessment.
- 5.2 How reasonable the adjustment is, 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 Organisations;
- involves unreasonable timeframes; or
- affects the security and integrity of the assessment.
- does not provide the evidence required.

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- 5.3 This is because the adjustment is not 'reasonable'. It will not be reasonable for adjustments to be made to assessment objectives within a qualification. To do so would likely undermine the effectiveness of the qualification in providing a reliable indication of the knowledge, skills and understanding of the candidate. There is no duty to make adjustments which the qualifications regulators have specified should not be made.

6. SPECIAL CONSIDERATION

- 6.1 Special Consideration is a post examination adjustment to a candidate's mark or grade to reflect temporary injury, illness or other indisposition at the time of the examination/assessment.
- 6.2 Special Considerations are only eligible for candidates who have experienced a temporary illness, a recent bereavement, domestic crisis, a serious disturbance or accident during the exam, international sporting commitments or a lack of approved access arrangements in place at the time of assessment/ exam. If a candidate(s) fall into the eligibility criteria The College examinations team will submit a special consideration application to the relevant Awarding Organisations supported by a member of the senior leadership team. The candidate will be informed by the College that the application has been submitted. In most cases once submitted an online system for certain Awarding Organisations will provide an instant decision. All evidence must be retained and stored compliantly until after the publication of results.

7. EXAM ACCESS ARRANGEMENTS

- 7.1 Access arrangements are applied for or approved by the college, following strict regulations and guidance. This allows students with SEND, disabilities or temporary injuries to access formal exams if eligible.
- 7.2 Access arrangements must be based upon an identified persistent and significant difficulties, and record of how the student's disability/ difficulty has impacted on teaching and learning. Records of normal way of working in the classroom to meet the needs of the student without affecting the integrity of the assessment is required. Each application must be carefully considered and specific to the individual learner. Evidence that the Access Arrangement for Exams (AAE) is the student's 'normal way of working' must be held on file for inspection purposes. The 'normal way of working' as defined by JCQ states: "The arrangement(s) put in place must reflect the support given to the candidate in the centre¹, e.g.
- In the classroom.
 - Working in small groups for reading and/or writing.
 - Literacy support lessons.
 - Literacy intervention strategies.
 - Mock examinations
- 7.3 These arrangements may differ to those a student has been awarded in their previous educational setting and may* require re-assessment of access arrangements upon

¹ This is commonly referred to as 'normal way of working'. For candidates with learning difficulties this is typically the background information recorded with Section A of Form 8.

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commencing their study programme. However, the college will work with candidates to ensure that the appropriate support is provided.

*Where a student transfers to the College with a valid Form 8 (JCQ-approved), this document can act as a 'passport to progress', meaning that if it is within the permitted validity period and meets JCQ evidence requirements, the College may not need to conduct a *full re-assessment* providing it reflects the student's current 'normal way of working'. It is the responsibility of the student to ensure that they collect this evidence from the previous provider and present it to the College in a reasonable time scale.

7.4 The detailed information, as above, may be supported by specialist evidence confirming the candidate's disability, dependent on the adjustment being applied for:

- a letter/report from CAMHS, a HCPC registered psychologist, a medical consultant, a psychiatrist, a Speech and Language Therapist (SaLT); or
- a letter/report from the Local Authority Specialist Service, Local Authority, Sensory Impairment Service or Occupational Health Service; or
- a current EHCP or a Statement of special educational needs or an Individual Development Plan (Wales), which confirms the candidate's learning difficulty, medical condition, physical disability, sensory or multisensory impairment.

However, we will consider evidence from the student's previous school that they needed support and any EHCP when assessing your level of need.

7.5 If evidence exists that this is a student's normal and current way of working, these arrangements can include:

- Supervised rest breaks
- Extra time
- Computer reader/reader
- Read aloud and/or the use of an examination reading pen
- Scribe/Speech recognition technology
- Word processor
- Braille transcript
- Prompter
- Other arrangements for candidates with disabilities
- Bilingual dictionaries

7.6 Some applications for access arrangements must be assessed by a qualified external assessor. The results of any assessments undertaken will confirm whether the adjustment(s) required meet the student's needs.

7.7 If the student is an international student and English is not your first language, there are a number of factors which influence which arrangements you can have in your exams. You will need to discuss this with an access arrangements coordinator, as it will depend on your individual circumstances.

8. DEADLINE DATES FOR CONFIRMED EXAM ACCESS ARRANGEMENTS

- 8.1 The College endeavors to ensure no students is disadvantaged due to their learning need or difficulty. We aim to have confirmed access arrangements in place in a reasonable time frame so long as prior awareness of normal way of working has been continually documented by the curriculum teams.

Assessment request type:	Deadline for Access arrangements to be confirmed:
Functional Skills	Min 4 Weeks before exam
City&Guilds, Vetskill	Min 4 weeks before external assessment (online or paper based)
GCSE Summer exams	Min 4 weeks before exam
Other Awarding Organisations such as RHS, NCFE and others	Specific deadlines published in their access policies may fall out of the annual cycle of general further education courses.

- 8.2 Access arrangements approved for exams should reflect a student's 'normal way of working' in the classroom. As part of a student's study programme, all teaching and support staff will ensure access to learning that is supportive, inclusive and aspirational through the quality first teaching framework.
- 8.3 All teaching and learning support staff must make reasonable adjustments in order to provide adaptive teaching and personalised learning and teaching to meet the needs of students.
- 8.4 Exam access arrangements can only be applied for in strict accordance with Awarding Organisations regulations under the Joint Council for Qualifications.

9. REFERRAL POINTS

- 9.1 There are a number of referral points in which a student can disclose to the college that they previously received exam access arrangements.

Application: Students are asked to provide details of any SEND/ previous access arrangements needs on application forms

Interview: Course managers will meet and discuss support needs with applicants. Previous arrangements would be recorded on the interview proforma.

Enrolment: Details of any previous access arrangements and formal diagnosis reports will be requested VIA letter by the inclusive learning team to those students who have already disclosed they received access arrangements at school. If not already provided, **these MUST be provided by October half term** otherwise timely access arrangements cannot be guaranteed.

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This includes providing valid Form 8 documentation from a previous centre as early as possible. Where received and compliant with JCQ rules, this can act as a 'passport to progress' and speed up the approval process.

Initial Assessment: Initial assessments will be completed with curriculum departments. Referrals can be made to the inclusive support team for screening assessment for any students identified difficulties through this process (these are learners who do not have an EHCP or formal diagnosis report), **the referral will not provide a formal diagnosis, however will outline areas of need ensuring timely intervention is provided.*

On Course: Students who present with SEND needs can be referred to the Inclusive Support team at any point after enrolment if it is felt access arrangements would benefit the student and these are related to usual way a student works. **However, all referrals should be made by October half term or within the first 6 weeks of a full-time programme that starts outside of the normal academic cycle as this may delay confirmed access arrangements being in place for the start of formal exams as otherwise it may be difficult to meet evidence the requirements of "normal pattern of working".**

Outcomes: The College's Access Arrangements Coordinator will inform candidates and staff of the outcome of application and input into pro solution. Exams officer will implement examination access arrangement for candidates.

10. DISCLOSURE

- 10.1 The College will only share Personal Data, including Special Category Data, with a third-party organisation where the College is legally entitled to do so and where there is a lawful basis for doing so, and provided there is a data sharing agreement in place, first.
- 10.2 The College actively promotes pre-enrolment disclosure of SEND and previous Exam access arrangements. This may be by one or more of the following:
- SEND Reviews in Schools
 - Local Authority Panel Meetings
 - Meetings with SEND Officers
 - Special Educational Needs Coordinators (SENCO's) in School
 - Meetings with Students and Parents at Open Events
 - Application Process
 - Student Interview
 - Education Health and Care Plans
 - Enrolment Process
 - Self-Referral
 - Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) Information
 - Other documentation

11. RESPONSIBILITIES

- 11.1 See FE Examinations Procedure.
- 11.2 FE Examinations Procedure outlines key areas of exam activity and responsibilities for all those involved.

12. MONITORING AND REVIEW

- 12.1 The Examinations and Awards Officer will maintain oversight of the effectiveness of these arrangements. This policy and the implementation arrangements which underpin it will be reviewed annually by the Vice Principal (Curriculum).

13. SUPPORTING/RELATED DOCUMENTS

- SEND Policy
- Equality and Diversity
- Exams Procedure
- Access Arrangements Guidance
- Safeguarding
- Data Protection
- JCQ Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments

14. DOCUMENT HISTORY

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