EXAMS ACCESS ARRANGEMENT POLICY

NAMED PERSON:	Ms Philippa Lockhart Assistant Headteacher

Last Review Date:	September 2026
Review Cycle:	1 Year
Next Review Date:	September 2027

Mr Andy Crossey **Chairman of Governing Body**
Signed: A.D. Crossey
Date: September 2026

Access Arrangements Policy

Centre name	The Buckingham School
Centre number	52127

Key staff involved in the Policy

Role	Name
Head of Centre	Mr Andy McGinnes
Senior Leader(s)	Mrs Philippa Lockhart Mr Richard Peel
Exams Officer	Mrs Sarah Mills
SENCo	Ms Philippa Lockhart
Other Staff (if applicable)	Ms Julie Branch, Ms Narhasha Bradley, Mrs Amy Clayton

This policy is reviewed and updated annually to ensure that access arrangements process at The Buckingham School 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**.

1. **Rationale**

   This policy provides guidance regarding the actions taken to ensure inclusion throughout the school to allow candidates with specific needs, such as special educational needs, disabilities or temporary injuries to access assessment without any disadvantage and without affecting the integrity of the assessment. The policy forms an integral part of our teaching and learning strategy which seeks to create a learning environment where every individual student may fulfil his or her full potential.

   This policy is written in line with the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) Regulations document: "Adjustments for candidates with disabilities and learning difficulties – Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments 1 September 2026 to 31st August 2027. (which aren't finalised yet) This will be updated in September following publication.

2. **Reasonable Adjustments**

   The Equality Act 2010 requires an Awarding Body to make reasonable adjustments where a disabled person would be at a substantial disadvantage in undertaking an assessment in comparison to a candidate who is not disabled. In such circumstances, the Awarding Body is required to take reasonable steps to avoid that disadvantage.

   Definition of Disability: Section 6 of the Equality Act defines disability as "a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long term adverse effect on someone's ability to carry out normal day to day activities."

   Definition of special educational needs (SEND): A candidate has SEN as defined in the Education Act 1996 if he/she has a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for him/her.

3. Procedure

An application for exam concessions to the Joint Council for Qualification (JCQ) can only be made if the school can provide all of the following:

- A history of need (clear evidence of need **over a period of time and evidenced by the teachers**)
- A history of provision (what support has been provided in school **over a period of time** which may include: support in the classroom; working in small groups for reading and/or writing; literacy support lessons; literacy intervention strategies; support in internal school tests/examinations and mock examinations.)
- A qualifying score from a recognised test carried out by a suitably qualified assessor (not required for all concessions).

In addition to this, evidence of need and provision can be provided through:

- Examples of classwork / past exam script
- Diagnostic test results
- Professional reports
- Medical evidence

Access arrangements should be processed at the start of the course prior to the beginning of the first year of a two-year GCSE course. Schools should have firmly established a picture of need and normal way of working for a student during Years 7 to 9.

It is the responsibility of the classroom teacher to evaluate performance in class and assessments and experiment with the different EAA to identify what a child may need and provide this evidence to the SEND team for further investigation. A referral into the department will spark a round robin and request for other teachers to be mindful of concerns and prompt their own exploration and evidence gathering of need.

For students with an EHCP, it is not a requirement for additional testing to be carried out or a Form 8 to be completed. Students with a diagnosis of Dyslexia will be automatically considered for testing although it should be noted that a diagnosis of Dyslexia is not an automatic guarantee of exam concessions.

4. General Principles

The principles for The Buckingham School 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)
- 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)
- Although access arrangements are intended to allow access to assessments, they cannot be granted where they will compromise the assessment objectives of the specification in question (AA 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 (AA 4.2)
- Access arrangements/reasonable adjustments should be processed at the start of the course (AA 4.2)
- Arrangements must always be approved before an examination or assessment (AA 4.2)
- The arrangement(s) put in place must reflect the support given to the candidate in the centre (AA 4.2)
- The candidate must have had appropriate opportunities to practise using the access arrangement(s)/reasonable adjustments before their first examination (AA 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 Insert name of policy or document (as example, Equalities Policy (Exams).

5. Sixth Form

Students who have previously qualified for exam concessions at GCSE will need to be re-assessed to see if they still qualify for concessions at A Level. For new entries to 6th form, students who have previously been given EAA, the SEND team will meet with the students to set out how the gathering of new evidence will be obtained and the process for re-application.

In line with JCQ regulations, schools will make all final decisions with regard to access arrangements based on whether the candidate has a substantial and long-term impairment and can demonstrate the access arrangement as being the student's normal way of working as evidenced by the teaching staff.

6. Checking the Qualifications of the Assessor(s)

Specialist assessors are used to conduct the assessments in line with JCQ regulations and guidance. It is the SENCO's responsibility to check the assessors are appropriately qualified to carry out the testing and evidence of the assessors' qualifications are held on file for inspection purposes.

At The Buckingham School, assessments are carried out by:

- an appropriately qualified assessor(s) appointed by the head of centre in accordance with the JCQ requirements (AA 7.3)

Details and qualification(s) of the current assessor(s)

- Mary Grashoff Spec. qualification: Post Grad Diploma in Specific Learning Difficulties (OCR) APC number as listed on SASC website: PATOSS 500001984 1F-6611

Appointment of assessors of candidates with learning difficulties

At the point an assessor is engaged/employed at The Buckingham School:

- Evidence of the assessor's qualification is obtained and checked against the current requirements (AA 7.3)
- This process is carried out prior to the assessor undertaking any assessment of a candidate (AA 7.3)
- A photocopy of the assessor's certificate(s) (or a printout of screenshot of HCPC or SASC registration, or screenshot of other relevant qualification listing) is kept on file (AA 7.3, 7.4)

Reporting the appointment of the assessor(s)

- Evidence that the assessor(s) is/are suitably qualified is held on file for inspection purposes (AA 7.4)

When requested, the evidence will be presented to the JCQ Centre Inspector by Philippa Lockhart SENDCo, Julie Branch SEND and EHCP manager and/or Sarah Mills Exams Officer.

- In the case of appropriately qualified psychologists (registered with the Health & Care Professions Council), or specialist 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**. (AA 7.4)
- The names of all other assessors, who are assessing candidates studying qualifications as covered by AA must be entered into **Access arrangements online** to confirm their status (AA 7.4)

The Buckingham School 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)
- Arrangements must be made for the candidate to be assessed by the centre's appointed assessor (AA 7.5)
- Assessors **must** personally conduct the assessments. They **must not** sign off assessments carried out by another professional (AA 7.5)
- The assessor must carry out tests which are relevant to support the application (AA 7.5)
- A privately commissioned assessment carried out without prior consultation with the centre cannot be used to award access arrangements (AA 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 (AA 7.3)

Access arrangements may include:

Cognition and Learning Needs

E.g. General and/or Specific Learning Difficulties (such as Dyscalculia and Dyslexia) Candidates with learning difficulties may require for example:

- supervised rest breaks
- extra time
- a computer reader or a reader
- read aloud or an examination reading pen
- a scribe
- a word processor
- a prompter
- a practical assistant
- coloured overlays
- coloured/enlarged papers
- modified language papers.

Communication and Interaction Needs

E.g. Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD), Speech, Language and Communication Needs (SLCN) Candidates with communication and interaction difficulties may require for example:

- supervised rest breaks
- extra time
- a computer reader or a reader
- read aloud or an examination reading pen
- a scribe
- a word processor
- modified language papers.
- Listening to Music

Sensory and Physical Needs

E.g. Hearing Impairment (HI), Multi-Sensory Impairment (MSI), Physical Disability (PD), Vision Impairment (VI)

Candidates with sensory and physical needs may require for example:

- supervised rest breaks
- extra time
- a computer reader or a reader
- read aloud or an examination reading pen
- a scribe
- a word processor
- a live speaker
- a Communication Professional
- a practical assistant
- Braille papers, modified enlarged and/or modified language papers.

Social, Mental and Emotional Needs

E.g. Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD), Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), Mental Health Conditions

Candidates with social, mental and emotional needs may require for example:

- supervised rest breaks
- extra time
- a computer reader or a reader
- read aloud or an examination reading pen
- a scribe
- a word processor
- a prompter
- alternative site arrangement
- separate invigilation within the centre.
- Listening to music

7. Processing applications for Access Arrangements

The SENCO is responsible for completing the paperwork (Form 8 and Form 9) and supervising the processing of on-line applications to JCQ for both GCSE and GCE qualifications using the Access Arrangements On Line tool. Candidates may not require the same access arrangements in each specification and SENCos must consider the need for access arrangements **on a subject-by subject basis.**

It should also be noted that if the SENCO or specialist assessor(s) consider that the access arrangements have ceased to be the student's normal way of working they reserve the right to withdraw permission for that access arrangement.

If a student prefers not to utilize their concession, they have the right to do so. Arrangements must always be approved before an examination or assessment.

8. Arrangements for Testing / Exams

Internal Assessments

All teaching staff are given access to the list of students qualifying for exam access arrangements (EAA). However, it is sensible to see this as a joint responsibility between the teacher and the student to ensure that the appropriate arrangements are in place for all internal assessment opportunities.

External Exams

It is the responsibility of the Exam Team, usually working in conjunction with the SEND Department, who take responsibility for organising the exam access arrangements for external exams.

9. 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. (AA 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. (AA 4.2)

It is the responsibility of:

- Philippa Lockhart SENDCo, Amy Clayton Deputy SENDCO, Julie Branch (SEND and EHCP manager), Nathasha Bradley (EAA Admin) and/or Sarah Mills (Exams Officer) to collect a candidate's consent (a completed candidate Personal data consent form) to record their personal data on-line through AAO
- Philippa Lockhart SENDCo, Amy Clayton Deputy SENDCO, Julie Branch (SEND and EHCP manager), Nathasha Bradley (EAA Admin) and/or Sarah Mills (Exams Officer) is responsible for completing this confirmation to complete the Data protection confirmation by the examinations officer or SENCo, prior to the processing of the online application
- Philippa Lockhart SENDCo, Amy Clayton Deputy SENDCO, Julie Branch (SEND and EHCP manager), Nathasha Bradley (EAA Admin) and/or Sarah Mills (Exams Officer) submits applications via AAO to submit applications for approval using AAO
- Philippa Lockhart SENDCo, Amy Clayton Deputy SENDCO, Julie Branch (SEND and EHCP manager), Nathasha Bradley (EAA Admin) and/or Sarah Mills (Exams Officer) acquires information before submitting applications 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)
- Philippa Lockhart SENDCo, Amy Clayton Deputy SENDCO, Julie Branch (SEND and EHCP manager), Nathasha Bradley (EAA Admin) and/or Sarah Mills (Exams Officer) submits applications for approval directly to an awarding body for any qualification that does not fall within the scope of AAO
- Sarah Mills (Exams Officer) is responsible for ordering modified papers by the published date