

Learning Support Policy

Senior School

Policy Owner(s)	Learning Support Director
Approved by	Assistant Head (Teaching and Learning)
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1. Introduction

This document should be read in conjunction with the following complementary documents:

- Curriculum Policy
- Homework, Assessment and Reporting Policy
- Teaching Policy
- Sport and Exercise High Performance Programme
- Admissions Policy
- Pupil Wellbeing Policy
- EAL Policy
- Disability Access Policy

Highgate is an academically selective school which admits pupils into its Pre-Prep, Junior and Senior Schools on the basis of ability shown in tests and interviews. The School is keenly aware that addressing individual learning needs is the key to pupil success and this policy therefore aims to provide a framework for the support of learning throughout the School.

2. Aim

Highgate aims to enable pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities (LDD) to achieve their full potential by:

- Working with the pupils concerned to enhance their learning skills and abilities;
- Working with their teachers to ensure the best programmes of study for each pupil;
- Working with outside agencies, where necessary, to enable the greatest access to opportunities for pupil progress in their schoolwork, in their programmes of examination, and in their future study or careers.

Thus, Highgate will ensure that it is fully compliant with the Equality Act of 2010, the Children and Families Act 2014 and the SEN and Disability Code of Practice 0-25 years 2015 to ensure a high-quality education for all its pupils.

3. Objectives of Learning Support provision

- To provide appropriate material resources, dedicated support and suitable advice to support pupils with LDD;
- To provide support and advice to pupils, where appropriate, who do not have a specific LDD, and yet have been identified as having specific difficulties with the curriculum;
- To develop a partnership with all members of the teaching staff to ensure that there is a positive approach to the learning of those with LDD;

- To maintain links with the parents¹ regarding the progress of pupils with LDD.

4. Learning difficulties defined

A pupil is defined as having a learning difficulty if:

- They have a more significant and greater difficulty than the majority of pupils of the same age
- They have a disability preventing or hindering them from making use of educational facilities of a kind generally provided for children of the same age in schools within the area of the Local Authority.

We identify four areas of need:

- Cognition and Learning
- Social, Emotional and Mental Health
- Communication and Interaction
- Sensory and/or physical needs

5. Learning Support Department

The Director of Learning Support has specific responsibility for pupils in Years 7-13 and is assisted by eight colleagues (one full-time and seven part-time). They are an Assistant Learning Support teacher and Access Arrangements Coordinator; a Learning Support Specialist; three English specialist teachers; two Maths specialist teachers and a French specialist teacher. The department is also helped by a teacher with dedicated time to Learning Support from the Science department

Pupils in Years 3-6 are specifically assisted by two teachers and pupils in the Pre-Prep School by the Pre-Prep Learning Support coordinator. The Director of Learning Support is responsible for the coordination of the Learning Support policy across the School.

6. Admissions policy

Admission to each section of the School is selective. The School must feel confident that a prospective pupil will benefit from the education offered so that there is no reasonable doubt at the time of admission that they will have a complete, happy and successful school career.

Both at the application stage and also later in the admissions process parents are given the opportunity, and indeed urged, to notify the School of any LDD affecting their child of which the School should be aware.

The parents of a pupil with an existing LDD, a report from an educational psychologist/psychiatrist/medical or other professionals and/or an Education, Health and Care Plan are requested to submit copies of such papers to the Director of

¹ All references to 'parents' in this policy includes parents/carers/guardians.

Admissions, who will then consult with the Learning Support Department. The Learning Support Department will review all documents provided to the School to establish i) if any reasonable adjustments are required for the entrance assessment and ii) if any reasonable adjustments within the school and/or curriculum are required if the candidate is successful with their application. The Learning Support Department will report their initial thoughts to the Head of Admissions and the Bursar, if necessary, for their consideration.

A meeting may be arranged between the candidate, their parents, and the Director of Learning Support, so that, if necessary, steps to accommodate the needs of the pupil can be arranged well in advance of admission.

If a pupil is accepted into the School with a known LDD, the School (acting on the advice of the Director of Learning Support) will make reasonable adjustments to meet their needs. The School will agree with the parents and pupil how the needs of the pupil can best be met. If a pupil is accepted into the School and their needs become identified at a later stage, the School will assess how best to meet those needs in consultation with the parents, the pupil and any external agencies which are felt appropriate.

Failure to disclose information regarding LDD issues may result in the School being unable to offer an adequate level of support.

7. Identification of pupils with LDD

The School aims to identify pupils with LDD or those for whom learning support would be valuable in the following ways:

- By the receipt of information from a previous school or other educational establishment;
- By the provision of information by parents as described above;
- By utilising internal baseline data;
- By screening all pupils in Year 9;
- By the raising of concerns from members of staff about the learning progress of a pupil;
- By reviewing the progress of all pupils within the School through the School's reporting system.

8. The Learning Support Register

When a pupil is identified as having a learning need their SIMS profile is updated accordingly. In this way all members of staff are readily able to see who is currently on the Learning Support register as well as a brief summary of their difficulties. Pupil Profiles and relevant documentation, such as summaries of educational psychologists' assessments, may also be attached to pupils' profiles. It is a requirement of all teachers to read and use this information in the planning and provision of their lessons.

Once the Learning Support Department has closed a pupil's file i.e. they no longer require support on a regular basis, the status of their learning support provision will be changed on SIMS. The fact that they were once on the Learning Support

register and a record of what difficulties the pupil presented with and the support they received will continue to be on their SIMS profile for the duration of their education at Highgate.

9. Screening of pupils

In the Senior School pupils in Year 9 will be screened for potential learning difficulties. Parents must be aware that these are screening and not diagnostic tests. The screening tests are not competitive, and no specific preparation is required, nor indeed would it be beneficial. In addition to information from parents and teachers, school assessments and reporting may be used to identify pupils with a potential learning need.

If the outcome of a test and/or any other circumstances give the School reason to think that a pupil may have a learning difficulty, the School will report and consult with their parents as necessary and make recommendations.

10. Support for pupils – procedure

Pupils receive support for their learning in the Senior School as follows:

- Stage 1:* *Concern raised.* Concerns may be raised by any member of staff at any stage in a pupil's career in the School or indeed by a pupil or parent.
- Stage 2:* *Observation.* The Learning Support Department may arrange to observe the pupil in a lesson(s) to obtain first-hand evidence of the potential problems a pupil may have. Furthermore, they may ask for feedback on the pupil from their teachers and review the pupil's academic progress.
- Stage 3:* *Pupil meeting.* A member of the Learning Support Department will aim to meet with the pupil as soon as possible, usually within two weeks of receiving the initial concern. This meeting may include, with the permission of the parents, a selection of educational assessments as well as a pupil interview.
- Stage 4:* *Assessment of pupil needs.* In the light of the pupil meeting, the teacher from the Learning Support Department will discuss the needs of the pupil with the referring teacher and the relevant senior teacher (in the Senior School this is likely to be the Head of House, or the Head of Year for pupils in Years 7 and 8). At this stage it will be usual for some feedback to be given to parents on the outcome of the appraisal. The pupil may then be placed on the Learning Support Register and the level of support required will be determined.
- Stage 5:* *Pupil in Learning Support.* Pupils may be offered learning support lessons on either a regular or occasional basis. These lessons may be offered on a one-to-one or group basis and may on very rare occasions require the pupil to be withdrawn from scheduled academic lessons. If

necessary, these lessons may take place at the beginning or end of the school day, at lunch or break time. Staff are expected to release pupils from scheduled lessons in order to take part in Learning Support lessons. These lessons have an agreed focus, for an agreed time period. Parents are informed that these sessions take place and are provided with updates re pupil attendance.

Stage 6: Preparation of Pupil Profile. In some cases, a Pupil Profile may be prepared and circulated to relevant teachers with the aim of enabling learning to be more effective. Pupil Profiles are uploaded on SIMS.

Stage 7: Conclusion of programme of support. At the end of a defined period the regular lessons of support for most pupils are concluded and a review is carried out of their progress. Pupils' information will continue to be recorded on SIMS and whilst they do not continue to be seen by the Learning Support Department on a regular basis it is possible for them to be assessed or reviewed by the department at any subsequent stage in their school career.

11. Support for teachers

Teachers are supported in their teaching of pupils with LDD in the following ways:

- Specialist Learning Support teachers in key departments, currently English, Maths, MFL and Science;
- Staff INSET and CPD sessions throughout the year (at regular intervals, as part of the cycle of compulsory training; all new staff receive an induction session on LDD from the Director of Learning Support early in their first term in the school);
- Information contained in the electronic Learning Support Register, accessible via SIMS;
- Information on strategies for teaching pupils with LDD available on VENN;
- Advice given on request to any teacher wanting support for teaching pupils with LDD;
- Advice given within departmental meetings when it is clear that there are particular issues relating to a subject;
- In-class observation of pupils with LDD and subsequent feedback from a member of the Learning Support department (especially when particular learning or behavioural issues are identified).

12. Provision of auxiliary aids for pupils with LDD

Some pupils may require the use of auxiliary aids, such as a reading pen, an induction loop, or other specialist equipment to enable them to fully access the curriculum. Where a request is made for the School to provide a pupil with such items, it will consider the request on a case by case basis, in accordance with what is reasonable having regard to all the relevant factors, such as the means of the pupils' parents, the benefit of the equipment to the pupil and the corresponding

disadvantage of not having it, the allocation of the School's resources, and the extent to which the equipment can be funded elsewhere such as by the local authority, among others.

13. Assistance from outside agencies

Highgate has links with a number of Educational Psychologists and other advisers who are able to assist, when required, in additional support for pupils with LDD. It is the responsibility of parents to engage the services of an external Psychologist or other professional and to cover all costs relating to the consultation and report. The School will not automatically accept a report, or the recommendations therein, of an Educational Psychologist when there is no evidence from school to substantiate the report.

The Learning Support Department will not carry out any diagnostic assessments; however, they may provide specific feedback to parents/careers on any assessments which have been conducted. This feedback may indicate that a pupil's difficulties are potentially associated with a given diagnosis and further investigations are needed. Parents wishing to have a diagnosis investigated will need to consult with a relevant professional, for example an educational psychologist or psychiatrist. The Learning Support Department has a recommended list of Educational Psychologists and clinics.

14. Pupils with EAL needs

The School conducts its learning in English and there is an expectation that all pupils are able to communicate effectively in English. There are a number of pupils in the School who have learnt English as an additional language (EAL). These pupils may be added to the Learning Support Register for additional assistance which may be provided by the English and/or the Learning Support department, usually a combination of the two.

In recent years, pupils with special circumstances have come to us with less English than they need to access the academic curriculum. These pupils have had incorporated in the planning of their learning both curriculum and EAL-specific objectives, including the acquisition of key curriculum vocabulary and enhanced opportunities for speaking and listening in the form of peer support and linguistic scaffolding provided in classes with the Learning Support Department. This is a strategy which may be adopted as appropriate.

Special provision in examinations can be provided where necessary, and in day-to-day life pupils with EAL requirements are supported by the school library and by the provision of, for example, bi-lingual dictionaries or electronic translators. It is our experience that those coming to us with significant language needs invariably fall into the 'gifted and talented range'.

To enable us to provide all necessary support at the critical point of entry, we ask at application for details from parents of their child's ability in English and language background. Additionally, the screening tests conducted as described in section 8 allow us not only to identify potential pupils with EAL but also the level of support they may require. Those who

are deemed likely to need support are given a further, qualitative assessment which is used to inform a scheme of support, if it is seen to be required.

15. Pupils with an Education, Health and Care Plan

Where a pupil has an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) prepared by the LA, the School will work with this body to ensure that the provisions of the plan are addressed and that the relevant Individual educational plans are prepared and enacted according to the relevant statutory requirements. [ISSRs 2014 Part 1, Paragraph 2 (1)(b)(i)]. It is the duty of the Director of the Learning Support to advise teachers on the particular needs of the pupil and the recommended strategies for teaching them.

The Director of Learning Support will chair a full annual review, with, in attendance, representatives from the LA for pupils with an EHCP. Furthermore, she liaises with the Bursar, when necessary, over matters of access and SENDA legislation.

16. Reporting to parents

The Learning Support Department reports directly to parents when there is an issue arises. The department formally reports to the parents once a year. Parents are encouraged to contact the department directly if they have a concern or require information. The Learning Support Department is represented at each of the Parents' Consultation Evenings throughout the year.

17. Pupils with Social, Emotional and Mental health difficulties

Highgate is committed to supporting pupils with such needs The Learning Support Department works with pupil counsellors, the Head of Pupil Health and Wellbeing and her team and all pastoral staff to ensure that needs are met wherever possible.

18. Access Arrangements for public and internal examinations

The Learning Support Department will review the needs of identified pupils for access arrangements in both public and internal examinations. The Learning Support Department works closely with the Examinations Officer and the Deputy Head (Academic) to ensure that such needs are met whenever possible.

For public examinations and university admissions tests, access arrangements will be made in accordance with the regulations set out by the Joint Council for Qualifications (www.jcq.org.uk) and Cambridge International. An assessment for such access arrangements will be carried out by a member of the Learning Support Department no earlier than the beginning of year 9 or at the beginning of a pupil's GCE studies as advised by the JCQ and Cambridge. Parents should be

advised that these assessments are to provide evidence that an access arrangement is required by the pupil and are not diagnostic.

For internal examinations in years 7 and 8 extra time will not be granted under normal circumstances. However, there may be exceptions. This is considered on a case-by-case principle. Alternative access arrangements such as the use of a word processor may be granted.

Please see Appendix 1 which outlines our Laptop and Word Processor Policy.

Please see Appendix 2 for Data Use and Storage.

Please see Appendix 3 for our Access Arrangements Policy for external exams.

19. Evaluation and Review of Policy

This policy is formally reviewed every year to update both legislative elements and also functional aspects of its content.

Appendix 1: Guidelines on the use of Laptops and Word Processors

The School recognises that for some pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities a laptop may be the most appropriate method of organising and presenting their work. Pupils are allowed to use a laptop in School as their normal, routine way of working where a need has been established and where appropriate training has been undertaken. Windows is the operating system used.

1. Use of a Laptop

Pupils will be allowed to use a laptop in School as their routine, normal way of working under the following conditions:

- A Specific Learning Difficulty (such as Dyslexia or Dyspraxia for example) has been identified and use of a laptop is recommended and approved by the School;
- A pupil has a medical condition, sensory impairment, physical disability; poor handwriting or struggles to plan and organise their thoughts when handwriting.
- The pupil has received recommended training to ensure that typing is efficient, accurate and of sufficient speed to be able to cope in class: as a guide, we would expect a standardised score within the average range or above;
- The Learning Support department approves the use of a laptop as the normal method of working;
- The pupil has been using the laptop as their routine way of working in any subject where they wish to use a word processor (WP) in an examination and has had specific practice and rehearsal in the use of a WP under examination conditions.
- A word processor cannot simply be granted to a candidate because they now want to type rather than write in examinations or can work faster on a keyboard, or because they use a laptop at home.

2. Limitations to Laptop Use

A subject teacher has the right to veto the use of a laptop in particular situations:

- Where its use might be dangerous or problematic e.g. in a particular experiment in Chemistry;
- Where particular exercises should not be done with computer assistance e.g. maps and diagrams;
- Where calculations are required without the assistance of computer functions such as in Mathematics;
- If an individual pupil, in any lesson, is using a laptop in such a way as to cause a distraction or disturbance to the learning of others.

3. Detailed Procedures

- Pupils should not expect always to have access to mains power and are therefore advised to have a spare battery;

- All written work, which would normally be done in exercise books during lessons, is to be printed out nightly at home and filed appropriately so that pupils possess a hard copy of all their work filed in ring binders or pasted into exercise books;
- Pupils should use a plain font (e.g. Times New Roman, Arial, Verdana) and allow room for teachers' comments;
- If there are problems with a laptop during lessons, the pupil should immediately stop using it and switch to pen and paper;
- In public examinations pupils will use a School WP;
- Pupils should not expect the School's technicians to maintain their machines or undertake repairs to them.

4. Backup

Pupils should backup their work on to a separate hard drive and/or school account (OneDrive) on a regular basis – ideally weekly, but at the very least at each half term. The cost of losing a term/year's work, particularly in public examination years through a computer crash can be very considerable, both literally and in terms of stress.

5. Printing work

Pupils can print their work using the Library computers by accessing their One Drive. Personal devices cannot be connected to the school printers.

6. Assistance with Laptops

The Learning Support department will be available to:

- Help pupils to establish a daily routine and encourage them to operate in an organised and independent way;
- Act as a trouble-shooter for general staff queries concerning laptop users and their problems;
- Advise on outside help for keyboard competency skills.

7. Security of Equipment

- Adequate insurance cover should be arranged by parents to cover damage or loss;
- The School does not accept liability for damage to or loss of any laptop computers, which will remain the responsibility of the owner at all times.

8. Use of Word Processors in Public Examinations

The Joint Council for Qualification and Cambridge International's recommendation for the use of word processors in examinations must be viewed within the context of the School's position on WP use for Years 7-13. (See Section 1 above.)

- Where a pupil is authorised to use a WP as their routine, normal way of working as per School policy and therefore may use it in examinations, the Learning Support Department or Examinations Officer will make contact with the candidate to arrange in which specific examinations they wish to use a word processor.
- Only the relevant software applications will be available; spell check, grammar check and the thesaurus will not be enabled. There will be instructions informing candidates how to use the Exam WritePad platform
- No Apple laptops are used by Highgate School for external exams so pupils must ensure that their normal way of working is with a laptop using Windows.

Appendix 2: Data Use and Storage

1. Use of Data

All data used by Learning Support is for the sole purpose of assisting pupils' learning. This information may take many forms including, but not limited to, assessments, reports, emails, minutes of meetings, test and exam results and learning reviews. This information will be shared by only those staff with direct contact with/responsibility for the pupil involved.

2. Storage of Confidential Information

Sensitive or confidential information such as Educational Psychologist (EP) reports and similar may be stored on SIMS in one of the categories of Confidential, Private or Public to be decided together by parents and Learning Support.

Information such as Pupil profiles may be stored on SIMS and transferred electronically to relevant teachers.

Hard copies of confidential information may be kept in a secure area in Learning Support in a locked filing cabinet.

In SIMS, the following information may be held on a pupil:

- Learning Support status
- Summary of learning need and strategies for teachers
- Record of Learning support sessions, meetings etc.
- Details of in-house assessments

3. Retention of information

All electronically stored information will remain on SIMS, as per the School's Record Retention Schedule.

Hard copies of information will be kept by Learning Support for two years and then archived. This will remain in Archives indefinitely.

4. Exchange of information

To aid smooth transition from Pre-Prep to Juniors and from Juniors to Seniors, all relevant Learning Support information will be transferred directly as befits the School. If parents do not wish for information to be transferred, they may speak with Learning Support.

Any documents sent by parents or external agencies to the School can be password protected, with the password being sent in a separate email.

Information sent by the School to another school or external agency will be with the permission of parents.

Supply staff on a long-term basis will have access to information on SIMS.

Short-term supply staff will speak with the relevant tutor, teacher, or pastoral leader to apprise themselves of the learning needs of the pupils they will be teaching.

Appendix 3: Access Arrangements Policy for external exams

This policy is reviewed annually to comply with current JCQ and Cambridge International regulations. For full details of regulations, please see current editions of *'Adjustments for candidates with disabilities and learning difficulties. Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments.'* Joint Council for Qualifications and Cambridge Handbook (International) *'Regulations and Guidance for administering Cambridge exams'*.

1. The purpose of this policy

This policy is to confirm that Highgate School fulfils its obligations to identify the need for, request and implement Access Arrangements, and to ensure that we are fully compliant with the 2010 Equality Act. The policy will ensure the integrity of assessments so that all pupils are on a 'level playing field' with regards to their external examinations. Thus, Highgate School *'recognise its duties towards disabled candidates as defined under the terms of the Equality Act 2010. This must include a duty to explore and provide access to suitable courses, submit applications for reasonable adjustments and make reasonable adjustments to the service the centre provides to disabled candidates...'* (JCQ General Regulations for Approved Centres)

2. What are Access Arrangements?

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' (JCQ)

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 comparison to someone who is not disabled

A reasonable adjustment for a particular person may be unique to that individual and may not be included in the list of available Access Arrangements.

How reasonable the adjustment is will depend on a number of factors including the needs of the disabled candidate. An adjustment may not be considered reasonable if it involves unreasonable costs, timeframes or affects the security or integrity of the assessment.

Definition of disability: The Equality Act 2010 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: A candidate has ‘special educational needs’ as defined in the SEND Code of Practice 2015 if they have a learning difficulty which calls for special educational provision to be made for them.

3. Who may require an Access Arrangement?

Pupils with the following needs may have access arrangements:

- Cognition and Learning Needs
- Communication and Interaction Needs
- Sensory and/or Physical Needs
- Social, Emotional and Mental Health

4. What evidence do we need to have to secure Access Arrangements?

JCQ and Cambridge International inspections require all schools to have appropriate evidence for every pupil awarded access arrangements. This will include evidence of the nature and the extent of the disability, difficulty or impairment; proof that the difficulties are persistent and significant and have a substantial impact on learning and teaching; confirmation that if access arrangements are not in place the pupil will be at a substantial disadvantage in comparison to their non-disabled peers; and evidence that the arrangement is the candidate’s normal way of working

Failure to produce sufficient evidence can be deemed as malpractice with subsequent repercussions for the individual pupil’s examinations marks and for the centre.

For access arrangements awarded on the grounds of social, emotional and mental health; communication and interaction; sensory and/or physical needs; medical condition or speech, language and communication needs, the School will also need to present at least one of the following (a letter from a GP is not admissible):

- A letter/report from CAMHS, a HCPC registered psychologist; a medical consultant, a psychiatrist, a Speech and Language Therapist; or
- a Neurodevelopmental Specialist GP or GP with an extended role in ADHD, who must have completed an RCGP framework for developing and maintaining an extended role specifically in ADHD. Evidence must be provided of this;
- A letter/report from the Local Authority Specialist Service, Local Authority Sensory Impairment Service or Occupational Health Service; or
- a current EHCP which confirms the candidate's learning difficulty, medical condition, physical disability, sensory or multi-sensory impairment.

Please note that a letter from a medical professional is for evidence only and does not guarantee an application for access arrangements.

Access arrangements may vary due to the different demands in some subjects and if this is the case then access arrangements may be awarded only for certain subjects. Where formal access arrangements are determined and agreed these become the 'normal way of working'. This means that the appropriate access arrangements should be taken into consideration in all internal and external assessments. An access arrangement must be the pupil's normal way of working in order for the application to comply with regulations. If a student chooses to continually not use their access arrangement, then the access arrangement will be removed for public examinations.

5. Responsibilities of SENCo

The SENCo must:

- ensure that applications are processed on time, no later than the published deadline;
- ensure that the full supporting evidence is in place before an online application is processed;
- review the evidence before an online application is processed, ensuring that the candidate does meet the published criteria for the respective arrangement;
- hold all supporting evidence and present such evidence to a JCQ Centre Inspector upon request;
- ensure that the agreed adjustment has been put in place before the candidate's first examination, e.g. internal school/college tests and mock examinations; and
- appoint a centre-based specialist assessor

6. Responsibilities of the Assessor

The assessor is appropriately qualified as required:

- an access arrangements assessor who has successfully completed a post-graduate course at or equivalent to Level 7, including at least 100 hours relating to individual specialist assessment. An access arrangements assessor may conduct assessments to be recorded within Part 2 of Form 8; and/or
- an appropriately qualified psychologist registered with the Health & Care Professions Council who may conduct assessments to be recorded within Part 2 of Form 8 and where necessary undertake full diagnostic assessments; and/or
- a specialist assessor with a current SpLD Assessment Practising Certificate, as awarded by BDA, the Dyslexia Guild or Patoss and listed on the SASC website, who may conduct assessments to be recorded within Part 2 of Form 8 and where necessary undertake full diagnostic assessments.
- and
- An access arrangements assessor must have successfully completed a post-graduate course at or equivalent to Level 7, including at least 100 hours relating to individual specialist assessment, which must include training in all of the following:
 - the theoretical basis underlying psychometric tests, such as the concepts of validity and reliability; standard deviations and the normal curve; raw scores, standard scores, quotients, percentiles and age equivalent scores; the concept of statistically significant discrepancies between scores; standard error of measurement and confidence intervals;
 - the appropriate use of nationally standardised tests for the age group being tested;
 - the objective administration of attainment tests which can be administered individually. This must include tests of reading accuracy, reading speed, reading comprehension and spelling;
 - appropriate methods of assessing writing skills, including speed, must also be covered;
 - the appropriate selection and objective use of tests of cognitive skills, see paragraph 7.5.12;
 - the ethical administration of testing including the ability to understand the limitation of their own skills and experience, and to define when it is necessary to refer the candidate to an alternative professional.

All assessors must:

- have a thorough understanding of the current edition of the JCQ document Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments and the principles, procedures and accountabilities involved;
- be familiar with the Equality Act 2010 (although it is not their role to determine what is a ‘reasonable adjustment’, this will help identify access arrangements that might assist the candidate in examinations and assessments and are thus potentially reasonable adjustments);
- either hold an appropriate qualification to teach and make recommendations for secondary aged or adult learners who have learning difficulties or be an HCPC registered psychologist.

Schools are not obliged to accept private reports and will only work with practitioners who are approved by the centre.

The practising certificates of these professionals must be kept on file in preparation for inspection.

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. This would be where the assessor has not contacted the centre, has not liaised with the centre, has not been approved by the head of centre and has not received a completed Part 1 of Form 8 from the SENCo (JCQ, 7.3.6)

Final decisions regarding access arrangements are made by the School; a diagnosis of a Learning Difficulty or disability does not automatically mean an access arrangement will be awarded.

7. Assessments used

Highgate has a wide range of assessments, all of which are approved by the awarding bodies.

8. Recording evidence of normal way of working

Information regarding a pupil's specific circumstances or LDD is kept on file along with reports from outside agencies, parents or the pupils themselves. Information regarding in class support, small group or one to one support is also kept on file and entered on SIMS.

Those pupils who have been awarded an Access Arrangement will be given that provision in the classroom wherever possible as their normal way of working. The support given in the centre reflects the arrangement put in place for the examination series. All background information, support and or interventions are recorded in Form 8 and Form 9.

Subject teachers may be asked to make individual comments with regard to those pupils who have been identified as having specific difficulties, responding to questions such as:

How has this pupil's difficulty had an impact on teaching and learning in the classroom?

What support is regularly provided for this pupil?

Staff are also asked to provide samples and examples of pupils' work which are kept on file as evidence of normal way of working.

9. Deadlines

All applications for exam access arrangements must be made by the deadlines imposed by JCQ and Cambridge, which vary slightly each year but are always before end of March.

No applications will be submitted after this date, apart from those arising from a temporary emergency.

Table of substantive changes

Section	Detail of Change	Date	Owner
All	Reformatted and updated to reflect current provision	October 2025	JLH/IS

HIGHGATE

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