

# SoundSkool Music

## Reasonable adjustments and special considerations policy

<b>Last Review Date</b>	26 <sup>th</sup> August 2025
<b>Review Date</b>	25 <sup>th</sup> August 2026
<b>Reviewed By</b>	Pamela Christie/Simon Gordon
<b>Amendments Made Since Last Review Date</b>	Formatting and reviewing dates

## Contents

Statement of Intent .....	3
Legal Framework.....	3
Definition .....	3
Responsibilities .....	4
Identifying student needs.....	4
Applying for access arrangements .....	5
Supervised Rest Breaks .....	7
Evidencing applications .....	7
Preparing for an assessment.....	8
The use of word processors .....	9
Maintaining records .....	9
Monitoring and review .....	9
Appendix 1- Form 8 JCQ.....	9

## Statement of Intent

At SoundSkool we are fully committed to ensuring that education is accessible to all. We recognise that some students may require support and additional arrangements to be able to access and undertake exams without being disadvantaged. This policy outlines SoundSkool's procedures for identifying and applying for access arrangements before an exam and the reasonable adjustments that will be put in place as required.

**Access arrangements** are agreed before an assessment. They allow students with specific needs, e.g. SEND or temporary injuries, to access the assessment and demonstrate what they can do without changing the demands of the assessment. Access arrangements are the main way through which SoundSkool will make reasonable adjustments, in line with its duties under the Equality Act 2010.

A duty to make **reasonable adjustments** is 'to take such steps as it is reasonable to have to take to avoid the substantial disadvantage' to a disabled person caused by a provision, criterion or practice applied by or on behalf of a school, or by the absence of an auxiliary aid or service. The duty to make reasonable adjustments requires SoundSkool to take positive steps to ensure that disabled students can fully participate in the education provided by SoundSkool, and that they can enjoy the other benefits, facilities and services that SoundSkool provides for students.

## Legal Framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- DfE and Department of Health and Social Care (2015) 'SEND code of practice: 0 to 25 years'
- Equality Act 2010
- JCQ (2024-2025) Adjustments for students with disabilities and learning difficulties: Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments'

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Data Protection Policy
- Equality, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy
- SEND Policy

## Definition

The working definition for a reasonable adjustment is any action which addresses and assists in minimising the effect of the disability or difficulty for the student that would significantly impact their learning and assessment ability.

What is reasonable will be dependent on the individual circumstance, the impact of the disability on

the individual, financial implications and the practicality and effectiveness of the adjustments. Challenge-trg Skills strongly believes in providing all students with a fair and equal opportunity of demonstrating their knowledge, skills and understanding.

## Responsibilities

Students likely to need reasonable adjustments can be identified by enrolment staff from enrolment information or from tutors, when updating the Individual Learning Plan (ILP) with a student. Students can also make enrolment staff and tutors aware of any reasonable adjustments they require.

The tutor must inform the Welfare Lead of any declarations and applications to be made.

An authorised member of staff with designated responsibility will be responsible for the decision-making assessment process in relation to reasonable adjustment and special considerations applications.

The Head of College will be responsible for applying to the awarding body with any reasonable adjustment and special considerations requests (where appropriate).

Requests must be made 5 days in advance of any assessment being undertaken and in line with the qualification awarding organisation's own policy and procedures relating to adjustments and considerations. Please note that requests for special considerations can be submitted using the Special Consideration Form as soon as possible but no later than 5 working days after the assessment. The qualification awarding organisation's own policy, procedures and timeframes must be adhered to in these circumstances.

Failure to adhere to the qualification awarding organisation's own policy, procedures and timeframes could result in an application being rejected and sanctions applied to the centre for not following documented procedures.

For audit purposes, the Head of College must ensure that evidence is gathered, and records are retained for each reasonable adjustment or special consideration requested and approved by the qualification awarding organisation. These must be retained for a minimum of 3 academic years.

## Identifying student needs.

Students with SEND or a temporary impairment or injury may have several additional needs requiring a range of adjustments which will fall into the following categories:

- Cognition and learning needs, e.g. Dyslexia.
- Communication and interaction needs, e.g. Autism Spectrum Disorder.
- Sensory and physical needs, e.g. Multi-sensory Impairment.
- Social, emotional and mental health needs, e.g. Attention Deficit Disorder.

Where a student has communication and interaction needs as English is not their first language, the student must have an impairment in their first language which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect. A student does not have a learning difficulty simply because their first language is not English, Irish or Welsh.

Students' needs will be identified and accommodated for in line with the SEND Policy. The Head of College will ensure effective screening and monitoring systems are in place to enable the SENCO to gather an appropriately detailed idea of a student's needs. Teaching and support staff will be made aware of the referral procedure to the SENCO where they have concerns about a student's development.

Internal tests and mock exams will be used to help identify students who need to be assessed for access arrangements and reasonable adjustments. Where a student experiences a problem during an exam, the SENCO will consider if an assessment is necessary.

Arrangements in place for an exam will reflect the student's normal way of working and the support normally provided for them in school, e.g. in the classroom, when working in small groups for reading and writing, support lessons, intervention strategies, and in internal tests and mock exams. This will not be the case where there is a late diagnosis of a disability, or late manifestation of an impairment or a temporary injury or impairment; however, the evidence of need will still be required to the same standard as early applications.

Student's needs will be assessed by an assessor with the necessary qualifications appointed by the headteacher, in line with JCQ requirements.

The SENCO will recognise that access arrangements and reasonable adjustments may differ for a student depending on each assessment's specification, and arrangements will be considered on a subject-by-subject basis

## Applying for access arrangements

The JCQ's form 8 will be used for students with learning difficulties who are not subject to a current EHCP or statement of SEN to collate evidence for the need to have 25 percent extra time or a scribe.

The JCQ's form 9 will be used for students with:

- Communication and interaction needs.
- Medical conditions.
- Sensory or physical.
- SEMH needs.
- Speech, language and communication needs.
- Learning difficulties and a current EHCP or statement of SEN.

The form 9 will be used to collate evidence for supervised rest breaks, reading aids, extra time, and access to a mobile phone for medical purposes.

Access arrangements and reasonable adjustments will be applied for by the SENCO in line with the JCQ guidelines for the relevant academic year. These will be applied for at the start of each course, e.g. at the start or during the first year of a two-year GCSE course, based on SoundSkool's knowledge of a student's needs and normal way of working.

Where there is a temporary injury or impairment, or a diagnosis of a disability or manifestation of an impairment relating to an existing disability arising after a course begins, access arrangements will be applied for as soon as is practicable.

The SENCO will complete all necessary paperwork and ensure all applications have regard for the relevant exam board's deadline. Where an application is processed after the deadline,

e.g. due to a temporary injury arising after this date, the SENCO will ensure the appropriate paperwork is on file and available for inspection. Access arrangements and reasonable adjustments will only be put in place for exams where they have been approved.

Applications processed and approved online will be valid for 26 months from the date of processing the application. Access arrangements online will be used for processing applications for certain qualification types as updated on page 12 of the JCQ Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments (2024-2025).

Where the SENCO believes that access arrangements for a student are no longer the student's normal way of working within this period, e.g. a student whose reading has improved to the extent they may no longer meet the exam board criteria for a reader, they will consider whether it is appropriate to withdraw permission for it. Where permission is withdrawn, written confirmation will be sent to the student's parents.

A student will have the right to not make use of the access arrangement or reasonable adjustment should they not wish to do so. The SENCO will consider removing the access arrangements in cases where a student repeatedly chooses not to make use of them.

Students will never be charged any fee in relation to an adjustment or aid made to meet SoundSkool's duty under the Equality Act 2010.

Access arrangements and reasonable adjustments will not normally be possible where it compromises the assessment objectives of the relevant specification, e.g. a practical assistant will normally not be allowed when practical skills are being tested.

Form 8 will be used to record information about a student's access arrangements/ reasonable adjustments and be presented by the SENCO for inspection. The form will only be used for students with learning difficulties or where a Language Modifier is required. Where the SENCO is also SoundSkool's appointed assessor, the online version of Form 8 may be completed using the Centre Admin Portal.

Extra time applications will only be made after the SENCO has considered and thoroughly exhausted the option of supervised rest breaks.

The following arrangements will not need to be processed online:

- Amplification equipment
- Bilingual dictionary
- Braille transcript and brailers
- CCTV
- Colour naming by the invigilator for students who are colour blind
- Coloured overlays
- Communication Professional for students using Sign Language
- Examination on coloured/enlarged paper
- Live speaker for pre-recorded exam components
- Low vision aid/magnifier

- OCR scanners
- Prompter
- Read aloud, including an exam reading pen
- Separate invigilation within the centre
- Supervised rest breaks
- Word processor
- Non-electronic headphones
- Timer on a student's desk – a small countdown clock, a small analogue or digital clock, digital timer

Where a case contains individual needs which are not covered by the online system for applications, the SENCO will contact the relevant awarding body at the earliest opportunity to discuss the student's needs. A written record will be kept of any discussions.

### Supervised Rest Breaks

Part 1 Form 8 will be used to confirm the need for supervised rest breaks for those students with learning difficulties who also require 25% extra time and/or a scribe. Specialist evidence is not required for supervised rest breaks.

In respect of a single supervised rest break, it should be no more than 30 minutes in duration. A supervised rest break will often be shorter than this. A student cannot be given as many supervised rest breaks for as long as they like and a supervised rest break will not usually be required within the first 10 minutes of an examination. The duration of a supervised rest break

### Evidencing applications

Evidence and history of need and provision will be provided by the SENCO as required for each access arrangement applied for. Evidence will be stored for inspection purposes in line with JCQ guidance.

Core evidence required will typically include, but is not limited to the following:

- EHC plans
- Individual Learning Plans (ILPs)
- Fully completed **Form 8** with an assessment carried out by an assessor confirming a learning difficulty
- Where applicable, a qualifying score from a recognised test carried out by a suitably qualified assessor
- Teaching staff testimony about a student's difficulties
- Specialist evidence, e.g. a report or letter from a medical consultant
- History of support and provision in place for the student in line with the requested access arrangement or reasonable adjustment

Where a student has complex needs, the SENCO will complete Form 9 to:

- Detail the student's current difficulties to show how they impact on teaching and learning and performance in examinations, summarising evidence of feedback from teachers and/or support staff.
- Confirm that 25 percent extra time is the student's normal way of working

Form 9 will be supported by specialist evidence confirming a student's disability.

Where the student has been referred to CAMHS or a local NHS Trust by their centre or GP and is on the list to be screened and/or receive a formal diagnosis, the SENCO may in exceptional circumstances use a CAMHS or NHS Trust referral confirmation/acceptance letter. The SENCO, however, will be required to produce a compelling picture of need within Part 1 of Form 9.

Specialist evidence will confirm the student's disability. The specialist will not be required to recommend more than 25 percent extra time in their report. The SENCO may accept a medical diagnosis from an appropriate specialist working within the NHS or private practice. Although a specialist can recommend specific access arrangements, it is for the SENCO to determine the arrangements for the student's examination.

Where a computer-based assessment tool is used to gather evidence for Part 2 of Form 8, a suitably qualified assessor will be present to oversee the student's engagement with the computerised test.

## Preparing for an assessment

Once an access arrangement has been approved, SoundSkool will:

- Inform the student.
- Inform the exam person and make an access arrangement list available to them.
- Ensure all staff are aware of which students have had approved access arrangements.

Where a student requires access arrangements or reasonable adjustments before their first assessment, appropriate opportunities to practice using them will be provided. SoundSkool will be particularly mindful of the need to practice prior to an exam where the following are used:

- Computer reader
- Modified enlarged papers
- A scribe
- Speech recognition technology
- Word processor

For internal assessments, teaching staff will inform the SENCO at least **two weeks** in advance of the assessment date to allow sufficient time for access arrangements to be prepared.

Students will be informed to raise any concerns or questions with the SENCO about their access arrangements before an exam, and what to do if they encounter any issues during an exam.

## The use of word processors

Students who normally work with a word processor will use it in exams where appropriate, or they will use a scribe where necessary. A word processor will also be used where necessary due to a temporary injury or impairment. Word processors will have the spelling and grammar check disabled or enabled in line with the exam's specifications.

A word processor will be considered for students where they have:

- SEN which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to write legibly.
- A medical condition.
- A physical disability.
- A sensory impairment
- Planning and organisational problems when writing by hand.
- Poor handwriting.

The above list is not exhaustive; the SENCO will consider if a word processor would benefit a student where an additional need is identified. Word processors will only be used where it meets an additional need and will not be permitted simply because a student prefers it or can work faster using one. For the use of a word processor with the spelling and grammar switched on, Part 2 of Form 8 will need to show a below average spelling accuracy score with unrecognisable spellings.

The SENCO will prepare and produce a statement for inspection purposes which details SoundSkool's criteria for awarding and allocating word processors for exams.

A word processor cover sheet will be completed where required by the relevant awarding body for an exam.

## Maintaining records

The SENCO will keep detailed records of all essential information on file for an application. This will include a copy of the student's approved application, appropriate evidence of need as required and a signed student personal data consent form.

All personal data will be treated confidentially and handled in line with the Data Protection Policy and Records Management Policy.

## Monitoring and review

This policy will be reviewed by the Head of College, SENCO, governing board and exam person annually .

## Appendix 1- Form 8 JCQ



Form-8\_JCQ.pdf