

**ACCESS ARRANGEMENTS, REASONABLE
ADJUSTMENTS AND SPECIAL
CONSIDERATION
PROCEDURES**

Agreed: Sept 2016 via Performance and Quality Group

To be reviewed: May 2017

It is intended that this procedure is 'fair to all'. Where any part could potentially lead to unequal outcomes, the policy then justifies why this is a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim.

1 Scope and Purpose

Wiltshire College has a duty to uphold the rights of individual learners to have access to qualification assessments (either exams or coursework based assessments) in a way most appropriate for their individual needs.

The duty for an Awarding Organisation to make a reasonable adjustment will apply where an assessment/examination arrangement would put a person with a learning difficulty or disability at a substantial disadvantage in comparison to someone who is not disabled. In such circumstances, the Awarding Organisation, via the college, is required to take reasonable steps to avoid that disadvantage.

Wiltshire College ensures that individual candidates can access qualifications and assessments in two ways:

- by recognising the diverse needs of learners when qualifications and assessments are designed;
- by making appropriate **access arrangements** or **reasonable adjustments** to standard assessments, wherever this is required to enable access.

Wiltshire College, via the relevant Awarding Organisation, will also give **special consideration** to assessment results.

This procedure applies to all access arrangements, reasonable adjustments and special consideration concerning qualifications taken by all Wiltshire College learners.

2 Definitions

2.1 Disability

Section 6 of 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'.

2.2 Access Arrangements

Access arrangements are pre-agreed and put in place **before an assessment/examination**. They allow candidates/learners with special educational needs, disabilities or temporary injuries to access the assessment. Access arrangements allow candidates/learners to show what they know and can do without

changing the demands of the assessment: for example, a reader, a scribe or 25% extra time. Only learners that have been assessed by a qualified specialist assessor as being eligible for these arrangements may be permitted to use/have them.

The intention behind many access arrangements is to meet the particular needs of an individual candidate without affecting the integrity of the assessment. In this way awarding bodies will comply with the duty under the Equality Act 2010 to make 'reasonable adjustments' (See also Section 2.3). Access Arrangements last for a 26 month period and then re-assessment will be required.

2.3 Reasonable Adjustment

Reasonable Adjustments are pre-agreed and put in place **before an assessment/examination**. A reasonable adjustment is any action that helps to reduce the effect of a disability or difficulty that places the learner at a substantial disadvantage in the assessment situation. Reasonable adjustments must not affect the reliability and validity of the assessment outcomes, but may involve:

- adapting assessment materials, e.g., in Braille
- providing assistance such as a sign language interpreter
- separate room requests for learners with high anxiety
- using assistive technology such as screen reading or voice activated software

Different types of assessment make different demands on the learner and will influence (a) whether Reasonable Adjustments will be needed and (b) the kind of Reasonable Adjustment which may be put in place. Reasonable Adjustments are generally not appropriate where the learner's particular difficulty directly affects performance in the attributes to be assessed

A Learner with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP), specific learning or physical difficulty does not automatically qualify for Reasonable Adjustments.

If an EHCP states that Reasonable Adjustments are appropriate college will still need to provide evidence of normal way of working in the classroom. A referral will need to be made to the ALS Specialist Assessor by the teacher who will assess the request and confirm with the exams team which, if any, reasonable adjustments or Exam Access Arrangements are appropriate.

2.4 Special Consideration

A learners' examination performance can sometimes be affected by circumstances out of their control. Special consideration is a **post-examination adjustment** that compensates learners who were suffering from a temporary illness/condition or who were otherwise **disadvantaged at the time of the assessment/examination**. Exams officers may apply for special consideration on behalf of a learner.

Special consideration if awarded may result in a small post-assessment adjustment to the mark of the candidate. The size of the adjustment will depend on the

circumstances during the assessment and will reflect the difficulty faced by the candidate. Special consideration cannot remove the difficulty faced by the candidate and only minor adjustments can be made to the mark awarded because to do more than this would jeopardise the standard of the assessment. See Awarding Organisation guidelines for breakdown of adjustments that can be made.

Special consideration should not give the candidate an unfair advantage; neither should its use cause any person to be misled regarding a candidate's achievements. The candidate's result must reflect his or her achievement in the assessment and not necessarily his or her potential ability.

Note the term Mitigating/Extenuating Circumstances is used in some of the current college policies and procedure but is interchangeable with **Special Consideration**

2.4.1 A learner who is fully prepared and present for a scheduled assessment, and is fully aware of the assessment requirements, **may be eligible for Special Consideration** if:

- performance is affected by circumstances beyond the control of the learner:
For example, recent personal illness (e.g. severe asthma attack, severe migraine or broken limb), accident, emotional distress (e.g. recent bereavement of a close family member, severe domestic crisis at the time of the assessment), serious disturbance during the assessment (e.g., fire or accidental event);
- alternative assessment arrangements which were agreed in advance of the assessment prove inappropriate or inadequate;
- part of an assessment has been missed due to circumstances beyond the control of the learner;
- alternative assessment arrangements prove inappropriate or inadequate
- part of an assessment has been missed due to circumstances beyond the control of the learner
- There is a sufficient difference between the part of the assessment to which Special Consideration is applied, and other parts of the qualifications that have been achieved, to infer that the learner could have performed more successfully in the assessment.

2.4.2 A learner will not be eligible for Special Consideration if:

- no evidence is supplied by the Centre that the learner has been affected at the time of the assessment by a particular condition;
- any part of the assessment is missed due to personal arrangements including holidays or unauthorised absence;
- s/he is suffering from a minor illness or subject to a minor disturbance;
- preparation for a component is affected by difficulties during the course, for example disturbances through building work, lack of proper facilities, changes in or shortages of staff, or industrial disputes.
- In the case of long-term illness of an individual learner, or when a permanent health condition and/or disability means a learner's completion of assessment

takes additional time, it may be possible to permit an extension to the deadline for the submission of work for certification.

- It is not be possible to allow time extensions for all Qualifications and Units, most particularly in cases where the extension would be beyond the qualification end date.
- In some circumstances it may be more appropriate to allow the learner to take the assessment at a later date.
- Special Consideration should not give the learner an unfair advantage and the result must reflect learner achievement and not potential ability.
- Centres should note that it may not be possible to apply Special Consideration where an assessment requires the learner to demonstrate practical competence or where criteria have to be met fully, or in the case of qualifications that confer a Licence to Practice

3 Accountability

3.1 Students

3.1.1 Students should be fully involved in any decisions about adjustments/adaptations. This will ensure that individual needs can be met, whilst still bearing in mind the specified assessment criteria for a particular qualification.

3.1.2 Students should disclose in confidence to their tutor/curriculum assessor and/or Additional Learning Support any disability, impairment or learning difficulty they are aware of which could adversely impact on their performance during internal unit assessment(s)

3.1.3 Students should notify their tutor/curriculum assessor and/or the Exams Team about any temporary illness, injury or indisposition that occurred during assessment and which has or is likely to have adversely impacted on the same and warrants special consideration.

3.2 Tutors/Assessors

3.2.1 Tutor/curriculum assessor must familiarise themselves with this policy and the JCQ regulations and the relevant awarding organisation guidelines regarding application for and recording of requests for access arrangement, reasonable adjustment and/or special considerations.

3.2.2 Tutor/curriculum assessor must inform Additional Learning Support/Exams Team as soon as possible of any disclosure or notification or apparent condition that could warrant access arrangements, reasonable adjustment and/or special consideration for their student, using the appropriate ALS referral form;

3.2.3 Ensure that there is sufficient recording of any such reasonable adjustment and/or special consideration applied;

3.2.4 Liaise and co-operate with the Additional Learning Support and/or the Exams Team in relation to the above, completing the appropriate ALS referral form.

3.3 Additional Learning Support Team

3.3.1 The ALS staff will provide guidance to tutors/curriculum assessors in relation to individual student information (if held), explain how to make referrals for assessment of needs where there is no record of previous support/adjustments in place where the tutor/ curriculum assessor has identified a potential need for assessment for EAA..

3.3.2 Record and follow-up any reported requests for access arrangements, reasonable adjustments and forward relevant documentation to MIS/Exams.

3.4 ALS Specialist Assessor

The Specialist Assessors will perform the necessary assessments with learners to determine if access arrangements/reasonable adjustments are permitted in relation to their individual needs and the regulatory guidelines

3.5 Exams Manager/Quality Manager

The Exams Manager/Quality Manager will provide general guidance on this policy and assist to make the appropriate request to Awarding Bodies and ensure that an audit trail is held and monitored centrally.

The Exams Manager will make arrangements for Special Consideration requests to be forwarded to Awarding Organisations where appropriate.

3.6 Awarding Organisations

Provide information on how to apply for and maintain records of requests for reasonable adjustments, access arrangements and special considerations.

3.7 The College as a provider in relation to Malpractice

It is the accredited course provider's responsibility to ensure that the candidate uses only appropriate adjustments and that they keep records of these adjustments for audit purposes.

If the accredited course provider exceeds the level of assistance and type of assistance it may lead to malpractice investigations

4 Access Arrangements Process (see also flow chart at Appendix 1)

Due to time lines required to put access arrangements in place early requests are advisable as near to the start of a programme/course as possible. Please see deadlines in appendix 5

For entry level students refer to the Awarding Organisation guidelines in consultation with ALS.

For Level 1 to 3 students including GCSE requesting access arrangements they are to be referred to and assessed by the ALS specialist assessors using the appropriate ALS referral form.

If access arrangements are approved this will be documented and the request forwarded to MIS/Exams to make the necessary arrangements.

If a student does not qualify for access arrangements they will be notified and informed they cannot re-apply for assessment for 2 years.

5 Reasonable Adjustment Process (see also flow chart at Appendix 2)

Students are to be referred to and then assessed as required for Reasonable Adjustments by the ALS Specialist Assessor. If students are assessed as requiring any form of reasonable adjustment this will be documented and the request forwarded to MIS/Exams. If they fail to secure the reasonable adjustment general support guidance will be offered to tutor/assessors and/or the student may be offered further IAG for a more appropriate course. Records will be retained by the ALS and/or Exams department. Awarding Organisation process and documentation will be followed.

6 Special Considerations Process (see also flow chart at Appendix 3)

Unlike access arrangements, there are no circumstances whereby Wiltshire College may apply its own special consideration. Applications must be made to the Awarding Organisation on a case by case basis and thus separate applications must be made for each candidate. The only exception to this is where a group of candidates has been affected by a similar circumstance during an assessment, such as a fire alarm. A list of candidates affected must always be attached to the application.

Special consideration can be requested by staff, parents or candidates with appropriate evidence within seven days of the exam/assessment.

In most circumstances, relating to vocational qualifications, the student should request an extension to the assessment deadlines where special circumstances are known about prior to assessment taking place.

For all other claims the "Mitigating Circumstances" form available in course handbooks should be completed by the student.

Any application will be considered on its individual merits. Applications will only be accepted where there is independent, supporting medical or other relevant evidence covering the appropriate period of time.

If the College supports the application the Exams Manager will then forward a completed special consideration application to the relevant Awarding Organisation within the JCQ's recommended deadlines.

7 Associated Documents (Linked policies etc.)

Equality Opportunities and Diversity Policy

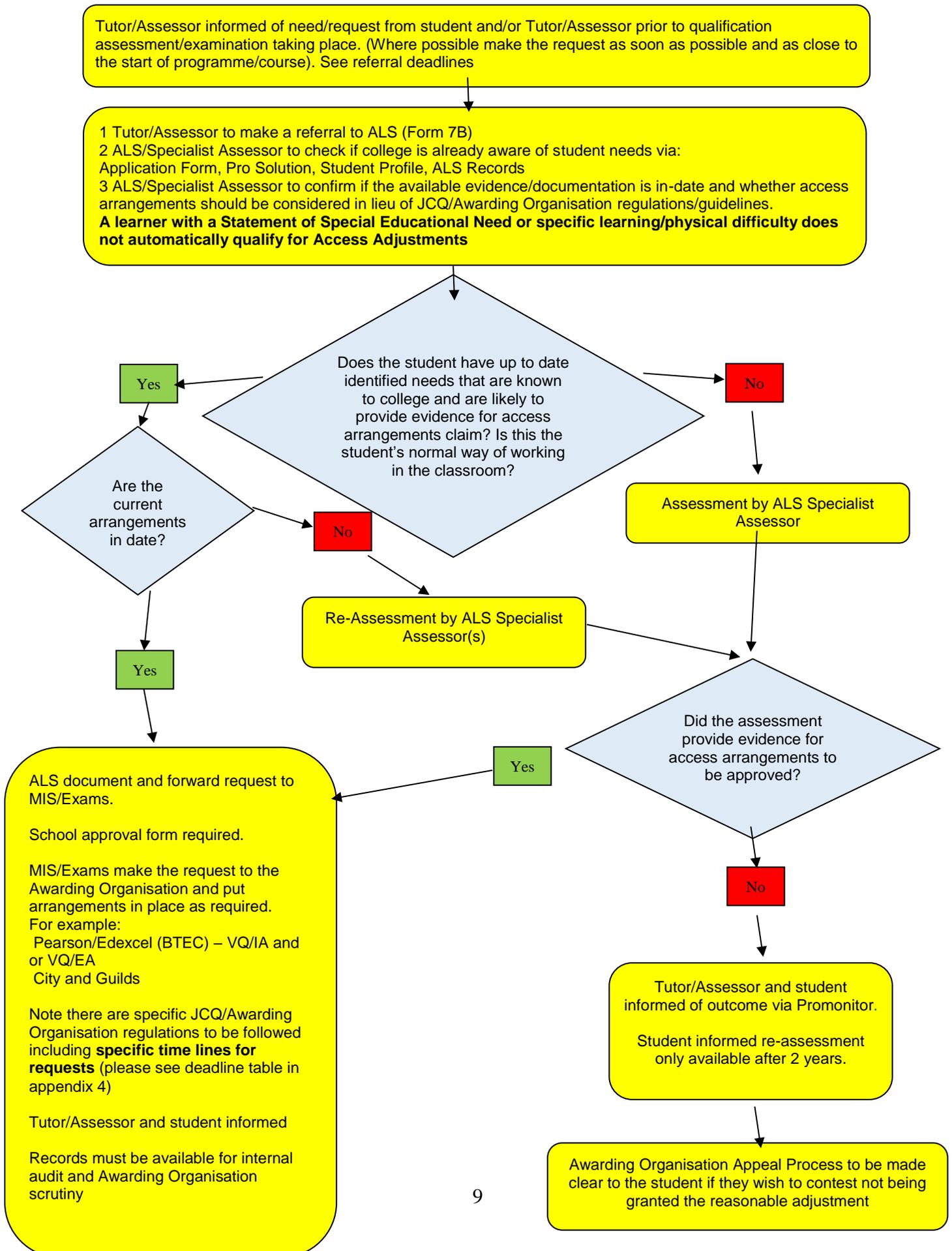
Awarding Organisation Guidance Notes

The Joint Council for Qualifications' Access Arrangements, Reasonable Adjustments and Special Considerations Policies

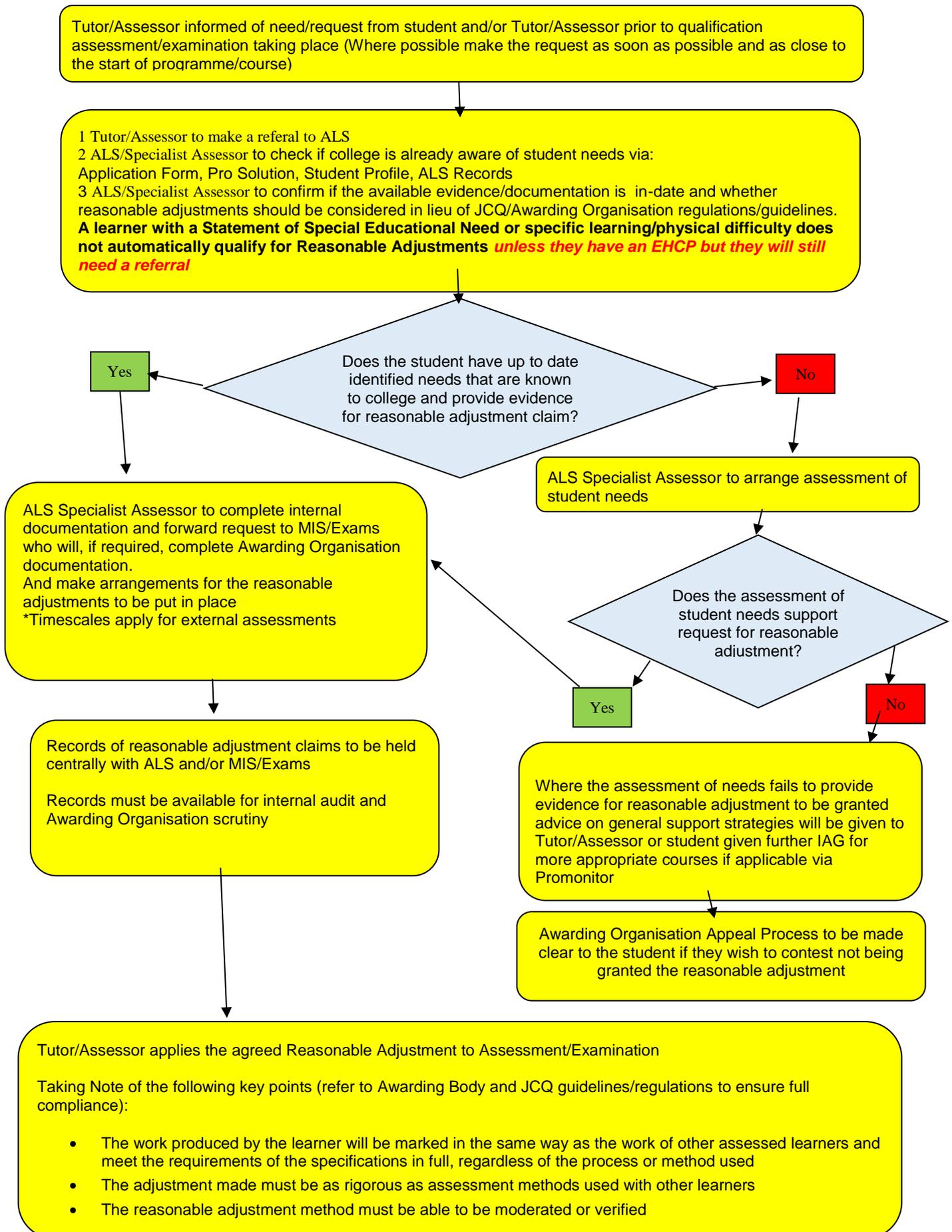
8 Monitoring, Review and Evaluation

To be reviewed annually by the Exams Manager, Head of ALS, and ALS Specialist Assessor

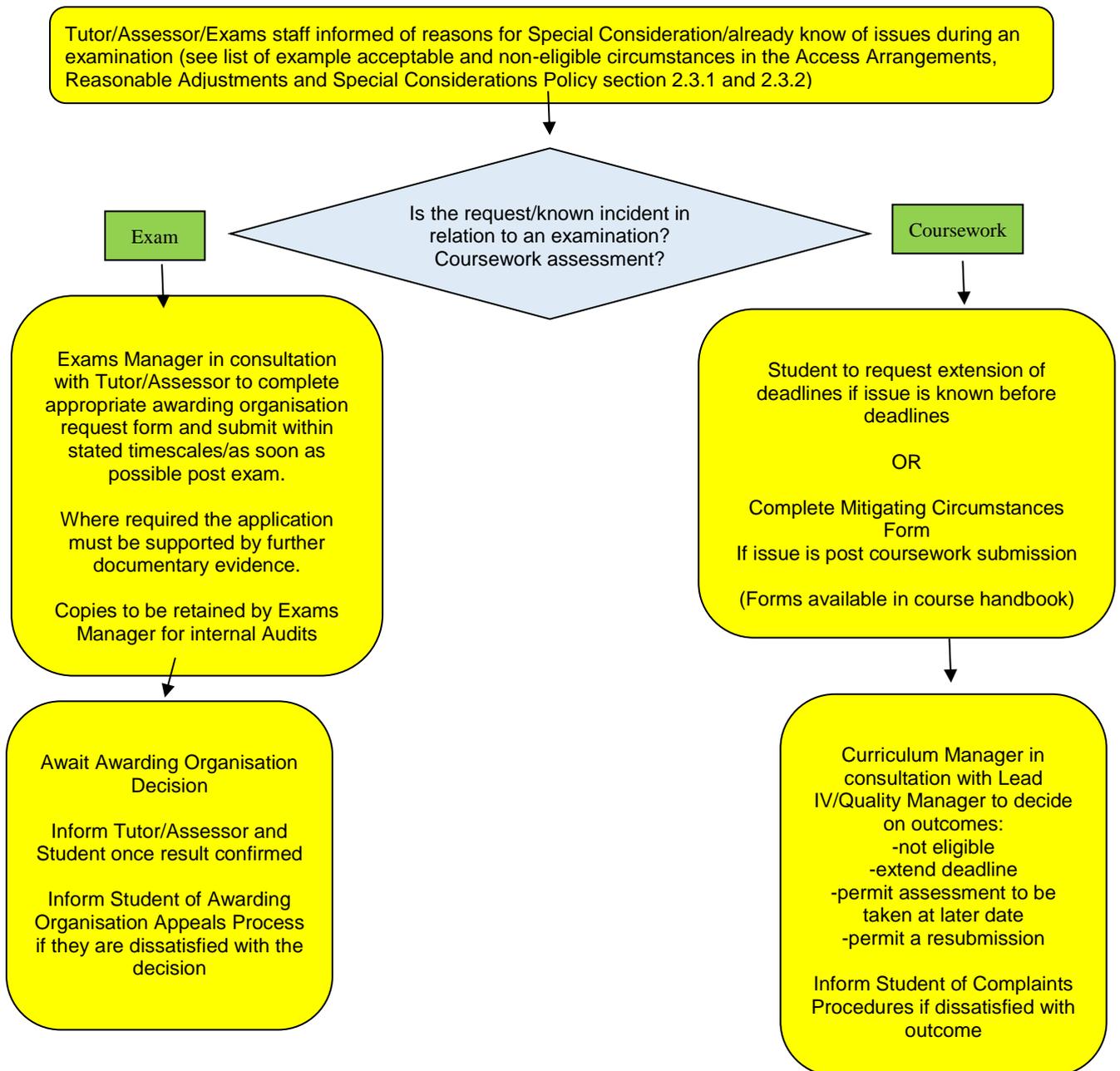
Appendix 1 Implementation Flow Chart for Access Arrangements – ALS form 7b



Appendix 2 Implementation Flow Chart for Reasonable Adjustments – ALS form 7c



Appendix 3 Implementation Flow Chart for Special Consideration



Appendix 4

Deadline dates for referral for EAA

Assessment request type	Deadline for ALS to receive referral
<i>GCSE retake November</i>	<i>30th September 2016</i>
<i>GCSE</i>	<i>23rd December 2016</i>
<i>Functional Skills</i>	<i>Minimum of 10 weeks before the exam</i>
<i>Pearson (BTEC NQF External Assessments)</i>	<i>Minimum of 10 weeks before the external assessment (online or paper-based)</i>

Forms

Form 7A – General Referral to ALS
Form 7B – Access Arrangements Referral
Form 7C – Reasonable Adjustments Referral
School Approval Form

LS7a - Additional Learning Support Referral Form



Site:	<input type="checkbox"/> Chippenham	<input type="checkbox"/> Lackham	<input type="checkbox"/> Salisbury	<input type="checkbox"/> Trowbridge	
Student:	Personal Tutor:				
Ref No:	Student Contact No:				
Course:	Course Code:				
Level of course:	<input type="checkbox"/> E	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4+

What kind of support do you consider you need or did you have at school that was helpful?
(Student to complete)

Signature:..... **Date:**.....

Additional support needs identified after discussion with Personal Tutor:

Relevant information/evidence of learner's persistent and significant difficulties. Include relevant information about attendance and punctuality.

Describe how the learner's disability/difficulty has impacted on teaching and learning in the classroom and what measures have you put in place to support the learner.

Student met the course entry requirements Student was an exceptional entrant

Personal Tutor Name:

Signature:	Date:
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LS7b - Additional Learning Support Referral Form for Exam Access Arrangements



Site:	<input type="checkbox"/> Chippenham	<input type="checkbox"/> Lackham	<input type="checkbox"/> Salisbury	<input type="checkbox"/> Trowbridge
Student:	Personal Tutor:			
Ref No:	Student Contact No:			
Course:	Course Code:			
Level of course:	<input type="checkbox"/> E	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3

What kind of exam arrangements did you have at school and what do you consider you need now?eg. reader/scribe
(Student to complete)

Signature:..... **Date:**.....

Personal Tutor to complete the following:

Relevant information/evidence of learner's persistent and significant difficulties.

Show how the learner's disability/difficulty has impacted on teaching and learning in the classroom and that subject teachers are fully involved in supporting the learner.

Show that subject teachers have been fully involved in determining the proposed arrangement(s) for the learner and that they support the arrangements(s) proposed.

Detail the learner's normal way of working within the classroom, the support given and how this relates to the proposed arrangements.

Please complete both sides in full

ADDITIONAL LEARNING SUPPORT

Application for Exam Access Arrangements



LS7c - Additional Learning Support Referral Form for Reasonable Adjustments in Exams



**Wiltshire
College**

GCSE: <input type="checkbox"/>	Functional Skills: Entry Level <input type="checkbox"/> Level 1 <input type="checkbox"/> Level 2 <input type="checkbox"/>
Exam subjects/Module Name and Codes:	Help required: <input type="checkbox"/> Reader <input type="checkbox"/> Scribe <input type="checkbox"/> Extra Time <input type="checkbox"/> Word processor <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please state)
Exam Board/s:	
Date of exams:	
Is the exam? <input type="checkbox"/> On line <input type="checkbox"/> Paper Based	
Has the student had any previous exams access arrangements? Please state:	
Any supporting evidence? Eg. Free writing	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes (please attach a copy) <input type="checkbox"/> No
Any further comments	
Student met the course entry requirements <input type="checkbox"/> Student was an exceptional entrant <input type="checkbox"/>	
Have you checked the Learner Course Profile and Prosolution for exam arrangements? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Evidence Expiry Date _____ No <input type="checkbox"/>	
Personal Tutor Name:	
Signature:	Date:

Site: <input type="checkbox"/> Chippenham <input type="checkbox"/> Lackham <input type="checkbox"/> Salisbury <input type="checkbox"/> Trowbridge				
Student:		Personal Tutor:		
Ref No:		Student Contact No:		
Course:		Course Code:		
Level of course:		<input type="checkbox"/> E	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2
				<input type="checkbox"/> 3

What kind of reasonable adjustments did you have at school and what do you consider you need now? eg. Separate room, coloured paper
 (Student to complete)

Signature:..... Date:.....

Personal Tutor to complete the following:
 Relevant informationn/evidence of learner's persistent and significant difficulties.

Please complete both sides in full

Application for Reasonable Adjustments in Exams

GCSE: <input type="checkbox"/>	Functional Skills: Entry Level <input type="checkbox"/> Level 1 <input type="checkbox"/> Level 2 <input type="checkbox"/>
Exam subjects/Module Name and Codes:	Help required: <input type="checkbox"/> Modified Papers (needed 12 weeks before exam) <input type="checkbox"/> Word Processor for GCSE <input type="checkbox"/> Rest Breaks <input type="checkbox"/> Prompter <input type="checkbox"/> Sign Language Interpreter <input type="checkbox"/> Enlarged text or coloured paper (needed 8 weeks before exam) <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please state)
Exam Board/s:	
Date of exams:	
Is the exam? <input type="checkbox"/> On line <input type="checkbox"/> Paper Based	
Has the student had any previous reasonable adjustments in exams? Please state:	
Any supporting evidence? E.G. Medical records	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes (please attach a copy) <input type="checkbox"/> No
Any further comments	

Student met the course entry requirements Student was an exceptional entrant

Have you checked the Learner Course Profile and Prosolution for reasonable adjustments?

Yes Evidence Expiry Date _____

No

Personal Tutor Name:

Signature:

Date: