

Access Arrangements Policy

Rationale

Our Exam Access Arrangements (EAA) Policy explains the activity undertaken to ensure inclusion throughout the school for all students with Additional Learning Needs, which will include those with formally diagnosed Special Educational Needs & Disabilities (SEND). The policy supports and facilitates the school's aim to create a learning environment in which every student can fulfil his or her full potential.

What are Exam Access Arrangements?

Access Arrangements are actions taken to remove the disadvantages to a student accessing an examination caused by physical, learning, sensory or psychological difficulties, without creating any unfair advantage or compromising the integrity of an assessment. These arrangements are agreed before an assessment, and ***must reflect a student's normal way of working within the school.***

Reasonable Adjustments

The Equality Act 2010 requires an awarding body to make reasonable adjustments where a candidate who is disabled within the meaning of the Equality Act 2010 would be at a substantial disadvantage in comparison to someone who is not disabled. A candidate with a disability or difficulty which has ***a substantial and long term effect on performance in examinations*** may qualify for access arrangements. An adjustment may not be considered reasonable if it involves unreasonable costs, timeframes or affects the security or integrity of the assessment.

Available Exam Access Arrangements include:

- Supervised rest breaks
- Extra time
- Reader/Computer reader
- Scribe
- Word processor
- Prompter
- Live speaker for pre-recorded examination components
- Bilingual translation dictionaries
- Modified papers (e.g. enlarged or modified papers)
- Practical assistant

A reasonable adjustment may not be included in the list of available access arrangements because it may be unique to an individual.

Evidence needed for Access Arrangements

Various pieces of evidence are required to apply for an Exam Access Arrangement from the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ), depending on the arrangement required. These include:

- Form 8 report from Access Arrangements Assessor
- Previous Access Arrangements from other schools (e.g in SATs or GCSEs taken at a previous school)
- Subject teachers – examples of work as appropriate
- Centre-based evidence of a history of need and normal way of working (e.g pupil passport)
- Results of baseline tests e.g. reading/comprehension scores, writing tests, standardised psychometric testing (with scores in the below average range)
- Results of additional assessments conducted by the school's SENDCo
- Any letters from outside agencies, hospital consultants (not a GP)
- Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP)

The arrangement(s) must not be granted to the candidate for the first time at the time of his/her final examinations.

Once the Access Arrangement is granted, this evidence will be held on file and available for Inspection by the JCQ, together with:

- Permission from the awarding body for the arrangement
- A data protection form signed by the student
- A record of all occasions where the student has been supported by Access Arrangements

Note on Private Educational Psychologists Reports

Schools are permitted to accept private reports only as part of wider school evidence and are not necessary in the awarding of EAA. A student's 'normal way of working' in school is key, and Access Arrangements may not be awarded purely on the basis of a private report. External Assessors are required to contact the SENDCo before carrying out the assessment. The SENDCo will provide the Assessor with any existing information about previous support and current difficulties.

Identifying the need for Access Arrangements

Students will be identified for consideration for Access Arrangements in at least one of the following ways:

- They had an Access Arrangement in KS2 for their National Curriculum Tests
- Screening tests (reading comprehension and spelling) on entry in Year 7 for all students
- Parental referral
- Subject Teacher referral
- Information from previous schools
- They are on the SEND Register of Concern

Testing and applying for Access Arrangements

When a student is brought to the attention of the SENDCo in one of the above ways, the SENDCo will investigate further. If a need for further testing or screening is indicated, this will be carried out and parents informed. The outcomes of the assessments will be recorded and summarised; where an Access Arrangement is recommended due to a learning difficulty, JCQ Form 8 Section C (the assessor's report) will be completed and used as evidence for online submission of a formal Access Arrangement application. The school will then apply to the Awarding Bodies using the Access Arrangements Online application system. The feedback is instant, and, where the Access Arrangement is approved, the arrangement is allocated to the student, and the parents informed in writing.

The evidence of need is held on file, and the SENDCo monitors and ensures that the Access Arrangement is normal working practice for the student within school.

Teaching and support staff can access lists of students who have been granted EAA on the staff shared resources area. Students who are on the SEND Register of Concern will have a pupil passport and any EAA will also be recorded there.

Deadlines for Access Arrangement Applications

In most cases, a need for EAA is identified at KS3 and is decided by the end of Year 9, in preparation for the start of GCSE courses. Information on final deadlines is included below:

Year 11

The school deadline to submit evidence and request Access Arrangements for a student in Year 11 is October half term. This allows the SENDCo and the Examinations Officer time to plan the Year 11 mock examinations, which are the last opportunity to trial any Access Arrangements. The Year 10 examinations should provide an opportunity to identify any difficulties a student may have, that were not identified earlier in the school.

Sixth Form

When a student progresses from GCSE to AS/A-level qualifications, a re-submission of the application for EAA must be processed. The SENDCo must be able to show updated centre based evidence of a continuing need for EAA.

For students joining the school in Year 12, the SENDCo will liaise with the previous setting where EAA were in place for GCSE exams. In order for the SENDCo to use assessment data from the previous setting, there must be an established working relationship with the feeder school in order to 'roll forward' the previous EAA. If not, then the SENDCo may need to re-assess the student to begin the process in the new centre.

The deadline for sixth form Access Arrangements requests is July of Year 12, as long as a body of evidence has been collected by teachers in advance of this. It would be extremely difficult, and in most cases impossible, to prove a history of need for the first time in Year 13.

Further Information

Further information can be found on the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) website: www.jcq.org.uk

If you have questions about Access Arrangements, please contact the SENDCo, Mrs Corinaldi, at the school.