

Access Arrangements in Examinations Policy 2016-2017

This document outlines the school policy on Access Arrangements in Public Examinations. These are arrangements put in place to ensure all students have equal access to examinations. Students should not be disadvantaged by any learning, medical, physical, sensory or psychological difficulty they may experience. The school must comply with the rules for Access Arrangements as set out in the most recent Joint Council for Qualifications publication.

<http://www.jcq.org.uk/Download/exams-office/access-arrangements-and-specialconsideration/regulations-and-guidance/access-arrangements-and-reasonable-adjustments-2016-2017>

In order to qualify for an Access Arrangement a student must be considered disabled according to the Equality Act of 2010 – ‘a physical or mental impairment which has substantial and long term adverse effect on someone’s ability to carry out normal day to day activities’. According to statutory guidance, disability means ‘limitations going beyond the normal differences in ability which may exist among people’. The impairment must have lasted, or be likely to last, for 12 months or more.

Access Arrangements should allow students with substantial long term special educational needs or short term illnesses or injuries to demonstrate their skills, knowledge and understanding without affecting the integrity of an assessment or examination. Access Arrangements are not intended to help certain candidates, or give them an advantage, but to give them a fair opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge and skills. ‘Failure to comply with the JCQ regulations (permitting Access Arrangements within the centre which are not supported by appropriate evidence) has the potential to constitute malpractice which may impact on the candidate’s result(s).’

If we receive a letter from a medical specialist requesting access arrangements for a student, JCQ regulations state that in order for such an access arrangement to be awarded, the school has to have evidence that the student has historically received the extra support. The access arrangements should not ‘suddenly be granted to the candidate at the time of his/her examinations’. If the said student has shown no signs of requiring said support, and has successfully sat their exams independently, it would be considered malpractice to award the access arrangement.

JCQ specify that normal way of working is priority when considering awarding an Access Arrangement to a student. We are not permitted to award Access Arrangements based on private psychology/assessment reports. When we receive a private report, it will trigger our internal process to assess student need and whether they meet the thresholds set by the JCQ.

We must comply with JCQ regulations, otherwise this is considered malpractice which has potentially severe consequences for all of our students.

What are Access Arrangements?

Access arrangements are agreed before an assessment. They allow students to demonstrate their skills, knowledge and understanding without changing the demands of the assessment. The intention behind access arrangements is to meet the particular needs of a 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.’

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. 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/learner. An adjustment may not be considered reasonable if it involves unreasonable costs, timeframes or affects the security or integrity of the assessment.

There is no duty on the Awarding Bodies to make any adjustment to the assessment objectives being tested in an assessment.

Special Consideration

Special Consideration is a post examination adjustment to a candidate's mark or grade to reflect temporary injury, illness or other indisposition at the time of the examination/assessment.

Access Arrangements at St George's School.

St George's School High aim to ensure that all students have equal access to examinations and are neither advantaged nor disadvantaged over their peers by any long term, substantial SEND/or ALN which fall into the following four categories: -

1. Communication and interaction.
2. Cognition and learning.
3. Social, emotional and mental health
4. Sensory and/ or physical needs.

When might students need to be given Exam Access Arrangements?

An Exam Access Arrangement (EAA) is a provision or type of support given to a student (subject to exam board approval) in an exam, where a particular need has been identified and is provided so that the student has appropriate access to the exam.

Students with Special Educational Needs are not automatically eligible for Access Arrangements in public exams. For example, a student with a slight hearing impairment, a previous diagnosis of 'mild dyslexia' or a physical disability that does not affect performance in an examination may not meet the criteria for Access Arrangements. However, when concerns are raised about a particular student, the SENDCo or Specialist Teacher will gather information from all the student's teachers to see whether they have similar concerns. If the initial concerns are echoed by others, the student will be assessed for Access Arrangements.

Where Access Arrangements are requested due to medical or physical difficulties, a letter from a consultant is required. The SENDCo or Specialist Teacher will ask parents/carers to obtain a letter

with a brief outline of the student’s condition or disability and the Access Arrangements that are deemed to be necessary.

Access arrangements	What is it?	Criteria
SCRIBE	A trained adult writes for the student. The student would dictate their answers. The scribe would write exactly what they say.	A student has a physical disability; where her/his writing:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • is illegible and may hamper their ability to be understood. • speed is too slow to be able to complete the exam in the allotted time. <i>In MFL, the student must dictate every word in the target language and must do so letter by letter.</i>
READER	A trained adult who would read the question and any relevant text (with the exception of Section A of an English GCSE Exam) for the student. The student would then write the answer/s themselves.	A student has a standardised score of 84 or below in a test delivered by Specialist Teacher (100 is the average).
Prompter	A trained adult can prompt them with a few permitted phrases to refocus, move the student on to the next question or indicate how much time is left.	A student who persistently loses concentration/focus, and is not aware of time.
MODIFIED PAPERS	Individually prepared papers for candidates. The modification of papers involves additional resources. Therefore centres are required to provide the awarding bodies with early notification that a candidate will require a modified paper.	Students for whom other access arrangements are unsuitable, for example, visually impaired students.
LAP TOP	Access to a laptop for an exam (if appropriate – not for subjects such as Maths) so the student would word process their answers. Spelling and	The provision to use a laptop is put in place to address an underlying difficulty such as: speed of handwriting; medical condition; physical disability; sensory

	grammar checks would be disabled and a special exam account would be used with no internet access.	impairment; planning and organisational difficulties or poor legibility.
	<i>The use of a laptop in exams reflects the student's normal way of working at the school and has been agreed as appropriate to the student's needs. The use of a laptop cannot be granted to a student simply because this is their preferred way of working. Centres are allowed to provide a word processor with the spelling and grammar check facility/predictive text disabled (switched off) to a candidate where it is their normal way of working within the centre and is appropriate to their needs. For example, the quality of language significantly improves as a result of using a word processor due to problems with planning and organisation when writing by hand. (This also extends to the use of electronic brailers and tablets.)</i>	
REST BREAKS	Students are permitted to stop for short break/s during the exam and the time stopped is added to the finish time, with the effect of elongating the exam but not actually using any extra time. Students are not permitted to have exam materials with them during rest breaks.	A student has a disability which prevents them from concentrating for long periods of time.
	<i>This is now the recommended option from the exam boards before considering extra time. Rest breaks are not included in any Extra Time allowance that the student may have. The amount of time awarded is granted at the discretion of the SENCo.</i>	
EXTRA TIME	Students may be entitled to an allowance of 25% depending on the history of evidence of need (Appendix 1) and the recommendation of the Designated Specialist Teacher or Teaching Assistant. Extra time between 26 and 50% can be granted in extraordinary circumstances.	Students will have an assessment to determine their speed of processing. A standardised score of 84 or below (100 being average) can qualify for extra time. In exceptional circumstances, a candidate may require more than 50% extra time in order to manage a very substantial impairment
	<i>There are cases where students get a score of more than 84. In these cases more evidence is needed to prove that a student should receive extra time. This could be in the form of an extensive history of need, formal diagnosis of a significant learning difficulty, or evidence of a substantial long term adverse effect on the performance of a child's speed of working. The amount of time that students should receive is decided by the Specialist Tester and based upon their processing speeds.</i>	
LIVE SPEAKER	A live speaker for pre-recorded examination components, e.g. MFL listening examinations, to a candidate where it is their normal way of working within the centre. The live speaker will speak or read aloud the contents of the CD or tape in a Listening examination.	Students who have persistent and significant difficulties in following speech at normal speed.
SIGN LANGUAGE	A trained adult who presents the	Students whose 'normal way of working'

INTERPRETER	<p>questions in a different language without: changing the meaning; providing any additional information; or providing an explanation as to what the question requires of the candidate.</p>	<p>requires sign language interpretation.</p>
	<p><i>A Sign Language Interpreter is not a reader. However, the same person may act as a reader and a Sign Language Interpreter. Permission must have been given for the use of a reader and a Sign Language Interpreter.</i></p> <p><i>The Sign Language Interpreter can sign the instructions and questions to candidates taking written papers except in Modern Foreign Languages or English, Irish or Welsh Language examinations. The Sign Language Interpreter may repeat the translation if requested to do so by the candidate. An alternative translation of the carrier language may be provided. However, under no circumstances may an explanation of the question or clarification of the carrier language be given. These actions would be deemed as giving the candidate an unfair advantage and may constitute malpractice.</i></p> <p><i>Candidates may only sign their answers in question papers or in controlled assessment/coursework where it is possible to finger spell the answers or where the answers involve single words.</i></p> <p><i>Sign Language interpretation is done ‘live’ in the presence of the candidate during the examination in order to allow for the candidate’s regional variations in BSL/ISL signs. Consequently, sign language interpretation cannot be checked by the awarding body for accuracy. Great care must be taken not to disadvantage or advantage the candidate.</i></p> <p><i>Candidates requiring the use of a Sign Language Interpreter may need to be accommodated separately in which case a separate invigilator will be required.</i></p>	
<p>BI – LINGUAL DICTIONARIES Bilingual translation dictionaries (with up to a maximum of 10% extra time)</p>	<p>Only to be used by student’s whose first language is not English, Irish or Welsh. The bilingual dictionary must be held in the centre to ensure no unauthorised information e.g. notes/revision is enclosed or written inside..</p>	<p>Should reflect the student’s normal way of working</p>
	<p><i>Such dictionaries must not be used in English Language, Irish Language or Welsh Language examinations or Modern Foreign Language examinations testing one of the languages of the dictionary or a similar language, for example, a Portuguese dictionary in a Spanish examination. The use of a bilingual translation dictionary. Exceptions to these rules are: The Writing Test in GCSE Arabic, GCSE Bengali, GCSE Dutch, GCSE Greek, GCSE Gujarati, GCSE Japanese, GCSE Modern Hebrew, GCSE Panjabi, GCSE Persian, GCSE Polish, GCSE Portuguese, GCSE Russian and GCSE Turkish where the specification states that all candidates must have access to a bilingual dictionary.</i></p> <p><i>Candidates who are permitted to use bilingual translation dictionaries may also be allowed up to a maximum of 25% extra time, depending on need, if they have been resident in the UK for less than two years at the time of the examination,</i></p>	

	<p><i>the candidate still has a very limited knowledge of the English language, extra time reflects the candidates normal way of working. For aural tests, clear amplification may be necessary to improve the candidate's ability to hear, or a transcript of a listening test may be read to enable the candidate to also lip/speech-read. The centre must consult a specialist teacher, i.e. a qualified Teacher of the Deaf, to identify the most appropriate arrangement for a candidate with hearing loss. The live speaker will speak or read aloud the contents of the CD or tape in a Listening examination. Extra time of 25% should always be considered on account of the additional repetition which may be required. Additionally, 25% extra time may also be required in light of the candidate's persistent and significant difficulties in following speech at normal speed. In very rare and exceptional circumstances the candidate may require up to 50% extra time.</i></p>	
Alternative site	<p>The candidate will be sitting his/her examination(s) at a residential address or at a hospital which is a non-registered centre due to, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a medical condition which prevents the candidate from taking examinations in the centre or • Social, Mental and Emotional Needs. 	<p>The candidate has:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • an impairment which has a substantial and long term adverse effect giving rise to persistent and significant difficulties; <p>or</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a temporary illness or injury at the time of the examination(s).
	<p><i>The centre must be satisfied that the candidate is able to take examinations. The SENCo, or a senior member of staff with pastoral responsibilities, must produce written evidence confirming the need for an alternative site arrangement to a JCQ Centre Inspector upon request.</i></p>	
PRACTICAL ASSISTANT	<p>It is not a reader or a scribe. The same person may act as a practical assistant, a reader and/or a scribe as long as permission has been given for these arrangements.</p>	<p>The regulations for the use of each arrangement must be strictly adhered to. Students with: poor motor co-ordination or/and severe vision impairment.</p>
	<p><i>A practical assistant must not be allowed to carry out physical tasks or demonstrate physical abilities where they form part of the assessment objectives. A practical assistant will not normally be permitted in subjects such as Art & Design, Design & Technology and Music.</i></p>	
OTHER ARRANGEMENTS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amplification equipment • Braille • Closed circuit television (CCTV) • Colour naming by the invigilator for candidates who are Colour Blind • Coloured Overlays (this would also include reading rulers, virtual overlays and virtual reading rulers) • Low vision aid/magnifier • Optical Character Reader 	<p>Candidates are only entitled to these arrangements if they are disabled within the meaning of the Equality Act. The candidate is at a substantial disadvantage when compared with other non-disabled candidates undertaking the assessment and it would be reasonable in all the circumstances</p>

	(OCR) scanners	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Separate invigilation within the centre 	
	<i>In the case of separate invigilation, the candidate's difficulties are established within the centre and known to a Form Tutor, a Head of Year, the SENCo or a senior member of staff with pastoral responsibilities. Separate invigilation reflects the candidate's normal way of working in internal school tests and mock examinations as a consequence of a long term medical condition or long term social, mental or emotional needs.</i>	
EXEMPTION	An exemption is an agreement reached by an awarding body, before the examination, for a disabled candidate to miss a component or components. An indication will be placed on the candidate's certificate to show that not all of the assessment objectives were accessible. An exemption will not be granted if an alternative and accessible route through a qualification is available to the candidate. Prior application must be made to the examination boards and it is to the exam board's discretion. Agreements will vary according to subjects.	

What evidence is needed to apply for EAA?

There are a number of pieces of evidence that can be used to apply for EAA to Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ):

- Form 8 report from Specialist Teacher or Specialist Teaching Assistant
- Previous EAA from Primary Schools/ other Education Providers
- Subject teachers – examples of work as appropriate
- Results of baseline tests e.g. reading/comprehension age, writing tests

Private Educational Psychologists Reports

Assessments are offered by private educational psychologists. Parents/carers may wish to submit the reports to the SENCo as evidence that their child should be awarded extra time, or EAA. Private educational psychologist's reports cost a significant amount of money. This therefore means that parents who are unable to obtain a private report through their financial circumstances are put at a disadvantage. As an exam centre we must be consistent in our decisions and ensure that no student is either given an unfair advantage or be disadvantaged by any arrangements put in place. Often private educational psychologists, recommend that children should receive EAA which can be in conflict with what the centre tester (Specialist Teacher) recommends. We will also look for evidence of a history of need.

Procedures

How students would be identified for Exam Access Arrangements?

- They would have had EAA at KS2 for their SAT's
- From baseline testing completed on the Cognitive Ability Tests (CAT) Day's in Year 7

- Parental Referral
- Subject Teacher Referral

Information from KS2 EAA Students who have EAA at KS2 are screened for EAA at KS3 and KS4. Although they may have received EAA at KS2, it doesn't necessarily mean that they automatically receive it at KS3 or KS4 because their needs may have changed. For example, a student who had a Reader for KS2 may not qualify for a Reader at KS4 because their reading has improved to the extent it does not meet the exam board criteria.

Baseline Testing in Year 7 All students in Year 7 are tested on the CAT's Days in September. We use the Cognitive Ability Tests (CATs), Reading and Comprehension, and a spelling test. These tests can help identify learning difficulties such as dyslexia. The SENCo will contact parents where this is the case, do further testing, and if necessary put an appropriate intervention into place.

Parent Referral Parents can contact the school to ask for advice about testing if they have concerns with the progress and learning of their child. Once contact has been made with the parent, the SENCO will investigate their concerns by sending a "round robin" to the child's teachers to gain information. Following this, a decision will be made as to whether it is appropriate to test a student.

Teacher Referral As with Parent Referrals, teachers can refer a student to the SENCo where they have concerns about the learning and progress of a student in their class. All of the students current teachers will be asked to give feedback to gain information, and following this a decision will be made as to whether to test a student for EAA. Where a teacher thinks that a student requires extra time, they are asked to get the student to change the colour of the pen that they are using once the allotted time is up, and continue writing until they are finished. This is then used as proof to JCQ and the exam boards of a history of need. Teachers are asked to refer students to the SENCo initially if they feel that a child may be dyslexic rather than contacting parents about their concerns. The SENCo will then contact the parents if the concerns are founded.

How do staff and parents know whether a student has Exam Access Arrangements?

Teaching and support staff can access the list on Staff Shared Area. It is updated on a monthly basis or whenever students become entitled to it. The information about results of assessments for EAA are kept confidentially in line with school policy, are shared on a need to know basis.

- Staff will be informed of any changes to the EAA list via email.
- Parents will be informed of any tests results via a letter home which states what they are entitled to, why and when.

How are Exam Access Arrangements applied for?

Students need to be tested at each Key Stage for EAA. Just because they were entitled to EAA at KS2 does not automatically entitle them to it at KS3 or KS4. Therefore the Specialist Teacher tests students who are referred to us, or who have had EAA in earlier Key Stages. The Specialist Teacher will assess students using a variety of nationally recognised tests such as:

- Access Reading Comprehension test
- Detailed Assessment of Speed of Handwriting (DASH)
- British Picture Vocabulary Scales (2&3)
- Comprehensive Test of Phonological Processing 2 (CTOPP)
- Phonological Assessment Battery

The tests that the Specialist Tester uses are replaced/upgraded periodically in line with current practice. The test that the Specialist Tester uses depends very much upon the type of barrier to learning that the student may have. Should the student need further testing to assess for other learning issues or further EAA, the Specialist Tester will arrange this. Following a report produced by the Specialist Tester an application is made to the Exam Boards for permission to implement the specified arrangement/s. Students are tested formally from April/May of Year 9 in order to comply with the 26 month rule; so that any permitted exam access arrangements are in place for the full GCSE period of both Year 10 and 11.

What support is given to students with EAA?

Students with EAA take part in small group sessions to show them how to effectively use EAA. In addition, students with EAA are encouraged to use their EAA during internal assessments and exams so that they gain practice at using it effectively. Students who have access to a reader or scribe are shown how to use them appropriately in exam situations, and it is explained to them what they can and can't do with the reader/scribe during the exam, and how much support the adult is allowed to give. Students with extra time are given sessions with a teaching assistant on how to use the additional time allowance effectively. They then need to apply the techniques and strategies given to them in internal exams and assessments.

All teachers are given access to the list of students with EAA, and they are asked to give the SENCo at least two weeks' notice before they assess students so that support can be provided for students who require it during the tests/exams. The SENCO/Exams Officer can provide staffing, a separate room, access to ICT and a scribe with the required amount of notice.

The SENCo require two weeks' notice so that staff can be redeployed if necessary to other students.

Students with EAA are monitored regularly. In the event that a student does not wish to make use of their EAA in any given exam, they will be required to sign a form (Appendix 2) to indicate that they were aware that EAA was available to them, but it was their choice not to use them. However, where a student is deemed under the Mental Health Act (Code of Practice 2014) to be unable to make this decision the use of EAA will actively be encouraged.

What are the procedures for processing an application?

Once the tests have been conducted and there is a recommendation from the tester for EAA, the SENCo or Exams officer then applies to the exam boards. The feedback is instant and at this point the EAA is added to the list of students and the parents are informed of the EAA by letter. The

application will require evidence of need, and the centre needs to hold evidence in its files that can be inspected at short notice. This can include:

- Recommendations by teachers
- Educational psychologist reports
- Letters from outside agencies such as CAMHS (Children and Adolescent Mental Health Services), hospitals or doctors
- Information from SALT (Speech and Language Team)
- Education, Health & Care Plans (EHCP)
- Permission from the exam boards for the arrangement/s
- A signed copy of the Form 8 report by the designated tester
- A data protection form signed by the student x
- For Extra Time – history of evidence of need in the form of copies of work where a student has regularly used more than the allotted time.

Deadlines for submitting applications for access arrangements and modified papers on-line for GCSE qualifications

Access arrangements may cover the entire course and for GCSE qualifications must be processed using access arrangements online as early as possible. Arrangements must be processed and approved before an examination or controlled assessment/coursework as per the deadlines available on the JCQ website:

<http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/access-arrangements-and-special-consideration/regulations-and-guidance/access-arrangements-and-reasonable-adjustments-2016-2017>

The deadline set by the JCQ is final, late entries will incur further inspections by the JCQ. The decision to apply for access arrangements is based on evidence of a history of need, history of provision and a specialist teacher access arrangements report. Recording the use of access arrangements JFS School follows the advice given by JCQ and maintain a record of the use of Access Arrangements, particularly in the case of the use of word processors.

If an Access Arrangement is never used then it is not a candidate's normal way of working and the arrangement should not be awarded for examinations.

Temporary arrangements

Temporary arrangements may be required by candidates suffering from medical or psychological illness or injury. Candidates with an illness or injury that has a direct impact on their ability to access the examination should obtain a letter from a consultant or other professional giving a brief outline of their condition and the Access Arrangements that are deemed to be necessary. For example, a right-handed candidate whose right arm is broken may need a scribe and some extra time, as it is not their normal way of working and dictating to a scribe may be difficult for them. A candidate with a painful back condition may require supervised rest breaks in order to stand and move around.

In all cases where an Access Arrangement or a reasonable adjustment is needed, the school is entitled to expect reasonable notice to carry out its responsibilities. Where a need for Access Arrangements has been identified before an examination session, the SENDCo, Specialist Teacher and Examinations Officer should be provided with medical evidence in reasonable time. For example: a candidate who suffers from panic attacks in test or exam situations should obtain a note from their GP or consultant well before the start of formal examinations. In an emergency, a scribe can be provided with 24 hours notice. It may not be possible to provide a scribe if the request is made without notice. Temporary arrangements last for one examination session. If the condition persists a letter from a consultant or other professional may be required for the next session.

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