



EdStart - Specialist Education Ltd.

## ACCESS ARRANGEMENTS POLICY

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## 1. WHAT ARE THE ACCESS ARRANGEMENTS

### **Access Arrangements:**

Access Arrangements are pre-examination adjustments for candidates based on evidence of need and normal way of working. Access Arrangements fall into two distinct categories: some arrangements are delegated to centres, others require prior JCQ<sup>CIC</sup> awarding body approval.

Access Arrangements allow candidates/learners with special educational needs, disabilities or temporary injuries to access the assessment without changing the demands of the assessment. For example, readers, scribes and Braille question papers. In this way Awarding Bodies will comply with the duty of 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.

## 2. THE ASSESSMENT PROCESS

Assessments are carried out by an assessor appointed by the head of centre in conjunction with the SENCo. The assessor is appropriately qualified as required in JCQ regulations as follows:

- 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 Section C of Form 8; and/or
- an appropriately qualified psychologist registered with the Health & Care Professions Council who may conduct assessments to be recorded within Section C 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 Patoss, Dyslexia Action or BDA and listed on the SASC website, who may conduct assessments to be recorded within Section C 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
- 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

### **3. CHECKING THE QUALIFICATION(S) OF THE ASSESSOR(S)**

The school would employ a specialist assessor to carry out exam access assessments. The specialist assessor holds a practising certificate

The qualification is seen and checked by the referring schools SENCO

A copy of the specialist assessor's qualification would be held on file in HR and will be shown on request to the JCQ inspector

A record of the assessors APC number is recorded by the SENCO and kept on file.  
Candidates with a hearing impairment are assessed by a specialist teacher of the deaf

### **4. HOW THE ASSESSMENT PROCESS IS ADMINISTERED**

Exam Access Assessment processes are administered with regard to the equality Act 2010 regulations and SEN code of Practice (2014)

The school makes every attempt to identify students needing exam access as early as possible

- At the start of each academic year, the school collects data from new students about previously held exam access arrangements. The school may use this information to request form 8's from feeder schools and as evidence for history of need
- Teachers and the SENCo identify students needing exam access through diagnostic assessment, class observations and from information contained in Education Health Care Plans and other documentation. Teachers refer students to the learning support team for exam access assessment via an online referral system
- The SENCo works with teaching teams to gather further evidence. Teachers complete a teacher questionnaire detailing how a candidate's difficulties impact on teaching and learning

Once students needing exam assessments have been identified, the SENCo schedules an exam access assessment with a specialist assessor. Students and tutors are informed of the date and time

Students and Teachers are informed via school systems and verbally of the outcome of their exam access assessment

Students with exam access arrangements will have these arrangements in class tests, mock exams and assessments. Details of these measures provided in assessments are documented by the use of an IEP

## 5. RECORDING EVIDENCE OF NEED

For candidates requiring exam access, JCQ [forms](#) are used to record assessment and application information. Section A and B are completed by the SENCo. Section C is completed by the specialist assessor

For candidates with an EHCP who only require extra time the SENCo, in line with JCQ guidance, writes a file note confirming the candidate's difficulties as per the equality act 2010. The file note:

- confirms that the candidate has persistent and significant difficulties when accessing and processing information and is disabled within the meaning of the Equality Act 2010
- includes evidence of the candidate's current difficulties and how they substantially impact on teaching and learning in the classroom
- shows the involvement of teaching staff in determining the need for 25% extra time
- confirms that without the application of 25% extra time the candidate would be at a substantial disadvantage; (The candidate would be at a substantial disadvantage when compared with other, non-disabled candidates undertaking the assessment.)
- confirms that 25% extra time is the candidate's normal way of working within the centre as a direct consequence of their disability

**The SENCo file note is supported with appropriate documentation such as:**

- a letter from CAMHS, a HCPC registered psychologist, a hospital consultant, a psychiatrist or
- a letter from the Local Authority Specialist Service, Local Authority Sensory Impairment Service or Occupational Health Service or
- a letter from a Speech and Language Therapist (SaLT) or
- a Statement of Special Educational Needs relating to the candidates secondary education, or an Education, Health and Care Plan, which confirms the candidates disability and includes evidence of the candidates current difficulties and how they impact on teaching and learning in the classroom

## **6. GATHERING EVIDENCE OF NORMAL WAY OF WORKING**

**The school gathers evidence of normal way of working as defined by JCQ in the following ways:**

- Screening tests (BKSB Lucid)
- GCSE English Results
- Candidates self-reported difficulties
- Information from feeder schools
- Comments on teacher questionnaires about candidates difficulties.
- Data drops and tracking information
- Information contained in EHCP, EP reports or other documents

**The arrangement(s) put in place reflect the support given to the candidate in the centre:**

- in the classroom
- literacy support lessons
- literacy intervention strategies
- mock examinations

The only exception to this is where an arrangement is put in place as a consequence of a temporary injury or impairment

## **7. PROCESSING APPLICATIONS FOR ACCESS ARRANGEMENTS**

**Access arrangements online**

*Access arrangements online* is a tool provided by JCQ member awarding bodies for GCSE and GCE qualifications. This tool also provides the facility to order modified papers for GCSE and GCE qualifications.

*“For GCSE and GCE qualifications, Access arrangements online enables centres to make a single on-line application for a candidate requiring access arrangements using any of the secure awarding body extranet sites. Access arrangements online will provide an instant response and will only allow a maximum of 26 months for any arrangement. Further information on Access arrangements online is available from:*

<http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/aao-access-arrangements-online>”

## 8. CENTRE-DELEGATED ACCESS ARRANGEMENTS

The school follows JCQ guidance when providing centre delegated access arrangements. The SENCo allocates candidates a prompter or rest breaks if;

- the need is a result of substantial and long-term impairment and it is their normal way of working
- there is medical evidence to substantiate this arrangement and it is their normal way of working

## 9. WORD PROCESSOR POLICY

An exam candidate may be approved the use of a word processor where this is appropriate to the candidate’s needs and not simply because this is the candidate’s preferred way of working within the centre.

**The school allows candidates to use a word processor:**

- If a candidate has approval for the use of a scribe but prefers to use a word processor and this is their normal way of working
- If a candidate has a permanent or temporary physical impairment that makes handwriting difficult and there is medical evidence to substantiate this
- If a candidate’s handwriting is so illegible that it cannot be read by third party. An example of their work is kept on file
- A word processor is their normal way of working

## 10. SEPARATE INVIGILATION WITHIN THE CENTRE

A decision where an exam candidate may be approved separate invigilation within the centre will be based on whether the candidate:

- has a substantial and long-term impairment which has an adverse effect; and
- the candidate’s normal way of working within the centre

**January 2023**