

## Access Arrangements - Information for Parents and Carers.

### What is an Access Arrangement?

If a student has an identified learning need or disability that means that he or she is disadvantaged in comparison to other students of similar ability, he or she may qualify for access arrangements for public examinations. There are a number of different types of access arrangement and these are determined by the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ). The main ones are listed at the bottom of this document. The criteria that must be met for an access arrangement changes frequently and JCQ issue guidance booklets every year. You can access these online – [www.jcq.org.uk](http://www.jcq.org.uk) for information. It is important to note that Exam Access Arrangements are not given for the practical element of an exam. i.e. DT, Art, etc.

**“The SENCo must be satisfied that the candidate has an impairment which has a substantial and long term adverse effect, giving rise to persistent and significant difficulties (the candidate is disabled within the meaning of the Equality Act) 2010”.** *Access Arrangements and Reasonable adjustments - JCQ 2020/2021*

### Reasonable Adjustments

The Equality Act 2010 requires an Awarding Body (Exam Board) to make reasonable adjustments where a disabled person would be at a substantial disadvantage in undertaking an assessment.

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. (JCQ 2020/2021)

### When we will assess a student

We will assess identified students with ‘persistent and significant difficulties’ (JCQ page 9 2020/2021) at the end of year 9 and the start of Year 10 in order to ascertain whether students meet the criteria and subsequently apply for access arrangements to be granted. Any application is only valid for 26 months and it is for this reason that we do not apply earlier.

In order for us to apply we need to provide evidence of an ongoing need and show that the access arrangement we apply for is the student’s normal way of working. Therefore, throughout Years 7, 8 and 9 we may trial various strategies and conduct a number of different tests and assessments in order to make sure that we are not only meeting the criteria but that we can work out what might be the best provision for your child.

No access arrangement is formalised until the end of Year 9/ start of Year 10 and any arrangement made before that time is essentially part of the assessment process. This can be quite confusing for parents as we are aware that students have sometimes been granted an access arrangement for tests at primary school. Please also be aware that having an Education Health and Care Plan or diagnosis of a Specific Learning Difficulty, does not necessarily mean that a student will qualify for access arrangements, even if your child has regular in class support.

Students will again be assessed in year 11 to confirm receipt of Exam Access Arrangements which they will then be able to access during college.

## **Eligibility**

If a student is eligible they will have the arrangements in all internal tests and exams for year 10 and year 11. We will notify parents of the exam access arrangements for the academic year, by letter. Exam Access Arrangements are also noted on student's EHCP's and SSPP's.

All exam board delegated arrangements can only be given once a student has been tested in school.

All arrangements must be submitted with evidence from teaching staff and be the candidate's usual way of working.

**Below is a summary of the current access arrangements available.**

### **Supervised rest breaks**

- These must always be considered before applying for extra time.
- These will be allowed where it is the candidate's normal way of working.
- Medical conditions – rest breaks can be agreed if you have a serious medical condition, examples of this are type 1 diabetes or a sensory need. Medical evidence is required. AD(H)D - if you have a diagnosis we will look at the recommendations and consider whether rest breaks will be helpful in exams. Evidence of your diagnosis is required.
- Evidence from CAMHs or FTB of current treatment for a condition that requires rest breaks. However, we do not accept evidence from this service if you have been discharged from treatment.

**Please Note:** We are not able or allowed to provide rest breaks in advance for anxiety/worry/ stress caused by taking exams. It is normal to feel stressed and worried about exams. Please feel reassured that our exam invigilators are experienced and trained to deal with students who are upset and worried on the day.

**Exam Board delegated:**

- Extra time (25%, 50%...)
- Reader
- Scribe
- Enlarged papers

**Centre (school) delegated:**

- Rest breaks
- Word processor
- Read aloud
- Own room
- Reader pen
- Prompt
- Practical assistant