

An Introduction to Exam Access Arrangements

May 2021



Access Arrangements for exams

Exam Access arrangements are agreed before an assessment. They allow candidates with specific needs, such as special educational needs, disabilities or temporary injuries to access the assessment and show what they know and can do without changing the demands of the assessment. The intention behind an access arrangement is to meet the needs of an individual candidate without affecting the integrity of the assessment.

In order to apply for Exam Access Arrangements, we need to be able to present clear evidence that there is a History of Need and a History of Provision for each young person. Therefore, it is likely that students who qualify for Access Arrangements will already be known to the Learning Support faculty, and recorded on the SEND Register as having additional educational needs. The Exam Access Arrangements should reflect what help has to be given in the classroom and the normal way of working should reflect what is going to be available in class tests, controlled assessments and exams.

Sixth Form applicants: if you have previously had Exam Access Arrangements for GCSE, please declare that on your application form so that we can gather appropriate information from your previous school. This process can be supported by you bringing written evidence of your access arrangements and marking them for the attention of the SENCO.

Please speak to the SENCO before arranging any assessment yourself, as the school is not obliged to automatically accept the findings of a privately commissioned report. No-one is guaranteed an arrangement simply because they have a learning difficulty.

Access Arrangements -

- do *not* change the skills or knowledge being tested
- *must* not give an unfair advantage, but..
- do give a level playing field so that students can show their skills and knowledge

There is a range of Exam Access Arrangements that can be applied for. Students may be approved for one or more of these. The precise arrangement depends on the students' needs AND their normal way of working in class AND the type of exam AND the current regulations. This means different arrangements might be allowed in different exams but all arrangements should reflect normal way of working so last minute applications are rarely permitted.

The most commonly used arrangements are:

- Extra Time
- Rest Breaks
- Prompter
- Reading Aloud
- Word Processors
- Reader
- Scribe

Extra time, rest breaks and prompter are usually provided in the main exam hall. We are not able to provide a smaller or separate room on request. If you have any questions about access arrangements, then please contact Pippa Whittaker (SENCO) who is based in the Learning Support faculty.

Acknowledgement:

- Joint Council for Qualifications – please see:

<https://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/access-arrangements-and-special-consideration/regulations-and-guidance/>