



What are exam access arrangements?

Public Examination Awarding bodies (for GCSE and GCE A Level) are required to make reasonable adjustments to exams 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

Access Arrangements allow students with special educational needs, disabilities or temporary injuries to have fair access in public exams (GCSE / GCE) without changing the demands of the assessment.

What is a disability?

A disability is defined as difficulties that go beyond the normal differences in ability which may exist among people and which have a **substantial** (more than minor or trivial) and **persistent** (the difficulty has or is likely to exist for at least 12 months) adverse effect on the person's ability to undertake **normal day do day activities**, including those required in education (such as reading, writing, attending for extended period of quiet time in exams, working at)

Examples of difficulties that constitute a disability would be:

- persistent and significant difficulty in reading and understanding written material (where this is in the person's native language), for example because of a learning difficulty such as Dyslexia or Dyspraxia or a sensory or impairment
- persistent and substantial impaired cognitive processing skills compared to other people of the same age
- persistent distractibility or substantial difficulty concentrating compared to other people of the same age (such as for students with ADHD)
- difficulty understanding or following simple verbal instructions, for example where a person has Specific Language Difficulties
- physical impairment – for example, difficulty operating a computer because of physical restrictions in using a keyboard.

How does the school identify students with disabilities that may require exam access arrangements?

Through information provided by primary / previous schools

Through information provided by relevant educational and medical professionals who are qualified to assess for learning and medical difficulties, such as EP, SALT, OT,

Through early identification at school during Key Stage 3 (see below)

Through identification during the exam access arrangements cycle from Year 9 – 11

Through identification / review at transition to Key Stage 5 in Year 12

How does the school identify students with disabilities?

ROUTE 1: Student with no previous SEN / AEN in during Key Stage 3

Concern identified by parent, student or member of staff

THEN

Appropriate adjustments agreed and put in place in the classroom, for example a specific place to sit to support attention, use of topic word lists to support spelling, or access to additional sessions to support memory.

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Concern continues despite the provision of appropriate adjustments

OR

Student is supported via appropriate adjustments in the classroom

THEN

Referral of concern made to SEN / Pastoral Team (using SWBGS SEN Concern Form)

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School based evidence gathered and reviewed by SEN / Pastoral Team.

This usually includes:

- Feedback from teachers, learning mentors and form teacher using the school feedback form
- Recorded discussion with the student and parents, including any additional information provided by parents (such as external assessments, medical information etc)
- Review of recent attainment and academic trends over time
- Review of any relevant behaviour logs and other school data such as CATs

It may also include:

- School based screening assessments such as Dyslexia screener, EXACT,
- Additional information provided by parents such as previous assessments for learning difficulties
- Information provided by primary schools

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Decision to refer for further assessment based on evidence (see below).

Additional targeted school based support may also be put in place whilst professional advice is sought, and the student's progress with this monitored using qualitative and quantitative measure (such as progress grades, specified tests, and self-assessment of emotional well-being)

OR

Decision to put in place targeted school based support as part of the school's normal provision for students, such as access to homework club, pastoral support, differentiated material in the classroom, adapted homework tasks. The student will continue to be monitored using the school's normal monitoring systems such as orders and form tutor feedback

AND/ OR

Decision to put in place targeted **additional** support, such as a short term intervention to support development of spelling, organisation or social skills, support by a learning mentor on a specified area e.g. revision. Student's progress reviewed using a range of methods at the end of the intervention e.g. self report on confidence with spelling, spelling test, feedback from teachers, review of academic progress, feedback from parents

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*Referral made to the appropriate professional for further assessment. This may include:

SALT, EP, Specialist Teacher, OT, Paediatrician

N.B. Professional services often have waiting lists and there can be a short or extended delay in accessing these services. If parents are considering a private assessment, this is the best time (once the school have identified a likely need) but they MUST liaise with school when doing this in order to validate any private assessment. In rare circumstances, the school will consider accessing private services from out of the school budget where this is essential to the wellbeing of the student. From Year 9 onwards the student will also be prioritised for assessment for exam access arrangements.

Additional provision will be put in place to support the student (as above) whilst advice from professional services is sought.

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Review by SEN of student's education needs once professional advice has been accessed.

Review by SEN of the student's exam access arrangements needs

Decision to put on the SEN or AEN Register with relevant support (including exam access arrangements where appropriate)

OR

Decision to support via normal classroom differentiation / adaptations

ROUTE 2: Student with history of SEN / known SEN or AEN difficulties

Appropriate adjustments agreed and put in place in the classroom, for example a specific place to sit to support attention, use of topic word lists to support spelling, access to additional sessions to support memory. Depending on the level of need, the student may also access a range of additional learning support, such as regular support from learning mentors, use of a laptop as normal way of working etc. The level and nature of support is based on the individual needs of the student. The student may or may not have a SEN Support Plan dependent on these needs.

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School based evidence gathered and reviewed by SEN / Pastoral Team.

This usually includes:

- Feedback from teachers, learning mentors and form teacher using the school feedback form
- Recorded discussion with the student and parents, including any additional information provided by parents (such as external assessments, medical information etc)
- Review of recent attainment and academic trends over time
- Review of any relevant behaviour logs and other school data such as CATs

It may also include:

- School based screening assessments such as Dyslexia screener, EXACT,
- Additional information provided by parents e.g. previous assessments of learning needs
- Information provided by primary / previous schools

Decision made to refer for further professional assessment if necessary, including for exam access arrangements

Completion of application for exam access arrangements by the school, including information about the substantial impact of the student's learning difficulties on their ability to access exams without additional arrangements (they are disabled under the terms of the Equalities Act)

Confirmation of exam access arrangements and application of this as the student's normal way of working for a MINIMUM of one term before the formal exams.

ROUTE 3: Student with no previous SEN / AEN in Year 9 – 11

Concern identified by parent, student or member of staff, and established as significant and long term, so referred to SEN.

School based evidence gathered and reviewed by SEN Team to include

- Feedback from teachers, learning mentors and form teacher using the school feedback form
- Feedback from student and parents using school's questionnaire
- Review of recent attainment and academic trends over time
- Review of any relevant behaviour information or previous assessments for SEN / SpLD / Medical needs
- Review of other school data such as CATs, attendance etc

It may also include:

- School based screening assessments such as Dyslexia screener, EXACT,
- Review of any previous assessment of learning needs or medical needs

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Review of school based evidence by SENDCo / Pastoral Team

Decision made to refer for further professional assessment if necessary

Decision to assess for exam access arrangements if necessary and to start a Form 8

Decision to apply for exam access arrangements where there is already sufficient school based evidence for this (e.g. EHCP or Medical Diagnosis with school based evidence)

Meeting / communication with parents / student

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Assessment for exam access arrangements followed by application for these if appropriate and establishment of normal way of working for the student

An ideal timescale for this would be:

Identification of need during Year 9 / 10 through:

- Review of Key Stage 3 data on students already identified with Special or Additional Educational Needs
- Referral by a member of staff, student or parent resulting in school based assessment of need, and referral to professionals where appropriate

Assessment for exam access arrangements by the schools specialist assessor

Completion of application for exam access arrangements by the school, including information about the substantial impact of the student's learning difficulties on their ability to access exams without additional arrangements (they are disabled under the terms of the Equalities Act)

Confirmation of exam access arrangements and application of this as the student's normal way of working for a MINIMUM of one term before the formal exams.