



Information for Parents on Exam Access Arrangements

What are exam access arrangements and who gets them?

Exam access arrangements are reasonable adjustments to exams provided by the exam boards 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 (see definition below).

Access Arrangements allow students with special educational needs or disabilities to have fair access in public exams without changing or compromising the demands of the assessment.

Students who receive exam access arrangements usually have:

- A statement of SEN or EHCP
- A diagnosed learning difficulty such as Dyslexia or Dyspraxia that has been confirmed as having a substantial impact on their access to learning in secondary school / sixth form
- A specific learning difficulty that has a substantial impact on their speed of working or functional study skills (for example reading and writing) which has been recently (from Year 9 onwards) assessed by a qualified assessor working with the school
- A diagnosed medical condition that significantly affects their ability to undertake exams in the normal way, for example ADHD, ASD,
- A physical or sensory impairment that significantly affects their ability to undertake exams in the normal way, for example Visual Impairment, Hearing Impairment, Cerebral Palsy,

What do I do if I think my child may need additional exam access arrangements?

Contact the SENDCo to raise your concerns, especially if your child is in Year 9 or 10 or the Autumn Term of Year 11.

The school will consider all the school based and external evidence on your child, and decide whether they are likely to need exam access arrangements, following JCQ Guidance

You child may be assessed by the school's designated access arrangements assessor, or referred for assessment by another appropriate professional, to identify their learning needs / needs for additional exam access arrangements

If you are concerned that your child may have a SpLD such as Dyslexia, you must contact the school to discuss this as any private assessments may not be valid for exam access arrangement applications without the involvement of the school

What is the timetable for identifying and assessing for exam access arrangements?

Year 7 and 8:

Your child's learning needs will be assessed and supporting following the schools normal procedures for SEN / AEN. Any need identified at this time will be reviewed during Years 9 / 10 and Year 12 (if applicable) for the purposed of exam access arrangements for GCSE.

Year 9 and 10:

- School gathers information from teachers, parents, the student, and medical and educational professionals (where appropriate) about a student's AEN/SEN
- SEN Staff complete a Form 8 or Centre Delegated application for exam access arrangements based on the assessment of the student's needs.
- Where necessary, the student may be assessed by the schools access arrangements assessor to review their learning in the light of JCQ Guidance
- Any appropriate exam access arrangements identified by the review / assessment will be put in place as the student's normal way of working. This need to be in place for a MINIMUM of one term before their formal exams in order to be valid as their normal way of working.

Year 11

- By this time school is able to confirm the student's normal way of working, and has evidence of their substantial and persistent learning needs over time (using school based evidence and professional assessment)
- Exam access arrangements are formally applied for by February of Year 11 at the latest. IT IS NOT POSSIBLE TO APPLY FOR ANY EXAM ACCESS ARRANGEMENTS, EXCEPT IN VERY EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCE AFTER THIS TIME.

New Students (Years 7/9/12) with previously identified learning needs

- Student's additional learning needs are reviewed after the first term of their entry to school
- SEN Staff complete a Form 8 or Centre Delegated application for exam access arrangements based on the assessment of the student's needs.
- Where necessary, the student may be assessed by the school's access arrangements assessor to review their learning in the light of JCQ Guidance
- Any appropriate exam access arrangements identified by the review / assessment will be put in place as the student's normal way of working. This need to be in place for a MINIMUM of one term before their formal exams in order to be valid as their normal way of working.

Glossary / Explanation of Terms and References

Disability: A disability is defined by the Equalities Act 2010 (www.gov.uk/guidance/equality-act-2010-guidance) 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 (from www.jcq.org.uk):

- 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.

ASD: Autistic Spectrum Disorder

ADHD: Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder

SpLD: Specific Learning Difficulty

JCQ: Joint Council for Qualifications www.jcq.org.uk

SEN: Special Educational Needs

AEN: Additional Educational Needs

EHCP: Education Health Care Plan