



The Eaglewood School

“Raising Aspiration and Changing Lives”

Exam Access Arrangements Information for Students and Parents/Carers

This information is reviewed and updated annually to ensure that the access arrangements process at The Eaglewood School is managed in accordance with current requirements and regulations.

References in this policy to GR, ICE and AA refer to the JCQ documents **General Regulations for Approved Centres, Instructions for conducting examinations** and **Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments**.

References to legislation are to the Equality Act 2010.

Access arrangements

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. Access arrangements are the principal way in which awarding bodies comply with the duty under the Equality Act 2010 to make 'reasonable adjustments'.

Reasonable adjustments

The Equality Act 2010 requires an awarding body to make reasonable adjustments 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. The awarding body is required to take reasonable steps to overcome that disadvantage. An example would be a Braille paper which would be a reasonable adjustment for a vision impaired candidate who could read Braille. A reasonable adjustment may be unique to that individual and may not be included in the list of available access arrangements.

Whether an adjustment will be considered reasonable will depend on several factors which will include, but are not limited to:

- the needs of the disabled candidate;
- the effectiveness of the adjustment;
- the cost of the adjustment; and
- the likely impact of the adjustment upon the candidate and other candidates.

An adjustment will not be approved if it:

- involves unreasonable costs to the awarding body;
- involves unreasonable timeframes; or
- affects the security and integrity of the assessment.

This is because the adjustment is not 'reasonable'. The centre must ensure that approved adjustments can be delivered to candidates.

There are a variety of access arrangements that can be provided where testing and normal ways of working show that there is a clear need. These might include:

- Support for reading (e.g. a reader, a reading pen)
- Support for writing (e.g. a scribe, a word processor)
- Support for working to time (e.g. rest breaks, prompt, 25% extra time)

Other individual arrangements may be available if there is clear need.

Assessment

The Head of Centre an Access Arrangements Assessor, Ms L Bilsborough, who will coordinate the access arrangements process within the Centre and determine appropriate arrangements for candidates with learning difficulties and disabilities, candidates for whom English is an additional language, as well as those with a temporary illness or temporary injury. (GR 5.4)

A Centre **must** make decisions on appropriate access arrangements for their candidates. Although professionals from other organisations may give advice, they **cannot** make the decision for the Centre. They will not have a working knowledge of an individual candidate's needs and how their difficulties impact in the classroom and/or in timed assessments. It is the responsibility of the Access Arrangements Assessor to make appropriate and informed decisions based on the JCQ regulations. (AA 4.2)

The principles The Eaglewood School will consider include:

- The purpose of an access arrangement/reasonable adjustment is to ensure, where possible, that barriers to assessment are removed for a disabled candidate preventing them from being placed at a substantial disadvantage due to persistent and significant difficulties. The integrity of the assessment is maintained, whilst at the same time providing access to assessments for a disabled candidate. (AA 4.2)

- Although access arrangements are intended to allow access to assessments, they cannot be granted where they will compromise the assessment objectives of the specification in question. (AA 4.2)
- Candidates may not require the same access arrangements/reasonable adjustments in each specification. Subjects and their methods of assessments may vary, leading to different demands of the candidate. The need for access arrangements/reasonable adjustments must be considered on a subject-by-subject basis. (AA 4.2)
- Arrangements must always be approved before an examination or assessment. (AA 4.2)
- The arrangement(s) put in place must reflect the candidate's normal way of working within the Centre. (AA 4.2)
- The candidate will be given appropriate opportunities to practise using the access arrangement(s)/reasonable adjustment(s). (AA 4.2)

GL Assessment, Lucid Exact testing will be used to calculate candidate's standardised scores for Word Recognition, Reading Comprehension Accuracy, Reading Comprehension Speed, Spelling, Typing Speed and Handwriting Speed. These scores, alongside teacher contribution about the candidates' normal way of working will then determine which access arrangements, if any, would be appropriate for the candidate.

Example Access Arrangements

Extra time

The JCQ extra time arrangements provide additional time during exams for students with special educational needs or disabilities, such as dyslexia or ADHD. To be eligible, students must have documented evidence of their need, often through an assessment from a qualified professional, and a history of requiring extra time in practice or mock exams. The school's Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENDCO) submits applications to the exam boards well in advance, with extra time typically ranging from 25% to 100%, depending on the severity of the student's condition. Governors are responsible for ensuring the school follows these guidelines, ensuring proper documentation, staff training, and adherence to the JCQ policies, while also overseeing other accommodations like rest breaks or the use of a reader or scribe.

Scribe

The JCQ (Joint Council for Qualifications) scribe arrangements are provisions made for students who have a disability, learning difficulty, or temporary injury that affects their ability to write or type during exams. A scribe is an individual who is allowed to write down the student's dictated responses, ensuring they can complete their exams fairly. This arrangement is typically used by students who struggle with handwriting, spelling, or motor control. The scribe must accurately transcribe the student's responses without offering any input or assistance with content, and the student must communicate their answers clearly. The scribe arrangement is designed to support students in demonstrating their knowledge and abilities without being hindered by physical writing limitations.

Reader

The JCQ reader arrangement is a provision for students who have a disability or learning difficulty that affects their ability to read exam papers. A reader is an individual who is allowed to read the exam questions aloud to the student, helping them access the content. This arrangement is typically used by students with conditions such as visual impairments or dyslexia. The reader must read the questions and any accompanying text verbatim, without providing any interpretation or assistance in understanding the content. This ensures that the student can focus on the content of the exam without being hindered by their reading difficulties, allowing them to demonstrate their knowledge.

Prompt

The JCQ prompt arrangement provides support for students who have specific learning difficulties or disabilities that affect their ability to understand or process exam questions. A prompt is used to assist students who may need reminders or cues to stay focused on the task at hand or to help them begin their responses. This support is typically given in the form of a gentle verbal prompt or reminder from the invigilator to help students manage their time or clarify instructions. The prompt is not intended to offer specific guidance on content but to aid in maintaining the student's progress throughout the exam, ensuring they have the opportunity to perform to the best of their ability.

Rest Breaks

Rest breaks are an arrangement provided by the JCQ for students who have medical conditions, disabilities, or learning difficulties that may cause fatigue or require frequent breaks during exams. These breaks allow students to rest for a short period during the exam without losing time from their allocated exam duration. Rest breaks are typically taken in a separate, quiet room, or walking in the fresh air and the student can use the time to manage their condition or relax before continuing the exam. The length of the break and the frequency is determined on an individual basis, ensuring that the student is able to demonstrate their knowledge effectively without being hindered by their condition.

If you have any concerns or queries and we will be happy to advise. Please contact us by emailing admin@eaglewoodschool.co.uk