

THE GRYPHON SCHOOL



Examination Access Arrangements Policy

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Gryphon School Exam Access Arrangements Policy 2015

What are Exam Access Arrangements (EAAS)?

Access Arrangements are pre-examination adjustments for candidates based on evidence of need and normal way of working. They are aimed at students with 'substantial impairments'.

Access Arrangements fall into two distinct categories: some arrangements are delegated to centres, others require prior JCQCIC awarding body approval. Access Arrangements allow candidates/learners with special educational needs, disabilities or temporary injuries to access the assessment without changing the demands of the assessment. For example, readers, scribes and Braille question papers. In this way Awarding Bodies will comply with the duty of the Equality Act 2010 to make 'reasonable adjustments'.

- EAAs are designed for candidates with the required knowledge, understanding and skills, who are unable to demonstrate these in an assessment in its normal format due to a difficulty or disability.
- EAAs should reflect the normal way of working for which there is evidence of need, unless such arrangements would affect the integrity of the assessment.
- EAAs are intended to increase access to assessments, but cannot be granted where they will directly affect performance in the skills that are the focus of the assessment.
- Credit is only given for skills demonstrated by the candidate working independently. EAAs are not intended to give an unfair advantage.
- EAAs will not be permitted if they compromise the assessment objectives of the specification in question.
- EAAs may vary between subjects because different subjects and methods of assessments may have different demands.
- An alternative assessment route may be available within the specification.

Reasonable Adjustments

The Equality Act 2010 requires an Awarding Body to make reasonable adjustments where a disabled person would be at a substantial disadvantage in undertaking an assessment. A reasonable adjustment for a particular person may be unique to that individual and may not be included in the list of available Access Arrangements. 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 is not the candidates normal way of working.

Identifying the need for access arrangements at the Gryphon School

Students who may qualify for formal Access Arrangements during KS4 and 5 are identified early in KS3 (Y7). At this stage needs are screened and identified, rather than formally assessed. Adjustments to Quality First Teaching within lessons are then made according to need to enable a student

to access their learning and make progress. All staff are involved in monitoring the adjustments.

Formal assessments take place during Y9. Screening and ongoing monitoring determines the level of specific assessment required. These assessments are delivered in accordance with the JCQ guidance. Formal Access arrangements expire after 26 Months, after this period the student may be re-tested. The most recent testing is binding and determines any subsequent Access Arrangements.

Where formal Access Arrangements are determined and agreed these become part of 'normal practice'. This means that appropriate Access Arrangements should be taken into consideration in Quality First Teaching and formally applied in any internal or external assessments. If a student chooses continually not to use the agreed access arrangements either because their needs change or they do not feel it aids their learning or achievement then access arrangements can be removed.

Access Arrangements for examinations

JCQ requirements can change annually however the following are some of the standard practice of access arrangements:

- Extra time
- Rest breaks
- Readers
- Scribes
- Prompts
- Use of word processors
- Computer Readers
- Oral Modifiers
- Live speakers for MFL

Responsibility

Access arrangements are the responsibility of the SENCO, directed by the Head teacher. Access arrangements for exams may be conducted by Gryphon staff with relevant qualifications in accordance with JQC guidance or a qualified person may be bought in. Qualifications will be checked by the SENCo and a copy will be available for inspection by JCQ inspectors.

Assessments for Examination Access Arrangements may only be carried out by Specialist Assessors.

Screening, can be administered by LS staff with the SENCo present. This gives a profile and can help to determine more specific assessment requirements

PROCEDURE

KS3 screening

Pupils who are flagged either during transition or during Y7 as having difficulties accessing their learning are screened. All teaching and LS staff are involved in this early identification process. Throughout KS3 all staff are

responsible for implementing recommended adjustments to QFT and assessment access arrangements. All staff are involved in the monitoring of these adjustments. Needs of students not identified in Y7 may become apparent at any point during KS3. Staff are responsible for reporting any concerns to the SENCo who can then arrange for screening to be carried out.

Formal Access Arrangement testing

Formal assessments are conducted in early summer term. Students qualifying for these formal assessments are determined by specified indicators following screening. Students with a statement or EHC plan do not need to be formally reassessed but evidence of normal way of working needs to be assessed.

Access arrangements Screening and formal assessment is a staged process:

Stage 1: Early Screening

- New Group reading test
- WRAT 4 Spelling
- Further assessments depending on need

Stage 2: Formal Testing

Summer term of Y9.

Depending on outcomes of screening formal assessments are conducted to confirm access arrangements for exams. Assessments are carried out by qualified specialist teachers. No one assessment can be submitted as evidence.

Assessments may include:

- WRAT (WIDE RANGE ACHIEVEMENT TEST)
- WRIT (Wide range intelligence test)
- CTOPP (processing)
- DASH
- PhAB
- GORT

Stage 3: Formal application for Access arrangements for examinations

The outcome of assessment are recorded and summarised on the pupil profile sheet by the assessor. Completed forms are then passed to the SENCo as evidence for online submission. The online submission is carried out by the Exams Officer.

Stage 4: Ensuring the EAA are normal way of working

It is the responsibility of the SEND team to ensure that all required information is collated and accessible to the Exams officer and wider staff body. The SENCo, in collaboration with colleagues and students, will monitor and ensure that EAA are normal ways of working. The SENCo and exams officer will ensure that all paperwork required by JCQ is in order.

Notes (from PATOSS website)

- The assessment evidence for 25% extra time, readers and scribes must be drawn from testing conducted no earlier than the start of year 9, rather than from any time within secondary education. If successful,

this application will be approved for 26 months from the date of processing the application. When planning assessments, consider the changes to GCSE qualifications and whether or not candidates will need access arrangements for controlled assessments in year 10.

- The new Education and Health Care plans are acceptable evidence for 25% extra time, readers and scribes as well as any current Statements of SEN but it is necessary to 'paint a picture of need' and show that this is normal way of working. See p.26 2014-5 Guidance.
- When candidates begin an A level course, they do not need to be formally re-assessed. However, the Centre must establish that there is a continuing need for these arrangements, and paint the picture of need. This might be achieved through gathering commentary from teaching staff, mock examinations etc. and preparing a brief summary note to attach to Form 8 – which cover the new requirements in the 2014/15 regulations.

Further information and current details can be found on the JCQ website:
<http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/access-arrangements-and-special-consideration/regulations-and-guidance/access-arrangements-and-reasonable-adjustments-2014-2015-interactive-version>

or contact Sarah Darlington, SENCo Gryphon School, 01935 810139, sarah.darlington@gryphon.dorset.sch.uk

Guidelines for Subject Teachers and Learning Support Staff

Access Arrangements allow candidates to show what they know and can do without changing the demands of the assessment. (JCQ 2010)

You are likely to be aware of candidates in your classes/teaching groups who have difficulties that may make them eligible for access arrangements in tests and public examinations. Please watch out for such candidates each year (especially if they are new to the school) and keep the SEN Department informed of their needs. A screening procedure is always carried out to identify these candidates, but there are always some who will not be identified through screening tests. The Learning Support staff are dependent on you to keep them informed of potential candidates for access arrangements.

It is essential that candidates are identified as early as possible in their school/college career for the following reasons:

The arrangements should be made at the start of the GCSE or A level course so that candidates know what is available and have the arrangements in place for module tests, course work and terminal papers. It is the Centre's responsibility to ensure that the regulations about who may act as 'scribe' for a candidate are not infringed during completion of course work.

The 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 the examinations.

Applications for permission to grant access arrangements must be made online early in the examination course, ideally at the start of Year 10 for GCSE in secondary schools. There are deadlines for applications, and it may not be possible to process late applications within the few weeks before the examination.

Centres are required to have made sure that candidates have practised using their access arrangements in class tests, annual exams and mock examinations. As a subject teacher you have some responsibility to make sure these opportunities are available.

The Awarding Bodies also require that candidates are entered for the correct level of examination. An Entry Level qualification may be more appropriate for candidates working at very low levels.

You may also be aware of candidates who rarely complete tests and exams in the time allowed, but who may be missed by brief screening tests. Please keep the SENCO informed of these candidates.

Please note that there is no specific access arrangement for poor spelling, unless it is so poor that it is likely to impair the examiner's ability to read the candidate's answers. In this case a transcript or, in extreme cases, a scribe

may be appropriate. If spellings are reasonable phonic approximations, and so can be deciphered, no access arrangements can be offered.

Regulations have changed in the last few years, and a diagnosis of dyslexia is no longer sufficient to allow a candidate extra time. The Awarding Bodies now require 'evidence of need in the normal working arrangements', i.e. the candidate uses extra time in class and for tests and internal exams.

Summary

Although the processes of screening, applying for and implementing access arrangements are the responsibility of the SENCO and Exams Officer, all teaching and support staff have a central role to play in the identification of candidates who need adjustments during public examinations and training the students to use agreed access arrangements effectively.

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