

Access Arrangements

Access Arrangements

Access arrangements are agreed before an exams. They allow learners with special educational needs, disabilities or temporary injuries to:

- access the assessment
- show what they know and can do without changing the demands of the exams

Purpose

- **Access arrangements are not there to give students an unfair advantage, but to give all students a level playing field in which to demonstrate their skills, knowledge and understanding.**
- **To reflect the student's normal way of working in assessments.**

Reasonable Adjustments

The Equality Act 2010 requires an awarding body to make **reasonable adjustments** where a student, 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.**

Examples of reasonable adjustments for disabled candidates

- A candidate with Dyslexia needs to use a coloured overlay and a word processor, and requires 25% extra time. The use of a yellow coloured overlay is a reasonable adjustment for the candidate since it helps him to improve his reading accuracy. The use of a word processor is a reasonable adjustment since it is his normal means of producing written work within the centre and is appropriate to his needs.

The candidate has been assessed by an assessor using up to date nationally standardised tests. **The assessment shows that the candidate has a substantial and long term impairment as his working memory score is in the below average range. The candidate has a standardised score of 79.** The SENCo can supplement the assessor's report (**Section C of Form 8**) with a picture of need (**Section A of Form 8**) showing 25% extra time as his normal way of working within the centre. The application of 25% extra time is a reasonable adjustment and the SENCo processes an application on-line using *Access arrangements online*.

Substantial Adverse Effect

Factors that might reasonably be expected to have a substantial adverse effect include:

- persistent and significant difficulty in reading and understanding written material
- persistent distractibility or difficulty concentrating
- difficulty understanding or following simple verbal instructions
- physical impairment

Substantial Adverse Effect

Factors that might reasonably be expected not to have a substantial adverse effect include:

- minor problems with writing or spelling;
- inability to read very small or indistinct print without the aid of a magnifying glass;
- inability to converse orally in a language which is not the speaker's native spoken language.

Equality Act

- **'substantial'** = *'more than minor or trivial'*
- **'long term'** = impairment has (or likely to do so) lasted *at least 12 months*
- **'Normal day to day activities'** *includes examinations (study & education-related activities)*

‘Normal Way of Working’

The arrangement(s) put in place must reflect the support given to your child in school, e.g.

- in the classroom**
- working in small groups**
- literacy support lessons**
- literacy intervention strategies**
- in internal school tests/examinations**
- mock examinations**


Permission

- **Schools have to apply for permission for students to have access arrangements.**
- **Applications are made online to JCQ.**
- **Applications need to be made in time for deadlines, which are up to three months before the exam.**

Who are JCQ?

The Joint Council for Qualifications, is a council acting as a single voice for the six largest qualification providers in the UK offering GCSE and GCE qualifications.

The JCQ closely monitors examination administration, invigilation of exams at individual schools and activities of exams officers.



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e.g. Edexcel

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The Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) is the single voice for its member awarding bodies

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The Specialist Assessor is:

- an access arrangements assessor who has successfully completed a postgraduate course at or equivalent to Level 7**
- an appropriately qualified psychologist**
- a specialist assessor with a current SpLD Assessment Practising Certificate**

Types of Access Arrangements

- Extra Time
- Reader or Computer Reader
 - Read Aloud
- Examination Reading Pen
 - Word Processor
 - Scribe
 - Practical Assistant
- Braille or Enlarged Papers
 - Supervised Rest Breaks

Reader

- A reader is a responsible adult who reads the questions to a student. This may involve reading the whole paper or the student may request only some words to be read.
- A reader will not be allowed if a student's literacy difficulties are primarily caused by English not being their first language.
- A reader or computer reader will not be allowed in sections of papers testing reading.
- Other students must not be able to overhear the reader as this would distract them from the exam.
- If several students require only occasional reading assistance, they may be accommodated as a separate group with a reader and an invigilator.

A reader must...

- read accurately and at a reasonable rate
- **only read the instructions of the question paper(s) and questions and must not explain or clarify**
- **repeat instructions given on the question paper only when specifically requested to do so by the student**
- **abide by the regulations.**

A reader must not...

- advise the student regarding which questions to do, when to move on to the next question, nor the order in which questions should be answered
- decode symbols and unit abbreviations (e.g. if the symbol $>$ is printed, it should not be read as 'greater than' but simply pointed to by the reader).

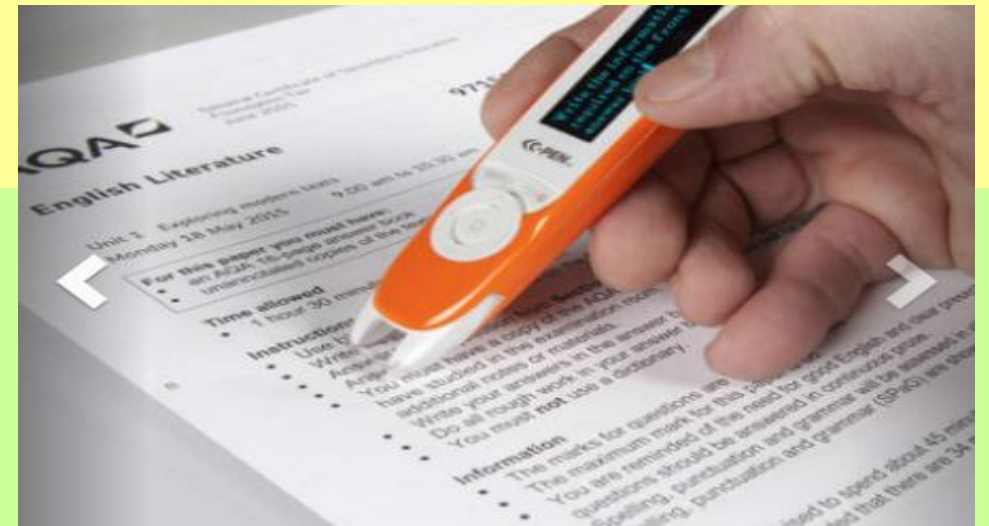
A reader may...

- read back, when requested, what has been written in the answer.
- if requested, give the spelling of a word which appears on the paper but otherwise spellings must not be given."

Exam Reader Pen

An **Exam Reader Pen** can read single words or lines of information to you. It may increase the independence of students who needed a reader for accuracy rather than comprehension.

An examination reading pen may be used in papers (or sections of papers) testing reading.



Exam Reader Pen

Example – examination reading pen

A candidate was found to be mildly dyslexic in Year 7. The candidate has always used a reader in internal school tests.

However, upon being assessed at the start of Year 10, his standardised scores are **89** (reading accuracy), **90** (reading comprehension) and **93** (reading speed). He does not meet the published criteria for a reader.

The SENCo trials the use of an examination reading pen which subsequently becomes his **normal way of working within the centre**. It is an effective arrangement, appropriate to his needs.

25% Extra Time

A GCSE student has an assessment which confirms the presence of a weak, below average working memory (**a standardised score of 77**). Her teachers observe she is slow at gathering her thoughts and putting them down onto paper, especially under the timed conditions of an examination. They confirm she regularly needs verbal instructions repeated. Class test papers additionally show that the quality and quantity of her written answers improves significantly with the allowance of extra time. The SENCo processes an on-line application for 25% extra time on the basis of her below average working memory **and** the substantial picture of need.

25% Extra Time

25% extra time will be added on to the end of an exam or assessments, which will be calculated for students.

Example History - 2 hours

With extra time 2 hours 30
mins (**150 minutes**)

Word Processor

- Laptops should be fully charged and have the spell/grammar check and internet disabled. Autosave should be enabled.
- Every page should have the student's name, centre number, candidate number and unit/component code as a header.
- Each page should be numbered e.g page 1 of 4
- Students should use a minimum font size of 12pt and double spacing.
- Each student will be issued with a named memory stick which will be securely stored.
- Work must be printed off immediately at the end of the exam with the student present so that they can verify it is their work. They will sign the front to confirm this.
- Scripts will be attached using a paperclip, to any answer booklet which also contains some of their answers.
- Students will ensure it is clear which question has been answered e.g Q2.) (type answer)

Scribe

- A scribe is a responsible adult who in an examination writes down or word processes a student's dictated answers to the questions.
- A scribe will not be allowed in subjects testing writing, such as MFL writing papers, unless the student can dictate foreign words letter by letter.
- A scribe will not be allowed if a student's literacy difficulties are primarily caused by English, Irish or Welsh not being their first language.
- Scribes should only be requested for students who cannot produce written communication by any other means, e.g. by word processor.

A scribe must...

- write down or word process accurately what the student has said, except in an examination requiring word processing, in which case a scribe will not be permitted.
- write or word process a correction on a typescript or Braille sheet if requested to do so by the student.
- immediately refer any problems in communication during the examination to the invigilator.
- draw or add to maps, diagrams and graphs strictly in accordance with the student's instructions (except for Design papers).

A scribe must not...

- give factual help to the student or indicate when the answer is complete.
- advise the student on which questions to do, when to move on to the next question, or on the order in which questions should be answered.

A scribe may...

- at the student's request, read back what has been recorded.

Prompter

- A prompter is a responsible adult who may sit beside the student in order to **keep his or her attention on the task in hand.**
- A prompter is **not a reader, a scribe or a practical assistant,** but the same person may act as such, as long as permission has been given for any or all of these arrangements.
- The **invigilator may act as a prompter.** If the prompter is acting as a reader or scribe, different invigilation arrangements will apply.

A prompter must not...

- advise the student regarding **which questions to do**, or on the **order** in which questions should be answered.
- **give factual help** or offer any suggestions or communicate in any other way than those listed below.

A prompt may...

- may use the following prompts whether vocally or written on a flash card:
‘focus on the question’; ‘move onto the next question’; ‘there are X minutes left.
- tap on the desk or on the student’s arm, depending on what is normal practice, in order to remind the student that he or she must pay attention to the question.
- use the student’s name as an appropriate prompt during the examination.

Supervised Rest Breaks

For students who have

- Poor concentration skills
- Extreme stress/psychological problems
- A medical condition
- Behavioural difficulties

Rest breaks take place in the exam room. Outside if supervised (do not discuss the content of the exam). Add time taken to the end of the exam

Working Together

Teaching Assistants Role

I am a different person in exams

- I can only help in certain ways
- I can't give you clues like I do in lessons
- I can't give you examples like I do in lessons
- I can't tell you if your answers are right or wrong
- I can't check your work to see if you have understood

What the school can do

Access Arrangement Workshops

Exam Reader Pens (and training on use)

Loan of a laptop

Touch Typing Intervention

Handwriting Intervention (to be done at home)

After School Homework Club

Revision sessions

Subject Specific Interventions

Student's new role

You are a different person in exams

- You can't walk around or go to the toilet
- You can't use the computer to check things
- You have to leave your bag outside
- You can only take what you need for the exam (such as a pen or pencil)
- No books or mobile phones
- You must be quiet and put your hand up if you need help
- You might need to stay until everyone has finished

How can parents help at home?

- Encourage your child to read anything, fiction and non-fiction
- Read their work and homework with them and look for any common mistakes
- Encourage them to proof read their work
- Look for any subject specific technology – ask them to explain and spell these words

Parents can help reinforce minimum expectations

- Spell simple words and common homophones correctly
- Use full stops and capital letters correctly
- Paragraph correctly
- Present work with pride and neat handwriting
- Proof read their work

Offer Support & Encouragement

- Encouraging them to eat well
- Encouraging them to sleep well
- Encouraging them to drink water every day
- Help them to identify what is actually causing the stress (and seek support where necessary)
- Acknowledge difficult times but remind them that they can cope
- Encourage them to work to a weekly timetable or plan around managing out of school time
- Encourage them to schedule breaks – resting, walking, listening to music

Q & A

Any questions should be sent to senco@holytrinity.academy responses will be in the parent bulletin