



Exam Access Arrangements Policy

SM

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This policy should be read in conjunction with our SEND and Learning Support Policy which sets out the school's procedures for identifying SEND, making and evaluating provision for pupils with SEND and the provision of access arrangements (AA).

1. Exam Access Arrangements

Exam Access Arrangements (EAAs) are the reasonable adjustments that are made for eligible pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

EAA or Exam Concessions are arrangements put in place to ensure all pupils have equal access to examinations. Pupils should not be disadvantaged by any learning, medical, physical, sensory or psychological difficulty they may experience. The school recognises that some pupils will meet the criteria for EAA in exams due to specific difficulties which result in having a below average processing speed or working memory, slow or poor handwriting, difficulties in attention, below average literacy or maths skills, a hearing or visual impairment or physical disability.

2. Who is eligible for exam access arrangements?

Exam arrangements are only granted if there is evidence that they are a student's 'normal way of working' and the student has a history of need because of a significant and long-term impairment. For example, a student who is eligible for extra time would need to have a history of needing extra time to complete their work and EAA assessment scores that are below average in speed of writing, reading, reading comprehension or processing, demonstrating they work more slowly than others do.

Regulations governing EAA are issued by the Joint Council of Qualifications (JCQ). They regulate all schools on their applications for EAA. Legal guidelines are laid down in the legislative Code of Practice for SEN professionals in schools, attached to the Disabilities Act. The Equality Act also governs this area.

The awarding of EAA at Summer Fields complies with the rules for EAA as set out by the JCQ and the Equality Act 2010.

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 disadvantage in comparison to someone who is not disabled. According to statutory guidance, disability means 'limitations going beyond the normal differences in ability which may exist among people'. A candidate with a disability or difficulty which has a substantial and long-term effect on performance in examinations may qualify for access arrangements. Our key responsibility in making decisions about AA in both internal and external exams is to ensure no pupil with substantial long term special educational needs or short-term illnesses or injuries is unnecessarily disadvantaged and to allow them to demonstrate their skills, knowledge and understanding without affecting the integrity of an assessment or examination. AA are not intended to help certain candidates, or give them an advantage, but to give them a fair opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge and skills. The intention is to remove barriers that may prevent them from demonstrating their knowledge and to allow them on to a 'level playing field' with other candidates. We have a responsibility as an examination centre to maintain fairness.

The school is therefore only able to put AA in place where these arrangements are specifically recommended in a formal report carried out by an Educational Psychologist, a Specialist Assessor, a hospital consultant, Occupational Therapist or Speech and Language Therapist within the time frame stipulated by senior schools. Assessments must demonstrate in quantitative and qualitative measures that the pupil meets the criteria as set out by the JCQ. Failure to comply with these regulations will be considered as (at best) centre maladministration, which may result in disqualification from the examination for the pupil.

The school will exercise its judgement regarding a pupil's eligibility for EAA. Privately commissioned reports will only be accepted by JCQ (and therefore the school) if they are written to the required standard and demonstrate the pupil's need in quantifiable terms. The parents should provide the school with a copy of the report. The school reserves the right to reject a privately commissioned report, or a report from an external professional.

Late identification of learning difficulties can occur, but concerns should be raised early in the academic year leading towards an examination.

3. What exam arrangements are available?

Some of the most common arrangements include:

Extra time, which is usually 25%.

A reader for pupils who have a disability that affects their ability to read accurately themselves. In an exam that assesses reading ability, a human reader is not allowed but, in some cases, a computer reader will be allowed.

A scribe or voice to text can be allocated to students who have a disability or injury that affects their ability to write legibly.

Modified paper can have different sizes and coloured paper.

Assistive technology: If a pupil uses approved assistive technology as their normal way of working, they will be able to use this in their exams. Some of the most common types are laptops, voice to text, exam reading pens, and computer text readers.

A separate room can be provided for pupils who require a scribe, reader or voice to text.

Alternative rooming arrangements for pupils with sensory needs or attention difficulties. Rest breaks, movement breaks and prompts can also be arranged.

4. Laptop

The school makes decisions about whether a pupil can use a word processor or laptop. The school's decisions are based on the pupil's learning needs, feedback, and normal way of working. The school will not allow a pupil to use a word processor in an exam if their writing, spelling, or punctuation deteriorates when they type.

A word processor cannot simply be granted to a pupil because he wants to type rather than write in examinations, can work faster on a keyboard or uses a laptop at home. The principle is that the use of a word processor must reflect his normal way of working within the school.

The school will consider pupils with -

- a learning difficulty which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to write legibly
- a medical condition
- a physical disability
- a sensory impairment

- planning and organisational problems when writing by hand
- poor handwriting as benefiting from the use of a word processor in lessons and in examinations.

JCQ adjusts its regulations annually and the school is bound to comply with the current regulations. The Head of Learning Support attends training on a regular basis to ensure they are appraised of the JCQ regulations for each academic year.

5. ISEB Pre-test

For the school to consider EAA for the year 6 ISEB pre-test the assessment must have taken place no earlier than the start of Year 3. As this is a computerized test, AA will be awarded based on two scores of 84 or below or a cluster of scores between 85 - 89. A qualifying score in a test of handwriting speed will not be eligible.

6. Year 8 Public Examinations

For AA to be considered for exams sat during year 8 the assessment must have taken place no earlier than the start of Year 5. AA will be awarded based on two scores of 84 or below or below or a cluster of scores between 85 - 89.

7. Temporary arrangements

Temporary arrangements may be required by candidates suffering from illness or injury. The Head of Learning Support should be provided with medical evidence in reasonable time. Temporary arrangements last for one examination session. If the condition persists, another letter may be required for the next session.