



Exam Access Arrangements Policy

Date Reviewed: May 2018

Date Ratified by Governors: May 2018

Date Due for renewal: May 2019

This policy is reviewed annually to ensure compliance with current regulations

Key staff involved in the access arrangements process:

Role	Name(s)
Access Arrangements are overseen by the SENDCo	Nicky Brown
Access Arrangements are processed and implemented by the Examinations Officer	Joanne Cairns
Teaching Assistant support and technology required for examinations is co-ordinated by the SEND Assessment Lead	Chloe Stevenson
Access Arrangement Assessments are carried out by our Specialist Assessor	Sarah Gleave

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What are access arrangements and reasonable adjustments?

Access arrangements are pre-examination adjustments for candidates based on evidence of need and normal way of working. Access arrangements fall into two distinct categories: some arrangements are delegated to centres, others require prior JCQ^{CIC} 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'.

Reasonable Adjustments

The Equality Act 2010 requires the 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 candidate/learner with the disability. An adjustment may not be considered reasonable if it involves unreasonable costs, timeframes or affects the security or integrity of the assessment.

There is no duty on the awarding bodies to make any adjustment to the assessment objectives being tested in an assessment.

The disability must be substantial, persistent and long term, unless it is a temporary injury.

The purpose of this policy

The Wyvern Academy Exam access arrangements Policy follows the regulations and guidance which are issued annually by the Joint Council for Qualifications for Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments.

These are adjustments for candidates with substantial disabilities and learning difficulties. The policy is reviewed annually to ensure that arrangements are carried out in accordance with the current edition of the JCQ publication

Disability policy (exams)

A large part of the access arrangements policy is covered in the Disability Policy (exams) which covers staff roles and responsibilities in identifying the need for requesting and implementing access arrangements and the conduct of exams.

The access arrangements policy further covers the assessment process and related issues in more detail.

The assessment process

Assessments are carried out by an assessor(s) appointed by the head of centre. The assessor(s) is (are) appropriately qualified as required by JCQ regulations

Access Arrangements

All arrangements must be processed and approved before an examination or assessment and before the published deadline apart from applications due to temporary injury or impairment.

Access arrangements can only be applied for if the candidate meets all of the following criteria:

- They must be disabled within the meaning of the Equality Act 2010
- The access arrangement/s being applied for must be their normal way of working
- Their disability is persistent and significant
- There must be evidence of the candidate's current difficulties and how they substantially impact on teaching and learning in the classroom
- Teaching staff must provide evidence of need of the reasonable adjustments made in the classroom, to meet the candidate's needs, due to their disability.
- Written confirmation must be provided to confirm that without the access arrangement applied for the candidate would continue to be at a substantial disadvantage

The most commonly used access arrangements at Wyvern Academy are as follows:

Scribe: a trained adult who writes for the candidate. The student would dictate their answers including all punctuation, grammar and relevant spellings and the scribe would write exactly what the student says. This provision is usually not encouraged for Maths or Modern Foreign Languages. This provision also includes the use of a word processor with spelling and grammar functions enabled. However, relevant spelling/grammar marks would then be deducted from the final exam score. The School cannot support the provision of speech recognition technology for this arrangement.

Reader: a trained adult who would read the question and relevant text (with the exception of an exam testing the students' reading such as English comprehension and Modern Foreign Languages) for the student. The student would then write the answers themselves although this text could then be read back to the student if requested. Under JCQ Regulations, three or four candidates may share one reader and candidates with individual readers may be required to share a room.

Word processing: An exam candidate may be approved the use of a word processor where this is appropriate to the candidate's needs and not simply because this is the candidate's preferred way of working within the centre. The Word Processor Policy and the SLT statement on the use of word processors is located in the Policy section of the School website and on the staff shared drive.

25% Extra Time: students may be entitled to an allowance of 25% extra time depending on their history of need and standardised scores below 85 relating to speed of reading, writing or processing.

Rest Breaks: where students are permitted to stop for short breaks during the exam and this time is then added to the finish time, with the effect of elongating the exam but not actually using any extra time

Prompter: used for students with little sense of time or ability to concentrate, a trained adult/invigilator can prompt them with a few permitted phrases to refocus, move the student on to the next question or indicate how much time is left.

The above list is not exhaustive but does cover the most commonly used exam access arrangements. The School would ensure each student's needs are met as required. Exam access arrangements may also differ according to the students' needs within each subject i.e. extra time may be awarded to extended writing subjects only.

The Access Arrangements Process

Years 7 and 8

All students who have been identified as having Special Educational Needs or a disability at their primary school or who have been identified during years 7 and 8, will be monitored to build up a history of need and provision

Year 9

For those pupils potentially requiring access arrangements, formal assessment and application to JCQ is carried out in Year 9. For all assessments carried out in all subjects from Year 9 onwards, pupils should be allowed to use the access arrangement, this enables them to become familiar with what is required and get used to the procedures before they start their KS4 courses.

- We send letters to parents/carers of students who have a history of persistent and significant need in the spring term to let them know that their child may be included in the group of students to be formally assessed. This will either be later that term or in the summer term.
- Students involved with outside agencies such as the Autism or Speech and Language Teams may have additional assessments
- *Please note 'Provisional' access arrangements granted in Years 7, 8 or 9 are not automatically guaranteed for GCSE exams.*

Year 10

- If there is sufficient evidence and history of need, an application for access arrangements will be made in the autumn term in consultation with the student and parents/carers
- Parents/carers and the student will be informed as to whether or not the application has been approved.
- All students with access arrangements will, apart from those with some sensory or physical disabilities, be designated as having special educational needs.
- Students will be issued with a card showing which access arrangements they are entitled to

Year 11

- Students with access arrangements will practice using them in examination situations during Mock Exams in Year 10 and 11.
- All students with Access Arrangements must continue to be in need of the arrangements and use them for the duration of the examination series otherwise it may be withdrawn.

A “use it or lose it” policy is in force.

- For example, a candidate has been awarded 25% extra time in their examinations and assessments. A potential need was identified in Year 7, and evidence has been gathered from staff which suggests the candidate has struggled to complete assessments in the allotted time, resulting in the SENDCo making the application for extra time. However, in Year 10, the candidate has completed controlled assessment tasks in several subjects and refused to use the extra time, finishing well before the allotted time is over. In this instance, the 25% extra time allocation does not reflect the normal way of working and the extra time would be removed.
- Another example would be a candidate who was granted the use of a reader in his/her assessments as this was the normal way of working whilst in class. If the candidate refuses to make proper use of the reader during examinations or assessments, this is breaking regulations and the candidate should not be allowed the access arrangement at all for future examinations or assessments.
- Misuse of access arrangements constitutes malpractice in examinations and can have serious consequences for the school, the candidate concerned, and indeed any other candidates. The school’s access arrangement records can be inspected at any time by a JCQ inspector and must be thorough, well maintained, and easily accessible on request.

Records

Appropriate evidence of need at Wyvern Academy will be available for inspection. Evidence will take the form of one or more of the following and should be documented from Year 7 onwards.

- Identification of potential candidates requiring access arrangements at the point of entry to school, based upon information from primaries, initial staff observations, KS2 data, baseline testing results, and CAT tests.
- History of need
- History of relevant provision
- Intervention strategies
- Assessment results
- Staff observations - to include teaching staff, teaching assistants and examination invigilators

The School will:

- Provide relevant evidence of the nature and extent of the disability, difficulty or impairment which has a substantial and long-term effect on the candidate’s ability to carry out day to day activities.
- Provide evidence that the difficulties are persistent and significant.
- Show evidence of how the disability, difficulty or impairment has impacted on teaching and learning in the classroom.
- Confirm that the candidate would be at a substantial disadvantage when compared with other non-disabled candidates undertaking the assessment
- Confirm that as a direct consequence of their disability the access arrangement is the candidate’s normal way of working within the school.
- Ensure that the arrangements put in place reflect the support given to the candidate in school and therefore reflect the normal way of working.

The requirements of different subjects vary, for example, an English assessment would require a greater amount of prose writing than a maths assessment. Therefore, it is often the case that a candidate's difficulties mean that he/she only requires support in one or two subjects. Equally, another candidate may need support in all their subjects. The key principle is that the SENCO can show a history of relevant support and provision. As per JCQ regulations certain applications may need to be supported with, for example:

- A letter from CAMHS or a clinical psychologist or psychiatrist
- A letter from a hospital consultant
- A letter from the Local Authority Educational Psychology Service
- A letter from the Local Authority Sensory Impairment Service
- A letter from a Speech and Language Therapist (SALT)

All of the above will be at the request of the SENCO and no other individual

Concerns about your child

It is important that if you think your child may have special educational needs or a disability that you talk to their teachers and the SENCO as **early as possible** in order for us to provide suitable support and build up a history of need.

Private Assessments

As advised by the JCQ, the School **will not** accept privately commissioned assessments as **sole** evidence for exam access arrangements. Privately commissioned assessments will only be considered as background evidence additional to qualitative and quantifiable evidence gathered by the School to reflect the candidates' significant, persistent and long-term need and their normal way of working in school.

With the exception of temporary illness or injury on the day of the examination, students who require exam access arrangements provision for medical purposes will need to provide written evidence from an appropriate medical professional in March of the year they will be sitting exams, stating their current diagnosis, treatment and details of how it might affect their performance. Historical information will not be taken into consideration. Any exam access arrangements provision will then be put in place to comply with current JCQ regulations, which may differ from that suggested by the medical professional.

The Special Educational Need & Disability (SEND) Department is responsible for exam access arrangements provision and duties include the following:

- Ensuring there is appropriate evidence for a student's exam access arrangements.
- Informing subject teachers at regular intervals regarding student's exam access arrangements and how they should be supported in the classroom.
- Liaising with the Exams Team.
- Informing parents/carers about student's provisional access arrangements, specialist assessor tests and official approval of arrangements for GCSE.
- Ensuring each student understands how to use their access arrangements and under what circumstances.

- Monitoring the use of exam access arrangements to ensure they remain appropriate and they become the student's normal way of working.

Please note, it is the responsibility of the student **and** the subject teacher to ensure exam access arrangements are put in place for any assessments and tests taking place in lessons (these do not include formal GCSEs). This will be done with the support of the SEND Department where required.