

Access arrangement policy

2017/18

This policy is reviewed annually to ensure compliance with current regulations

Completed by Senco/Exams Manager	Approved by SLT
Date of next review	January 2019

What are Exam Access Arrangements?

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 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'.

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

Identifying the need for access arrangements within Pedmore Technology College

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
- Reading aloud
- Scribes
- Prompts
- Use of word processors

Responsibility Access arrangements

Are the responsibility of the SENCO, directed by the Headteacher. Access arrangements for exams may be conducted by Pedmore Technology staff with relevant qualifications in accordance with JQC guidance or a qualified person(s) may be bought in.

The SENCO can direct appropriate staff to be part of the assessment process, ie those with appropriate qualifications as cited in JQC document.

- Specialist assessor(s) from Dudley Support Service have been appointed by the Head of the Centre, have a formal and established working relationship with the centre. All Dudley Support Service assessors meet the published criteria for a specialist assessor and the specialist assessor conducts assessments as per the published regulations. All Dudley Learning Support Service Specialist Teachers carrying out Access Arrangements testing have an approved qualification (a post-graduate qualification in individual specialist assessment at or equivalent to Level 7) and regularly update our Access Arrangements CPD training on a 2 yearly basis, as recommended (last cycle was Autumn 2015).

Key Stage 3

On entry to the school in Year 7 all pupils have their abilities in Reading and Spelling assessed. These initial results are used to identify pupils who may need additional support.

If required, support or intervention will then be put in place and monitored. This history will be recorded and noted as the pupil's normal way of working.

Key Stage 3 Staff who have any concerns about a pupil who may need access arrangements should liaise with the Mrs Durrant, The Special Educational Needs Coordinator. Wherever possible, they should provide evidence of need. In addition, the SENCO will ascertain whether any diagnostic testing needs to be administered to determine any specific or additional needs.

When pupils reach Year 9, those who have had access arrangements applied in internal assessments and any newly identified pupils will have their needs reviewed by the SENCO. This will determine what, if any, arrangements are needed for the examination. Permission will only be granted where arrangements:

- are the pupil's normal way of working, with evidence of a history of need;
- meet the conditions set out by the examination boards and JCQ;
- backed by information and evidence clearly demonstrating the extent of the disability and the need for additional support.

It is important that any pupil with a possible disadvantage is identified during Key Stage 3 and referred to the SENCO for assessment before the end of Year 9. Applications for Access Arrangements cannot be submitted for consideration by JCQ without approved and signed by specialist assessor Form 8 and evidence of a history of need.

Key Stage 4

By this stage a history of need will have been established. If new concerns are raised the same process will be followed as for Key Stage 3. The school will then make a decision if testing for Access Arrangements is required and refer to Dudley MBC learning Support. Any new pupil transferring to SVC from another school who has previously been given access arrangements must present the following evidence:

- test data
- supporting evidence of need and provision from their previous school;
- a copy of Access Arrangements online 'Application Approved' (Form 8).

It is the responsibility of the parent/carer to obtain these documents on transfer and to present them to the SENCO on entry to the school.

Other Considerations

Those pupils with a Statement of Special Educational Needs will automatically be considered for possible access arrangements (following the rules and guidance set out by JCQ).

Independent Reports (e.g. those commissioned by parents through private arrangement) cannot be considered in isolation but will be looked at by the school. Access Arrangements, however, can only be considered alongside school data, history of need and the pupil's normal way of working, which must be demonstrated over a significant period of time.

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.

Reports from Primary Schools are not eligible as evidence for exam Access Arrangements in a secondary school setting.

There are time restraints for some Access Arrangements which will be reviewed as appropriate.

Medical emergencies do occur and will be treated urgently as to whether Access Arrangements are required for exams.

When Access Arrangements for Public Examinations are granted

Pupils granted Access Arrangements will be given guidelines on how to use them and parents are informed by letter from the SENCO.

What evidence is needed to apply for Exam Access Arrangements?

There are a number of pieces of evidence that must be in place in order to apply for EAA to the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ):

- Form 8 report signed from specialist teacher and SENCO all sections must be in place
- subject teachers – examples of work as appropriate;
- results of baseline tests e.g. reading/comprehension age, writing tests.
- Signed consent form from pupil.

The SENCO will retain copies of evidence each time a pupil is referred to her as having a possible need for support.

The exam officer will then apply for access arrangements required dependant on the information received on Form 8 and with the guidelines and regulations of JCQ.