



# Access Arrangements Policy

Reviewed September 2017

Next review September 2018

## Rationale

The Examination Access Arrangements Policy explains the actions taken to ensure inclusion throughout the Trust for all students with additional learning needs (ALN), including those with formally diagnosed Special Educational Needs Disabilities (SEND). The policy forms an integral part of our teaching and learning philosophy, which seeks to create a learning environment whereby every individual student may fulfil his or her full potential.

*'Everyone Matters, Everyone Helps, Everyone Succeeds'*

## Definitions

The term **Additional Learning Need** is used as an umbrella term to incorporate ALL students known to be receiving intervention Learning Support provision including those pupils identified as having SEND.

## Disability

**Section 6** of the Equality Act 2010 defines **disability** as a *'physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long term adverse effect on someone's ability to carry out normal day to day activities'*.

## Special Educational Needs

A candidate has "special educational needs" as defined in the SEND code of practice: 0 to 25 years.

Children have special educational needs if they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for them.

The Equality Act 2010 definition of disability includes substantial and long-term sensory impairments such as those affecting sight or hearing, mental health difficulties and long-term health conditions such as asthma, diabetes, epilepsy and cancer. Children and young people with such conditions do not necessarily have SEN, but there is a significant overlap between disabled children and young people and those with SEN.

## What are Access Arrangements?

Access arrangements are agreed before an assessment. They allow students to demonstrate their skills, knowledge and understanding without changing the demands of the assessment. The intention behind access arrangements is to meet the particular needs of a candidate without affecting the integrity of the assessment.

Access arrangements are the principal way in which awarding bodies comply with the duty under 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 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.

### **Special Consideration**

Special Consideration is a post examination adjustment to a candidate's mark or grade to reflect temporary injury, illness or other indisposition at the time of the examination/assessment.

### **Access Arrangements at Rainford High**

Rainford High aim to ensure that all students have equal access to examinations and are neither advantaged nor disadvantaged over their peers by any long term, substantial SEND/or ALN which fall into the following four categories: -

1. *Communication and interaction.*
2. *Cognition and learning.*
3. *Social, emotional and mental health*
4. *Sensory and/ or physical needs.*

We will do this by applying the rules for Access Arrangements as set out in the most recent Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ guidelines 1/09/2015). We believe it is important to abide by the JCQ regulations, so that there is parity in how access arrangements are awarded throughout a student's secondary schooling.

We will use every opportunity to identify students' needs from their first contact with the school. Professional reports are requested that demonstrate a SEND/ALN and a recommendation for a reasonable adjustment to be made to meet the student's needs and the type of access arrangements that are appropriate. Access arrangements reflect the support that is usually given to the student in the classroom, internal exams and mock examinations. This is commonly referred to as 'normal way of working.'

### **When might students need to be given Exam Access Arrangements?**

An Exam Access Arrangement (EAA) is a provision or type of support given to a student (subject to exam board approval) in an exam, where a particular need has been identified and is provided so that the student has appropriate access to the exam.

<u>Access Arrangements</u>	<u>What is it?</u>	<u>Criteria</u>
<b>Scribe</b>	A trained adult writes for the student. The student would dictate their answers. The scribe would write <u>exactly</u> what they say.	<p>A student has a physical disability; where her/his writing:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>is illegible and may hamper their ability to be understood.</i></li> <li>• <i>speed is too slow to be able to complete the exam in the allotted time.</i></li> </ul> <p><b>In MFL, the student must dictate <u>every word in the target language</u> and must do so letter by letter.</b></p>
<b>Reader</b>	<p>A trained adult who would read the question and any relevant text (with the exception of Section A of an English GCSE Exam) for the student. The student would then write the answer/s themselves.</p> <p><i>A reader can read instructions and questions to the student, read the whole paper if necessary or the student may prefer to just ask for some specific words to be read to them.</i></p>	A student has a standardised score of <u>84 or below</u> in a test delivered by Specialist Teacher (100 is the average).
<u>Access Arrangements</u>	<u>What is it?</u>	<u>Criteria</u>
<b>Prompter</b>	A trained adult 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.	A student who <u>persistently</u> loses concentration/focus, and is not aware of time and this can also be put in place for students who are affected by OCD (Obsessive Compulsive Disorder). Students with OCD often focus on one question in particular rather than moving onto look at other questions in the exam paper.
<b>Transcript</b>	An <u>exact</u> copy of a student's exam script made after the exam without the participation of the student.	Only to be used where a student's handwriting or spelling is difficult to decipher for those not familiar with it. This can also be put in place for students with a temporary injury <u>where the use of a laptop is not appropriate.</u>



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<b>Read Aloud</b>	Where a candidate is reading difficult text he/she may work more effectively if they can hear themselves read.	A candidate who <u>persistently</u> struggles to understand what they have read, but who does not qualify for a reader, to read aloud.
	<p><b><i>The arrangement must reflect the candidate's normal way of working in internal school tests and mock examinations.</i></b></p> <p><i>A candidate who reads aloud to himself/herself <b>must</b> be accommodated separately within the centre.</i></p>	
<b>Separate Room</b>	<p>A student with a medical condition such as epilepsy/diabetes where it isn't appropriate for them to sit an exam in the main exam hall. Students who are agoraphobic/have a psychological condition may also need to sit an exam in a separate room.</p> <p><b><u>Medical evidence must be provided in advance</u> to support this arrangement and then be approved by the SENCo.</b></p>	
<b><u>Access Arrangements</u></b>	<b><u>What is it?</u></b>	<b><u>Criteria</u></b>
<b>Modified papers</b>	Individually prepared papers for candidates. The modification of papers involves additional resources. Therefore centres are required to provide the awarding bodies with early notification that a candidate will require a modified paper.	Students for whom other access arrangements are unsuitable.
	<p><i>Modified papers must be ordered in advance of a specific examination series. Centres must not order papers for candidates unless they intend to enter them for the relevant examination series.</i></p> <p><b>Access arrangements online allows centres to place orders for GCSE and GCE modified papers.</b></p>	
<b>Laptop</b>	Access to a laptop for an exam (if appropriate – not for subjects such as Maths) so the student would word process their answers. Spelling and grammar checks would be disabled and a special exam account would be used with no internet access.	The provision to use a laptop is put in place to address an underlying difficulty such as: speed of handwriting; medical condition; physical disability; sensory impairment; planning and organisational difficulties or poor legibility.
	<p><i>The use of a laptop in exams reflects the student's normal way of working at the school and has been agreed as appropriate to the student's needs. The use of a</i></p>	



	<p><i>laptop cannot be granted to a student simply because this is their <b>preferred</b> way of working.</i></p> <p><i>Centres are allowed to provide a word processor with the spelling and grammar check facility/predictive text disabled (switched off) to a candidate where it is their normal way of working within the centre and is appropriate to their needs. For example, the quality of language significantly improves as a result of using a word processor due to problems with planning and organisation when writing by hand. (This also extends to the use of electronic brailers and tablets.)</i></p>	
<u>Access Arrangements</u>	<u>What is it?</u>	<u>Criteria</u>
<b>Rest breaks</b>	<p>Students are permitted to stop for short break/s during the exam and the time stopped is added to the finish time, with the effect of elongating the exam but not actually using any extra time.</p> <p><b>Students are not permitted to have exam materials with them during rest breaks.</b></p>	<p>A student has a physical disability which prevents them from concentrating for <u>long periods of time</u>.</p>
<b>Extra time</b>	<p>Students may be entitled to an allowance of 25% depending on the history of evidence of need (Appendix 1) and the recommendation of the Designated Specialist Teacher or Teaching Assistant.</p> <p><b>Extra time between 26 and 50% can be granted in extraordinary circumstances.</b></p>	<p>Students will have an assessment to determine their speed of processing. A standardised score of <u>84 or below</u> (100 being average) can qualify for extra time.</p> <p><b>In exceptional circumstances, a candidate may require more than 50% extra time in order to manage a very substantial impairment.</b></p>
	<p><i>There are cases where students get a score of more than 84. In these cases more evidence is needed to prove that a student should receive extra time. This could be</i></p>	



	<p><i>in the form of an extensive history of need, formal diagnosis of a significant learning difficulty, or evidence of a substantial long term adverse effect on the performance of a child's speed of a working.</i></p> <p><b>The amount of time that students should receive is decided by the Specialist Tester and based upon their processing speeds.</b></p>	
<u>Access Arrangements</u>	<u>What is it?</u>	<u>Criteria</u>
<p><b>Live speaker</b></p>	<p>A live speaker for pre-recorded examination components, e.g. MFL listening examinations, to a candidate where it is their normal way of working within the centre.</p> <p>The live speaker will speak or read aloud the contents of the CD or tape in a Listening examination.</p>	<p>Students who have <u>persistent and significant</u> difficulties in following speech at normal speed.</p>
<p><b>Oral language modifier</b></p>	<p>A responsible adult who may clarify the carrier language used in the examination paper when requested to do so by a candidate.</p> <p>The Oral Language Modifier must not explain technical terms or subject-specific terms. The ability to understand these terms is part of the assessment. If such terms are explained to the candidate then the demands of the question will have been compromised and may constitute malpractice.</p>	<p>Students whose disability has a very <u>substantial and long term</u> adverse effect resulting in very persistent and significant difficulties in accessing and processing information.</p> <p><i>An Oral Language Modifier <u>must be seen as a rare and exceptional arrangement.</u></i></p> <p><i>An Oral Language Modifier is an adjustment of last resort so an application must only be made once all other relevant access arrangements have been considered and found to be unsuitable or unworkable. There must be a very strong justification as to why an Oral Language Modifier is required.</i></p> <p><i>An Oral Language Modifier <u>may also act as a reader.</u></i></p> <p><i>An Oral Language Modifier will not be allowed to read questions or text in a paper (or a section of a paper) testing reading.</i></p> <p><i>A candidate who would normally be eligible for an Oral Language Modifier, but is not permitted this arrangement in a paper (or a section of a paper) testing reading may be granted up to a maximum of 50% extra time.</i></p> <p><i>An approved application for an Oral Language Modifier will allow the centre to</i></p>



	<u>What is it?</u>	<u>Criteria</u>
<p><b>Sign language interpreter</b></p>	<p>A trained adult who presents the questions in a different language without:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• changing the meaning;</li> <li>• providing any additional information;</li> <li style="text-align: center;">or</li> <li>• providing an explanation as to what the question requires of the candidate.</li> </ul>	<p>Students whose 'normal way of working' requires sign language interpretation.</p>
<p><u>Acc</u> <u>ess</u> <u>Arr</u> <u>an</u> <u>ge</u> <u>me</u></p>		

*A Sign Language Interpreter is not a reader. However, the same person may act as a reader and a Sign Language Interpreter. Permission must have been given for the use of a reader and a Sign Language Interpreter.*

*The Sign Language Interpreter can sign the instructions and questions to candidates taking written papers except in Modern Foreign Languages or English, Irish or Welsh Language examinations.*

The Sign Language Interpreter may repeat the translation if requested to do so by the candidate. An alternative translation of the carrier language may be provided. **However, under no circumstances may an explanation of the question or clarification of the carrier language be given.** These actions would be deemed as giving the candidate an unfair advantage **and may constitute malpractice.** **Candidates may only sign their answers in question papers or in controlled assessment/coursework where it is possible to finger spell the answers or where the answers involve single words.**

*Sign Language interpretation is done 'live' in the presence of the candidate during the examination in order to allow for the candidate's regional variations in BSL/ISL signs.*

*Consequently, sign language interpretation cannot be checked by the awarding body for accuracy. Great care must be taken not to disadvantage or advantage the candidate.*

**Candidates requiring the use of a Sign Language Interpreter may need to be accommodated separately in which case a separate invigilator will be required.**





	<u>What is it?</u>	<u>Criteria</u>
<b>Alternative site</b>	<p>The candidate will be sitting his/her examination(s) at a residential address or at a hospital which is a non-registered centre due to, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>a medical condition</b> which prevents the candidate from taking examinations in the centre; or</li> <li>• <b>Social, Mental and Emotional Needs.</b></li> </ul>	<p>The candidate has:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• an impairment which has a <b>substantial and long term adverse effect</b> giving rise to</li> <li>• <b>persistent and significant difficulties</b>; or</li> <li>• a temporary illness or injury at the time of the examination(s).</li> </ul>
	<p><i>The centre must be satisfied that the candidate is able to take examinations.</i>  <b>The SENCo, or a senior member of staff with pastoral responsibilities, must produce written evidence confirming the need for an alternative site arrangement to a JCQ Centre Inspector upon request.</b></p>	
<b>Practical assistant</b>	<p><b>Is not a reader or a scribe.</b> The same person may act as a practical assistant, a reader and/or a scribe as long as permission has been given for these arrangements.</p> <p><b>The regulations for the use of each arrangement must be strictly adhered to.</b></p>	<p>Students with: poor motor co-ordination or/and <u>severe</u> vision impairment.</p>
	<p><i>A practical assistant must not be allowed to carry out physical tasks or demonstrate physical abilities where they form part of the assessment objectives. A practical assistant will not normally be permitted in subjects such as Art &amp; Design, Design &amp; Technology and Music.</i></p> <p><i>Candidates using a practical assistant in externally set practical or written examinations may need to be accommodated separately, <b>in which case a separate invigilator will be required.</b></i></p> <p><i>The invigilator <b>must</b> be made aware, prior to the examination, of the particular task(s) the practical assistant will be performing.</i></p>	
<b><u>Access Arrangements</u></b>	<b><u>What is it?</u></b>	<b><u>Criteria</u></b>
<b>Other arrangements</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Amplification equipment</li> <li>• Brailers</li> <li>• Closed circuit television (CCTV)</li> </ul>	<p>Centres must note that candidates are <u>only entitled to the above arrangements</u></p>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Colour naming by the invigilator for candidates who are Colour Blind</li> <li>• Coloured Overlays (this would also include reading rulers, virtual overlays and virtual reading rulers)</li> <li>• Low vision aid/magnifier</li> <li>• Optical Character Reader (OCR) scanners</li> <li>• Separate invigilation within the centre</li> </ul>	<p><u>if they are disabled within the meaning of the Equality Act.</u></p> <p>The candidate is at a substantial disadvantage when compared with other non-disabled candidates undertaking the assessment and it would be reasonable in all the circumstances to provide the arrangement.</p>
<p><i>In the case of separate invigilation, the candidate's difficulties are established within the centre and known to a Form Tutor, a Head of Year, the SENCo or a senior member of staff with pastoral responsibilities.</i></p> <p><i>Separate invigilation reflects the candidate's normal way of working in internal school tests and mock examinations as a consequence of a long term medical condition or long term social, mental or emotional needs.</i></p>		
<p><b>Exemptions</b></p>	<p>An exemption is an agreement reached by an awarding body, before the examination, for a disabled candidate to miss a component or components. An indication will be placed on the candidate's certificate to show that not all of the assessment objectives were accessible.</p> <p><b>An exemption will not be granted if an alternative and accessible route through a qualification is available to the candidate.</b></p> <p><b><i>The centre in the first instance should select 'Other'. This will result in an automatic rejection. The centre must then make a referral to the relevant awarding body. The centre <u>must</u> indicate the candidate's disability in order that an awarding body has the necessary information to hand when considering an application for an exemption. The awarding body <b>must</b> be assured that the exemption is an arrangement of the last resort.</i></b></p> <p><i>In Functional Skills English where barriers to access remain, candidates can be exempted from up to two of the three assessed components. Such an arrangement does not apply to Functional Skills ICT and Mathematics qualifications, as these qualifications consist of only one component.</i></p>	

**What evidence is needed to apply for EAA?**

There are a number of pieces of evidence that can be used to apply for EAA to Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ):

- Form 8 report from Specialist Teacher or Specialist Teaching Assistant
- Previous EAA from Primary Schools/ other Education Providers
- Subject teachers – examples of work as appropriate
- Results of baseline tests e.g. reading/comprehension age, writing tests

**Private Educational Psychologists Reports**

A growing number of parents are having their children assessed by private educational psychologists and submitting the reports to the SENCo as evidence that their child should be awarded extra time, or EAA.



Private educational psychologist's reports cost a significant amount of money. This therefore means that parents who are unable to obtain a private report through their financial circumstances are put at a disadvantage. As an exam centre we must be consistent in our decisions and ensure that no student is *'either given an unfair advantage or be disadvantaged by any arrangements put in place.* Often private educational psychologists, recommend that children should receive EAA which can be in conflict with what the centre tester (Specialist Teacher) recommends. We will also look for evidence of a history of need.

## **Procedures**

### **How students would be identified for Exam Access Arrangements:**

- They would have had EAA at KS2 for their SAT's
- From baseline testing completed on the Cognitive Ability Tests (CAT) Day's in Year 7
- Parental Referral
- Subject Teacher Referral
- Information from Middle or Upper schools

### **KS2 SAT EAA**

Students who have EAA at KS2 are screened for EAA at KS3 and KS4. Although they may have received EAA at KS2, it doesn't necessarily mean that they automatically receive it at KS3 or KS4 because their needs may have changed. For example, a student who had a Reader for KS2 may not qualify for a Reader at KS4 because their reading has improved to the extent it does not meet the exam board criteria.

### **Baseline Testing in Year 7**

All students in Year 7 are tested on the CAT's Days in September. We use the Cognitive Ability Tests (CATs), Reading and Comprehension. These tests can help identify learning difficulties such as dyslexia. The SENCo will contact parents where this is the case, do further testing, and if necessary put an appropriate intervention into place.

### **Parent Referral**

Parents can contact the school to ask for advice about testing if they have concerns with the progress and learning of their child. Once contact has been made with the parent, the SENCo will investigate their concerns by sending a "round robin" to the child's teachers to gain information. Following this, a decision will be made as to whether it is appropriate to test a student.

### **Teacher Referral**

As with Parent Referrals, teachers can refer a student to the SENCo where they have concerns about the learning and progress of a student in their class. All of the students current teachers will be asked to give feedback to gain information, and following this a decision will be made as to whether to test a student for EAA. Where a teacher thinks that a student requires extra time, they are asked to get the student to change the colour of the pen that they are using once the allotted time is up, and continue writing until they are finished. This is then used as proof to JCQ and the exam boards of a history of need. Teachers are asked to refer students to the SENCo initially if they feel that a child may be dyslexic rather than contacting parents about their concerns. The SENCo will then contact the parents if the concerns are founded.

### **How do staff and parents know whether a student has Exam Access Arrangements?**

- Teaching and support staff can access the list on Staff Shared Area. It is updated on a monthly basis or whenever students become entitled to it. The information about results of assessments for EAA are kept confidentially in line with school policy, are shared on a need to know basis.



- Staff will be informed of any changes to the EAA list via email.
- Parents will be informed of any tests results via a letter home which states what they are entitled to, why and when.

### **How are Exam Access Arrangements applied for?**

Students need to be tested at each Key Stage for EAA. Just because they were entitled to EAA at KS2 does not automatically entitle them to it at KS3 or KS4. Therefore the Specialist Teacher tests students who are referred to us, or who have had EAA in earlier Key Stages.

The Specialist Teacher will assess students using a variety of nationally recognised tests such as:

- *Access Reading Comprehension test*
- *Detailed Assessment of Speed of Handwriting (DASH)*
- *British Picture Vocabulary Scales (2&3)*
- *Comprehensive Test of Phonological Processing 2 (CTOPP)*
- *Phonological Assessment Battery*

The tests that the Specialist Tester uses are replaced/upgraded periodically in line with current practice. The test that the Specialist Tester uses depends very much upon the type of barrier to learning that the student may have. Should the student need further testing to assess for other learning issues or further EAA, the Specialist Tester will arrange this. Following a report produced by the Specialist Tester an application is made to the Exam Boards for permission to implement the specified arrangement/s. Students are tested formally in April/May of Year 9 in order to comply with the 26 month rule; so that any permitted exam access arrangements are in place for the full GCSE period of both Year 10 and 11.

### **What support is given to students with EAA?**

Students with EAA take part in small group sessions to show them how to effectively use EAA. In addition, students with EAA are encouraged to use their EAA during internal assessments and exams so that they gain practice at using it effectively.

Students who have access to a reader or scribe are shown how to use them appropriately in exam situations, and it is explained to them what they can and can't do with the reader/scribe during the exam, and how much support the adult is allowed to give. Students with extra time are given sessions with a teaching assistant on how to use the additional time allowance effectively. They then need to apply the techniques and strategies given to them in internal exams and assessments.

All teachers are given access to the list of students with EAA, and they are asked to give the SENCo at least two weeks' notice before they assess students so that support can be provided for students who require it during the tests/exams. Students who have a reader can be supported by the teaching Assistant supervising the test. The SENCO/Exams Officer can provide a separate room, access to ICT and a scribe with the required amount of notice. The SENCo require two weeks' notice so that teaching assistants can be redeployed if necessary to other students.

Students with EAA are monitored regularly through the use of 'The Watch List'.

In the event that a student does not wish to make use of their EAA in any given exam, they will be required to sign a form (Appendix 2) to indicate that they were aware that EAA was available to them, but it was



their choice not to use them. However, where a student is deemed under the Mental Health Act (Code of Practice 2014) to be unable to make this decision the use of EAA will actively be encouraged.

### **What are the procedures for processing an application?**

Once the tests have been conducted and there is a recommendation from the tester for EAA, the SENCo, Specialist Teaching Assistant or Exams officer then applies to the exam boards. The feedback is instant and at this point the EAA is added to the list of students and the parents are informed of the EAA by letter.

The application will require evidence of need, and the centre needs to hold evidence in its files that can be inspected at short notice. This can include:

- *Recommendations by teachers*
- *Educational psychologist reports*
- *Letters from outside agencies such as CAMHS (Children and Adolescent Mental Health Services), hospitals or doctors*
- *Information from SALT (Speech and Language Team)*
- *Statement of Educational Need or Education, health & Care Plans (EHCP)*

Permission from the exam boards for the arrangement/s

- *A signed copy of the Form 8 report by the designated tester*
- *A data protection form signed by the student*
- *For Extra Time – history of evidence of need in the form of copies of work where a student has regularly used more than the allotted time.*

### **Deadlines for submitting applications for access arrangements and modified papers on-line for GCSE and GCE qualifications**

Access arrangements may cover the entire course and for GCSE and GCE qualifications **must** be processed using access arrangements online **as early as possible**.

The following dates are set by the JCQ and we will endeavour to test students after the dates above but they will not receive dispensation for that period. This is due to allocation of time to test late entries.

**From referral to point of access arrangements being awarded take up to 4 weeks with Edexcel.**

**The deadline set by the JCQ is final, late entries will incur further inspections by the JCQ.**

**The decision to apply for access arrangements is based on evidence of a history of need, history of provision and a specialist teacher access arrangements report.**

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