

Good Practice in Access Arrangements

The Purpose of Access arrangements:

"The purpose of an access arrangement is to ensure, where possible, that barriers to assessment are removed for a disabled candidate preventing him/her from being placed at a substantial disadvantage as a consequence of persistent and significant difficulties"

This applies to students with Specific Learning Difficulties. Identifying Students to be assessed for Access Arrangements

It is important to identify students who will require access arrangements as early as possible for two main reasons:

1. A 'picture of need' is required to support applications. Therefore effective screening and monitoring systems during Years 7 to 9 will enable the SENCo to 'paint an appropriately detailed picture of need'.

Making Reasonable Adjustments in the classroom setting throughout KS3 is good practice and enables students to develop skills they will need for KS4 examinations.

All access arrangements put in place must reflect the typical support given to the candidate in the school. It is best practice if this support has been given over time, ideally throughout kS3

- In class support (reader, scribe, prompter)
 - Working in small groups for reading and/or writing; or
 - Literacy support lessons;
 - Literacy intervention strategies;
 - Reasonable adjustments in internal school tests and mock examinations (use of word processor, extra time, scribe and reader, read aloud)
2. To ensure that students get as much practice as possible in using an access arrangement the candidate must have had appropriate opportunities to practise using the access arrangement(s) before his/her first examination, e.g. a computer reader, or a scribe. **These arrangements should become a student's normal way of working.**

Who can assess students for Access Arrangements?

Assessments for access arrangements should be administered by specialist teachers, or psychologists.

The responsibility for deciding who is qualified to administer assessments is determined by the Head of Centre.

JCQ makes recommendations regarding the skills and experience necessary.

These include:

- Being able to teach and assess secondary age students who have learning difficulties
- Understanding the theory and practice of standardised assessment of ability and literacy skills
- Ability to select, administer and interpret appropriate tests and assessments
- Training (or experience) in cognitive ability assessment
- Understanding the JCQ regulations and the Equality Act (2010)

The names of all assessors for access arrangements must be registered with JCQ in advance.

Professional Standards

- Ensure assessments for access arrangements are conducted by suitably qualified practitioners
- Make applications only for those students with identified needs
- Ensure that access arrangements do not give an unfair advantage to a student,
- Adhere to the requirements of the Equality Act (2010) as highlighted in the JCQ regulations
- Keep all those involved informed:
 - Students and parents need to know what access arrangements are in place for them and the implications of these.
 - Subject teachers need to be aware of which students have access arrangements so they can facilitate this as the 'normal way of working'.
 - Exam officers need to support in the facilitation of access arrangements.

Suggested timeline for Access Arrangements:

When	
Ongoing	Identification of KS3 students who may need reasonable adjustments within the classroom setting or for internal tests and assessments
May	Select year 9 students to be assessed for access arrangements. This can be done in collaboration with the SENCo, subject teachers, pastoral team, parents and students Send requests to parents for permission to assess their child
June/July	Students assessed for specific arrangements that reflect their individual learning needs eg. reader and or scribe, use of WP, extra time. Results of assessments are valid for 24 months from the date of assessment so will take a student through until the end of Y11. Diagnostic reports produced by the specialist assessor to be kept on file. These reports should also include relevant background information about the student's AEN and history of support.

	<p>Ensure the Data Protection notice has been explained to, and signed by students.</p> <p>http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/aao-access-arrangements-online/data-protection-notice</p>
September	<p>Work with the Examinations Officer to get the updated JCQ regulations for that academic year (usually published by the end of September)</p> <p>Check that the students meet the criteria for access arrangements under the new regulations.</p> <p>Apply on line through: http://www.aqa.org.uk/</p> <p>Although this is AQA this link covers the examining bodies under JCQ. The Examinations Officer can set up a password for this.</p> <p>Inform parents and students</p> <p>Ensure all staff are aware of who has access arrangements and their responsibility to ensure this is the normal way of working for students in all internal assessments and tests</p>
October	<p>Train support staff in the roles and responsibilities of being a reader and scribe</p>

It is important to ensure that the Exams Officer facilitates access arrangements for students during mocks and public examinations. Consideration given to rooming, equipment (word processors, computer readers) and staffing (separate invigilators).

The regulations regarding applications for access arrangements are set by the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ). You can download these from the JCQ website: <http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/access-arrangements-and-special-consideration>

