



**The Telford Langley School**  
**ENSURING EXCELLENCE**

## **Exam Access Arrangements Policy**

Approved: Autumn 2021

# Exam Access Arrangements Policy

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# 1. Purpose of the Policy

This policy is intended as a guidance document with teachers and parents being the target audience. The Examination Access Arrangements Policy explains the actions taken to ensure inclusion throughout the school for all students with learning needs, including those with formally diagnosed Special Educational Needs and 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 their potential..

This policy is maintained and held by the Director of Inclusion alongside the individual files of each access arrangements candidate. Each file contains detailed records of all the essential information that is required to be held according to the regulations.

The policy is annually reviewed to ensure that processes are carried out in accordance with the current edition of the JCQ publication Adjustments for candidates with disabilities and learning difficulties - Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments.

## 2. What are Exam Access Arrangements (EAA)

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 so that the student has appropriate access to the exam. This can be in the form of:

- **A scribe:** a trained adult who writes for the student. The student would dictate their answers. The scribe would write exactly what they say.
- **A reader:** 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.
- **ICT:** access to a computer 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.
- **Extra time:** students may be entitled to an allowance of 25% if there is a evidence of need and the recommendation of the designated Specialist Teacher.
- **Supervised Rest breaks:** where 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.
- **Prompter:** a trained adult can prompt a student with a few permitted phrases to refocus, move the student on to the next question or indicate how much time is left.

### 3. When might students need to be given Exam Arrangements?

<b>Scribe</b>	Where there is a physical disability; where their writing:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is illegible and may hamper their ability to be understood</li> <li>• speed is too slow to be able to complete the exam in the allotted time</li> </ul>
<b>Reader</b>	Where there is a standardised score of below 85 in a test delivered by Specialist Teacher (100 is the average).
<b>ICT</b>	Where there is a physical disability; their writing would be:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• illegible and may hamper their ability to be understood</li> <li>• speed is too slow to be able to complete the exam in the allotted time</li> </ul>
<b>Extra Time</b>	Where a student's ability to process information is slower than average.
<b>Rest Breaks</b>	Where a student has a physical disability which prevents them from concentrating for long periods of time. This is now the recommended option from the exam boards before considering extra time.
<b>Prompter</b>	For a student who loses concentration/focus and is not aware of time.
<b>Separate Room</b>	For 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. Medical evidence and history of need to be evidenced in the form of an external professional/medical note explaining how the medical condition is disabling within the means of the Equality Act 2010 and why without the arrangements be at a substantial disadvantage.

### 4. Staff Roles in determining and managing Exam Access Arrangements

#### Director of Inclusion:

- To ensure there is a 'whole centre' approach to access arrangements it is therefore the responsibility of the head of centre, members of the senior leadership team and the specialist assessor(s)/SENCO within the centre to familiarise themselves with the entire contents of the latest JCQ guidance.
- The SENCO, fully supported by teaching staff and members of the senior leadership team, must lead on the access arrangements process within his/her centre.
- Teaching staff and members of the senior leadership team must support the SENCO in determining and implementing appropriate access arrangements.
- Ideally, the SENCO will also be the in-house specialist assessor and will thus assess candidates, process applications on-line and hold the evidence for inspection purposes for GCSE and/or GCE qualifications. At The Telford Langley School we currently have a separate specialist assessor.

#### Examinations Officer:

- To ensure that the agreed EAA provisions are in place for exams and are communicated to the invigilators.
- To ensure the agreed EAA provision is updated on the EAL register.
- To manage any on the day questions and queries regarding EAA provision.

- To put in place (in conjunction with the SEND department) any on day provisions – such as medical emergencies.
- To ensure students are roomed suitably for their Access Arrangement and to ensure zero disruption for other students also sitting exams.

### **Specialist Assessor:**

- To work with students at KS3 to do basic assessments, give strategies and build a picture of need and provision.
- To administer recognised psychometric testing after gathering evidence from teachers, student interviews and classroom observations.
- To assist the SENCO in the decision-making process about EAA.

### **Teaching Staff:**

- To provide relevant information/evidence of the candidate's **persistent and significant difficulties**.
- To show how the candidate's disability/difficulty has impacted on teaching and learning in the classroom. Provide evidence of this for the SENCO.
- Detail the candidate's normal way of working within the centre, the support given and how this relates to the proposed arrangement. For example, teaching staff must record any support regularly provided in the classroom.
- To ensure that the correct EAA are in place for controlled assessments.

## **5. Deadlines for making applications**

### **Year 11**

The deadline to raise concerns about a student in Year 11 is October half term. This allows the SENCO and the Examinations Officer time to plan the Year 11 mock examinations which are the last opportunity to trial any EAA. The Year 10 examinations provided an opportunity to identify any difficulties a student may have.

### **Timelines towards being awarded an EAA, Year 7-11**

1. Year 6 – The junior school and parents provide the SENCO with any history of need/provision.
2. KS3 - Teachers monitor students closely and gather evidence of need for EAA. EAA trialled in tests/exams.
3. Year 9 summer term – Form 8 completed based on evidence supplied by teachers. Specialist Assessor then tests students. SENCO applies online and informs the examinations officer.
4. KS4 – EAA in place and being used regularly.
5. Oct of Year 11 – final deadline for teachers to submit evidence and requests for EAA. Mock examinations are the last chance to trial EAA. Students must use them then or lose them.
6. Summer Year 11 – exams completed with correct EAA in place as 'normal way of working'.

## 6. 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 the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ):

- Form 8 report from a specialist teacher and/or Detailed File Note from the SENCO
- Previous EAA from a Primary School
- Subject teachers – examples of work as appropriate
- Results of baseline tests e.g. reading/comprehension age, writing tests
- Letters or referrals from a medical professional
- Specific testing to meet the JCQ criteria

### Extra Time

For extra time (the most applied for EAA), students will have an assessment to determine their speed of processing. Two standardised score of 84 or below from different areas can qualify for extra time.

There are rare 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 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 working.

The Exam Boards recommend that before extra time is awarded, supervised rest breaks must be considered, since this may be more appropriate for a student with a medical or psychological condition.

It is usual that a student would receive 25% extra time in the first instance. To receive 50% is very unusual and applies to those students with a severe learning/physical difficulty. Exam boards would recommend putting other EAA in place before this occurs. There is evidence to suggest that students who receive more extra time than they need do not use it effectively and may in fact damage their chances of achieving a good grade because they go back and undo the work that they have produced. Therefore, giving extra time needs careful consideration.

### Private Educational Psychologists Reports

A number of parents have their children assessed by private educational psychologists and submit the reports to Learning Support as evidence that their child should be awarded 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 conflict with what the centre assessor (Specialist Teacher) recommends. We also look for and consider evidence of a history of need. JCQ states that "*if a candidate can complete a paper in the normal length of time, and never uses the extra time which has been made available, then it is not an effective time management. It would not be appropriate to process an application for extra time.*" As such the school will not accept the recommendations of a private educational psychologist report but will instead follow the recommendations of the specialist.

JCQ advise that: "*...the specialist assessors should be guided by the following:*

- ***The specialist assessor should ideally be employed within the centre***
  - *The second choice is a specialist assessor employed at another centre*
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- *The third choice would be a local authority specialist assessor*
- *The fourth choice would be an external specialist assessor **who has an established relationship with the centre** (The Telford Langley School)”.*

JCQ also states that **“Where a centre elects either to accept or reject a privately commissioned report from an external professional, the head of centre [the Headteacher] or a member of the senior leadership team must provide a brief, written rationale to support this decision which must be available for inspection purposes.**

## 7. Procedures

### How would students be identified for Exam Access Arrangement Assessing?

- They would have had EAA at KS2 for their SAT's
- From baseline testing completed on the Induction Days in Year 6
- Parental Referral
- Subject Teacher Referral
- Information from Primary schools
- Students on SEN Reg
- Interventions

### 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 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 6

All students in Year 6 are tested on the Induction Days in July. These tests can help identify learning difficulties such as dyslexia. Learning Support 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, Learning Support 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 Learning Support where they have concerns about the learning and progress of a student in their class. All the student's current teachers will be asked to give feedback in order to gather information. 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 have 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 Learning Support initially if they feel that a child may be dyslexic rather than contacting parents about their concerns. Learning Support 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 from a shared data base. It is updated on a weekly basis or whenever students become entitled to it. The information about results of assessments for EAA are kept confidentially in line with school policy and are shared on a need to know basis.
- Staff are informed of any changes to the EAA list. ~~via the Staff Bulletin which goes out every Friday.~~
- 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. An entitlement to EAA at KS2 does not automatically entitle them to it at KS3 or KS4. Therefore, the specialist assessor tests students who are referred to us, or who have had EAA in earlier Key Stages.

The specialist assessor will assess students using a variety of nationally recognised tests such as:

- LUCID Exact
- LUCID Rapid
- LUCID Recall
- Wide Range Achievement Test
- (i) Spelling
- (ii) Single-word reading
- Detailed Assessment of Speed of Handwriting
- British Picture Vocabulary Scales (2&3)
- Comprehensive Test of Phonological Processing 2

The tests that the specialist assessor uses are replaced/upgraded periodically in line with current practice.

The tests that the specialist assessor 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, this will be arranged. Following a report produced by the specialist assessor, an application is made to the Exam Boards for permission to implement the specified arrangement/s. Students are tested formally in Year 9 so that any permitted exam access arrangements are in place for the full exam 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 and that it offers the “normal way of working” approach.

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 Learning Support 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 teacher supervising the test. Learning Support can provide a separate room, access to ICT and a scribe with the required amount of notice for assessments. The



EAA's are organised jointly by the HLTA's and Examination officer for formal and internal exam periods.

Students with EAA are monitored regularly using data from Progress Reports, Trackers and exam results.

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

Once the tests have been conducted and there is a recommendation from the specialist assessor for EAA, the SENCo 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/Educational health care Plan
- Permission from the exam boards for the arrangement/s
- A signed copy of the Form 8 report by the designated assessor and/or a Detailed File Note from the SENDCO
- A data protection form signed by the student
- A record of all occasions when a student has been supported by EAA
- 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 and regular feedback from subject teachers to indicate how the student is using their extra time allowance.

## **Other additional information**

### **Procedure for medical letters**

Letters from medical professionals will trigger an investigation but the medical condition also needs to be supported by evidence from within the school otherwise it is considered malpractice. EAA's cannot be awarded purely on the basis of a medical letter.

## **Malpractice**

Schools are regularly inspected to ensure they have followed JCQ regulations – usually every summer during the examination season. The consequences of malpractice can be severe. These may include disqualification for the student from one or more examinations, disqualification for a whole cohort of students, or even the centre being closed down for up to 5 years. Examples of malpractice include:

- Students being granted EAA which are not their normal way of working
- EAA being 'suddenly' granted before examinations
- EAA being granted when a student has no history of need or provision

- EAA being granted without sufficient evidence
- Students not using their EAA in a mock examination and still being allowed it in the real examination

### **Further Information**

Further information can be found at the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) website: <http://www.jcq.org.uk>

Any questions about exam access arrangements, please contact the Director of Inclusion on 01952 386700.

## **8. Links to other School Policies and References**

This policy links to the following policies and procedures:

- JCQ publication Adjustments for candidates with disabilities and learning difficulties - Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments
- Equality Act 2010

# Appendix 1

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.

Access Arrangement	What is it?	Criteria
<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.	A student has a physical disability; where her/his writing:- <i>x is illegible and may hamper their ability to be understood.</i> <i>x speed is too slow to be able to complete the exam in the allotted time. In MFL, the student must dictate every word in the target language and must do so letter by letter.</i>
<b>Reader</b>	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.	A student has a standardised score of <u>84 or below</u> in a test delivered by Specialist Teacher (100 is the average).
<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>		
<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>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.
<b><i>The arrangement must reflect the candidate's normal way of working in internal school tests and mock examinations.</i></b>  <i>A candidate who reads aloud to himself/herself <b>must</b> be accommodated separately within the centre.</i>		

Access Arrangement	What is it?	Criteria
<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 to support this arrangement and then be approved by the SENCo.</u></b></p>	
<b>Modified papers</b>	<p>Individually prepared papers for candidates.</p> <p>The modification of papers involves additional resources. Therefore, Centre's are required to provide the awarding bodies with early notification that a candidate will require a modified paper.</p>	<p>Visual Impairment</p> <p>Students for whom other access arrangements are unsuitable.</p>
<p><i>Modified papers must be ordered in advance of a specific examination series. Centre's 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 Centre's to place orders for GCSE and GCE modified papers.</b></p>		
<b>Laptop</b>	<p>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.</p>	<p>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>
<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 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>		

Access Arrangement	What is it?	Criteria
<p><b>Rest breaks</b></p>	<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>
<p><b>Extra time</b></p>	<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. <b>In exceptional circumstances, a candidate may require more than 50% extra time in order to manage a very substantial impairment.</b></p>
<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><i>This is now the recommended option from the exam boards before considering extra time.</i></p> <p><b>Rest breaks are not included in any Extra Time allowance that the student may have.</b></p> <p><b>The amount of time awarded is granted at the discretion of the SENCo.</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>	

Access Arrangement	What is it?	Criteria
<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. 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 grant the candidate up to a maximum of 50% extra time in a paper (or a section of a paper) testing reading.</i></p>	

Access Arrangement	What is it?	Criteria
<p><b>Bilingual translation dictionaries (with up to a maximum of 25% extra time)</b></p>	<p>Only to be used by student's whose first language is not English, Irish or Welsh.</p> <p><b>The bilingual dictionary must be held in the centre to ensure no unauthorised information e.g. notes/revision is enclosed or written inside.</b></p>	<p>Should reflect the student's normal way of working.</p>
	<p><i>Such dictionaries must not be used in English Language, Irish Language or Welsh Language examinations or Modern Foreign Language examinations testing one of the languages of the dictionary or a similar language, for example, a Portuguese dictionary in a Spanish examination. The use of a bilingual translation dictionary.</i></p> <p><u>Exceptions to these rules are:</u></p> <p><i>The Writing Test in GCSE Arabic, GCSE Bengali, GCSE Dutch, GCSE Greek, GCSE Gujarati, GCSE Japanese, GCSE Modern Hebrew, GCSE Panjabi, GCSE Persian, GCSE Polish, GCSE Portuguese, GCSE Russian and GCSE Turkish where the specification states that all candidates must have access to a bilingual dictionary.</i></p> <p><i>Candidates who are permitted to use bilingual translation dictionaries may also be allowed up to a maximum of 25% extra time, depending on need, if they have been resident in the UK for less than two years at the time of the examination, the candidate still has a very limited knowledge of the English language, extra time reflects the candidates normal way of working.</i></p> <p><i>For aural tests, clear amplification may be necessary to improve the candidate's ability to hear, or a transcript of a listening test may be read to enable the candidate to also lip/speech-read.</i></p> <p><i>The centre must consult a specialist teacher, i.e. a qualified Teacher of the Deaf, to identify the most appropriate arrangement for a candidate with hearing loss. The live speaker will speak or read aloud the contents of the CD or tape in a Listening examination.</i></p> <p><i>Extra time of 25% should always be considered on account of the additional repetition which may be required. Additionally, 25% extra time may also be required in light of the candidate's persistent and significant difficulties in following speech at normal speed. In very rare and exceptional circumstances the candidate may require up to 50% extra time.</i></p>	