

Exam Access Arrangements Policy 2016

An outline of the definition of Exam Access Arrangements and an explanation of how they work at Tanbridge House School.

1. What are Exam Access Arrangements?

1.1. Exam Access Arrangements (EAA) are agreed before assessments / exams take place. They are put in place to meet the particular needs of an individual candidate without affecting the integrity of the assessment.

1.2. The Equality Act 2010 requires exam boards to make reasonable adjustments when a candidate has a long term and substantial disability or difficulty which would disadvantage them compared to other candidates. Students should not be disadvantaged by any medical, physical, cognitive, sensory or psychological difficulty they have.

1.3 The application of EAA should remove any barriers preventing students from demonstrating their knowledge in exams and should reflect their normal way of working within school.

1.4 Examples of EAA include use of a Reader; a Word Processor; 25% Extra Time; Rest Breaks and a Scribe. These are described in more detail at the end of the policy.

1.5 Students may qualify for one or more concessions as long as they meet the criteria set out by the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ). EAA will not be recorded on any qualification certificates.

1.6 Whilst seeking to remove barriers, JCQ also have to ensure that candidates are not given an unfair advantage by having an EAA. Therefore, the school has to be able to show evidence that students would use the access arrangement as their normal way of working, usually from Yr 7 if not earlier.

A list of the most common EAA are included at the end of the policy.

2. How are EAA decided ?

There are a number of ways that students who may need EAA are identified.

2.1 During Yr 6 transition visits, the SENCo collates information about concessions the student had at Primary school. Once the student is settled in Yr 7, KS3 cards may be issued, reminding staff that a concession is needed during tests.

2.2 Parents may mention exam concessions at Induction evening or in information supplied to Inclusion prior to the September start or once term has started.

2.3 The reading and spelling screeners completed during the first half term may highlight a specific need that needs consideration for EAA.

2.4 Students may speak to their form tutor, subject teacher or a member of staff from Inclusion if they feel they are struggling with reading / completing exams / writing etc.

2.5 All teaching and support staff have a significant role to play in identifying students who need EAA. They can alert the SENCo or the Exams Manager or a member of the Inclusion team if they have concerns over a student managing in assessments for any reason.

2.6 Any student who has an EHCP / Statement or has had wave 2 or wave 3 intervention with Inclusion will be assessed, along with any student highlighted by a member of staff, parent or by the student themselves.

3. Time Line

3.1 November Yr7 -Yr 8

Students have a KS3 exam card if needed, identified as above. Evidence is accumulated for 'normal way of working' (see 4 below) as required by JCQ.

It is **not** guaranteed that these concessions will continue into KS4 or be available for GCSEs as this will depend on standardised assessments carried out in Yr 9.

Centre delegated concessions such as rest breaks for medical reasons are not subject to assessment but are required to be the student's normal way of working.

3.2 Yr9 - Yr 10

Formal assessments completed by the SENCo, leading to applications to the exam board where necessary. A 'Form 8' may be required which is the legal document completed before applying on line for certain concessions. This is completed by the SENCo and gives a detailed picture of need, provision and evidence of normal way of working.

Students will be asked to sign a data protection sheet giving permission for the school to apply on line to JCQ and also to pass on the Form 8 to colleges in the future.

Any assessments or recommendations from outside agencies such as Educational Psychologists, Speech and Language therapists or Paediatricians are held in student's files as background evidence of need but do not in themselves guarantee any EAA. JCQ will only accept assessments done by the School's specialist assessor who must also complete the application form and sign it off.

3.3 Yr 10 - Yr 11

Parents are informed by letter as to which EAA have been approved. It is now a legal requirement that the student has these EAA for all assessments, both in-house and external exams.

Use of the concessions are recorded in all exams as evidence for JCQ Inspectors.

If a student refuses to use their concession they will be asked to sign a letter to that effect and will not be able to have access to the concessions in the future. This is because the exam boards require the concession to be the normal way of working.

Subject teachers have a responsibility to ensure the EAA are in place for all in-house assessments and need to alert Inclusion in plenty of time if extra staff are required e.g. for Readers.

Students with EAA can be identified on the departmental data bases which are updated as soon as concessions are approved by JCQ.

The Inclusion department work closely with the Exams Manager to ensure that EAA are in place for Key Assessment Weeks (KAW) and any other major exam period, including official GCSE exams.

4. Normal way of working :

4.1 Deciding to apply for EAA is based on evidence of a history of need, history of provision and substantial evidence that this is how the student normally works in their assessments. The school keeps records of all concessions used in exams and KAW during KS3 and KS4 in order to be able to demonstrate this to JCQ. **School is not able therefore, to consider applying for EAA once Yr 11 has been started as we cannot fulfil the legal criteria.** Advice may instead be given on revision skills and preparation.

4.2 Indicators of the need for the common EAA :

Reader	An impairment which has a substantial and long term adverse effect on the ability to read. A standardised score of 84 or below in an assessment carried out by the SENCo. (100 is the average). Note : Readers are not allowed for components where reading is being assessed ie English Language papers. 25% extra time is offered instead for this exam.
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<p>Scribe</p>	<p>A disability or difficulty which has a long term and substantial adverse effect on the students writing. The student is not able to use a WP effectively. A standardised score of 84 or less in an assessment carried out by the SENCo. Note : Scribes are not allowed for any MFL exam unless every word is dictated letter by letter. Where separate marks are awarded for spelling, punctuation and grammar, these cannot be credited to a student using a scribe. Marks can be awarded for punctuation only if this is dictated. It is not ideal to use a scribe for a Maths paper as working out needs to be shown.</p>
<p>Word Processor (WP)</p>	<p>Where there is a physical disability such as hypermobility or writing is illegible or speed of writing is too slow due to substantial difficulties. Note : WPs are not allowed to have the spelling and grammar check enabled.</p>
<p>25% Extra time</p>	<p>Where a student’s ability to process information / read is significantly lower than average. A standardised score of 84 or below in an assessment carried out by the SENCo. (100 is the average)</p>
<p>Supervised Rest Breaks</p>	<p>These may be awarded for students who have medical or sensory needs. The clock is ‘stopped’ then ‘restarted’ so no exam time is lost. Note : Students need to be aware that rest breaks will extend the overall time and may disrupt their train of thought.</p>

4.3 This list is by no means exhaustive but covers the most commonly used EAA. In all cases, EAA must be the student’s normal way of working during KS3 and KS4.