



Co-op Academy
North Manchester

Access Arrangements

Information for parents and carers

What is an Access Arrangement

If a pupil has an identified learning need or disability that means that they are disadvantaged in comparison to other pupils of similar ability, they may qualify for access arrangements for public examinations. There are a number of different types of access arrangement and these are determined by the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ).

The main ones are listed at the bottom of this guidance document. The criteria that must be met for an access arrangement changes frequently and JCQ issue guidance booklets every year. You can access these online – www.jcq.org.uk for information.

Reasonable Adjustments

The Equality Act 2010 requires an Awarding Body (Exam Board) to make reasonable adjustments where a disabled person would be at a substantial disadvantage in undertaking an assessment. How reasonable the adjustment is will depend on a number of factors including the needs of the disabled candidate/learner.

When we will assess a pupil

We will assess pupils who have been identified in KS3 as potentially requiring access arrangements in Year 10. This assessment will help us determine whether pupils meet the criteria and subsequently apply for access arrangements to be granted. Any application is only valid for 26 months and it is for this reason that we do not apply earlier.

In order for us to apply we need to provide evidence of an ongoing need and show that the access arrangement we apply for is the pupil's normal way of working. Therefore, throughout Years 7, 8 and 9 we may trial various strategies and conduct a number of different tests and assessments in order to make sure that we are not only meeting the criteria but that we can work out what might be the best provision for your child.

No access arrangement is formalised until Year 10 and any arrangement made before that time is essentially part of the assessment process. This can be quite confusing for parents as we are aware that pupils have sometimes been granted an access arrangement for tests at primary school. Please be aware that these do not carry forward and that the assessment process for GCSE examinations, does not occur until Year 10. Please also be aware that having an Education Health and Care Plan or diagnosis of a Specific Learning Difficulty, does not necessarily mean that a pupil will qualify for access arrangements, even if your child has regular in class support.



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Access arrangements information

Below is a summary of the current key points regarding access arrangements.

Supervised rest breaks:

- These must always be considered before applying for extra time.
- These will be allowed where it is the candidate's normal way of working.
- Medical conditions – rest breaks can be agreed if you have a serious medical condition, examples of this are type 1 diabetes or a sensory need. Medical evidence is required. ADHD - if you have a diagnosis we will look at the recommendations and consider whether rest breaks will be helpful in exams. Evidence of your diagnosis is required.
- Evidence from CAMHs of current treatment for a condition that requires rest breaks. However, we do not accept evidence from this service if you have been discharged from treatment.

Prompter:

- These do not need to be registered on Access Arrangements Online
- A prompter may be permitted where a candidate has a substantial and long-term adverse impairment resulting in persistent distractibility or significant difficulty in concentrating..

25% extra time:

- These must be applied for and registered on Access Arrangements Online.
- Applications will be considered based on either a Statement of Special Educational Need or an assessment carried out no earlier than Year 10 by a specialist assessor to confirm a learning difficulty.
- Candidates with 25% extra time normally sit their examinations in the hall (unless an additional arrangement such as a reader/scribe is in place).
- Candidates must have at least one below average standardised score of 84 or less in either;
 - o Speed of reading
 - o Speed of reading comprehension
 - o Speed of writing
 - o Cognitive processing measures.



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Allocation of a reader:

- These must be applied for and registered on Access Arrangements Online.
- Applications will be considered based on either a Statement of Special Educational Need or an assessment carried out no earlier than Year 10 by a specialist assessor to confirm a learning difficulty.
- A reader will only be allowed if; language and vocabulary difficulties have a substantial and long-term adverse effect on the candidates' ability to access written text or there is a substantial and long-term visual impairment which means the candidate cannot access Braille or enlarged print independently.
- Where substantial impairment is evidenced the SENCO must be able to demonstrate the candidate would be at a substantial disadvantage when compared with other, non-disabled candidates undertaking the exam.

Allocation of a scribe:

- These must be applied for and registered on Access Arrangements Online.
- Applications will be considered based on either a Statement of Special Educational Need or an assessment carried out no earlier than Year 10 by a specialist assessor to confirm a learning difficulty.
- If a word processor is the candidates' normal way of working within school then it should be used within examinations.
- The use of a scribe must reflect the candidates' normal way of working within school.
- A scribe should only be used where a candidate cannot use a word processor with the spelling and grammar check disabled.
- A scribe will only be allowed where; impairment has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on the candidates' writing or a candidate cannot write, type or Braille independently, or at sufficient speed to record their answers even with extra time allowed.

Word Processor:

The following criteria details how we award and allocate word processors for examinations and non examination assessment.

- If a candidate believes they should be using a word processor for their examinations and/or controlled assessments they must first speak with the SENCo. The use of a laptop will only be granted to a pupil if it is appropriate to their needs and approved by the SENCo.
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- The examinations officer will add this entitlement to their Exams profile so it is recorded for public examination seasons. However, please note that the candidate may or may not wish to use the word processor on the day of the examination and may only use the word processor for certain subjects.
- The subject leader must make sure that the word processor is ready if the candidate wants to use this for their controlled assessment. However, the candidate may or may not wish to use the word processor on the day of the controlled assessment. Please note that word processors cannot be used in controlled assessments if prohibited for that unit and/or specification.
- The JCQ requirement and recommendation for candidates regarding the use of word processors in examinations and/or controlled assessments is that this is their normal way of working.

*please note: Maths & Science exams - The use of a word processor in exams is for pupils who need to do extended writing. Unless there is a medical reason or a specific need, pupils do not usually use word processors for these exams.

Alternative Rooming Invigilation:

Alternative rooming is when pupils sit with others in a smaller room rather than in the Sports Hall for examinations and controlled assessments.

Arrangements for seating candidates in rooms separate to the main cohort may be put in place in certain circumstances. As and when applicable, these circumstances may include:

- a candidate with depression or anxiety who is being supported by the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS)
- a candidate with an established medical condition or a formally recognised social, emotional or behavioural difficulty

Some pupils have difficulty with self-regulation as a consequence of a long term medical condition or long term social, mental or emotional needs. This means that some candidates routinely work in a separate room so that they can be better regulated in order to access the teaching and learning. It also prevents them from disrupting the learning of others in the same room. For this reason, some candidates may therefore require separate invigilation and it will reflect the candidate's normal way of working in the classroom and in internal school assessments and mock examinations.

Where a candidate simply panics on the day of an examination or becomes anxious, we cannot facilitate separate invigilation but these pupils may be seated more appropriately within a main examination room. Separate invigilation within the centre is no different to other access arrangements, such as prompters, supervised rest breaks etc.