

26 June 2026

Dear Parent/Guardian

EXAM ACCESS ARRANGEMENTS – PROCESS AND JCQ REQUIREMENTS

We are writing to explain how our school identifies, assesses, and applies for exam access arrangements, in line with the latest requirements set by the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ).

Access arrangements are reasonable adjustments — such as extra time, the use of a reading pen, or supervised rest breaks — which ensure that students with recognised needs are able to access examinations fairly.

It is important to note that, under JCQ regulations, a formal diagnosis (e.g. dyslexia, ADHD) does not automatically entitle a student to access arrangements. Schools must provide robust evidence that any arrangement:

- Reflects the student's normal way of working in the classroom
- Is necessary to remove a substantial disadvantage in exams

To ensure fairness and compliance, we follow the structured process outlined below:

1. Identifying a Concern

Teachers may identify that a student is experiencing difficulty in accessing learning or demonstrating their knowledge. Staff will record:

- The nature of the concern
- The subject area
- Specific examples, including dates

2. Normal Way of Working

Appropriate support strategies are implemented in lessons, such as:

- Adjusted teaching methods
- In-class support
- Use of learning tools

Staff record what strategies are used and how effective they are. This stage is essential, as exam arrangements must reflect the student's usual classroom experience.

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3. In-Class Assessments

Students complete a range of assessment activities to determine whether difficulties persist despite support, including:

- Timed tasks
- Reading and writing activities
- Note-taking exercises
- Performance and observations are recorded carefully.

4. School-Based Assessment (Exam Practice)

Where appropriate, students complete assessments under exam-style conditions. In Year 9 and Year 10, end-of-year examinations are a key opportunity to trial different access arrangements, such as:

- Extra time (e.g. 25%)
- Use of a reading pen
- Supervised rest breaks

This allows us to gather evidence on what support is effective in a formal setting.

5. Reviewing Impact

We evaluate whether the arrangements:

- Reduce barriers to learning
- Improve access to assessment tasks
- Enable the student to demonstrate their true ability
- All outcomes are recorded in detail.

6. Gathering Evidence

To meet JCQ requirements, we compile clear and factual evidence, including:

- Assessment results
- Records of classroom support
- Observations and impact notes
- Student feedback (where appropriate)

7. Application for Access Arrangements

All evidence is reviewed and, where the criteria are met, an application is made. Decisions are based strictly on JCQ regulations and the strength of the evidence collected over time.

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For further information please refer to the JCQ website –

<https://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/access-arrangements-and-reasonable-adjustments/>

Yours faithfully



Mrs A Holland
SENCo