



14 September 2026

Dear Parents/Carers,

Subject: Exam Process and Evidence for Access Arrangements

In recent years we have received a large increase in the number of enquiries received directly from parents/carers and external agencies requesting the award of access arrangements for use in mock and formal GCSE and A-Level examinations. As such, we thought it would be helpful share how the school monitors and supports pupils who may experience persistent difficulties in class or during assessments, and how the award of access arrangements is made by the school and regulated by the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ).

Access Arrangements are adjustments to a candidate's examination conditions which allow some students with special educational needs, disabilities or temporary injuries to access the assessment without changing the demands of the assessment. Access Arrangements vary according to evidenced need, and may include adjustments such as rest breaks, extra time, a reader or a scribe. Access Arrangements enable awarding bodies to comply with the duty of the Equality Act 2010 to make 'reasonable adjustments' to help ensure that all students have fair and equitable access.

It is important to note that not all students with additional needs will require access arrangements. Additional needs or a diagnosis alone do not entitle a student to access arrangements and specialists (for example medical consultants and psychiatrists) are responsible for providing a formal diagnosis but their remit does not extend to making decisions about access arrangements.

The JCQ requires schools to build evidence of need for any future exam access arrangements. This evidence must show that the support reflects a pupil's normal way of working in school and is based upon observed difficulties over time. Only in cases where this evidence proves a clear and ongoing need will a student be considered for assessment by a JCQ-approved external assessor, whose recommendations will feed into the school's decision.

Teachers will continue to monitor students for persistent challenges in a variety of areas and will share pertinent information with the SENCo. Copies of assessments or work which demonstrates need will be kept as evidence for inspection by the JCQ.

Please be assured that the process outlined above helps to ensure that, if needed, we have the required evidence to comply with JCQ regulations in relation to the award of access arrangements.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mrs Alexander". The signature is written in a cursive style, with the first letters of "Mrs" and "Alexander" being capitalized and prominent.

Mrs Alexander SENCo / Inclusion Lead

