



The Khalsa Academy Wolverhampton – ONE Multi Academies Trust

TKAW Exam Access Arrangements Policy

This policy is applicable to Khalsa Academy Wolverhampton

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Statement of intent

At The Khalsa Academy Wolverhampton, we are fully committed to ensuring that education is accessible to all. We recognise that some learners may require support and additional arrangements to be able to access and undertake exams without being disadvantaged. This policy outlines the school's procedures for identifying and applying for access arrangements before an exam and the reasonable adjustments that will be put in place as required.

Access arrangements are agreed before an assessment. They allow candidates with specific needs, e.g. SEND or temporary injuries, to access the assessment and demonstrate what they can do without changing the demands of the assessment.

Access arrangements are the main way through which the school will make reasonable adjustments, in line with its duties under the Equality Act 2010.

A reasonable adjustment is where reasonable steps are taken to overcome a substantial disadvantage that a candidate who is disabled faces in comparison to a candidate who is not disabled.

Exam access arrangements policy

This information should be read in conjunction with The Khalsa Academy Wolverhampton's Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) policy, which sets out the Academy's procedures for identifying SEND, making and evaluating provision for learners with SEND, and monitoring the learners' needs for access arrangements. This policy, and its approach to Exam Access Arrangements, reflects our Teaching and Learning philosophy which seeks to create a learning environment whereby every individual learner may fulfil their full potential. It explains the actions taken to ensure inclusion throughout the Academy for all learners with additional educational needs, including those with SEND.

Legal Framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- DfE and Department of Health and Social Care (2015) 'SEND code of practice: 0 to 25 years'
- DfE (2015) 'Supporting learners at school with medical conditions'
- Equality Act 2010
- JCQ 'Adjustments for candidates with disabilities and learning difficulties: Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments'

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Data Protection Policy
- Records Management Policy
- SEND Policy

What Are Exam Access Arrangements?

An Exam Access Arrangement (EAA) is a provision or type of support given to a learner (subject to exam board approval) in a national/public exam, where a particular need has been identified and it is provided so that the learner has appropriate access to the exam. EAAs are intended to give all candidates equal opportunity to demonstrate their skills, knowledge and understanding.

Procedures and practices relating to the awarding of EAAs are governed by the statutory duty to make reasonable adjustments to provision under guidelines produced by the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ). The JCQ adjusts its regulations periodically and the Academy is bound to comply with the current regulations.

Access arrangements at The Khalsa Academy Wolverhampton

The most commonly used access arrangements at The Khalsa Academy Wolverhampton are as follows:

Scribe: a trained adult who writes for the learner. The learner would dictate their answers including all punctuation, grammar and relevant spellings and the scribe would write exactly what the learner says. This provision is usually not encouraged for Maths or Modern Foreign Languages. This provision also includes the use of a word processor with spelling and grammar functions disabled.

Reader: a trained adult who would read the question and relevant text (with the exception of an exam testing reading such as English comprehension and Modern Foreign Languages) for the learner. The learner would then write the answers themselves although this text could then be read back to the learner if requested. Under JCQ Regulations, three or four candidates may share one reader and candidates with individual readers will be in a separate room.

Word processing: access to a computer for an exam (if appropriate but not usually for subjects such as Maths and Modern Foreign Languages) so the learner would word process their answers. Spelling and grammar checks would be disabled.

25% Extra Time: Learner may be entitled to an allowance of 25% extra time depending on their history of need and 2 standardised scores below 84 relating to speed of reading, writing or processing.

Rest Breaks: where learners are permitted to stop for short breaks during the exam and this time is then added to the finish time, with the effect of elongating the exam but not actually using any extra time.

Prompter: used for learners with little sense of time or ability to concentrate, a trained adult/invigilator can prompt them with a few permitted phrases to refocus or move the learners on to the next question or indicate how much time is left.

The above list is not exhaustive but does cover the most commonly used exam access arrangements but the academy would ensure each learner's needs are met as required. EAs may also differ according to the learner's needs within each subject i.e. extra time may be awarded to extended writing subjects only.

Procedures for EAA

Learners will be identified for possible access arrangements through a combination of the following criteria:

- From Year 7 as a result of information from primary schools, prior access arrangements and/or low attainment scores in relevant assessments
- Referral from a teacher and evidence supporting the learner's area of need
- EAs granted/officially approved by previous secondary school – subject to relevant paperwork being sent to the SEND department at The Khalsa Academy Wolverhampton, in addition to clear evidence of need and confirmation of qualifications of prior academy's specialist assessor.
- Presentation of a recent medical letter/diagnosis from a qualified health care professional
- Parental concern expressed to a subject/form teacher

'Provisional' access arrangements granted in Years 7, 8 or 9 are not automatically guaranteed for GCSE exams. Official approval is normally requested by the Autumn Term of Year 10 and is subject to results from the Academy's designated specialist and/or a medical diagnosis/report. EAAs have to be officially approved for all learners taking GCSE, AS and A Levels. However, it is our aim to have 'provisional' access arrangements in place for internal assessments for learners in younger years as soon as additional needs are identified so this becomes the learners' normal way of working. Learners who are deemed eligible for access arrangements in Key Stage 4 will be tested (at the earliest in Year 9) by the Academy's Assistant Principal for Inclusion to ensure the results are valid for official approval for the entire GCSE period.

Exam access arrangements for learners in Years 10 will only be considered for those learners identified before the autumn half term break commences. This allows the Academy sufficient time to gather evidence of need in the classroom, evidence of normal way of working (including the mock exams) and assessment by the Academy's Assistant Principal for Inclusion. This evidence is required to meet the JCQ deadline for submissions.

As advised by the JCQ, the Academy will not accept privately commissioned assessments as sole evidence for exam access arrangements. Privately commissioned assessments will only be considered as background evidence additional to qualitative and quantifiable evidence gathered by the Academy to reflect the candidates' significant, persistent and long-term need and their normal way of working in academy.

With the exception of temporary illness or injury on the day of the examination, learners who require EEA provision for medical purposes will need to provide written evidence from an appropriate medical professional in March of the year they will be sitting exams, stating their current diagnosis, treatment and details of how it might affect their performance. Historical information will not be taken into consideration. Any EEA provision will then be put in place to comply with current JCQ regulations, which may differ from that suggested by the medical professional.

Who is responsible for EAA?

The Special Educational Need & Disability (SEND) Department is responsible for EAA provision and duties include the following:

- Ensuring there is appropriate evidence for a learner's exam access arrangement.
- Informing subject teachers at regular intervals regarding learner's exam access arrangements and how they should be supported in the classroom.
- Liaison with Exams Team
- Informing parents/carers about learner's provisional access arrangements, specialist assessor tests and official approval of arrangements for GCSE or A Levels.
- Ensuring each learner understands how to use their access arrangements and under what circumstances.
- Monitoring the use of exam access arrangements to ensure they remain appropriate and they become the learners or 's normal way of working.

Please note, it is the responsibility of the learner and the subject teacher to ensure EAAs are put in place for any assessments and tests taking place in lessons (these do not include formal GCSE/A Level exams). This will be done with the support of the SEND Department where required.

The Academy will monitor the appropriate use of exam access arrangements in both internal and external assessments. Any misuse or unauthorised use of access arrangements will be investigated in line with JCQ and Academy regulations. Where malpractice is identified, the matter will be referred to the Examinations Officer and may be reported to the awarding body in accordance with JCQ guidelines.

Applying for access arrangements

Access arrangements and reasonable adjustments will be applied for by the SENCO in line with the JCQ guidelines for the relevant academic year. These will be applied for at the start of each course, e.g. at the start or during the first year of a two-year GCSE course, based on the school's knowledge of a learner's needs and normal way of working.

Where there is a temporary injury or impairment, or a diagnosis of a disability or manifestation of an impairment relating to an existing disability arising after a course begins, access arrangements will be applied for as soon as is practicable.

In cases of unexpected emergency on the day of an exam, the Academy will make every effort to implement suitable arrangements, such as a temporary scribe, reader, or rest breaks, provided these do not compromise the integrity of the exam. Such arrangements will be documented and, where required, reported to the awarding body in line with JCQ requirements.

The SENCO will complete all necessary paperwork and ensure all applications have regard for the relevant exam board's deadline. Where an application is processed after the deadline, e.g. due to a temporary injury arising after this date, the SENCO will ensure the appropriate paperwork is on file and available for inspection. Access arrangements and reasonable adjustments will only be put in place for exams where they have been approved.

Applications processed and approved online will be valid for 26 months from the date of processing the application. Where the SENCO believes that access arrangements for a learner are no longer the learner's normal way of working within this period, e.g. a learner whose reading has improved to the extent they may no longer meet the exam board criteria for a reader, they will consider whether it is appropriate to withdraw permission for it. Where permission is withdrawn, written confirmation will be sent to the learner's parents.

A learner will have the right to not make use of the access arrangement or reasonable adjustment should they not wish to do so. The SENCO will consider removing the access arrangements in cases where a learner repeatedly chooses not to make use of them. Candidates will never be charged any fee in relation to an adjustment or aid made to meet the school's duty under the Equality Act 2010.

Access arrangements and reasonable adjustments will not normally be possible where it compromises the assessment objectives of the relevant specification, e.g. a practical assistant will normally not be allowed when practical skills are being tested.

Extra time applications will only be made after the SENCO has considered and thoroughly exhausted the option of supervised rest breaks.

Where a case contains individual needs, which are not covered by the online system for applications, the SENCO will contact the relevant awarding body at the earliest opportunity to discuss the candidate's needs. A written record will be kept of any discussions.

Learners and parents/carers will be kept informed throughout the application process. Where a request for an access arrangement is declined, the reasons will be explained in writing, and parents/carers.

Evidencing applications

The online application process will provide prompts as to the evidence required. Evidence and history of need and provision will be provided by the SENCO as required for each access arrangement applied for. Evidence will be stored for inspection purposes in line with JCQ guidance.

Core evidence required will typically include, but is not limited to the following:

- EHC plans
- Learner Passports
- Fully completed Form 8 with an assessment carried out by an assessor confirming a learning difficulty
- A Form 9 where applicable
- Where applicable, a qualifying score from a recognised test carried out by a suitably qualified assessor
- Teaching staff testimony about a learner's difficulties
- Specialist evidence, e.g. a report or letter from a medical consultant
- History of support and provision in place for the learner in line with the requested access arrangement or reasonable adjustment

Preparing for an assessment

Once an access arrangement has been approved, the school will:

- Inform the learner's parents in writing.
- Inform the learner.
- Inform the exam officer and make an access arrangement list available to them.
- Ensure all staff are aware of which learners have had approved access arrangements.

Where a candidate requires access arrangements or reasonable adjustments before their first assessment, appropriate opportunities to practice using them will be provided. The school will be particularly mindful of the need to practice prior to an exam where the following are used:

- Computer reader
- Modified enlarged papers
- A scribe
- Speech recognition technology
- Word processor

For internal assessments, teaching staff will inform the SENCO at least **two weeks** in advance of the assessment date to allow sufficient time for access arrangements to be prepared.

Learners will be informed to raise any concerns or questions with the SENCO about their access arrangements before an exam, and what to do if they encounter any issues during an exam.

All staff, including invigilators, will receive annual training on exam access arrangements to ensure consistency, compliance with JCQ regulations, and appropriate support for learners. Training will include how to support learners during assessments, confidentiality requirements, and procedures for implementing EAAs fairly and effectively.

Maintaining records

The SENCO will keep detailed records of all essential information on file for an application. This will include a copy of the candidate's approved application, appropriate evidence of need as required and a signed candidate personal data consent form.

All personal data will be treated confidentially and handled in line with the Data Protection Policy and Records Management Policy.

Monitoring and review

This policy will be reviewed by the Assistant Principal of Inclusion on an annual basis.