



Examination Access Arrangements Policy

Legal

- To meet the requirements of the Joint Qualifications Council (JCQ) awarding organisations
- To meet the requirements of other awarding organisations used by the school

Monitoring and Review

- This policy will be subject to continuous monitoring, refinement and audit by the Examinations Officer and reviewed by the Senior Leadership Team
- The Headteacher will undertake a formal annual review of this policy for the purpose of monitoring and of the efficiency with which the related duties have been discharged, by no later than one year from the date shown below, or earlier if significant changes to the systems and arrangements take place, or if legislation, regulatory requirements or best practice guidelines so require

Prepared by: School SENCo, Examinations Officer

Reviewed by: School SENCo

Approved by: SLT and School Governors

Rationale

The Examination Access Arrangements Policy explains the actions taken to ensure inclusion throughout Challney High School for Girls for all students with additional learning needs (ALN), including those with formally diagnosed Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND). The policy forms an integral part of our teaching and learning philosophy, which seeks to create a learning environment whereby every individual student may fulfil her full potential.

What are Examination Access Arrangements?

Access arrangements are pre-examination adjustments for candidates based on evidence of need and normal way of working. Access arrangements fall into two distinct categories: some arrangements are delegated to centres; others require prior JCQ or awarding organisation approval. Access arrangements allow candidates/learners with SEND or temporary injuries to access the assessment without changing the demands of the assessment. For example, readers, scribes and braille question papers. In this way awarding bodies will comply with the duty of the Equality Act 2010 to make 'reasonable adjustments'.

Reasonable Adjustments

The Equality Act 2010 defines **disability** as a *'physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long term adverse effect on someone's ability to carry out normal day to day activities'*.

A candidate has "special educational needs" as defined in the SEND code of practice: 0 to 25 years. Children have special educational needs if they have a learning difficulty or disability, which calls for special educational provision to be made for them.

Section 6 of The Equality Act 2010 requires an awarding body to make reasonable adjustments where a disabled person would be at a substantial disadvantage in undertaking an assessment. A reasonable adjustment for a particular person may be unique to that individual and may not be included in the list of available access arrangements. How reasonable the adjustment is will depend on a number of factors including the needs of the disabled candidate/learner.

Responsibility

Access arrangements are the responsibility of the SENCo, directed by the Headteacher. Access arrangements for examinations need to be conducted by a member of staff who processes the relevant qualifications in accordance with JCQ guidance **or** indeed a qualified person may be bought in. The SENCo can direct appropriate staff to be part of the assessment process, i.e. those with appropriate qualifications as cited in JCQ document *'Adjustments for Candidates with disabilities and learning difficulties: Access Arrangements and Reasonable adjustments.'*

These are:

- a specialist assessor with a current SpLD Assessment Practising Certificate, as awarded by Patoss, Dyslexia Action or BDA and listed on the SASC website;
- An appropriately qualified psychologist registered with the Health & Care Professions Council.

In addition to these two categories, other educational professionals may conduct access arrangements assessments if they meet following criteria.

They must hold a post-graduate qualification in individual specialist assessment at or equivalent to Level 7 which must include training in all of the following:

- The theoretical basis underlying psychometric tests, such as the concepts of validity, reliability, standard deviations and the normal curve, raw scores, standard scores, quotients, percentiles and age equivalent scores;
- The concept of statistically significant discrepancies between scores, standard error of measurement and confidence intervals, the appropriate use of nationally standardised tests for the age group being tested;
- The objective administration of attainment tests which can be administered individually. This must include tests of reading accuracy, reading speed, reading comprehension and spelling. Appropriate methods of assessing writing skills, including speed, must also be covered;
- The appropriate selection and objective use of cognitive tests including tests of verbal and non-verbal ability and wider cognitive processing skills;
- The ethical administration of testing including the ability to understand the limitation of their own skills and experience, and to define when it is necessary to refer the candidate to an alternative professional.

In rare and exceptional circumstances the centre may need to refer a candidate to an alternative professional, such as a clinical psychologist or a neuropsychologist, where further investigation is warranted. The initial assessment may have indicated specific/global learning needs, mental health or developmental concerns.

Private Educational Psychologists Reports

Sometimes parents seek an independent psychologist's report for their child. On some occasions, these are in contradiction to the specialist assessor's findings and arrangements put in place by the class teacher.

In these cases the report will be taken into consideration as part of the wider supplementary evidence, however, it will not always be acted upon as the information may be contrary to the overriding EAA principles of 'normal working practise'.

Special Consideration

Special Consideration is a post examination adjustment to a candidate's mark or grade to reflect temporary injury, illness or other indisposition at the time of the examination/assessment.

Access Arrangements for examinations

JCQ and awarding organisation requirements can change annually however the following are some of the standard practice of access arrangements:

- Extra time
- Rest breaks
- Readers
- Reading aloud
- Scribes
- Prompts
- Use of word processors (please see procedures document)
- Separate rooms can be provided for candidates should this be deemed appropriate either by the appointed level 7 assessor or relevant medical professionals. This will be considered on an individual needs basis.

This list is not exhaustive.

Identifying the need for access arrangements

Students who may qualify for formal access arrangements during KS4 are identified as early as possible in KS3. At this stage needs are screened and identified, rather than formally assessed. Adjustments to quality first teaching within lessons are then made according to need enabling a student to access their learning and make progress. All staff are involved in monitoring the adjustments.

Formal assessments take place during Y9. Screening and ongoing monitoring determines the level of specific assessment required. These assessments are delivered in accordance with the JCQ guidance. Formal access arrangements expire after 26 months, after this period the student may be re-tested. The most recent testing is binding and determines any subsequent access arrangements.

Where formal access arrangements are determined and agreed these become part of 'normal practice'. This means that appropriate access arrangements should be taken into consideration in everyday teaching and formally applied in any internal or external assessments. If a student chooses not to use the agreed access arrangements either because their needs change or they do not feel it aids their learning or achievement then access arrangements can be removed. This decision is made by the Headteacher or the SENCo.

The decision to apply for access arrangements is based on evidence of a history of need, history of provision and a specialist teacher access arrangements report. This decision is made by the Headteacher or the SENCo.