

Guidance for parents, carers and students about access arrangements

What are access arrangements?

- Access arrangements allow students with specific needs, such as special educational needs and disabilities to access an exam.
- They allow students to show what they know and can do without changing the demands of the exam.

How will the process start?

- The SENCo and/or Exam Access Arrangement Coordinator will work with teachers and the student to identify possible arrangements.
- Various access arrangements are available. For example, support for students who have difficulties with reading, writing, speed of working and concentration.
- Not all students with additional needs (e.g. being on the SEND register) will require access arrangements. It depends on whether their difficulty affects their access to exams. Additional needs alone do **not** entitle a student to access arrangements.
- Medical diagnosis alone does **not** entitle a student to access arrangements.
- Parents and carers who have a concern, should let the SENCo and/or Access Arrangement Coordinator know as soon as possible. Evidence for access arrangements must be gathered over a significant period. Access arrangements should not be granted just before exams, except for last minute injuries for example. Asking for access arrangements in Year 11 is often too late and the arrangement is unlikely to be the student's normal way of working.
- Students joining Sixth Form should record their additional needs and any previous access arrangements on the enrolment form. We will need to gather further information from their previous school.

Who will make the assessment?

- If a student has learning difficulties, the school's appointed assessor must conduct the assessment to determine the need for access arrangements such as 25% extra time.
- If an external assessor diagnoses a learning difficulty (for example, dyslexia, dyscalculia), the assessment can only be used as evidence for access arrangements if the assessor has liaised with the school **in advance** and received the necessary access arrangements paperwork.
- Specialists (for example, a medical consultant, a psychiatrist) are responsible for providing a formal diagnosis. They are **not** responsible for decisions about access arrangements.
- Teachers must give evidence to show that an access arrangement is needed. The school will record how effective the arrangement is in the classroom, in internal tests and in mock exams.
- The school must decide which access arrangements a student has for their exams, based on their normal way of working within the centre.

What else needs to be done?

- The school or college will have to apply for some arrangements.
- Schools must follow the rules and regulations, and evidence must meet the JCQ published criteria. They are inspected and if they are found to be breaking the rules, this will be malpractice.