THE LATYMER SCHOOL

Founded 1624

EXAMINATIONS ACCESS ARRANGEMENTS

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1. Introduction

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

2. What are Examination Access Arrangements (EAA)?

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 awarding body approval from the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ). Access Arrangements allow candidates/learners with special educational needs, disabilities 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'.

3. Reasonable Adjustments

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. An adjustment may not be considered reasonable if it involves unreasonable costs, timeframes or affects the security or integrity of the assessment.

There is no duty on the Awarding Bodies to make any adjustment to the assessment objectives being tested in an assessment.

4. Responsibility

Access arrangements are the responsibility of the SENCo, directed by the Head Teacher. Access arrangements for exams need to be conducted by a member of staff who possesses 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 the 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 and 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.

The SENCO and Examinations Officer hold further information on the qualifications held by our specialist assessors.

5. Access Arrangements for examinations

JCQ 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

6. Identifying the need for Access Arrangements within The Latymer School

Where a pupil has been awarded Exam Access Arrangements in Key Stage 2 for SATs. The English department do a literacy screening test for year 7 in the first few weeks of the autumn term, which may highlight pupils with an additional need. At this stage, needs are screened and identified, rather than formally assessed.

Staff at The Latymer School can complete a 'Cause for Concern' form to the Learning Support Team at any time if they are concerned about a student. The Learning Support Team will then investigate the issue further.

Termly analysis of data by Heads of Department may highlight a pupil of concern.

Parents/students can email the relevant Head of Learning and/or SENCo to raise a concern about a possible issue to do with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities.

Formal assessments take place from Year 9 onwards. Screening and ongoing monitoring determines the level of specific assessment required. These assessments are delivered in accordance with the JCQ guidance. An assessment conducted no earlier than the start of Year 9 (Part 2 of Form 8) recommending 25% extra time for GCSE examinations will be valid for GCE AS and A-level examinations. A fully completed Form 8 (Parts 1, 2 and 3), signed and dated, may roll forward from GCSE to GCE qualifications. No further assessment is required.

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 every day teaching and formally applied in any internal or external assessments. It is not always possible to provide full access arrangements in internally assessed tasks. Formal tasks in an exam venue will be subject to full Access Arrangements. For internal assessments the teacher will attempt to make reasonable adjustments to provide suitable access arrangements, e.g. extra time. If a student chooses continually 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.

Students with a disability will be provided with an appropriate assessment in order to identify particular requirements.

7. KS2 SATs Examination Access Arrangements

Students who have EAA at KS2 are screened for EAA in KS3 and KS4. Although they may have received EAA at KS2, students will not automatically receive it in KS3 or KS4 because their needs may have changed. For example, a student who had a Reader for KS2 may not qualify for a Reader at KS4 because their reading has improved to the extent it does not meet the exam board criteria.

8. Parent Referral

Parents can contact the school to ask for advice about testing if they have concerns with the progress and learning of their child. The SENCo will investigate the student's progress in order to make a decision on the appropriateness to conduct screening tests. This may include offering teacher guidance and making adjustments to classroom teaching before screening would be considered an appropriate route.

9. Teacher referral

Teachers can complete an Access Arrangements Request Form if they have concerns about a student's learning and progress following assessments and exams, or if they have concerns about a specific learning difficulty. The SENCo will investigate before deciding whether to test a student for EAA and will notify parents of any concerns that are identified.

If a teacher thinks that a student requires extra time during internal examinations, they will ask the student to change the colour of the pen that they are using at the end of the allotted time and then continue writing until they are finished. This will be used as evidence for JCQ and the exam boards of a history of need.

10. What evidence is needed to apply for EAA?

There are a number of pieces of evidence that can be used to apply for EAA to the JCQ:

- Form 8 report
- Previous EAA from other schools
- Subject teachers provide examples of class learning, exam papers
- Results of baseline tests - reading/comprehension age, writing tests
- History of support from Learning Support Team
- Pupil Profile Plans
- Evidence of specific difficulties in exam conditions
- Centre evidence report completed by SENCo
- Medical letter from a Local Authority Service
- School-based evidence that any EAA given or applied for represents the students normal way or working within the school.

11. Private Educational Psychologists reports

A privately commissioned assessment carried out without prior consultation with the school cannot be used to award access arrangements and cannot be used to process an application using Access arrangements online. The SENCo must provide the assessor with at least a 'skeleton' Part 1 of Form 8 prior to the candidate being assessed (Part 2 of Form 8).

Where a privately commissioned report, or a report from an external professional, is rejected by a centre, the head of centre or a member of the senior leadership team should provide a written rationale supporting their decision to the parent/carer. SENCos and assessors working within the centre should always carefully consider any privately commissioned assessment to see whether the process of gathering a picture of need, demonstrating normal way of working within the centre and ultimately assessing the candidate themselves should be instigated.

As an exam centre, The Latymer School is unable to accept the recommendations of private Educational Psychologist reports for extra time or EAA but follows the recommendations of the specialist teacher conducting assessments. The rationale for this decision is to ensure that all students are given the same fair and unbiased specialist assessments conducted by the specialist teacher. This information is used alongside evidence of a history of need and the student's normal way of working. Private educational psychologists may recommend that children should receive EAA which can be in conflict with what the centre tester (Specialist Teacher) recommends.

JCQ states that "*if a candidate can complete a paper in the normal length of time and never uses the extra time which has been made available, then it is not an effective time management. It would not be appropriate to process an application for extra time.*"

JCQ also states that *"where a privately commissioned report, or a report from an external professional, is rejected by a centre, the head of centre or a member of the senior leadership team should provide a written rationale supporting their decision to the parent/carer*."

12. Formal Access Arrangement testing

Formal assessments are conducted at school. Students qualifying for formal assessments are determined by specified indicators following screening. All students with an Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan will automatically qualify for a need matched Access Arrangements screening.

The outcome of all assessments are recorded and summarised, and the assessor will make a formal recommendation of any suitable EAA. Form 8 is then completed as evidence for online submission. The online submission is completed by the SENCo or Examination Officer.

The application will require evidence of need. The Centre (The Latymer School) must retain evidence that can be inspected at short notice. Evidence can include:

- Letters from outside agencies such as Children and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS), hospital consultant, HCPC registered psychologist, a psychiatrist; or
- A letter from the Local Authority Specialist Service, Local Authority Sensory Impairment Service or Occupational Health Service; or
- A report from a Speech and Language Therapist (SaLT); or
- Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) which confirms the candidate's disability
- Recommendations by teachers
- Educational psychologist reports

Permission from examination boards for the arrangement/s:

- A signed copy of the Form 8 report by the designated assessor.
- A data protection form signed by the student
- A record of occasions when a student has been supported by EAA
- Extra time – history of evidence of need in the form of copies of work where a student has regularly used more than the allotted time.

The outcome of the submission is recorded and parents/carers are notified in writing.

13. Ensuring the Access Arrangements are normal practice

It is the responsibility of the Learning Support team to ensure that all required information is collated and accessible to the Examinations Officer and wider staff body. The SENCo, in collaboration with colleagues and students, will monitor and ensure that Access Arrangements are normal working practice wherever reasonably practical. There is an Access Arrangements spreadsheet available to all staff to view, in order to put in place these arrangements in school assessments and lessons. The SENCo and Examinations Officer will ensure that all paperwork required by JCQ is in order.