



# THE ECCLESBOURNE SCHOOL

Learning Together for the Future

## Access Arrangements 2023-2024

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This is a Statutory Policy. It is to be reviewed annually. This policy is ratified by Students and Curriculum

## 1. Purpose of the policy

The purpose of this policy is to confirm that The Ecclesbourne School has a written record which clearly shows the centre is leading on the Access Arrangements process and is complying with its obligation to identify the need for, request and implement Access Arrangements [JCQ General Regulations for Approved Centres, (section 5.4)]

This policy is implemented and overseen by the Learning Support Faculty and the Examinations Office. The Learning Support Faculty is committed to providing equal opportunities for all students in compliance with the demands of the Equality Act 2010. Where students have a need which prevents them from fully Accessing examinations, provision will be made. The Learning Support Faculty plays a vital role in the Access Arrangements process (identification, testing, applications & strategies) working alongside colleagues in school to ensure the appropriate adjustments for students.

## 2. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies and procedures:

- The JCQ: Instructions for Conducting Examinations (ICE) 2023-24
- JCQ Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments 2023-24
- Word Processor Policy 2023-2024

## 3. What are Exam Access Arrangements & Reasonable Adjustments?

**Access Arrangements are agreed before an assessment;** They allow candidates with **specific needs**, such as special educational needs, disabilities or temporary injuries to Access the assessment and show what they know and can do without changing the demands of the assessment. The intention behind an Access Arrangement is to meet the needs of an individual candidate without affecting the integrity of the assessment. Access Arrangements are the principal way in which awarding bodies comply with the duty under the Equality Act 2010\* to make 'reasonable adjustments'.

**Reasonable adjustments;** The Equality Act 2010 requires **an awarding body** to make reasonable adjustments where a candidate, who is disabled within the meaning of the Equality Act 2010, would be at **a substantial disadvantage** in comparison to someone who is not disabled. The awarding body is required to take reasonable steps to overcome that disadvantage. An example would be a Braille paper which would be a reasonable adjustment for a vision impaired candidate who could read Braille. A reasonable adjustment may be unique to that individual and may not be included in the list of available Access Arrangements. Whether an adjustment will be considered reasonable will depend on several factors which will include, but are not limited to:

- the needs of the disabled candidate;
- the effectiveness of the adjustment;
- the cost of the adjustment; **and**
- the likely impact of the adjustment upon the candidate and other candidates.

An adjustment will not be approved if it:

- involves unreasonable costs to the awarding body;
- involves unreasonable timeframes; or
- affects the security and integrity of the assessment.

This is because the adjustment is not 'reasonable'.

Access Arrangements are 'reasonable adjustments' made to public examinations/assessments for those students with evidence of a defined need. As such, students may be granted one or more Access Arrangement depending on their needs in line with the guidance and regulations laid down by examination boards and the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ). Some examples of Access Arrangements available are the support of a reader/computer reader, a scribe, and 25% extra time.

The school considers any information received from previous schools and also conducts its own tests to establish which students may need Access Arrangements for examinations. Access Arrangements are reviewed annually and if a student receives help in any one year it does not automatically mean they will receive the same help in later years.

#### **4. Why are students tested for Access Arrangements?**

Reasons a student might be referred or are eligible for Access Arrangements include e.g. oral ability being much better than written, weak/slow reader, slow processing speed, poor memory, weak interpretation skills, poor speller & never completing timed assessments etc

#### **5. Identification of Access Arrangements Needs**

##### **Key Stage 3**

Throughout Key Stage 3, staff who have any concerns regarding a particular student liaise with the Learning Support Faculty. Wherever possible, they should provide evidence of need. When students reach Year 9, those who have received Access Arrangements in internal assessments and any newly identified students will be assessed by suitably qualified specialist assessors in the Learning Support Faculty to determine which arrangements, if any, are needed for the forthcoming GCSE examinations. Assessments take place in the Summer Term of Year 9 and parents/carers are notified that testing is due to take place. Permission for Access Arrangements will only be granted in the following instances: firstly, if the arrangements are the student's "normal way of working"; secondly if the student has attained scores which demonstrate "a substantial and long term" disadvantage meeting the criteria set out by the examination boards and JCQ; and thirdly, if evidence is available to support the application.

A list of students with an entitlement to Access Arrangements in Year 12 & 13 is placed centrally for all teaching staff & LSOs to Access. This is on Staff Portal à Support Site à Learning Support à ACCESS ARRANGEMENTS.

##### ***Procedures for Testing Year 9:***

The flow chart in appendix 3 illustrates the procedures followed throughout an academic year with regards to the testing of Year 9 students that have been flagged up by teaching staff or have an identifiable learning need. This testing is comprehensive to ensure we have the right support in place for students as they approach their GCSE studies.

##### **Key Stage 4**

All Access Arrangements should be in place by the start of Year 10 so that staff, parents/carers and student are all aware of the decision. The Access Arrangement can then be put into practice both in the classroom and for assessments/exams over the next two years. If concerns regarding new students are raised, the same process will be followed as for KS3. The school will then need to make a decision as to whether testing for Access Arrangements is required (see under 'late referrals').

A list of Year 10 & 11 students with an entitlement to Access Arrangements is placed centrally for all teaching staff & LSOs to Access (Staff Portal à Support SiteàLearning SupportàACCESS ARRANGEMENTS).

### **Years 12 and 13**

Year 12 students need to be re-assessed if they have received the support of a reader and/ or scribe to see if they still merit this Access Arrangement.

Students do not need to be re-tested but the specialist assessor does need to ascertain whether the student is still in need of the extra time by liaising with teachers and re-application for this Access Arrangement needs to be made on-line.

New students transferring to The Ecclesbourne School 6th Form, who have previously been given Access Arrangements, must present a copy of Access Arrangements online 'Application Approved' as well as a Form 8 Assessment to the school. It is the responsibility of the student/parent/carer to obtain these documents on transfer and to present them to the Head of Sixth Form no later than the end of September in Year 12. These documents should then be passed on to the Learning Support Faculty to support an application for Access Arrangements.

Similarly, when a student leaves the school to transfer elsewhere or when a student leaves for college, the Application Approved Online document and the Form 8 should be forwarded with the student.

A list of students with an entitlement to Access Arrangements in Year 12 & 13 is placed centrally for all teaching staff & LSOs to Access. This is on Staff Portal à Support SiteàLearning SupportàACCESS ARRANGEMENTS.

### **6. Late Referral for Testing:**

It is sometimes the case that students' difficulties become more apparent later on in school, after the normal observation & testing period. Students' coping mechanisms often become ineffective in overcoming difficulties especially as work becomes noticeably more difficult, as a student moves up a key stage or as pressure mounts. It is a prerequisite, however, that there has to be sufficient evidence and justification for a student being referred at a late date. This is because JCQ stipulate that there has to be a 'History of Need' and that the concession is the students 'Normal Way of Working'.

### **7. Procedure for late testing:**

- The member of staff who is concerned about a student, builds up evidence over a period of time e.g. observation logs & photocopies of classwork/homework /timed assessments. This is following guidance set out in the JCQ guidelines.
- The member of staff shares the specific concern, with the SENDCo and should not discuss testing with students or parents until it can be established if there is a case for testing.
- If it is agreed, then the student will be tested by Learning Support after being placed on the 'Late referral' waiting list (Staff Portal à Support SiteàLearning SupportàACCESS ARRANGEMENTS).
- The testing process is undertaken by trained assessors from LS. If an exam concession is awarded, then further evidence will be requested from ALL teachers of the student. This should then become the 'Normal way or Working' and collecting evidence should be an ongoing process in order to build up further 'History of Evidence'. The concession will only be awarded if evidence is submitted from subject areas and will not include subjects where it is not needed.

The following checklist is used as guidance by LS staff responsible for undertaking a late test:

**Late Testing Checklist:**

- Establish why student has been referred - evidence.
- Testing.
- Data protection/consent (staff & parent).
- Student Questionnaire/Interview.
- Student to gather examples of work for file - log sheet.
- Inform staff of outcome - email.
- Updated (Staff Portal → Support Site→Learning Support→ACCESS ARRANGEMENTS) - Write name in GREEN.
- Inform Exams Office - email.
- Blue evidence sheet requests distributed to staff pigeon holes.
- Complete Form 8.
- Application online - print off for file.
- Inform parent - letter → 'Admin Work Request' /copy for file
- Update referral list table on (Staff Portal → Support Site→Learning Support→ACCESS ARRANGEMENTS)

The deadline for making late referrals is set at the end of the autumn term, leaving enough time to test and gather evidence before applications on line have to be submitted.

A copy of the procedures for late testing is sent to Heads of Faculty (HoF) & Heads of Year (HoY) at the start of the academic year with a request to share with staff members. This procedure is also kept on the staff shared drive.

### **8. After Approval of Access Arrangements**

When Access Arrangements have been awarded, parents/carers are notified in writing detailing the specific Access Arrangement. Students are informed verbally. When granted, Access Arrangements are valid for 26 months. A list of students with Access Arrangements is made available to all staff.

Appropriate evidence of need will be kept on file at school for inspection purposes.

Parents/carers may request an independent assessment. However, the decision as to whether the student qualifies for Access Arrangements can only be made by the school. In this instance, the following must be taken into consideration: school data; history of need; recent test results; as well as the student's normal way of working, which must be demonstrated over a significant period of time. Regulations have changed in the last few years, and a diagnosis of dyslexia is no longer sufficient to allow a candidate extra time.

The Examination officers, the SENDCo, the specialist assessor from the Learning Support Faculty as well as the staff in the schoolwork together to ensure that the appropriate Access Arrangements are put in place for tests, mock examinations as well as the actual public examinations.

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. If the SENDCo and/or specialist assessor considers that Access Arrangements cease to be the student's 'normal way of working', they reserve the right to withdraw the permission, providing written confirmation is sent to parents/carers.

Crucial to this process is building up a bank of evidence to support the applications. Teaching staff are requested to provide examples of work that show that the concession/s are needed e.g. mock exams, untimed work, work using/not using a scribe etc. Following assessment for Access Arrangements, teaching staff are also asked to complete a feedback form which shows their opinion on the concession as well as demonstrating strategies they employ in lessons to support the student. The Learning Support Team will provide the feedback form.

LSOs are asked to assist with the collecting of evidence. They are also requested to ask teaching staff for copies of evidence e.g. test papers & those assisting in tests routinely fill in a 'LSO Feedback – Examination Support' form.

## **9. Logging Access Arrangements:**

Results from tests are recorded & stored on a log sheet by members of the learning support team.

Scores are also inputted onto 'Student Passports' as appropriate so that all subject staff have access to them.

The lists of students with Exam Concessions can be found on Staff Portal → Support Site → Learning Support → ACCESS ARRANGEMENTS.

Packs of evidence on each student are kept in locked filing cabinets in C1. These packs should consist of:

- Up to date online applications to exam boards
- Form 8
- Signed Data Protection/Consent sheets
- Test data
- Evidence showing normal way of working/history of evidence e.g. staff feedback forms, examples of exams, emails/ correspondences & Student Passports
- Questionnaires from a student interview
- Central File Note if appropriate – written by SENDCo
- Medical evidence – if appropriate

Where documentation is stored electronically, each individual candidate will have their own e-folder, which will contain each of the required documents required for inspection.

## **10. Specialist Trained Staff:**

Learning Support is fortunate to have 2 members of staff qualified to test for Access Arrangements & who meet the necessary standards.

Both Cathy James & Lisa Smith meet the framework for Higher education Qualifications in England, Wales & Northern Ireland (2008) having obtained the following qualification:

***“Certificate of Psychometric Testing Assessment & Access Arrangements -CPT3A”***

Copies of these certificates can be found in the Access Arrangements filing cabinets in C1.

## **11. Alternative venues for exams**

A decision where an exam candidate may be offered alternative rooming arrangements (e.g. a room for a smaller group of candidates with similar needs) within the centre will be made by the SENDCo in discussion with the Exams Officer and the Head of Year.

The decision will be based on:

- whether the candidate has a substantial and long-term impairment which has an adverse effect **and**
- the candidate's normal way of working within the centre (JCQ AA 5.16)

In the case of separate invigilation, the candidate's difficulties will already be established within the centre and known to a Form Tutor, a Head of Year, the SENDCo or a senior member of staff with pastoral responsibilities. Separate invigilation reflects the candidate's normal way of working in internal school tests and mock examinations because of a long-term medical condition or long-term social, emotional and mental health needs. (JCQ [AA](#) 5.16)

## **Appendix 1:**

### **Personal data consent from examination candidate (aged 13 or over): *Access arrangements online***

You are asked to complete this form as your SENDCo has decided that access arrangements are required when you sit your examinations. (The term 'access arrangements' is explained in the Privacy Notice that should have been provided to you by your centre. If you have not received it, please ask your centre to provide it). As you are over 13 years of age you can sign this form yourself.

<b>Centre name:</b>	[Insert name of your school] (the 'centre')
<b>Centre details:</b>	[Identify the school as a legal entity. E.g. for maintained schools the name of the Academy Trust or Local Education Authority, or for private schools the name of the company, the country it is incorporated in and its registration number.]
<b>Centre's address:</b>	[Insert address of school]
<b>Centre's examinations Officer or SENCo:</b>	Name: [Insert name] Job title: [Insert job title] Email address: [Insert contact email address]
<b>Centre's Data Protection Officer:</b>	[Name or Not applicable] [Contact details for DPO, if applicable. LAs will have a DPO. Some other exam centres may have one.]

\* If your centre has not filled in the above for you, ask your centre to provide you with the required information.

<b>Your full name:</b>	[Insert name of student]
<b>Your date of birth:</b>	[dd/mm/yyyy]
<b>Consent to using and sharing information about me, as described in the Privacy Notice:</b>	YES / NO [Delete as applicable]

1. *Access arrangements online*'.
2. I agree to my centre applying for access arrangements on my behalf, for the purposes of the application.
3. My consent decision, about whether information about me can be used and shared (as described in the Privacy Notice) for the purposes of the access arrangements application, is stated in the table above.
4. If I have said 'YES' (i.e. given my consent), I know I have the right to withdraw my consent at any time, and I will tell the examinations officer or SENCo of my centre if I want to withdraw my consent.
5. I know that the Privacy Notice may change, and the centre must tell me about any new Privacy Notice. It is my responsibility to tell the examinations officer or SENCo of my centre, after I have been told about the new Privacy Notice, if I want to change my mind about my consent.

6. I know that if I do not give my consent, or if I withdraw it, the centre and/or the relevant awarding bodies might not be able to process access arrangements for me. I understand that if the application cannot be processed, access arrangements will not be granted.

**My signature:**

**Dated:**

## **Appendix 2**

### **Privacy Notice for examination candidate aged 13 or over:**

#### **Access arrangements online**

This Privacy Notice applies to the following **qualifications**:

- AQA Applied General qualifications;
- AQA Level 1, Level 2 and Level 3 Technical qualifications;
- Cambridge Nationals;
- Cambridge Technicals;
- OCR Level 3 Certificates;
- WJEC Welsh Baccalaureate Qualification (WBQ);
- WJEC Level 1 and Level 2 General qualifications;
- WJEC Level 1 and Level 2 Vocational qualifications; and
- WJEC Level 3 Applied qualifications from, respectively, AQA, OCR and WJEC.

FSMQ, GCE AS and A-level and GCSE qualifications from the following **awarding bodies**: AQA, CCEA, OCR, Pearson and WJEC, who are represented by **JCQ** (the Joint Council for Qualifications <sup>CIC</sup>).

This Privacy Notice is provided to you by your **centre**, which is the person or organisation (e.g. your school) who enters you for your examinations. It tells you how your personal information is used for processing online applications for access arrangements.

**Access arrangements** are pre-examination adjustments for candidates with learning difficulties and disabilities based on evidence of need and normal way of working. They take account of one or more of the following impairments when you take an examination: your learning difficulty, medical condition, physical disability and/or sensory impairment.

References in this Privacy Notice to the **Access arrangements online form** are references to the document '**Personal data consent from examination candidate (aged 13 or over): Access arrangements online**' that has been provided to you by your centre.

#### **Your controller**

Your centre is a controller of your personal information. The awarding bodies, including JCQ, will also be controllers when they receive or use your personal information.

A **controller** is someone who uses your personal information and decides the purposes for which it will be used, and the methods of use. The contact details for the centre are included in the *Access arrangements online* form. Contact details for the awarding bodies can be found at: <https://www.jcq.org.uk/contact-our-members/>.

#### **Personal information**

To apply online for access arrangements your centre must use your name, date of birth, candidate number, year group and the academic year(s) when you will take your examinations. They must also confirm what your impairment(s) is/are, and the difficulties that they cause you, as relevant to the request for access arrangements.

If the online application for access arrangements is rejected, your centre may refer the decision to each relevant awarding body to review. As part of this review, your centre will need to provide **detailed information** about your impairment(s), and the difficulties caused, to enable the relevant awarding bodies to make a decision.

### **How your personal information is used**

If you sign the *Access arrangements online* form to give consent, the examinations officer or SENCo at your centre will apply online for your access arrangement(s). The online system is commissioned by JCQ and operated by one of the awarding bodies on behalf of all the others.

The online system is programmed to make a decision about your application. If the application is rejected and your centre refers the decision, it will have to provide the detailed information described above. The relevant awarding body/bodies will use the detailed information to review the application and either confirm or change the decision.

Your personal information submitted in the *Access arrangements online* form, and the detailed information, will be kept by your centre. The centre will tell you how long the form and information will be kept. The relevant awarding body/bodies will keep the information that is submitted online, and any detailed information, for up to seven (7) years.

Your information may be used for other purposes, without your consent, in some circumstances, such as to comply with law or to combat crime, as part of dealing with alleged malpractice, or to report potential malpractice or fraud to regulators (such as Ofqual or Qualifications Wales). The awarding bodies may share your information with each other in some circumstances, to help them achieve consistency in their decisions. JCQ and each of the awarding bodies will also need their suppliers to use your information (for example, the online portal for access arrangements relies on host and connectivity providers).

The awarding bodies use your personal information in the UK, where laws protect the information. Your personal information will only leave the UK if you or your centre are outside the UK, where such laws may not apply. You can find more details, including the legal basis for the use of your personal information by your centre and the awarding bodies at:

<https://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/information-for-candidates-documents/>

### **Your choices**

You do not have to give your consent by signing the *Access arrangements online* form. If you withhold consent, the centre might not be able to process an online application for you.

### **Your rights**

If you sign the *Access arrangements online* form to give consent, you have the right to withdraw your consent at any time. You also have rights to find out how the online system made the decision about your application, and to get the decision reviewed by an awarding body Officer, and to complain to the Information Commissioner (which is the UK regulator of personal information). Your other rights are to access your personal information that is held by relevant awarding bodies or JCQ, or to ask for it to be corrected or erased.

To exercise rights, if you live in the UK or EU, just tell the examinations officer or SENCo at your centre, using the contact details contained in the *Access arrangements online* form, and (wherever you live, if the application has already been made) tell the awarding bodies or JCQ using the contact details referred to above. You can find more detail about these and your other rights at:

<https://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/information-for-candidates-documents/>

## Appendix 3

### Special Arrangements Flow Chart

