

Policy Description

This policy sets out the procedures and responsibilities relating to Exam Access arrangements within the College.

Supporting documentation:

- Referral Form
- Evidence of need form

Links to other documentation:

- JCQ access arrangements <http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/access-arrangements-and-special-consideration>
- Equality Act 2010 <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/contents>
- Disable Students allowance <http://www.yourdsa.com/>
- SEND Code of Practice 2014 <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-code-of-practice-0-to-25>
- Children and Families Act 2014 <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2014/6/contents/enacted>

Links to other policies:

- Examination Policy
- Single Equality Scheme
- Student Support Policy

1.0 INTRODUCTION

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 JCQCIC awarding body approval.

Access Arrangements allow candidates/students 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'.

1.1 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 student. An adjustment may not be considered reasonable if it involves unreasonable costs, time frames 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.

1.2 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

2.0 ACCESS ARRANGEMENTS PROCEDURES

2.1 Referral points

Application

Students are asked to provide details of any SEND need on application forms; students will then be contacted by the SEND Officer for further details.

Interview

A member of the Student Mentoring team will meet and discuss support needs. Contact may be made with the previous school, college or agency to provide further information. Previous arrangements and a need for assessment would be recorded on the support needs assessment documentation, and details forwarded to the Specialist Support Team

Enrolment

Details of any previous access arrangements will be requested if not already provided. Students will be offered a meeting with the Specialist Support Team

Induction

Tutors will introduce students to the Specialist Support Team and the Drop in workshops, and arrange assessment meetings with students who identify a need at this point.

Initial Assessment

All new students will carry out screening tests with the Specialist Support Team and initial assessments with the Maths and English tutors. Referrals will be made for assessment for any students identified through this process.

On Course

Students who present with SEND needs can be referred to the Specialist Support team throughout the year if it is felt Access arrangements would benefit the student and these are related to usual way a student works. **However all referrals need to be made 8 weeks before any exam.**

2.2 Process

If a student requires access arrangements and the Specialist Support team SEND Officer are aware of this, they will ensure that staff and students are aware of support needs at the start of term. This ensures that the student has access to support throughout the year and that any access arrangements assigned are the student's usual way of working.

If a tutor or other support staff identifies that a student has access arrangement needs then the following procedures should be followed.

- Staff should complete an Evidence of Need form and send it the Specialist Support Team, types of evidence can be found in the table below but students will often also have formal evidence from Educational Psychologist or Specialist Tutor, for those with a specific learning difficulty (SpLD) or from a Medical Practitioner for those with an impairment or disability.
- This applies in all circumstances, including students who have previously had access arrangements and ensures the Specialist Support Team must have up-to-date evidence of their need and communicate accordingly with the relevant examining bodies
- This applies to all examinations including Functional Skills
- When a referral is received the student will be invited to meet a member of the Specialist Support Team
- Outcomes of this meeting will be recorded Pro Monitor
- When referring a student, staff should give as much detail as possible about the nature of a student's needs
- During interview the Specialist Support Tutor will check the student's eligibility and discuss the most appropriate course of action for them
- The team will then submit a request with evidence to the exam board which must approve the application before the arrangement can be set up
- Work-place learners are encouraged to disclose exam access arrangement Needs on their application form and at interview. A member of the Work-based team will follow up any disclosure and arrange exam access arrangements in liaison with the Specialist Support team
- Higher Education students are encouraged to disclose exam access arrangement needs on their application form. They will be contacted by the Higher Education. They will be offered guidance on applying for a Disabled Student Allowance, if appropriate
- Early referral is essential as the any access arrangements must be linked to the students usual way of working, therefore the student should have had this support throughout the year, **ALL REFERRALS SHOULD BE MADE AT LEAST 8 WEEKS PRIOR TO THE EXAM.**

3.0 TYPES OF ACCESS ARRANGEMENTS

If evidence exists that this is a student's usual way of working

- Supervised rest breaks
- Extra Time
- Computer reader
- Read aloud and/or the use of an examination reading pen
- Scribe/Speech recognition technology
- Word processor
- Transcript
- Prompter
- Oral Language Modifier
- Live speaker for pre-recorded examination components
- Sign Language Interpreter
- Practical assistant
- Alternative site for the conduct of examinations
- Other arrangements for candidates with disabilities
- Exemptions

- Bilingual translation dictionaries with up to a maximum of 25% extra time.

4.0 ACCESS ARRANGEMENTS RESPONSIBILITIES

The SEND Officer will inform tutors of candidates with special educational needs and any special arrangements that individual candidates will need during the course and in any assessments/exams. The SEND Officer will notify students prior to any examination as to where they will be sitting their exam and the agreed arrangements that have been put in place.

This is a two way process however and tutors should inform the specialist support team early in the academic year of any students they have concerns about but by **at least 8 weeks before the exam.**

- A candidate's access arrangements requirement is determined by the specialist support team under the direction of the Specialist Support Coordinator
- Ensuring there is appropriate evidence for a candidate's access arrangement is the responsibility of the Specialist Support Coordinator
- Submitting completed access arrangement applications to the awarding bodies is the responsibility of the specialist support team under the direction of the Specialist Support Coordinator
- Rooming for access arrangement candidates will be arranged by the MIS team.
- Invigilation, rooms and support for access arrangement candidates, as defined in the JCQ access arrangements regulations, will be organised by the MIS team
- The Specialist Support Coordinator will organise and ensure scribes, readers, assistive technology and all other access arrangement requirements are in place.

Appendix 1 Types of Access Arrangements and possible evidence

Access arrangement	Why apply for this?	What to include on Evidence of Need referral form	Evidence required by exam board
Coloured overlay	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learner experiences visual disturbance and uses an overlay in class 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence of Need form not necessary 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No further evidence required Learner responsible for bringing overlay to exam (spares can be borrowed from W1.01 in emergencies)
Prompter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learning Difficulty or medical condition that leads to lack of focus, easy distraction or poor time estimation that will lead to exam performance being seriously impaired 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describe the nature of the problem, its impact in class and what measures are in place to support in class 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence of Need form Any formal assessment or medical notes that are available In class documentation
Separate invigilation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Behavioural, emotional, social need, medical condition, physical disability, psychological need that will lead to impaired performance within normal exam conditions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describe the nature of the need and how it is supported within the classroom Include medical or other evidence where possible Discuss the option of being in a small group and record the outcome of this discussion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence of Need form Any formal assessment or medical notes that are available In class documentation
Supervised Rest Breaks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learning difficulty, behavioural emotional social need, medical condition, physical disability, psychological need that leads to learner needing rest breaks in order to sustain performance in exam conditions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describe the nature of the need and how it is supported within the classroom Include medical or other evidence where possible Confirm that having frequent breaks is the learner's normal way of working 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence of Need form Any formal assessment or medical notes that are available In class documentation
Use of Word Processor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Slow rate of writing, illegible handwriting or handwriting that deteriorates under stress Injury, physical disability, normal way of working 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describe the nature of the learner's difficulties Provide evidence of handwritten and typed scripts (ideally mock exam questions) and note differences in quality of language or rate of writing Confirm that word processing is the normal way of working within the classroom for this learner 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence of Need form Examples of typed and handwritten scripts Learner may be invited for further assessment
Extra time 25%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learning difficulty, medical, physical or physiological requirement or visual or hearing impairment which has an adverse effect on the candidate's speed of processing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Indicate the nature of the learner's processing problem and how it is supported in the classroom Include examples of unfinished timed assessments Discuss with learner how extra time will be 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence of Need form Examples of learner's work In class documentation Statement of Special Educational Need or assessment by specialist tutor showing below average standardized scores in processing speed or reading and/or writing

		<p>used and record this on referral form</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confirm that it is the learner's normal way of working to use extra time 	<p>speed or letter from specialist detailing precise nature of processing difficulty</p>
Reader	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visual impairment or learning difficulty that leads to learner performing significantly less well than peers in either reading accuracy, comprehension or speed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe nature of learner's need – indicate that the learner performs significantly below peers in reading accuracy, comprehension or speed • Describe how this is supported in class and confirm that reading support is the learner's normal way of working 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence of Need form • Classroom documentation • Specialist assessment showing below average score in reading accuracy, comprehension or speed
Scribe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical disability, medical condition or recent injury preventing writing • Visual impairment and cannot touch type or use a braille • Learning difficulties that means that writing cannot be read by others • Writes so slowly that answers cannot be fully recorded even with extra time 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe the nature of the difficulty – include examples of handwritten and scribed work (where appropriate) and comment on quality of language • Describe how need is supported in class and confirm that using a scribe is the learner's normal way of working 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence of Need form • Examples of learner's work • Classroom documentation • Specialist assessment indicating severe problems of legibility, incomprehensibility or processing speed • Covering letter explaining precise nature of need