

EPHS ACCESS ARRANGEMENTS PROTOCOL

November 2020

Introduction

Access arrangements are modifications or provisions, made in public examinations and controlled assessments, for students with evidence of a defined need. This policy is reviewed annually in line with publication of updated JCQ regulations and guidance contained in the publication.

Access arrangements must be approved by the examination boards before an assessment in which they are to be provided. The criteria for eligibility for the arrangements are laid down by the examination boards ('the awarding bodies').

Access arrangements allow students with special educational needs, disabilities or temporary injuries to:

- Access the assessment
- Show what they know and can do without changing the demands of the assessment

Arrangements that are available include (but not limited to) the use of a reader, scribe* or a word processor** and the provision of extra time.

*A scribe is only granted when the student has demonstrated they are not competent using a word processor.

**Please see separate Word Processor Policy

The intention behind access arrangements is to meet the particular needs of an individual candidate with a learning, medical or physical disability, without affecting the integrity of the assessment or advantaging the candidate above his or her peers. In this way the awarding bodies will comply with their duty under the Equality Act 2010 to make 'reasonable adjustments'.

Equality Act 2010, special needs and access arrangements

- All staff with responsibility for exams must ensure they meet the disability provisions in the Equality Act 2010
- 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 with someone who is not disabled. The awarding body is required to take reasonable steps to overcome the disadvantage. An example of a reasonable adjustment would be providing an enlarged exam paper for a visually impaired student who has difficulty seeing small text and diagrams.
- Students with disabilities must be given full access to exams according to their needs.

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

EPHS provision of access arrangements

The school will ensure that access arrangements are provided in public examinations to give pupils with particular requirements a fair opportunity to demonstrate their attainment ability. All access arrangements provided will:

- Comply with awarding body regulations (JCQ) and ensure the integrity of the assessment is maintained

- Be backed by the required evidence of need, **normal way of working** and history of provision on file for inspection by a JCQ inspector.

-Evidence of need: Documentation confirming the disability/difficulty by a HCPC registered Psychologist, an Education Professional with a Level 7 qualification or a Specialist Teacher with a current SpLD Assessment Practising Certificate. Teachers are asked to provide evidence to support the application confirming that the access arrangement is their normal way of working in lesson. A Doctor's note is **not** permissible evidence. An external professional must have a prior and working relationship with the school to submit documentation.

-Normal way of working: Teachers are asked to provide evidence to support the application confirming that the access arrangement is their normal way of working in lesson. Without this evidence a child would not be entitled to access arrangements.

-History of provision: Evidence is gathered over a period of time to show that a student makes use of the arrangement in lesson (where possible) and in internal assessments and exams. The decision to use the access arrangement rests with the student and they should demonstrate the use of it during domestic examinations. A student entitled to access arrangements will receive this provision in all domestic and public exams. If a student does not use the arrangement the school may remove the provision as it will be considered malpractice to grant the arrangement to a student if they have not practiced using it.

Poor attendance will also be a deciding factor in whether access arrangements are granted as it will be difficult to prove normal way of working to an inspector.

Procedure

KS3

- The SENCO, in collaboration with the Transition/Year 7 Leader will identify students who were provided with access arrangements in primary school, and consider the evidence available on the likely need for continuance of provision, in class and in tests and assessments. Teachers will be advised of these previous arrangements, and will be asked to ensure that students are able to access appropriate support in the classroom, and in tests – teachers will then be able to provide feedback on student needs. Any provision which continues to be necessary will help establish the provision as the student's normal way of working. A student who has a difficulty with writing, and who has used a word processor in their tests, e.g., should be entitled to use a chromebook, laptop or a word processor for as much of their work as possible, within the constraints of the classroom setting.
- At assessment points the SENCO will seek, and give, feedback on whether arrangements that are provided remain justified, necessary and effective. Throughout KS3 teachers will be asked by the SENCO to identify students whose presentation or performance in class activities, or in tests and assessments, indicates they may be at a substantial disadvantage in tests and assessments, due to a learning difficulty or other barrier to access. The SENCO will ensure that these students' needs are assessed, and that appropriate support and intervention are put in place ready for KS4. The provision will be recorded as evidence of the history of need and provision.
- Teachers may be asked to explore alternative ways in which students may be supported to overcome difficulties accessing tests and assessments, or to test whether a particular arrangement does effectively address a student's difficulties. This would take place over two terms.

- The SENCO will access any professional reports or assessments available to, or requested by, the school, with a view to identifying students' need for support provisions in class, and access arrangements in tests and internal examinations. Teachers will be advised about these students' needs.
- The SENCO will liaise with the students' teachers, pastoral staff and Year Leaders in identifying and finalising the students for whom provision of access arrangements is appropriate. As far as possible, those students who are likely to meet the requirements of the GCSE examination boards relating to access arrangements will be identified by the start of the summer term in Year 9. **It is only possible to give students who had access arrangements in Year 6 and students with an EHCP or diagnosis confirming a learning difficulty, access arrangements for the Year 9 Spring term assessments.**
- For those arrangements for which the rules require an assessment by a specialist teacher, in addition to a history of need, evidence of normal way of working and provision, screening will start in the Spring Term and assessments by a Specialist Teacher will take place during the Summer term in Year 9. The school will bear the costs of the assessment by the Specialist Teacher.
- In addition to this assessment teachers must also provide evidence that this is the child's normal way of working. All teachers will be required to completed the evidence form meeting the five condition (appendix 1)
- Parents will be notified if their child is entitled to access arrangements.
- The student will sign a Data Protection Notice

KS4

- All students who have been granted access arrangements will be highlighted for KS4. Their provision will be their normal way of working. For example, if a child is entitled to extra time, they will have extra time for work in lessons where possible within the constraints of the classroom, and in all PPEs.
- Applications will be made by the examinations officer, in line with JCQ deadlines for exam series, to ensure that access arrangements are in place for any controlled assessments in the autumn term.
- The SENCO, together with heads of department, will ensure that teachers make appropriate provision for students to ensure their normal way of working reflects their agreed access arrangements.

KS5

- Students who attended EPHS for Key Stage 4 will be considered for eligibility for access arrangements in Key Stage 5 by the SENCO in conjunction with sixth form teachers and the examinations officer, and a similar procedure implemented as at the start of Key Stage 4.
- **New students transferring to EPHS 6th form** from another school must bring evidence of previous access arrangements with them, and present these to the Head of 6th form **by the first Friday of September in Year 12**. This evidence should include any professional reports, together with Form 8, a copy of any Approval provided by the examination boards and any other evidence recorded by the previous school describing the history of need and provision.

Exceptions to the Process

- Any concerns raised after the start of KS4 by a teacher should be accompanied by the five conditions in order for SENCo to consider any provision change. If the SENCo is in agreement that the evidence provided warrants further investigation, the teacher will be asked to communicate their concerns to parents and with their permission, the student will be screened using Lucid (a suite of online literacy assessments). An application will only be made if the results of the Lucid screening meet the criteria and all the necessary evidence to support an application has been collated.
- When students join the school after the start of Key Stage 4 the SENCO will consider information passed on by the previous school, or by the family, about eligibility or provision of access arrangements. Parents are requested to complete the admission form noting any access arrangements. Teachers will be asked to make appropriate provision for the student in class and in tests and assessments, and to monitor whether the student needs or makes use of the provision. If the necessary evidence of need and provision is available, an assessment by the specialist teacher will be arranged and action taken accordingly. If sufficient evidence is not available, from within the school or from assessments, an application will not be made.
- Any emergency application for medical concerns must to be referred to the examinations officer and SENCo who must be satisfied that the need is genuine and will request supporting evidence. (refer to access arrangements for medical conditions)

Independent reports or other evidence provided by outside agencies/professionals/parents

- The school will follow the regulations laid down by the examination boards when considering any evidence or report or assessment or other evidence provided to the school in relation to a student's eligibility for access arrangements. Such evidence can only be considered alongside school data, history of need and the pupil's normal way of working, which must be demonstrated over a significant period of time.
- Reports from primary school are not valid as evidence for access arrangements in secondary school, and testing by a specialist teacher identified by the school will always be required in the absence of any other valid and appropriate assessment which complies with the regulations.
- If parents believe they have documentation which indicates that access arrangements may be appropriate for their child, they must notify the SENCO or the examinations officer on entry to the school, or as soon as possible after they become aware that there may be an issue to consider.

IMPORTANT

- **Private Reports:** Privately commissioned reports without prior consultation with the school will not be accepted and cannot be used to apply for access arrangements. In the event parents have their child privately assessed, the JCQ regulations require the assessor to have a relationship with the school and a copy of their qualification must be kept on file for inspection. The school will provide Section A of Form 8 prior to the assessment.

Access Arrangements for medical conditions

- For access arrangements awarded on medical grounds the school will also need to present the following evidence to enable an application to be made and for JCQ inspection:
 - A letter from CAMHS or a clinical psychologist; or
 - A letter from a hospital consultant; or
 - A Letter from the Local Authority Educational Psychology Service; or
 - A letter from the Local Authority Sensory Impairment Service; or
 - A letter from a Speech and Language Therapist (SALT).

The school must be made aware of any on-going medical problems as soon as they have been diagnosed. If the school is not made aware of the student's medical history then an access arrangement cannot be put into place for public examinations.

Medical letters are required for anxiety or depression, and so the appropriate access arrangement can be granted the school must be made aware in good time. Students presenting with anxiety or depression close to an exam will not be granted access arrangements as the school will be unable to provide the evidence required relating to history of need and normal way of working.

Students with an Education Health Care Plan

Students with an EHCP do not require an Access Arrangement Assessment or Form 8. The following evidence is sufficient and will be co-ordinated by the school

- Detailed letter including provision, evidence over time and normal way of working.
- Current EHCP
- Specialist evidence confirming a disability

Internal responsibilities

SENCO

- The SENCO has overall responsibility for determining whether the school has sufficient, relevant and appropriate evidence to apply for access arrangements for students.
- The SENCO will compile all the necessary evidence for applications, and arrange any assessments to be carried out by a specialist teacher or other professional. All evidence and test results will be available to the Examinations Officer in line with JCQ deadlines for exam series, and the Examinations Officer will make the online applications.
- Throughout the academic year the SENCO and the examinations officer will liaise about any new students, or students who make an emergency application
- At the start of the exams series the SENCO and the Examinations Officer will liaise about rooms, and the provision and arrangements for any approved access arrangements.