

## **EXAM ACCESS ARRANGEMENTS POLICY**

### **What are Exam Access Arrangements?**

An Exam Access Arrangement (EAA) is a provision or type of support given to a pupil (subject to exam board approval) in an exam, where a particular need has been identified and is provided so that the pupil has appropriate access to the exam. At Aldenham School we will use every opportunity to identify students' needs from their first contact with the school. Professional reports are requested that demonstrate an Additional Educational Need (AEN) and a recommendation for a reasonable adjustment to be made to meet the pupil's needs and the type of access arrangements that are appropriate. Exam access arrangements extend and reflect the support that is given to a pupil who has SEND/AEN in the classroom, internal exams and mock exams. Access Arrangements are pre-examination adjustments for candidates based on evidence of need. Further, Access Arrangements fall into two distinct categories: some arrangements are delegated to centres; others require prior JCQ awarding body approval. These arrangements allow candidates/learners with special educational needs, disabilities or temporary injuries to access the assessment without changing the demands of the assessment. In this way Awarding Bodies will comply with the duty of the Equality Act 2010 to make 'reasonable adjustments'. The Aldenham School Policy for Access Arrangements is written in line with the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) Regulations document: 'Adjustments for candidates with disabilities and learning difficulties – Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments'. This Policy should be read in conjunction with the Schools SEND Policy, which sets out the procedures for identifying SEND and making and evaluating provision for pupils with SEND.

### **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.

### **Duty to make a reasonable adjustment**

The duty for an awarding body to make a reasonable adjustment will apply where assessment arrangements would put a disabled candidate at a substantial disadvantage in comparison with a candidate who is not disabled. In such circumstances, the awarding body is required to take reasonable steps to avoid that disadvantage.

**Definition of Disability:** Section 6 of the Equality Act defines disability as a ‘physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on someone’s ability to carry out normal day to day activities’.

**Definition of Special Educational Needs:** A candidate has ‘special educational needs’ as defined in the SEND Code of Practice 2014: 0 to 25 years.

**Access Arrangements may include:**

- Supervised rest breaks
- Extra time of up to 25%
- Extra time of up to 50%
- Extra time of over 50%
- Reader/Computer reader
- Read aloud
- Scribe/Voice Activated software
- Word processor
- Transcript
- Prompter
- Oral Language Modifier
- Live speaker for pre-recorded examinations components
- Sign Language Interpreter
- Practical Assistant
- Alternative accommodation away from the centre may be made for him/her
- Other arrangements for candidates with disabilities: amplification equipment; Brailers; closed circuit TV; colour naming by the invigilator for candidates who are colour blind; coloured overlays; low vision aid/magnifier; optical character reader scanners; separate invigilation within the centre.

In line with JCQ regulations, Aldenham School will make all decisions with regard to access arrangements based upon whether the candidate has a substantial and long term impairment which has an adverse effect, in conjunction with the access arrangement being the candidate’s normal way of working at Aldenham – demonstrating the involvement of the teaching staff in determining the need for the access arrangement. Appropriate evidence of need will be available at the School for inspection.

## **Identifying the need for Access Arrangements**

Pupils who may qualify for formal access arrangements are identified early; at this stage needs are identified, rather than formally assessed. Adjustments to Quality First Teaching within lessons are then made according to need to enable a pupil to access their learning and make progress. All staff are involved in monitoring the adjustments. Formal assessment for Access Arrangements takes place in or after Year 9. The fact that pupils may have received EAA in the lower school does not necessarily mean that they automatically receive it for GCSE exams because their needs may have changed. For example, a pupil who had a reader in Year 5 may not qualify for a reader in Year 11 because their reading has improved to the extent it does not meet the exam board criteria.

### **Assessment:**

- For those pupils potentially requiring access arrangements, formal assessment and application to JCQ is carried out in Year 9/10 and evidence is requested again in Year 12. Assessments may also be carried out at other points, where necessary. When granted, access arrangements are valid for 26 months.
- Any pupil with scores which indicate a substantial impairment will be considered for access arrangements. The most recent tests are binding and determine any subsequent access arrangements.
- Specialist assessments for access arrangements must be carried out by an appropriately qualified assessor with a special relationship with the School; a list can be provided.
- Parents may request an independent assessment. However, Aldenham may elect to accept or reject a privately commissioned report. If rejected the SENCo or a member of the Senior Management Team can provide a brief, written rationale to support this decision which will be available for inspection purposes.
- At Aldenham School examination officers, specialist assessors, the SENCo and teaching staff all work together to ensure that appropriate access arrangements are put in place for all tests and examinations.
- If a pupil 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.



- If the SENCo and/or specialist assessor considers that access arrangements cease to be the pupil's 'normal way of working', they reserve the right to withdraw the permission, communicating this to parents/careers.

### **Procedures for processing an application**

Parents must declare at the time of enrolment and when completing the school application form if their child has any medical or psychological condition, SEND needs, previous EAA or any other issues that may require an EAA. Once diagnostic tests have been conducted and there is a recommendation for EAA, the SENCo will complete the JCQ paperwork and the Examination Officer will then apply to the exam board. Since the application requires evidence of need, the SENCo will hold evidence in its files that can be inspected at short notice.

This can include:

- Educational Psychologist reports
- Speech Therapist reports
- Occupation Therapist reports
- Letters from outside agencies such as hospitals, doctors, and CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service)
- Reports from Hearing Impairment (HI) and Visual Impairment (VI) advisory teachers
- Copies of Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCP)
- Permission from the exam board for the arrangements
- A fully completed and signed copy of Form 8 report by the SENCo
- A record of occasions when a pupil has previously been supported by EAA

Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) deadlines are fully adhered to.

### **Evidence needed to apply for EAA**

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

- Form 8 reports from a specialist teacher carrying out EAA assessments, fully completed and signed by the SENCo
- Previous EAA from another school, alongside the Assessor's qualifications and Form 8



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- Subject teachers' examples of work as appropriate and support given in class, or evidence from tests or mock exams
- Results from baseline tests such as reading age, writing tests
- Medical reports outlining significant medical needs and disability
- An Educational Psychology report which explicitly diagnoses severe dyslexia
- A Speech Therapy report which diagnoses severe language impairment

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