



# **Exam Access Arrangements Policy**

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## 1. Rationale

The Examination Access Arrangements Policy explains the actions taken to ensure inclusion at Saint David's High School (SDHS) for all students with additional learning needs (ALN), including those with formally diagnosed Special Educational Needs Disabilities (SEND). The policy 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. Who is this policy for?

This policy is for staff and parents.

## 3. Key Terminology

The term Additional Learning Need is used as an umbrella term to incorporate ALL students known to be receiving intervention Learning Support provision including those pupils identified as having SEND.

### *Disability*

Section 6 of the Equality Act 2010 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'.

### *Special Educational Needs*

A candidate has "special educational needs" as defined in the SEND code of practice: 0 to 25 years. Children have special educational needs if they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for them. The Equality Act 2010 definition of disability includes substantial and long-term sensory impairments such as those affecting sight or hearing, mental health difficulties and long-term health conditions such as asthma, diabetes, epilepsy and cancer. Children and young people with such conditions do not necessarily have SEN, but there is a significant overlap between disabled children and young people and those with SEN.

## 4. What are Access Arrangements?

Access arrangements are agreed before an assessment. They allow students to demonstrate their skills, knowledge and understanding without changing the demands of the assessment. The intention behind access arrangements is to meet the particular needs of a 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.'

## 5. 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.

## 6. 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.

## 7. Access Arrangements at Saint David's High School

SDHS aims to ensure that all students have equal access to examinations and are neither advantaged nor disadvantaged over their peers by any long term, substantial SEND/or ALN which fall into the following four categories: -

- i Communication and interaction
- ii Cognition and learning
- iii Social, emotional and mental health
- iv Sensory and/ or physical needs

We will do this by applying the rules for Access Arrangements as set out in the most recent Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ guidelines). We believe it is important to abide by the JCQ regulations, so that there is parity in how access arrangements are awarded throughout a student's secondary schooling.

We will use every opportunity to identify students' needs from their first contact with the school.

Professional reports are requested that demonstrate a SEND/ALN and a recommendation for a reasonable adjustment to be made to meet the student's needs and the type of access arrangements that are appropriate. Access arrangements reflect the support that is usually given to the student in the classroom, internal exams and mock examinations. This is commonly referred to as 'normal way of working.'

8. [Exam Access Arrangements \(EAA\) at KS2](#)

Students who have EAA at KS2 are screened for EAA at KS3 and KS4 to see if EAA still apply. Although they may have received EAA at KS2, it doesn't necessarily mean that they automatically receive it at KS3 or KS4 because their needs may have changed. This will also be repeated at the start of KS4 if they qualified at KS3.

9. [Exam Access Arrangement \(EAA\) referrals](#)

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. Once contact has been made with the parent, the ALNCo will investigate their concerns. Following this, a decision will be made as to whether it is appropriate to test a student.

Teacher Referral:

Teachers and support staff can refer a student to the ALNCo where they have concerns about the learning and progress of a student in their class. The students' current teachers will be asked to give feedback to gain information, and following this a decision will be made as to whether to test a student for EAA. Teachers are asked to refer students to the ALNCo initially, if they have EAA concerns about a student. The ALNCo will then contact the parents if the concerns are founded.

10. [When might students need to be given Exam Access Arrangements \(EAA\)?](#)

An EAA is a provision or type of support given to a student (subject to exam board approval) in an exam, where a particular need has been identified and is provided so that the student has appropriate access to the exam. The appended table identifies the Access Arrangements. Any that require an application through the online AA portal are highlighted in bold. All others are at the discretion of the school, and will be awarded according to the criteria set, evidence of need and the student's normal way of working within the school.

11. [What evidence is needed for SDHS to consider an application for Exam Access Arrangements \(EAA\)?](#)

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

- Form 8 report from ALNCo/Access Arrangements Assessor
- Access Arrangement Assessment results
- Previous EAA from Primary Schools/ other Education Providers or transition information from previous school.
- Subject teachers – examples of work as appropriate, and evidence of normal way of working
- Parental referral
- Concerns raised by SEN/Pastoral Team
- Evidence from Medical Professionals
- Private Education Psychologists reports (*please note that as Private educational psychologist's reports cost a significant amount of money. This therefore means that parents who are unable to obtain a private report through their financial circumstances are put at a disadvantage. As an exam centre we must be consistent in our decisions and ensure that no student is 'either given an unfair advantage or be disadvantaged by any arrangements put in place. Often private educational psychologists, recommend that children should receive EAA which can be in conflict with what the centre ALNCo recommends. We will consider this evidence alongside the history of need, the other evidence available, including an assessment from a specialist assessor, and the students' normal way of working within the centre).*

12. [How do staff and parents know whether a student has Exam Access Arrangements \(EAA\)?](#)

Teaching and support staff can access the list in the ALN register. It is updated when students become entitled to EAA. The information about results of assessments for EAA are kept confidentially in line with school policy. The information is also listed in quick notes section of the students' profile on SIMS. Parents will be informed of any tests results via a letter or email home which states what the pupil is entitled to, why and when.

13. [How are Exam Access Arrangements \(EAA\) applied for?](#)

Whether they were entitled to EAA at KS2 does not automatically entitle them to it at KS3 or KS4. Therefore, the Access Arrangements Assessor (AAA) tests students who are referred, or who have had EAA in earlier Key Stages. The AAA will assess students using a variety of current, nationally recognised tests. Following a report produced by the AAA/ALNCo an application is made to the Exam Boards for permission to implement the specified arrangement/s.

For EAA which require a formal JCQ application, Students are tested formally in the summer term of Year 9, or during Year 10 and 11 as appropriate in order to comply with the 26-month rule; so that any permitted exam access arrangements are in place for the full GCSE period of both Year 10 and 11.

14. [What support is given to students with Exam Access Arrangements \(EAA\)?](#)

Students with EAA will have support to show them how to effectively use EAA. In addition, students with EAA are encouraged to use their EAA during internal assessments and exams so that they gain practice at using it effectively.

All teachers are given access to the list of students with EAA, and the use of EAA is monitored to ensure that it is suitable.

Students who have a reader can be supported by a Teaching Assistant (TA) in the classroom setting, or a specially trained invigilator in formal examinations.

The ALNCo requires two weeks' notice so that TAs can be redeployed if necessary to other students.

The Exams Officer/ALNCo can provide a separate room, access to ICT and specialist equipment with the required amount of notice.

A classroom is determined as a small room, so if students have this EAA, they can stay in a classroom setting to complete their assessment/examination.

In the event that a student does not wish to make use of their EAA in any given exam, the class teacher/invigilator will make a written note that the student was aware that EAA was available to them, but it was their choice not to use them.

15. [What are the procedures for processing an application?](#)

The decision to apply for access arrangements is based on evidence of a history of need, history of provision and an Access Arrangements Assessment report. Once the tests have been conducted and there is a recommendation from the tester for EAA, the ALNCo or Exams Officer then applies to the exam boards. At this point the EAA is added to the list of students and the parents are informed of the EAA via the pupil's school report. The application will require evidence of need, and the centre needs to hold evidence in its files that can be inspected at short notice.

16. [Deadlines for submitting applications for access arrangements and modified papers on-line for GCSE and GCE qualifications](#)

Access arrangements for GCSE qualifications must be processed using access arrangements online by the deadline set by the JCQ for each examination series.

17. [Late applications](#)

18. [Protocol for re-taking exams](#)

19. [Malpractice](#)

Information about malpractice is contained in the school exams policy.

20. [Appeals process](#)

Access Arrangement	Definition	Criteria
<b>Reader</b>	<p>A trained adult who would read the question and any relevant text (with the exception of Section A of an English GCSE Exam) for the student. The student would then write the answer/s themselves.</p> <p><i>A reader can read instructions and questions to the student, read the whole paper if necessary or the student may prefer to just ask for some specific words to be read to them.</i></p>	<p>There is substantial evidence from staff that the students' normal way of working within the school, that they need reading support in most/all situations. This could be the occasional word or full sentences.</p> <p>Odd word readers will be accommodated in a 'reading room', with a specially trained invigilator</p> <p>1:1 readers will be accommodated separately.</p>
<b>Extra Time</b>	<p>Students may be entitled to an allowance of 25% and the recommendation of the Designated Specialist Teacher or Teaching Assistant, following a formal assessment. Extra time between 26 and 50% can be granted in extraordinary circumstances.</p> <p>Before the option of Extra time is considered, the option of rest breaks must be explored.</p>	<p>Students will have an assessment to determine their speed of processing. At least two standardised scores of 84 or below (100 being average) can qualify for extra time. In exceptional circumstances, a candidate may require more than 50% extra time in order to manage a very substantial impairment.</p> <p>There must also be evidence that this is the students normal way of working within the school.</p>
<b>Rest Breaks</b>	<p>Students are permitted to stop for short break/s during the exam and the time stopped is added to the finish time, with the effect of elongating the exam but not actually using any extra time. Students are not permitted to have exam materials with them during rest breaks.</p> <p>The amount or length of rest breaks will be determined on an individual basis.</p>	<p>A student either has a physical disability or medical condition which prevents them from concentrating for long periods of time, or a processing speed which benefits from breaks in the thought process to enable students to order their thoughts before proceeding with the examination. This must be the student's normal way of working within the school.</p>
<b>Word-processor/lap-top</b>	<p>Access to a laptop so the student would word process their answers. Spelling and grammar checks would be disabled and a special</p>	<p>The provision to use a lap-top is put in place to address an underlying difficulty such as: speed of handwriting; medical condition; physical disability;</p>

	examinations laptop would be used with no internet access.	sensory impairment; planning and organisational difficulties or poor legibility. There must be evidence that this is the students normal way of working within the school.
Prompter	A trained adult can prompt them with a few permitted phrases to refocus, move the student on to the next question or indicate how much time is left.	A student who persistently loses concentration/focus, and is not aware of time and this can also be put in place for students who are affected by OCD (Obsessive Compulsive Disorder). Students with OCD often focus on one question in particular rather than moving onto look at other questions in the exam paper. There must be evidence that this is the students normal way of working within the school.
Read Aloud	Where a candidate is reading difficult text he/she may work more effectively if they can hear themselves read.	A candidate who <u>persistently</u> struggles to understand what they have read, but who does not qualify for a reader, to read aloud. There must be evidence that this is the students normal way of working within the school, and the student must be accommodated in a separate room.
Small Room	Where the student takes their examination in a room of fewer than 30 people.	There must be medical/behavioural evidence and SENCO approval to support this
Separate Room	A student is accommodated in a separate room with a 1:1 invigilator.	There must be substantial medical/behavioural evidence and SENCO approval to support this.
<b>Modified Paper</b>	Students have papers either enlarged or printed onto coloured paper. Enlargement of papers requires the school to notify the examination boards of this requirement well in advance.	There must be evidence that this is necessary for either medical reasons, or through Irlens/visual screening This must be the student's normal way of working within the school.

<p>Bilingual translation dictionaries <b>(with up to 10% extra time)</b></p>	<p>Only to be used by student's whose first language is not English, Irish or Welsh. The bilingual dictionary must be held in the centre to ensure no unauthorised information e.g. notes/revision is enclosed or written inside.</p>	<p>Should reflect the student's normal way of working. Candidates may also be allowed up to 10% extra time, depending on need, if they have been resident in the UK for less than two years at the time of the examination. Exceptions to these rules are: Writing Test in GCSE Languages where the specification states that all candidates must have access to a bilingual dictionary</p>
<p>Live Speaker</p>	<p>A live speaker for pre-recorded examination components, e.g. MFL listening examinations, to a candidate where it is their normal way of working within the centre. The live speaker will speak or read aloud the contents of the CD or tape in a Listening examination.</p>	<p>Students who have <u>persistent and significant</u> difficulties in following speech at normal speed</p>
<p><b>Oral language modifier</b></p>	<p>A responsible adult who may clarify the carrier language used in the examination paper when requested to do so by a candidate. The Oral Language Modifier must not explain technical terms or subject specific terms. The ability to understand these terms is part of the assessment. If such terms are explained to the candidate then the demands of the question will have been compromised and may constitute malpractice.</p>	<p>Students whose disability has a very substantial and long term adverse effect resulting in very persistent and significant difficulties in accessing and processing information. An Oral Language Modifier must be seen as a rare and exceptional arrangement. An Oral Language Modifier is an adjustment of last resort so an application must only be made once all other relevant access arrangements have been considered and found to be unsuitable or unworkable. There must be a very strong justification as to why an Oral Language Modifier is required. (JCQ Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments 5.11)</p>
<p><b>Scribe</b></p>	<p>A trained adult writes for the student. The student dictates their answers. The scribe writes exactly what they say.</p> <p>In MFL, the student must dictate every word in the</p>	<p>This must be the student's normal way of working within the centre There must be evidence that the student has persistent and significant difficulties with writing that cannot be addressed by the use of a word processor. The</p>

	target language and must do so letter by letter.	student must be competent or confident in the use of a word processor. There must be specialist evidence to support the use of a scribe
Sign Language Interpreter	A trained adult who presents the questions in a different language without: changing the meaning; providing any additional information; or providing an explanation as to what the question requires of the candidate. Sign Language interpretation is done 'live' in the presence of the candidate during the examination in order to allow for the candidate's regional variations in BSL/ISL signs. Consequently, sign language interpretation cannot be checked by the awarding body for accuracy. Great care must be taken not to disadvantage or advantage the candidate. Under no circumstances may an explanation of the question or clarification of the carrier language be given.	Students' whose 'normal way of working' requires sign language interpretation.  Students who require sign language interpretation will require a separate room.
<b>Alternative site</b>	The candidate will be sitting his/her examination(s) at a residential address or at a hospital which is a non-registered centre due to, for example: a medical condition which prevents the candidate from taking examinations in the centre; or Social, Mental and Emotional Needs.	The candidate has: an impairment which has a substantial and long term adverse effect giving rise to persistent and significant difficulties; or a temporary illness or injury at the time of the examination(s). This must be documented in writing. A full risk assessment must be completed and both parents/carer and school must abide by the Home visit arrangements documentation.
<b>Practical Assistant</b>	A person may act as a practical assistant, as long as permission has been given for these arrangements. The regulations for the use of each arrangement must be strictly adhered to. They must not carry out Physical tasks which	Students with poor motor co-ordination or/and severe vision impairment, or significant temporary injury or illness which prohibits the students normal motor skills. There

	form part of assessment objectives.	must be written evidence of this.
Other measures	Amplification equipment, Brailers, closed circuit television (CCTV), colour naming by the invigilator for candidates who are Colour Blind, coloured overlays (this would also include reading rulers, virtual overlays and virtual reading rulers), noise cancelling headphones	Centres must note that candidates are only entitled to the above arrangements if they are disabled within the meaning of the Equality Act. The candidate is at a substantial disadvantage when compared with other non-disabled

