



WALTHAMSTOW HALL
SEVENOAKS

Examinations: Access Arrangements Policy

What are Exam Access Arrangements?

Access arrangements allow candidates with special educational needs, disabilities or temporary injuries to access an examination without changing the demands of the assessment. The intention behind any access arrangement is to meet the particular needs of an individual candidate without affecting the integrity of the assessment. Access arrangements are pre-examination adjustments for candidates based on evidence of need and normal way of working. In this way, Awarding Bodies will comply with the duty of the Equality Act 2010 to make 'reasonable adjustments'.

Purpose of the Policy

The purpose of this policy is to confirm that Walthamstow Hall fulfils its obligations in respect of identifying the need for, requesting and implementing access arrangements. The Policy for Exam Access Arrangements is written in line with the Joint Council for Qualification (JCQ) Regulations Document 'Adjustments for Candidates with disabilities and learning difficulties – Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments'.

Responsibilities

In line with the JCQ Regulations, Walthamstow Hall 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 on their normal day to day activities. In determining the need for an access arrangement, the School will ensure that teaching staff have been involved and that consideration is given to whether the access arrangement is the candidate's 'normal way of working'.

Timings

The JCQ Regulations state that 'Access Arrangements should be processed at the start of the course'. As such, the School will aim to process applications at the start of or during the first year of a two year GCSE or A level course after having firmly established a picture of need and normal way of working in previous years where practicable.

Identifying the need for access arrangements

Students who may qualify for formal access arrangements during KS4 are identified and monitored in KS3. Students may be identified as potentially needing access arrangements by the following means:

- An existing Educational Psychologist Report or specialist teacher identifying a particular learning difficulty from the Summer Term in Year 9 onwards.
- Concerns from teaching staff/ learning support staff.

- Concerns from parents.
- Baseline assessments carried out in Year 7.
- Performance in tests and end of Year exams.
- Background information from Primary School.

At this stage a student's needs are identified, appropriate support is provided and where necessary a screening test undertaken. Access arrangements are not put in place during Years 7 and 8 as recommendations for certain arrangements made for a student in KS2 may no longer be applicable and/or in some cases the JCQ criteria for access arrangements are not met. Instead, information from the Year 7 and 8 exams provides background evidence of a student's need.

Assessment Process

For those students potentially requiring access arrangements, a formal Exam Access Arrangement assessment is carried out in Year 9 and in Year 12. Where necessary, an assessment may be carried out at other points but any application for an access arrangement must be processed and approved by the JCQ published deadline. When granted, access arrangements are valid for 26 months.

Prior to the assessment, Part 1 of the Form 8 is completed by the Head of Learning Support, in which a detailed picture of need and evidence of the normal way of working for the candidate is established. The assessment is carried out by an assessor appointed by the Head of Centre. The assessor, who is currently the Head of Learning Support, is appropriately qualified and employed by the centre, as required by the JCQ Regulations. During the assessment a number of nationally recognised tests may be used and these could include:

- CTOPP 2 – Comprehensive Test of Phonological Processing
- LUCID EXACT – Computerised assessment of literacy
- TOWRE 2 – Test of Word Reading Efficiency
- TOMAL 2 – Test of Memory and Learning
- DASH – Detailed Assessment of Speed of Handwriting
- SDMT - Single Digit Modality Test

Where the assessment identifies one below average and one low average score (within a different aspect of learning), which indicates the candidate has a substantial impairment, then consideration will be given to implementing appropriate and reasonable access arrangements. An appropriate arrangement for a particular student may be unique to that individual and may include one or more of the following:

- Supervised Rest Breaks.
- 25% Extra Time.
- A Reader or Read Aloud technology.
- Use of a word processor (See separate Policy).
- Use of a scribe.
- Coloured overlays.
- Modified paper.

Part 2 of the Form 8 is then completed by the person who has undertaken the assessment. Once an access arrangement is agreed and Part 3 of the Form 8 completed, the student is notified verbally and the parents are informed by letter. Staff are informed of all access arrangements and iSAMS is updated.

Note: 25% Extra Time

25% Extra Time is the most common access arrangement that is processed by the School. The JCQ Regulations require that the following points are taken into account by the School when considering the suitability of this access arrangement:

- The documentation in place to support this arrangement must show a compelling case for 25% extra time with a clear and detailed picture of need.
- Supervised rest breaks must always be considered before making a request for extra time, as they may be more appropriate for a student with a medical condition, a physical disability or a psychological condition.
- This arrangement must not suddenly be granted to the candidate at the time of their exams.

Processing the Application

The Exams Officer and Head of Learning Support will process the application using Access Arrangements Online (AAO). The application will require evidence of need which can include recommendations from teachers, educational psychologists' reports, letters from outside agencies for medical conditions. The following information is kept on file in the Exams Office and is available for inspection by the JCQ Centre Inspector:

- Completed Form 8 (or File Note for Medical related difficulties).
- Data Protection Notice, signed by the candidate.
- Approval sheet for AAO.
- Appropriate evidence of normal way of working according to the JCQ regulations.

Temporary Injury/Late Diagnosis of a Disability

Where a diagnosis of a disability occurs after the published deadline, it is possible to process arrangements.

For a temporary injury, for example a broken arm, arrangements are processed as the need arises. Appropriate documentation will be held on file to support the temporary access arrangement made.

Progression from GCSE to A Levels

When a candidate progresses from GCSE to GCE AS and A Level Qualifications within the School, the centre is required to resubmit an application for 25% extra time and process it online. Provided the original Form 8 fulfils the requirements described in the JCQ Regulations and the Head of Learning Support has updated evidence of need statements from teachers which clearly shows that 25% extra time is still needed, no further assessment is required.

Privately Commissioned Reports

In the case where a privately commissioned assessment is carried out, the external assessor (or Educational Psychologist) must have an established relationship with the centre and the Head of Learning Support must complete Part I of Form 8, prior to the candidate being assessed. The Head of Learning Support and the external assessor must work together to ensure a joined up and consistent process.

It should be noted that a privately commissioned report, carried out without prior consultation with the centre, cannot be used to process an application for access arrangements. Often private Educational Psychologists recommend that a student should receive an Access Arrangement which can be in conflict with the history of need observed in the School.

Separate Invigilation

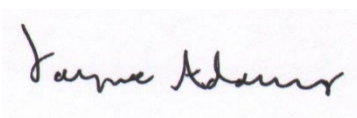
In the cases where a candidate is recommended a separate room by an external assessor, a final decision will be made by the Headmistress, Deputy Head, Exams Officer and Head of Learning Support as this arrangement has implications for staffing, costs and room availability. The decision will consider whether this is a reasonable adjustment based upon the candidate's:

- Substantial and long-term impairment which has an adverse effect and
- Normal way of working.

This policy has regard to the guidance issued by the Secretary of State.

Walthamstow Hall policies are approved, ratified and reviewed regularly by the Governing Body in the light of statutory requirements.

Reviewed March 2023
Next Review March 2024



Signed: Date:17 March 2023.....

Mrs J Adams
Chairman of the Governing Body