

**Examination Access Arrangements
(EAA)
Guidance for parents and carers**

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Adjustments for candidates with disabilities and learning difficulties

Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments

This document covers the following qualifications:

AQA Applied General qualifications,
AQA Level 2 Certificate in Further Maths,
AQA Level 3 Certificate in Mathematical Studies,
BTEC Firsts, BTEC Nationals, BTEC Tech Awards, **BTEC Level 2 Technicals**
Cambridge Nationals, Cambridge Technicals,
City & Guilds Level 2 and Level 3 Technical qualifications,
ELC, FSMQ, **Functional Skills**, GCE, GCSE, OCR Level 3 Certificates,
T-Levels
Welsh Baccalaureate Qualification (WBQ),
WJEC Level 1 and Level 2 General qualifications,
WJEC Level 1 and Level 2 Vocational qualifications,
WJEC Level 1 and Level 2 Vocational Awards (Technical Awards),
WJEC Level 3 Applied qualifications

1 September 2024 to 31 August 2025

For the attention of SENCos, assessors and senior leaders within schools and colleges.

PRODUCED ON BEHALF OF:



What are access arrangements?

- Access arrangements allow students with specific needs, such as special educational needs and disabilities to access an exam.
- They allow students to show what they know and can do without changing the demands of the exam.

How will the process start?

- Parents and carers should let the SENCo know as soon as possible if their child has additional needs. Good and open communication is important.
- Students in Further Education should record their additional needs on the college's enrolment form.
- The SENCo will work with teachers and the student to identify possible arrangements.
- Various access arrangements are available. For example, support for students who have difficulties with reading, writing, speed of working and concentration.
- Not all students with additional needs will require access arrangements. It depends on whether their difficulty affects their access to exams. Additional needs alone do not entitle a student to access arrangements.

Who will make the assessment?

- If a student has learning difficulties, the school or college's appointed assessor must conduct the assessment to determine the need for access arrangements such as 25% extra time.
- If an external assessor diagnoses a learning difficulty (for example, dyslexia, dyscalculia), the assessment can only be used as evidence for access arrangements if the assessor has liaised with the school or college in advance and received the necessary access arrangements paperwork.
- Specialists (for example, a medical consultant, a psychiatrist) are responsible for providing a formal diagnosis. They are not responsible for decisions about access arrangements.
- The school or college must decide which access arrangements a student has for their exams.
- Teachers must give evidence to show that an access arrangement is needed. The school or college will record how effective the arrangement is in the classroom, in internal tests or in mock exams.

What else needs to be done?

- The school or college will have to apply for some arrangements.
- If a student has complex needs, a school or college can discuss their needs with the exam board.

Finally

Schools and colleges must follow the rules. They are inspected and if they are found to be breaking the rules, this will be malpractice.

If you have any questions about access arrangements, please speak to the school / college / SENCo.

What are Access Arrangements?

- EAA allow students with specific needs, such as SEND need to access an exam.
- They allow students to show what they know and can do without changing the demands of the exam.

How will the process start?

- Parents and carers should let the SENDCO know as soon as possible if their child has additional needs.
- Good and open communication is important.
- The SENDCO will work with teachers and students to identify possible arrangements.
- Various arrangements available.
 - For example, support for students who have difficulties with reading, writing, speed of working and concentration.

Please note

- Not all students with additional needs will require access arrangements.
- It depends on whether their difficulty affects their access to exams.
- Additional needs alone do not entitle a student to access arrangements. Please keep note of this.

Who will make the assessment?

- This decision is made by the SENDCO with the information and evidence available.
- If a student has learning difficulties, the school appointed assessor must conduct the assessment to determine the need for access arrangements such as 25% extra time.

External assessors

- If an external assessor diagnoses a learning difficulty (for example, dyslexia, dyscalculia), the assessment can only be used as evidence for access arrangements **if** the assessor has liaised with the school in advance and received the necessary access arrangement paperwork.
- Otherwise, this will only be additional background evidence

Please be aware

- If a parent/carer commissions an assessment, unless that assessor has contacted the SENCO, in advance, had a conversation and been sent the necessary access arrangement paperwork, the school cannot use that assessment to make an application for access arrangements.

Specialists

- For example, a medical consultant, a psychiatrist are responsible for providing a formal diagnosis.
- They are not responsible for decisions about access arrangements. That is up to the SENDCO.

The SENDCO must decide

- Teachers must have evidence to show that an access arrangement is needed.
- The school will record how effective the arrangement is. There is ongoing evidence collection.
- The access arrangement must be the child's way of work.

What else needs to be done?

- The school will have to apply for some arrangements.
- If EAA have already been granted in Year 11 previously at a different school, students in Year 12 need to follow the 'Rollover' process.

Finally

- Schools must follow the rules.
- They are inspected and if there are found to be breaking the rules, this will be malpractice.
- Key thing to remember is that EAA are intended to level the playing field, removing a disadvantage and making the exams fair.
- There is a danger that an arrangement that is not appropriate gives a student an unfair advantage.

Timeline for 2024-2025

- *Year 11 and Year 13 – December 2024*
- Year 12 – February 2025
- Year 10 – May 2025
- Year 9 – July 2025

- 2025-2026 onwards
 - All December 2025. Deadline February 2026

Support in school

- EAA should be a student's normal way of work. They have these adjustments in lessons.
- Teachers will lead on the guidance of how to make the best use of particular arrangements

Implementation in exams

- **Use of a word processor**
- **Alternative Room Arrangements**
- **Prompt**
- **25% Extra Time**
- **Rest breaks**

This provision is where students are permitted to stop for short breaks during the exam; this time is then added to the finish time, with the effect of elongating the exam, but not actually gaining any extra time. Rest Breaks are delegated to the school, in line with the guidance from the JCQ. Please note that students are generally not eligible for both Rest Breaks and Extra Time, except under exceptional circumstances.

Please note that for students granted Rest Breaks, the following rules apply in order to support its management:

- Rest breaks may not be taken during the first or last 20 minutes of the exam.
- Students are permitted a 5-minute rest break every 30 minutes throughout the exam. During this time, students must close their exam papers/answer booklets and turn them upside-down.
- Typically, students are expected to remain at their desk during the break.

Further questions

- Please email:

Accessa@fortismere.org.uk