

# Access Arrangements Policy 2020/21

## Queen Elizabeth Grammar School Penrith



**Approved by Governors' E&S Committee: 23.04.2020**

**Chair of Governors: T Boving Foster**

**Date: 23.04.2020**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'T Boving Foster', written in a cursive style.

**Headteacher: P Buckland**

**Date: 23.04.2020**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'P Buckland', written in a cursive style.

**Head of Centre: Mr Paul Buckland**

**SENDCo and Specialist Assessor: Mrs Julie Bellas**

**Examinations Officer: Mrs Katie Ellwood**

**Date of next review: March 2021**

## **Rationale**

The Examination Access Arrangements Policy explains the actions taken to ensure inclusion throughout our school 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 his or her full potential.

## **Definitions**

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.

## **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 centres and awarding bodies comply with the duty under the Equality Act 2010 to make 'reasonable adjustments.'

## **Access Arrangements at Queen Elizabeth Grammar School**

We aim 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: -

1. *Communication and interaction.*
2. *Cognition and learning.*
3. *Social, emotional and mental health*
4. *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 1/09/2019-20). We must abide by the JCQ regulations, so that there is parity in how access arrangements are awarded throughout a student's secondary schooling.

**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.'**

We will use every opportunity to identify students' needs from their first contact with the school. (Please see SEND Information and Policy Report 2019-20).

Examples of Access Arrangements:

Access Arrangement	What is it?	Criteria
Scribe	A trained adult writes for the student. The student would dictate their answers. The scribe would write <u>exactly</u> what they say.	Where there is a physical disability; where his/her writing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is illegible and may hamper their ability to be understood.</li> <li>• Speed is too slow to be able to complete the exam in the allotted time.</li> </ul>
Reader	A trained adult who would read the question and any relevant text (a reader would not be permitted for components that assess reading). The student would then write the answer themselves.	The SENCo must produce a short concise file note on centre headed paper, signed and dated, confirming the nature of the candidate's impairment and that the use of a reader reflects his/her normal and current way of working within the centre.
Extra time	Students may be entitled to 25% extra time depending upon a history of need and where this has been the students' <b>normal way of working</b> .	Students will have an assessment by our SENDCo and specialist assessor, Mrs J Bellas to determine his/her speed of processing. Teachers must provide written evidence to the SENDCo before assessments take place to prove that the student has persistent and significant difficulties, and how these substantially impact on teaching and learning
Supervised rest breaks	Students are permitted to stop for short break/s during the exam and the time is added to the finish time, with the effect of elongating the exam but not actually using any extra time. The amount of time awarded is at the discretion of the SENDCo.	Where a student has a disability which prevents them from concentrating for long periods of time. This is now the recommended option from the exam boards before considering extra time.

### Word Processors

QEGS has a Word Processor Policy which is reviewed annually.

The provision to use a word processor is put in place to address an underlying difficulty such as:

- speed of handwriting;
- medical condition;
- physical disability;
- sensory impairment;
- planning and organisational difficulties or poor legibility.

*The use of a word processor in exams reflects the student's normal way of working at the school and has been agreed as appropriate to the student's needs. The use of a word processor cannot be granted to a student simply because this is their **preferred** way of working.*

Other examples of Access Arrangements include:

- Sign Language Interpreter
- Practical Assistant
- Alternative accommodation away from the centre
- Prompter
- Oral Language Modifier
- Live Speaker for pre-recorded examinations components
- Read aloud
- Modified papers

### **Private Reports**

Private reports, including but not exclusive to private Educational Psychologists' reports, cost a significant amount of money. This 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 reports recommend that children should receive Exam Access Arrangements which can be in conflict with what the centre tester (Specialist Teacher) recommends. As such the school will not accept the recommendations of private reports, but will instead follow the recommendations of the Specialist Assessor (Mrs J Bellas) who has been appointed by the Head of Centre in line with JCQ regulations.

### **KS2 SAT EAA**

Students who have EAA at KS2 are tested for EAA at KS3 and KS4. Although they may have received EAA at KS2, it does not necessarily mean that they automatically receive it at KS3 or KS4 because their needs may have changed.

Students are tested formally in April of Year 9 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.

**The decision to apply for access arrangements is based on evidence of a history of need, history of provision and a specialist teacher access arrangements report.**