



ST BENEDICT'S SCHOOL
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Access Arrangements Policy – Senior School

Authorised by: SET
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Contents

| | PAGE |
|---|-------------|
| Key staff involved in the access arrangements process | 3 |
| What are access arrangements and reasonable adjustments?..... | 3 |
| Purpose of this policy..... | 3 |
| The Assessment Process | 3 |
| Stage 1 – Screening | 4 |
| Stage 2 – Individual Assessment..... | 4 |
| Alternative Stage 2 – Recommendations by External Professionals | 4 |
| Stage 3 – Establishing a Picture of Need in the Classroom..... | 4 |
| Stage 4 – Awarding Concessions..... | 5 |
| The procedure for students who have an access arrangement moving from GCSE to A Level | 5 |
| Access Arrangements not granted by JCQ..... | 5 |

Key staff involved in the access arrangements process

| Role | Name(s) |
|------------------------------------|---|
| SENCo | Selina Smith, Head of Teaching and Learning Support |
| SENCo Line Manager (Senior Leader) | Craig Wilks |
| Head of Centre | Andrew Johnson |
| Assessor(s) | Selina Smith |
| Access Arrangement Facilitator(s) | Judith Wallace for Public Exams and Mock examinations Selina Smith for Internal Tracking exams |

What are access arrangements and reasonable adjustments?

Access arrangements

Access arrangements are agreed before an assessment. They allow candidates with special educational needs, disabilities or temporary injuries to access the assessment and show what they know and can do without changing the demands of the assessment. Access arrangements are the principal way in which awarding bodies and schools comply with the duty under the Equality Act 2010 to make 'reasonable adjustments' in examinations.

Examples of such 'reasonable adjustments' through access arrangements include providing students with rest breaks, use of a lap top, extra time, use of a scribe or speech recognition technology, a separate examination room, modified papers, a language modifier or a reader.

Purpose of this policy

This policy outlines the process for awarding access arrangements. It includes:

1. The process for screening and testing that the school uses to establish need.
2. The evidence required for award of access arrangements

The Assessment Process

Summary

| | |
|---------|---|
| Stage 1 | Screening |
| Stage 2 | Individual Assessment or a Recommendation by an External Professional |
| Stage 3 | Establishing a Picture of Need in the Classroom |
| Stage 4 | Awarding Access Arrangements |

Stage 1 – Screening

In Upper 4 (Year 9) students are screened by the Teaching and Learning Support Department. Students who score at least one below-average literacy score will be eligible for a one-to-one cognitive assessment. Alternatively, other evidence, such as concerns raised by teachers or consistent underachievement in tracking tests, would also indicate that further assessment would be appropriate. Parental permission will be sought before one-to-one individual assessments take place.

Stage 2 – Individual Assessment

Who conducts individual assessments?

Assessments are conducted by an appropriately qualified individual: either a member of the school staff who holds the appropriate qualification or an appropriately qualified professional (e.g. an educational psychologist) with whom the school has a working relationship. Please note:

“A privately commissioned assessment carried out without prior consultation with the centre cannot be used to award access arrangements and cannot be used to process an application using Access arrangements online.”[JCQ]

Any need identified by testing must also be shown to be evident in a student’s performance in the classroom (see section 3) if an exam concession is to be granted.

Alternative Stage 2 – Recommendations by External Professionals

An external medical professional may also recommend access arrangements, including extra time, when students have a substantial impairment.

Document(s) from an appropriately qualified professional must be submitted confirming that the Candidate has persistent/significant difficulties and is disabled within the definition of the Equality Act 2010. Such documents include those from:

- CAMHS
- A registered psychologist/the Local Authority Educational Psychology Service
- A Psychiatrist
- A hospital consultant (not a GP)/Local Authority specialist service
- An Occupational Therapist specialising in Children
- A speech and language therapist
- The Local Authority through a statement of SEN or EHCP relating to the Candidate’s secondary education.

As with access arrangements suggested through cognitive assessment, the proposed arrangement must be supported by evidence of need in the classroom (see section 3). The SENCO must also have considered supervised rest breaks before applying extra time.

Stage 3 – Establishing a Picture of Need in the Classroom

In addition to the evidence gathered in stage two, the school must also provide evidence to show that a student’s need is evident in their normal way of working (for example in class, in tests and exams and in written work) if an access arrangement is to be granted. The only exception to this is where an arrangement is put in place because of a temporary injury or impairment.

Stage 4 – Awarding Concessions

Exam Concessions for which the School has to make an Application to the Joint Council on Qualifications (JCQ).

This section explains the procedure for securing exam concessions for which an application has to be made to the JCQ

What cognitive assessment results entitle students to extra time?

A student who scores two below-average standardised scores (below 85) or one below-average and one low-average score, which relate to two different areas of speed of working or cognitive processing, meets the threshold for access arrangements. The student may be entitled to extra time in examinations (usually of 25%), provided this is supported by evidence of such a need in a student's normal way of working.

Sixth Form students who achieve such scores in school testing are also encouraged to have a further assessment with an Educational Psychologist who has a working relationship with the school.

What other evidence entitles a student to extra time?

Alternatively, a recommendation by an external professional will result in extra time for a student if this is supported by evidence from the classroom of such a need in a student's normal way of working. The SENCO must have considered supervised rest breaks before applying extra time.

What other Access Arrangements can the JCQ grant?

If a student has significant needs, the school can apply to JCQ for the following access arrangements. The exact criteria that must be met for the award of these arrangements are set out in the JCQ Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustment Policy

- 50% or more extra time
- A computer reader or reader
- A scribe or speech recognition technology
- A language modifier
- A practical assistant
- Modified papers
- (JCQ Policy link: https://www.jcq.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/AA_regs_21-22_v11.pdf)

The procedure for students who have an access arrangement moving from GCSE to A Level

No further assessment is required for a student to retain their access arrangement when moving between GCSE and A level; however, a student must meet the current published criteria for a particular access arrangement if it is to be retained.

Access Arrangements not granted by JCQ

What other access arrangements can the school grant?

A candidate who does not meet the criteria outlined for JCQ access arrangements, but who still demonstrates a need through the evidence collected in stages 1,2 and 3 may be awarded one of the

following access arrangements by the SENCO if this is considered a reasonable adjustment to meet their need:

- Supervised rest breaks
- Use of a word processor
- Reading aloud or use of an examination pen.
- Use of Braille or sign language
- A live speaker for pre-recorded exam components
- A bilingual dictionary.