

**EXAM ACCESS ARRANGEMENTS POLICY**

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## **1. Rationale for Exam Access Arrangements at London Park School Clapham**

London Park School Clapham School aims to provide fair access to all students. We will process applications when there is clear evidence of a long-term and substantial impairment, or disability, as defined by the Equality Act 2010 in line with the JCQ (Joint Council for Qualifications) recommendations. All applications will reflect a student's 'normal way of working' within the classroom.

## **2. Key Terms Definitions from the Joint Council for Qualifications**

### **Access Arrangements**

Access Arrangements are pre-examination adjustments for candidates based on evidence of need and normal way of working. Access Arrangements fall into two distinct categories: some arrangements are delegated to centres; others require prior JCQCIC awarding body approval.

Access Arrangements allow students with special educational needs, disabilities or temporary injuries to access the assessment without changing the demands of the assessment. For example, readers, scribes and Braille question papers. In this way, Awarding Bodies will comply with the duty of the Equality Act 2010 to make 'reasonable adjustments'.

### **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 made will depend on a number of factors including the needs of the student. An adjustment may not be considered reasonable if it involves unreasonable costs, and 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.

### **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.

## **3. The Role of the SENCO**

The SENCO will lead on the access arrangements process (they are also the designated assessor, which means they'll assess students' needs, process applications for arrangements and keep the necessary evidence).

The SENCO will work with teachers, support staff and exams office personnel to put approved access arrangements in place for internal school tests, mock exams and exams. They will work with teachers to

identify the most appropriate published format of modified papers and will also work with specialist advisory teachers, educational psychologists and medical professionals, where appropriate.

#### **4. Roles of Teachers and SLT**

Teachers and senior leaders support the SENCO in identifying, determining and implementing appropriate access arrangements and reasonable adjustments.

#### **5. Equality Act 2010**

Generally, impairments have to meet the statutory requirements set out in section 6 and Schedule 1 to the Equality Act 2010 and associated regulations.

The Equality Act 2010 definition of disability is usually considered cumulatively in terms of:

- identifying a physical or mental impairment;
- looking into adverse effects and assessing which are substantial;
- considering if substantial adverse effects are long term;
- judging the impact of long-term adverse effects on normal day to day activities.

The clear starting point in the statutory guidance is that disability means *'limitations going beyond the normal differences in ability which may exist among people'*. *'Substantial'* means *'more than minor or trivial'*. Substantial adverse effects can be determined by looking at the effects on a person with the impairment, comparing those to a person without the impairment, to judge if the difference between the two is more than minor or trivial.

*'Long term'* means the impairment has existed for at least 12 months, or is likely to do so.

*'Normal day to day activities'* could be determined by reference to the illustrative, non-exhaustive list of factors in pages 47 to 51 of the statutory guidance relating to the Equality Act 2010. (Study and education related activities are included in the meaning of *'day to day'* activities.)

## **6. Exam Access Arrangements Guidance and Principles**

London Park School Clapham will follow the guidance and systems set down in the Joint Council for Qualifications Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments. This guidance is updated annually and can be found on the following link <https://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/access-arrangements-and-special-consideration>.

London Park School Clapham will follow the JCQ principles in assessing students for Exam Access Arrangements in all internal examinations and assessments.

### ***The Exam Access Arrangements that are available***

Exam Access Arrangements will mirror a student's 'normal way of working' in the classroom. The JCQ guidance identifies the following access arrangements can be applied, this is not an exhaustive list and a reasonable adjustment may be unique to the individual and not included in the list below. This list can be found in the JCQ Guidance.

## **7.5 Evidence of need for Exam Access Arrangements**

The JCQ sets down the expectations for evidence in their guidance and these principles will be applied consistently throughout all year groups. The types of evidence required will be dependent on the specific access arrangement being awarded.

Examples of evidence used within the school will include:

All Years –

- Students allocated access arrangements are identified on Learning Enrichment Register
- Exam Access Arrangements are in line with recommendations on an student's individual Learning Profile (ILP)
- Consultations/round robins with teaching staff to ascertain a student's normal way of working
- Results of internal and external reports
- Specialist and Medical reports e.g. hospital consultants and Educational Psychologists

For Year 7 and new students, we would consider previous access arrangements provided by school. Where appropriate for KS4 students, approved JCQ Form 8 and a successful access arrangements online applications would also be reviewed.

## **7.6 Staff Roles in Determining and Managing Exam Access Arrangements**

Examination officer

- To ensure that the approved Exam Access Arrangements are in place for the examination and are communicated to the invigilators
- To ensure completion of appropriate JCQ cover sheets
- To manage any on the day questions and queries regarding Exam Access Arrangements
- To put in place in liaison with SENDCo any on the day provisions – such as medical emergencies
- To ensure students are roomed suitably for their Access Arrangement and to ensure minimal disruption for other students sitting the exam.

#### SENDCo

- To ensure there is a 'whole centre' approach to Exam Access Arrangements, it is important the heads of centre, examination officer and SENDCo familiarise themselves with the JCQ requirements.
- The SENDCo, fully supported by teaching staff and SLT, must lead on the exam access arrangement process within the centre.
- To maintain and distribute information on a student's approved Exam Access Arrangements.
- To undertake initial assessments and completion of JCQ guidelines including the gathering of evidence to show a student's normal way of working, Completion of the Form 8 sections 1 and 3, Completion of SENDCo supporting statements when required.
- To process applications online, maintain and hold evidence for inspections for GCSE qualifications.

#### Specialist Assessor (currently this is the SENDCo)

- To administer recognised psychometric testing after the completion of form 8 section 1 and 3.
- Completion of Form 8 section 2
- To advise SENDCo in the decision-making process about Exam Access Arrangements.

#### Teaching Staff

- To provide relevant information/evidence of the candidates *persistent and significant difficulties*
- To show how the candidate's disability/difficulty has impacted on teaching and learning in the classroom. Provide this evidence, when requested, to the SENDCo.
- Detail the candidate's normal way of working within the centre.
- Complete Exam cover sheet when marking any exam scripts noting down the impact Exam Access Arrangements have had.
- To raise concerns as early as possible with regards to a student using the Learning Enrichment referral form

#### Student

- To attend training on how to use their Exam Access Arrangements
- To make full use of their Exam Access Arrangements. *Students must use their access arrangements, or the arrangements will be withdrawn.*

### **7.7 Procedures and Processes for Exam Access Arrangements**

#### On Entry to School/Year 7

- Information sharing between schools during the year 6 to year 7 transition will aim to gather information relating to any previously provided Exam Access Arrangements.
- New student form will request information on any previous Exam Access Arrangement.
- SENDCos will assess evidence provided on transition identifying students for Exam Access Arrangements during the Autumn term and make recommendations to staff.

#### Key Stage 3

- Exam Access Arrangements will be provided in all internal examinations.
- Information on students with approved SENDCo Exam Access Arrangements will be recorded on the London Park School Clapham SEND Register and Learning Profiles.
- A cover sheet will be completed by the class teacher recording if Extra Time was used and the impact this has made. This evidence is critical in providing a clear history of need for KS4.
- When a student is provided with extra time they *must* change the colour of their pen at the start of the extra time.
- Where possible students with Exam Access Arrangements will undertake their exam in separate accommodation, for example in end of year assessments.

#### Key Stage 4

- Exam Access Arrangements will be provided in all internal and public examinations.
- A formal application for access arrangements will be made following the current JCQ guidelines. This will include:
  - Consultation with a student's subject teachers.
  - Completion of Form 8
  - Assessment by a specialist level 7 specialist assessor (appropriate qualifications held by Ruth Sherlock, SENDCo)
  - Supporting SENDCo assessment where there is appropriate and relevant evidence.
- A cover sheet will be completed by the class teacher recording if Extra Time was used and the impact this has made. This evidence is critical in providing a clear history of need for KS4.
- When a student is provided with extra time they *must* change the colour of their pen at the start of the extra time.
- Where possible students with Exam Access Arrangements will undertake their exam in separate accommodation for example in end of year assessments.

### **7.8 Procedures for medical letters**

Letters from medical professionals, where the professional meets the requirements set down in the JCQ Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments, will trigger an assessment for Exam Access Arrangements. An identified medical condition must be supported with evidence from the school on the student's 'normal way of working', otherwise it is considered malpractice. Exam Access Arrangements cannot be awarded purely on the basis of a medical letter.

### **Private assessments/Educational Psychologist reports**

We can only accept private reports as part of wider school evidence where it is in agreement with evidence within school of a student's 'normal way of working'. Exam Access Arrangements cannot be awarded purely on the basis of a private assessment/Educational Psychologist. In line with JCQ guidelines, where we choose to accept or reject a privately commissioned report from an external professional, the head of centre or a member of senior leadership will provide a brief, written rationale to support the decision which will then be available for inspection purposes.

### ***Deadlines for making Exam Access Arrangements***

It is important concerns are raised as early as possible to allow for assessment and adaptations required are implemented as soon as possible.

Key Stage 4: The deadline to raise concern about a student in Key Stage 4 and request an exam access arrangement review is the end of Year 10. This will allow the SENDCo and the Exam Officer to assess and plan for an opportunity to trial any Exam Access Arrangements.

### **Word Processing and Laptop use in Examinations**

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The use of a laptop will be considered when:

- A need has been established
- Its use is recommended by the SENDCo
- Appropriate training has been undertaken.

Where it is the established 'normal way of working' for a student to use a laptop in their lessons, we will provide the use of a laptop in all internal and external examinations. We will establish a 'normal way of working' through monitoring by SENDCOs and feedback from Subject Teachers.

The SENDCo needs to be satisfied that:

- The student's typing is efficient, accurate and of sufficient speed to be able to cope with the exam
- The student has used a laptop as his or her routine way of working in the subject area
- The student has had sufficient practice in the use of it under exam conditions (e.g. using the laptop in pre-public exams)

*Where the above requirements are not met, the use of a laptop will not be recommended.*

In exams without a significant amount of writing or consisting of more simplistic answers – which may be easier to hand write - avoiding the need to switch between answer paper and laptop may be preferable for the student.

#### Regulations for the use of a laptop in Examinations

- The Exams Officer will decide the room where the laptop users will sit their exams.
- London Park School Clapham will provide a laptop on the day of the exam to ensure that only agreed software is accessible.
- Only the relevant software applications will be available; spell-check, grammar check and the thesaurus will not be available. The laptop will not be connected to the internet or any other means of communication.
- The SENDCo/Exam Officer will give instructions to each student for whom the use of a laptop has been agreed.
- London Park School Clapham will provide a USB stick which is clear of previous data. The student's work will need to be saved onto the USB stick and printed from it.
- As an added precaution student will be instructed to also save work to the hard drive during the exam.
- At the end of the examination the student will be escorted to the Exams Office by the Invigilator / Exams Officer to print off their work and to authenticate the relevant hard copy.
- Once the work has been printed, all devices will be cleared of any saved work

#### Limitations to the use of a laptop

- The use of a laptop might not be agreed in cases where, for example, a particular exercise should not be done with computer assistance (maps, diagrams etc.)

#### **Procedures for administration of Exam Access Arrangements**

Where possible students with Exam Access Arrangements will be accommodated in a separate room to reduce disruption and anxiety levels of LONDON PARK SCHOOL CLAPHAM SENIOR SCHOOL students. Exam Access Arrangements will be implemented using the JCQ Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments and the JCQ instructions for conducting examinations guidelines.

Students will be provided with an allocated desk with a name label identifying their approved Exam Access Arrangements.

#### **Malpractice**

London Park School Clapham will be regularly inspected to ensure they have followed the JCQ regulations. There are serious and severe consequences to cases of malpractice including:

- The disqualification for the students from one or more examinations
- The disqualification of the whole cohort of students
- The centre being closed down for up to 5 years.

Examples of malpractice are:

- Students being granted Exam Access Arrangements which are not their normal way of working
- Exam Access Arrangements being suddenly granted before examinations
- Exam Access Arrangements being granted when there is no history of need or provision.
- Exam Access Arrangements being granted without sufficient evidence.
- Students not using their Exam Access Arrangement in mock exam and then being allowed it in external examinations.

#### **Contingency Planning**

Can be found as part of the Exams Policy.

***Further Information***

Further information can be found at the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) website:

<http://www.jcq.org.uk>

Any questions about Exam Access Arrangements, please contact the Learning Enrichment Team

References

1 Definitions quoted from JCQ Website <https://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/access-arrangements-and-special-consideration>

2 Quoted from JCQ Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments

3 Quoted from JCQ Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments