



Access Arrangements & Reasonable Adjustments Policy

This policy is reviewed annually to ensure compliance with current regulations

Approved/reviewed by	
Date of next review	September 2021

Rationale

The Examination Access Arrangements (EAA) Policy explains the actions taken to ensure inclusion throughout the school for all students with additional learning needs (ALN), including those with formally diagnosed Special Educational Needs Disabilities (SEND). The policy is based upon the principles and practices of our School Mission Statement which seeks to create a learning environment whereby every individual student may fulfil his or her full potential.

We are a Catholic community united by Christ's teaching

Prayer and mutual respect establish a sense of belonging as we strive to live the Gospel message. We aspire to a secure, supportive and stimulating Christian environment where justice, tolerance, forgiveness and generosity are practised with courtesy, consideration and common sense. We believe that each person should be known, loved and valued by encouragement to realise his/her full potential through positive commitment and achievement. We practise our faith freely, valuing the sanctity of life. We aim to develop the whole person and enable him/her to make a positive Christian contribution to society

Definitions

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.

What are Access Arrangements?

The mandatory legislation specified in The Equality Act 2010, to ensure that no pupil is discriminated against, necessitates that equitable education and accreditation opportunities are offered to all pupils. As a result of this, certain modifications to the format of an examination paper or assessment or the conditions under which the

examination is delivered, can be made in order to ensure that students are not disadvantaged or disabled by this examination process (JCQ 2017). These are known as Access Arrangements (AA) or Reasonable Adjustments (RA) and are bound by strict regulations, determined by the JCQ, to ensure students are fully supported to allow: "skills, knowledge and understanding to be demonstrated" without altering the integrity of the assessment. The (2017) OSFR.

Access arrangements are the principal way in which awarding bodies comply with the duty under 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. The reasonableness of the adjustment will always depend on a number of factors including the needs of the disabled candidate/learner. An adjustment may not be considered reasonable if it involves unreasonable costs, 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.

Access Arrangements at St Gabriel's

St. Gabriel's RC High School aims 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.*

St Gabriel's will apply the rules for Access Arrangements as set out in Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ guidelines2018/2019).available at <https://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/access-arrangements-and-special-consideration/regulations-and-guidance>.

We will use every opportunity to identify students' needs from their first contact with the school and from primary records.

Professional reports, which identify a SEND/ALN needs and a recommendation for a reasonable adjustment to meet the student's needs and the type of access arrangements that are appropriate. 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.'

When might students need to be given Exam Access Arrangements?

An Exam Access Arrangement (EAA) is a provision or type of support given to a student (subject to exam board approval) in an exam, where a particular need has been identified and is provided so that the student has appropriate access to the exam.

Exemptions

An exemption is an agreement reached by an awarding body, before the examination, for a disabled candidate to miss a component or components.

An indication will be placed on the candidate's certificate to show that not all of the assessment objectives were accessible.

An exemption will not be granted if an alternative and accessible route through a qualification is available to the candidate.

*St. Gabriel's RC High School will indicate the candidate's disability in order that an awarding body has the necessary information to hand when considering an application for an exemption. The awarding body **must** be assured that the exemption is an arrangement of the last resort. In Functional Skills English where barriers to access remain, candidates can be exempted from up to two of the three assessed components. Such an arrangement does not apply to Functional Skills ICT and Mathematics qualifications, as these qualifications consist of only one component.*

What evidence is needed to apply for EAA?

There are a number of pieces of evidence that can be used to apply for EAA to Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ):

- *Form 8 report from Specialist Teacher*
- *Previous EAA from Primary Schools/ other Education Providers*
- *Subject teachers – examples of work as appropriate*
- *Results of baseline tests e.g. reading/comprehension age, writing tests*
- *Standardised tests scores undertaken by appropriately qualified professionals. CCET and AAC.*

Other arrangements for candidates with disabilities*

*For the access arrangements detailed below, there is not a requirement to process an application using *Access arrangements online* or to record the use of the arrangement. No evidence is needed to support the arrangement.

- Amplification equipment
- Braille
- Closed circuit television (CCTV)
- Colour naming by the invigilator for candidates who are Colour Blind
- Coloured Overlays (this would also include reading rulers, virtual overlays and virtual reading rulers)
- Examination on coloured/enlarged paper
- Low vision aid/magnifier
- Optical Character Reader (OCR) scanners
- Separate invigilation within the centre

The SENDCo will make the decision based on:

- whether the candidate has **a substantial and long term impairment** which has **an adverse effect**; and
- **the candidate's normal way of working within the centre.**

Procedures.

The process of collecting evidence for EAA is complex and relies on the professional judgement of all staff working with the pupil. The evidence is required to prove that any 'Reasonable Adjustments,' are the student's 'Normal Way of Working.' This is then used as proof to JCQ and the exam boards of a 'history of need'.

This process will begin, during the Transition Period for all pupils starting St Gabriel's. All information on pupils, who received EAA in Year 6, will be collected and used initially to inform of those pupils who may need Reasonable Adjustments to be made during Examinations.

Summative Assessments will inform Heads of Departments and identify any further pupils who may be eligible for Access Arrangements.

Students who may be eligible are those that may:

- show heightened anxiety during examinations
- consistently underperform in examinations
- consistently do not achieve expected results
- consistently run out of time
- consistently demonstrate concentration difficulties
- have illegible handwriting

Where a teacher thinks that a student requires extra time, they are asked to enable the student to change the colour of the pen that they are using, once the allotted time is up, and continue writing until they are finished. This will indicate how much more time is required.

Early identification allows staff, pupils and parents to work together, to eradicate such difficulties during examination time to improve these outcomes.

Strategies to do this would include:

- 'How to Revise' sessions.
- Parental Workshops,
- Nurture Groups,
- Handwriting Groups (to improve the Speed of Handwriting).

Data Protection.

St Gabriel's RC High School is registered, with ICO under the registration number Z5041630, following the Principles of the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR May 2018), the school's data protection policy will be adhered to. This is made available on the website, under the subheading 'Policies'. All data will be stored in a locked office and only made available to SENDCo, assistant SENDCo and JCQ officials when required. All electronic files are password protected.

How students would be identified for Exam Access Arrangements:

The 'Initial Concern Sheet,' will be passed to the Access Arrangements Assessor, and the process of evidence collection will begin. Each pupil will sign a 'Data Protection' declaration giving permission for information to be stored on file.

The 'Purple File' will contain amongst other documents:

- Dyslexia Screening Test.
- Educational Psychology Report
- Form 8,
- Provision Map,
- Pupil Profile,
- Year 7 Report,
- Year 8 Report
- Year 9 Report
- Year 10 Report
- Year 11 Report

Further information will be collected during routine standardised and formative assessments, including but not exclusive to:

- Cognitive Ability Tests (CAT) Day's in Year 7.
- Pupil Profiles.
- Wrat IV Testing.
- Needs outlined in Education, Health and Care Plans
- Dyslexia Screening.

Parents can contact school to ask for advice about testing if they have concerns with the progress and learning of their child. Once contact has been made with the parent, Access Arrangements Assessor, will investigate their concerns by contacting child's teachers to collect evidence. Following this, a decision will be made as to whether it is appropriate to test a student.

This evidence will inform us as to whether or not Exam Access Arrangements need to be applied for.

How are Exam Access Arrangements applied for?

Students need to be tested at each Key Stage for EAA. An entitlement to EAA at KS2 does not automatically entitle them to it at KS3 or KS4. Therefore, the Specialist Assessor (Qualified Teacher who holds a Certificate of Competence in Educational Testing and Access Arrangements, Level 7) tests students who are referred to us, or who have had EAA in earlier Key Stages.

The Specialist Tester will assess students using a variety of nationally recognised tests such as:

- Detailed Assessment of Speed of Handwriting (DASH)
- Edinburgh Reading Tests.
- Wrat IV Tests
- WRIT tests.

The tests that the Specialist Tester uses are replaced/upgraded periodically in line with current practice. The test that the Specialist Tester uses depends very much upon the type of barrier to learning that the student may have. Should the student need further testing to assess for other learning issues or further EAA, the Specialist Tester will arrange this. Following a report produced by the Specialist Tester an application is made to the Exam Boards for permission to implement the specified arrangement/s.

Students are tested formally in October/ November Year 10 in order to comply with the 26 month's rule; so that any permitted exam access arrangements are in place for the full GCSE period of both Year 10 and 11.

How do staff and parents know whether a student has Exam Access Arrangements?

Any difficulties that pupils are having with the examination process will be identified early by Heads of Departments and forwarded to SENDCo by 'Initial Concern Sheet.' Additional arrangements will be documented on Pupil's Reports. Teaching and support staff will access the list on Staff Shared Area. It is updated regularly or whenever students become entitled to it. The information about results of assessments for EAA are kept confidentially in line with school policy, are shared on a need to know basis. Staff will be informed of any changes to the EAA list via email. EAA will also be detailed in Key Cards. Parents will be informed of any tests results via a letter home which states what they are entitled to, why and when.

What support is given to students with EAA?

Students with EAA take part in small group sessions to show them how to effectively use EAA. In addition, students with EAA are encouraged to use their EAA during internal assessments and exams so that they gain practice at using it effectively.

Students who have access to a reader or scribe are shown how to use them appropriately in exam situations, and it is explained to them what they can and can't do with the reader/scribe during the exam, and how much support the adult is allowed to give. Students with extra time are given sessions with a teaching assistant on how to use the additional time allowance effectively. They then need to apply the techniques and strategies given to them in internal exams and assessments.

All teachers are given access to the list of students with EAA, and they are asked to give the SENDCO at least two weeks' notice before they assess students so that support can be provided for students who require it during the tests/exams. Students who have a reader can be supported by the teaching assistant supervising the test. The SENDCo/Exams Officer can provide a separate room, access to ICT and a scribe with the required amount of notice. The SENDCo require two weeks' notice so that teaching assistants can be redeployed if necessary to other students.

Students with EAA are monitored regularly through the use of 'A Watch List'. In the event that a student does not wish to make use of their EAA in any given exam, they will be required to sign a form (Appendix 4) to indicate that they were aware that EAA was available to them, but it was their choice not to use them. However, where a student is deemed under the Mental Health Act (Code of Practice 2014) to be unable to make this decision the use of EAA will actively be encouraged.

What are the procedures for processing an application?

Once the tests have been conducted and there is a recommendation from the tester for EAA, The SENDCo, Specialist Teaching Assistant or Exams Officer then applies to the exam boards. The feedback is instant and at this point the EAA is added to the list

of students and the parents are informed of the EAA by letter. The application will require evidence of need, and the centre needs to hold evidence in Purple files (stored in The SENDCo's Office) that can be inspected at short notice.

This can include:

- *Recommendations by teachers*
- *Educational psychologist reports*
- *Letters from outside agencies such as CAMHS (Children and Adolescent Mental Health Services), hospitals or doctors*
- *Information from SALT (Speech and Language Team)*
- *Statement of Educational Need or Education, health & Care Plans (EHCP)*

Permission from the exam boards for the arrangement/s

- *A signed copy of the Form 8 report by the designated tester*
- *A data protection form signed by the student*
- *For Extra Time – history of evidence of need in the form of copies of work where a student has regularly used more than the allotted time.*

Access arrangements may cover the entire course and for GCSE and GCE qualifications **must** be processed using access arrangements online **as early as possible**.

From referral to point of access arrangements being awarded can take up to 4 weeks with Edexcel.

The deadline set by the JCQ is final, late entries will incur further inspections by the JCQ.

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.