



EXAM ACCESS ARRANGEMENTS POLICY

Policy approved by the Chief Executive Officer, Julie Hollis in
December 2020.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Julie Hollis", is written in a cursive style within a rectangular box.

NEXT REVIEW – AUTUMN 2023
CRANMER EDUCATION TRUST
THE BLUE COAT SCHOOL, EGERTON STREET, OLDHAM. OL1 3SQ

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This policy outlines how Cranmer Education Trust schools will organise specific Exam Access Arrangements for young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) or temporary injuries.
- 1.2 Our schools are fully inclusive environments with an ethos and culture of achievement for all where the aim is that all pupils experience a full, wide ranging, engaging curriculum. We have the highest expectations of all our children and young people on their educational journey; to achieve excellence, meet and exceed national expectations, and be able to progress confidently to further education, training employment and life.
- 1.3 The intention behind access arrangements is to meet the particular needs of an individual candidate to achieve those high expectations, without affecting the integrity of the assessment.
- 1.4 This policy complies with the statutory requirement laid out in the JCQ [guidance](#). The JCQ adjusts its regulations periodically and schools are bound to comply with the current regulations.
- 1.5 This policy has been written with reference to the following guidance and documents:
 - 1.5.1 Equality Act 2010: Advice for schools DfE (Feb 2013)
 - 1.5.2 SEND Code of Practice 0-25 (2014)
 - 1.5.3 Schools SEND Information Report Regulations (2014)
 - 1.5.4 Statutory Guidance on Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions (April 2014)
- 1.6 This policy should be read in conjunction with the following Trust policies:
 - 1.6.1 Equality Policy
 - 1.6.2 SEND Policy
 - 1.6.3 Medical Conditions Policy
 - 1.6.4 Local level School Accessibility Plan

2. What are Exam Access Arrangements?

- 2.1 An Exam Access Arrangement (EAA) is a provision or type of support given to a student (subject to exam board approval) in a national/public exam, where a particular need has been identified and it is provided so that the student has appropriate access to the exam.
- 2.2 EAAs are intended to give all candidates equal opportunity to demonstrate their skills, knowledge and understanding.
- 2.3 Procedures and practices relating to the awarding of EAAs are governed by the statutory duty to make reasonable adjustments to provision under [guidelines](#) produced by the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ).
- 2.4 The Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) explains that access arrangements "allow candidates with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) or temporary injuries to access an assessment and show what they know and can do without changing the demands of the assessment".
- 2.5 Access arrangements should meet the needs of a candidate without affecting the integrity of the assessment.

3. The access arrangements our schools use include:

- 3.1 **Scribes:** a trained adult who writes for the student. The student would dictate their answers including all punctuation, grammar and relevant spellings and the scribe would write exactly what the student says. This provision is usually not encouraged for Maths or Modern Foreign Languages. This provision also includes the use of a word processor with spelling and grammar functions enabled. However, relevant spelling/grammar marks would then be deducted from the final exam score. The school cannot support the provision of speech recognition technology for this arrangement.
- 3.2 **Readers:** a trained adult who would read the question and relevant text (with the exception of an exam testing the student's reading, such as English comprehension and Modern Foreign Languages) for the student. The student would then write the answers themselves although this text could then be read back to the student, if requested. Under JCQ regulations, three or four candidates may share one reader and candidates with individual readers may be required to share a room.
- 3.3 **Word Processing:** access to a computer for an exam (if appropriate but not usually for subjects such as Maths and Modern Foreign Languages) so the student would word process their answers. Spelling and grammar checks would be disabled other than in exceptional circumstances where the student has 'scribe' provision (see above).
- 3.4 **25% Extra Time:** students may be entitled to an allowance of 25% extra time depending on their history of need and standardised scores below 85 relating to speed of reading, writing or processing.
- 3.5 **Supervised Rest Breaks:** where students are permitted to stop for short breaks during the exam and this time is then added to the finish time, with the effect of elongating the exam but not actually using any extra time.
- 3.6 **Prompter:** used for students with little sense of time or ability to concentrate, a trained adult/invigilator can prompt them with a few permitted phrases to refocus or move the student on to the next question or indicate how much time is left.
- 3.7 The above list is not exhaustive but does cover the most commonly used exam access arrangements but the school would ensure each student's needs are met as required. EAAs may also differ according to a student's needs within each subject ie. extra time may be awarded to extended writing subjects only.
- 3.8 The list of access arrangements and adjustments is not exhaustive and students requiring other access arrangements or adjustments may also be accommodated.
- 3.9 The JCQ approved tests we use to identify the need for such arrangements can be found in the [appendices](#) of this policy.

4. Evidence Required for Access Arrangements

- 4.1 In all circumstances the school (centre) must follow the most up to date detailed JCQ guidance: "Adjustments for candidates with disabilities and learning difficulties Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments"
- 4.2 When an access arrangement has been processed on-line and approved, for GCSE and GCE qualifications the evidence of need (where required) must be made available by the SENDCO to a JCQ Centre Inspector upon request. An awarding body may also request evidence of need when considered necessary. This can either be in hard copy paper format or electronically.

- 4.3 Where the SENCo is storing access arrangements documentation electronically he/ she must create an e-folder for each individual candidate. The candidate's e-folder must hold each of the required documents for inspection.

5. Procedures for Exam Access Arrangements

- 5.1 Students will be identified for possible access arrangements. The JCQ publishes information on access arrangements, reasonable adjustments, and special considerations for examinations for each school year. The publication suggests the types of access arrangements that may be appropriate for pupils with:
- 5.1.1 Cognition and learning needs
 - 5.1.2 Communication and interaction needs
 - 5.1.3 Sensory and physical needs
 - 5.1.4 Social, mental and emotional needs
- 5.2 The publication explains that adjustments will not be approved if they:
- 5.2.1 Involve unreasonable costs to the awarding body
 - 5.2.2 Involve unreasonable timeframes
 - 5.2.3 Affect the security and integrity of the assessment
- 5.3 Students will be identified for possible access arrangements through a combination of the following criteria:
- 5.3.1 from Year 7 as a result of information from primary schools, prior access arrangements and/or low attainment;
 - 5.3.2 scores in relevant assessments; referral from a teacher and evidence supporting student's area of need;
 - 5.3.3 EAAs granted/officially approved by previous secondary school (subject to relevant paperwork being sent to the SEND department of the school) in addition to clear evidence of need and confirmation of qualifications of prior school's specialist assessor;
 - 5.3.4 presentation of a recent medical letter/diagnosis from a qualified health care professional; and
 - 5.3.5 parental concern expressed to a subject/form teacher.
 - 5.3.6 'Provisional' access arrangements granted in Years 7, 8 or 9 are not automatically guaranteed for GCSE exams. Official approval is normally requested by the Autumn Term of Year 10 and is subject to results from the school's designated specialist and/or a medical diagnosis/report. EAAs have to be officially approved for all students taking GCSE, AS and A Levels. However, it is our aim to have 'provisional' access arrangements in place for internal assessments for students in younger years as soon as additional needs are identified so this becomes a student's normal way of working.
 - 5.3.7 Students who are deemed eligible for access arrangements in Key Stage 4 will be tested (at the earliest in Year 9) by the school's designated 'specialist assessor' to ensure the results are valid for official approval for the entire GCSE period.
 - 5.3.8 Exam access arrangements for students in Years 11, 12 and 13 will only be considered for those students identified before the autumn half term break commences. This allows the school sufficient time to gather evidence of need in the classroom, evidence of normal way of working (including the mock exams) and assessment by the school's designated 'specialist assessor'. This evidence is required to meet the JCQ deadline for submissions (currently set in March).

- 5.4 All exam access arrangements for Key Stage 5 students (A Levels) must be resubmitted for official approval by the school and evidence of continued need within the classroom is essential for this process.
- 5.5 Students will be identified for possible access arrangements from Year 12 as a result of information from secondary schools, prior access arrangements and/or low attainment scores in relevant assessments
- 5.6 As advised by the JCQ, the school will not accept privately commissioned assessments as sole evidence for exam access arrangements.
- 5.7 Privately commissioned assessments will only be considered as background evidence, additional to qualitative and quantifiable evidence gathered by the school to reflect the candidates' significant, persistent and longterm need and their normal way of working in school.
- 5.8 With the exception of temporary illness, or injury on the day of the examination, students who require EEA provision for medical purposes will need to provide written evidence from an appropriate medical professional in March of the year they will be sitting exams, stating their current diagnosis, treatment and details of how it might affect their performance. Historical information will not be taken into consideration. Any EEA provision will then be put in place to comply with current JCQ regulations, which may differ from that suggested by the medical professional.
- 5.9 The Achievement for All Department is responsible for EAA provision and duties include the following:
 - 5.10 ensuring there is appropriate evidence for a student's exam access arrangement;
 - 5.11 informing subject teachers at regular intervals regarding student's exam access arrangements and how they should be supported in the classroom;
 - 5.12 liaison with Exams Team;
 - 5.13 informing parents/carers about student's provisional access arrangements, specialist assessor tests and official approval of arrangements for GCSE or A Levels;
 - 5.14 ensuring each student understands how to use their access arrangements and under what circumstances; and
 - 5.15 monitoring the use of exam access arrangements to ensure they remain appropriate and they become the student's normal way of working.
- 5.16 It is the responsibility of the student and the subject teacher to ensure EAAs are put in place for any assessments and tests taking place in lessons (these do not include formal GCSE/A Level exams).

6. Roles and Responsibilities

6.1 The role of the Trust Board

- 6.1.1 The Trust Board has overall responsibility, and ultimate decision-making authority, for Equality and SEND legal compliance.
- 6.1.2 The Trust Board exercises its specific legal obligation for SEND and Equality through the setting of the Trust-wide policies.
- 6.1.3 The Trust board, through the Standards Committee, CEO and Executive Team, approves recommended systems and will take such steps as it is reasonable to have to take to avoid the substantial disadvantage to a disabled person caused by not having reasonable access arrangements.

6.2 The role of the CEO and Executive Team

- 6.2.1 The CEO and Executive Team develop and keep under continuous review the Examinations Access Arrangements Policy to advise the Trust Board.
- 6.2.2 The CEO and Executive Team receive reports from Headteachers and advise the Trust Board on risks to the Directors and to the Trust generally and establish the appropriate staffing, allocation of resources and funding arrangements required for Examinations Access Arrangements.
- 6.2.3 The CEO and Executive Team recommend systems to support individual schools to mitigate risk to the Directors and the Trust generally.

6.3 The role of the Standards Committee

- 6.3.1 Oversee the monitoring of compliance with SEND law having regard to the statutory guidance, 'the SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years'.
- 6.3.2 Monitor and review policy drawing on SENDCO reports and local committee reports.
- 6.3.3 The Standards Committee will undertake 'deep dives' on SEND. They will scrutinise the work the Local Committee named person for SEND does at each school. This will include Examinations Access Arrangements.

6.4 The role of the Local Committee

- 6.4.1 Local committees will review SEND practice and procedures in schools by appointing a designated local committee member(s), with specific oversight of the school's arrangements for SEND, which will include Examinations Access Arrangements.

6.5 The role of the Headteacher

- 6.5.1 In all trust schools the Headteacher retains overall responsibility for Achievement for All/SEND within the school including Examinations Access Arrangements.
- 6.5.2 The Headteacher will ensure that Trust policies and procedures are followed by all staff.
- 6.5.3 The Headteacher will determine the approach, in line with Trust Policy, for children with additional needs or injury who need Examinations Access Arrangements or will delegate the responsibility to the appropriately trained member of staff such as the Achievement for All Co-ordinator/SENDCO.
- 6.5.4 The Headteacher will ensure the school's local procedures are reviewed annually in line with Trust policy and communicated to all staff and parents.
- 6.5.5 In a large school it is good practice to have more than one teacher working with the Achievement for All/SEND team and overseeing Examinations Access Arrangements.
- 6.5.6 Headteachers may deploy staff in their schools to carry out Examinations Access Arrangements as they see fit.
- 6.5.7 Headteachers should review regularly how expertise and resources can be used to support Examinations Access Arrangements.
- 6.5.8 Headteachers are responsible for determining "reasonable" for the purposes of Examinations Access Arrangements.

6.6 The role of the SENDCO

- 6.6.1 Will undergo training to ensure the skills and knowledge required to make adequate arrangements for Examinations Access Arrangements.
- 6.6.2 To have an overview of all pupils' SEND needs, EHC plans, medical needs and students with injuries and consider their needs for examinations.
- 6.6.3 To put together a portfolio of "evidence of need" to support applications for access arrangements.

- 6.6.4 Manages the application procedure, ensuring that full supporting evidence is available before starting the application
- 6.6.5 To ensure efficient systems of communication methods to inform staff of pupils' Access Arrangements.
- 6.6.6 To inform parents when Access Arrangements provision is being made for their child.
- 6.6.7 To inform the headteacher or his/her nominated representative of any issues around Access Arrangements.
- 6.6.8 To ensure all school staff receive regular and appropriate development and training to be able to support Examinations Access Arrangements e.g. as a scribe or a reader.
- 6.6.9 To maintain detailed, accurate, secure records of Examinations Access Arrangements and make available for JCQ inspection if necessary.
- 6.6.10 Ideally, the SENCo will also be the in-house designated assessor and will thus assess candidates, process applications on-line and hold the evidence for inspection purposes for GCSE and/or GCE qualifications. The SENDCO must work with teaching staff to identify the most appropriate published format of modified papers which will enable the candidate(s) to access their examinations.
- 6.6.11 To maintain detailed, accurate, secure records of Examinations Access Arrangements and make available for JCQ inspection if necessary.

6.7 The Role of the Subject Teacher

- 6.7.1 To ensure EAAs are put in place for any assessments and tests taking place in lessons (these do not include formal GCSE/A Level exams).
- 6.7.2 This will be done with the support of the AFA Department where required.

6.8 The Role of the HLTA teaching assistant

- 6.8.1 Supports the work of the Achievement for All Co-ordinator/SENDCO.
- 6.8.2 Will take operational responsibility for an agreed system for Examination Access Arrangements.
- 6.8.3 Monitoring of the day to day deployment and work of the members of staff who support Examination Access Arrangements.
- 6.8.4 Will have access arrangements training depending on context.
- 6.8.5 To maintain detailed, accurate, secure records of Examinations Access Arrangements and make available for JCQ inspection if necessary.

6.9 The Role of the Examinations Officer

- 6.9.1 Ensure that JCQ guidelines are adhered to at all times and report to the SENDCO or Headteacher any concerns of issues.
- 6.9.2 To work closely with the SENDCO in making arrangements for facilitating Examinations Access Arrangements.
- 6.9.3 To ensure that Examination Invigilators receive the correct communication, training and development with regards to Examinations Access Arrangements.
- 6.9.4 To maintain detailed, accurate, secure records of Examinations Access Arrangements and make available for JCQ inspection if necessary.

7. Reasonable Adjustments

- 7.1 Reasonable adjustments' are made where a candidate, who is disabled within the meaning of the Act, would be at a substantial disadvantage in comparison to someone who is not disabled.

- 7.2 Schools and examination boards are required to take reasonable steps to overcome that disadvantage.
- 7.3 An example might be providing an enlarged paper for a visually impaired pupil. Whether an adjustment will be considered reasonable will depend on a number of factors, which will include:
- 7.3.1 the individual needs of the pupil;
 - 7.3.2 the effectiveness of the adjustment;
 - 7.3.3 the cost of the adjustment and
 - 7.3.4 the likely impact of the adjustment upon the candidate and other candidates.
- 7.4 An adjustment will not be approved if it:
- 7.4.1 involves unreasonable costs
 - 7.4.2 involves unreasonable timeframes or affects the security and integrity of the assessment.

8. Appendix 1

Name of test	Description
WIAT II Single Word	includes letter identification, phonological awareness, letter-sound awareness, accuracy and automaticity of word recognition.
WIAT II T Reading Comprehension	stories and sentences include literal, inferential and lexical comprehension, oral reading accuracy and fluency and word recognition in context.
WIAT II T Reading Speed	for 6 to 16 years 11 months. Words per minute (WPM) can also be recorded for the full age range.
WIAT II T Spelling	includes letter-sound correspondence for vowels, consonants and consonant blends, regular and irregular words, contradictions and high-frequency homonyms.
DASH Free Writing (Hand)	The DASH provides a measure of handwriting speed.
DASH Free Writing (WP)	The DASH (WP) provides a measure of typing speed using a word processor.
SDMT Written	The Symbol Digit Modalities Test is a measure of concentration and decision making. The SDMT detects cognitive impairment in less than 5 minutes.
SDMT Oral	