1. **What are Access Arrangements?**

Access Arrangements are **pre**-examination adjustments for candidates based on **evidence of need and normal way of working**. They fall into two distinct categories: some arrangements are delegated to centres, others require prior Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQCIC) awarding body approval. It is the responsibility of our SENCo, Mrs Ellie Gilroy, to lead on the access arrangements process.

1. **Why are Access Arrangements sometimes needed?**

Access arrangements allow candidates/learners with learning difficulties, disabilities or temporary injuries to access the assessment **without changing the demands of the assessment**. In practice this means that if the assessment directly assesses a skill e.g. reading or writing then access arrangements relating to this skill are not allowed. By allowing such arrangements Awarding Bodies are complying with their duty under the Equality Act 2010 to make 'reasonable adjustments'.

The purpose of access arrangements is to remove or reduce the disadvantage for learners with learning difficulties, disabilities or temporary injuries**, NOT** to give an advantage.

At Broadland High Ormiston Academy there is **NOT** a requirement for a student’s name to be on our Special Educational Needs register in order to be awarded access arrangements. This is because the needs of many of our students with learning difficulties are met in the classroom with quality first teaching which include “reasonable adjustments”.

1. **What Access Arrangements are available?**

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| --- | --- |
| **Centre Delegated Arrangements** | **Arrangements that need prior JCQ approval** |
| Supervised rest breaks \* | 25% extra time (up to 100% available in very rare exceptional cases) |
| Reader/Read aloud/Reader Pen |  |
| Word processor (with spell/grammar check disabled) \* | Scribe/Speech recognition technology |
| Prompter | Practical assistant |
| Braille transcript | Oral Language Modifier (rare and exceptional) |
| Live speaker for pre-recorded examination components |  |
| Sign Language Interpreter |  |
| Alternative site for conduct of examinations \* |  |
| Bilingual translation dictionaries with 10% extra time |  |
| Other arrangements for candidates with disabilities. |  |

\* See section 7 for further information on the eligibility of candidates for these arrangements.

For all arrangements the SENCo must be satisfied that there is a genuine need for the arrangement and may request additional written evidence from other professionals to substantiate this. In most cases it will be the responsibility of the candidate/parents to provide this.

1. **How does Broadland High Ormiston Academy determine which students might need Access Arrangements?**

The JCQ states that “The SENCo, fully supported by teaching staff and members of the senior leadership team, must lead on the access arrangements process within his/her centre.” In addition to this support staff and where appropriate other professionals such as specialist teachers/medical professionals also have a role to play.

The main criteria for the implementation of any access arrangement is that it must be the students **“normal way of working”** within the centre. This means that only very rarely will access arrangements be agreed in the immediate lead up to public examinations, unless a need is very recently identified or is temporary in nature such as a broken arm. Additionally students must be shown to have a “**substantial impairment**” which puts them at a considerable disadvantage compared to their peers.

As an academy we work with our teaching and learning support staff to identify as early as possible students that need reasonable adjustments and to trial these as much as possible during years 7 to 9.

During Year 10, teaching and learning support staff are asked to formally identify which students they feel need access arrangements agreed because they either have learning difficulties or are disabled under the meaning of the Equality Act 2010.

1. **Specialist Assessments for students with learning difficulties**

The range of learning difficulties is extensive so candidates must be assessed by a qualified assessor once they have been identified by teaching staff. At Broadland High Ormiston Academy our qualified assessor Tracy Roofe, this is in line with best practice as advised by the JCQ as she has an established relationship with our centre. It is important to note that the JCQ states that “A privately commissioned assessment carried out without prior consultation with the centre **cannot** be used to award access arrangements”. If a parent or student feels that a specialist assessment is necessary they should discuss this with the student’s teachers in the first instance followed by the academy SENCo.

The main window for specialist assessment is during year 10, this allows evidence to be collected and an application to be made in a timely fashion at the beginning of the course. In all cases the deadline (except for temporary injury/recently diagnosed conditions) is February 21st for the summer examination period that year.

1. **Disabled students**

Where a student is disabled under the definition of the Equality Act and has complex communication, interaction, sensory, physical, social, mental or emotional needs then **a specialist assessment is not always required.** Usually, but not always, students that fall into these categories will already have had these needs identified within an Education, Health and Care Plan. However if this is not the case a copy of the confirmation of the diagnosis is required from either a hospital consultant, specialist nurse or a speech and language/ occupational therapist. It is the responsibility of the SENCo to ensure that sufficient evidence is collected and held on file to substantiate the need for any arrangements. To allow access arrangements without such evidence is malpractice and could impact on the candidate’s results.

1. **Additional criteria for supervised rest breaks, word processing and an alternative site.**

**Supervised rest breaks –** This arrangement allows a student to take a “rest” during the examination and have the time taken added on to the total time allowance. Students do not have access to the examination paper or their script during this time. In order to qualify the candidate’s difficulties must be known to the student’s Head of Year, the SENCo, or a member of the academy’s senior leadership team. Additionally the need for supervised rest breaks should be documented within academy records or substantiated with documentary evidence from an independent professional such as the child’s GP.

**Word processing –** Some students have poorly formed handwriting which is difficult to read, have difficulty with communicating their knowledge, skills and understanding in handwriting or handwrite very slowly. Such students **may** benefit from word processing. However word processing cannot simply be granted to any candidate because he/she wants to type rather than write or that the can work faster on a keyboard or because that is what they do at home.

At Broadland High Ormiston Academy we require the support of a student’s teachers and clear evidence that word processing improves either the quality or quantity of a student’s writing before we will agree the use of a word processor. This evidence will usually be collected over time rather than focus on the completion of one piece and primarily relies on the teacher’s professional judgement as to the benefit of word processing.

Should the demand for word processors exceed our capacity then disabled students or those with learning difficulties will be given priority. As with all arrangements word processing has to be the student’s normal way of working which ideally is established as early as possible in their secondary education.

**Alternative site –** this is a **rare and exceptional** arrangement which allows candidates to sit their examinations at a non-registered centre for example at home or in hospital. The learner must have a disability, medical condition or a social, mental or emotional health need that prevents them attending the centre. The SENCo or the Assistant Principal - pastoral must be satisfied that the candidate is well enough to take the examination and that there is written evidence on file from an independent professional to substantiate this arrangement.