

King Charles I School

Access Arrangements in Examinations Policy

The governing body adopted this policy on Wednesday 3rd May 2017

This document outlines the school policy on Access Arrangements in public examinations. These are arrangements put in place to ensure **all** students have equal access to examinations. Students should not be disadvantaged by any learning, medical, physical, sensory or psychological difficulty they may experience.

The school must comply with the rules for Access Arrangements as set out in the most recent Joint Council for Qualifications publication.

<http://www.jcq.org.uk/Download/exams-office/access-arrangements-and-special-consideration/regulations-and-guidance/access-arrangements-and-reasonable-adjustments-2016-2017>

Access arrangements are the principal way in which awarding bodies comply with the duty under the Equality Act 2010 to make 'reasonable adjustments'. *The Equality Act 2010 requires an awarding body to make reasonable adjustments where a candidate, who is disabled within the meaning of the Equality Act 2010, would be at a disadvantage in comparison to someone who is not disabled. According to statutory guidance, disability means 'limitations going beyond the normal differences in ability which may exist among people'.*

A candidate with a disability or difficulty which has a **substantial and long term effect** on performance in examinations may qualify for Access Arrangements. Access Arrangements should allow students with substantial long term special educational needs or short term illnesses or injuries to demonstrate their skills, knowledge and understanding without affecting the integrity of an assessment or examination. Access Arrangements are not intended to help certain candidates, or give them an advantage, but to give them a fair opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge and skills.

'Failure to comply with the JCQ regulations (permitting Access Arrangements within the centre which are not supported by appropriate evidence) has the potential to constitute malpractice which may impact on the candidate's result(s).'

Access Arrangements encompass a wide range of provisions which include:

- being allowed to sit examinations in a smaller room
- supervised rest breaks
- use of colour overlays
- prompter
- extra time
- reader or e-reader pen
- scribe
- use of a word processor
- practical assistant

The Identification of candidates who might need access arrangements

There are several ways in which this might occur:

1. King Charles I School acts on the information provided by students' previous schools to identify those who may need Access Arrangements. These students normally have a history of Special Educational Needs (SEN), these arrangements are clearly noted on the SEND register.
2. A teacher may voice a concern about a student with difficulties that prevent them from completing tests or practice papers.
3. A parent / carer may raise concerns about their child who is attempting but unable to complete work set in class and as homework.
4. In the Summer term of Year 9 students who are on the SEN register who have been identified as having a need for Access Arrangements are tested by an external Learning Support Team (LST) Confirmation will be sent to parents by the end of the Autumn Term of Year 10 outlining the Access Arrangements that have been put in place.
5. By the Spring Term of Year 10 a full up to date document is in place which includes a list of students who receive Access Arrangements in Public Exams.

External Learning Support Team Reports must be submitted in a timely manner giving the school the opportunity to concur and ensure there is a reasonable opportunity to put any suitable adjustments in place if required.

We will endeavour to take all evidence into consideration when making judgements; however, the decision must ultimately rest with the school who is required to evidence all judgements to an external verifier.

In all cases, there must be a genuine need for the arrangement. The school *must be satisfied that the candidate has an impairment which has a substantial and long term adverse effect, giving rise to persistent and significant difficulties. 'Long term' means the impairment has existed for at least 12 months, or is likely to do so.*

Students with special educational needs are not automatically eligible for Access Arrangements in public exams. For example, a student with a slight hearing impairment, a previous diagnosis of 'mild dyslexia' or a physical disability that does not affect performance in an examination may not meet the criteria for Access Arrangements.

However, when concerns are raised about a particular student, the SENCO or Specialist Teacher will gather information from all the student's teachers to see whether they have similar concerns. If the initial concerns are echoed by others, the student will be assessed for Access Arrangements.

Notification about Access Arrangements

Parents/carers are informed by letter when formal applications for Access Arrangements are approved. The arrangements are named and this information leaflet is provided.

Conduct and procedures

The SENCO liaises with the Examinations Officer, departmental and associate staff to ensure sufficient rooms and staffing are organised for candidates with Access Arrangements when examinations or controlled assessments are taking place.

It must be noted that staffing and room constraints mean that candidates **cannot normally be seated alone** in a separate room.

The Examinations Officer monitors the need for renewal of Access Arrangements when necessary and liaises with the SENCO to ensure that reassessment is carried out for students with additional arrangements (reader, scribe etc.) that expire after their GCSEs. This is to ensure that candidates still meet the criteria for those additional arrangements.