



Ringwood School

Exam Access Arrangements (EAA) Policy 2025-26

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

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

If you have any questions about exam access arrangements, please contact the SEN Team at senteam@ringwood.hants.sch.uk

1. Principles

The purpose of an access arrangement is to ensure, where possible, that barriers to assessment are removed for a disabled candidate preventing them from being placed at a substantial disadvantage as a consequence of persistent and significant difficulties.

The integrity of the assessment is maintained, whilst at the same time providing access to assessments for a disabled candidate.

2. Exam Access Arrangements (EAAs) and Reasonable Adjustments for candidates with disabilities and learning difficulties

2.1

Definitions

Access Arrangements

Access arrangements are agreed before an assessment. They allow candidates with specific needs, such as special educational needs, disabilities or temporary injuries to access the assessment and show what they know and can do without changing the demands of the assessment. The intention behind an access arrangement is to meet the particular needs of an individual candidate without affecting the integrity of the assessment. 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 candidate, who is disabled within the meaning of the Equality Act 2010, would be at a **substantial disadvantage** in comparison to someone who is not disabled. A reasonable adjustment may be unique to that individual and may not be included in the list of available access arrangements. Whether an adjustment will be considered reasonable will depend on a number of factors which will include, but are not limited to:

- the needs of a disabled candidate;
- the effectiveness of the adjustments;
- the cost of the adjustments; **and**
- the likely impact of the adjustment upon the candidate and other candidates

An adjustment will not be approved if it:

- involves unreasonable cost;
- involves unreasonable timeframes: or
- affects the security and integrity of the assessment. This is because the adjustment is not reasonable.

JCQ guidance states that EAAs should be initiated by the school not a body external to the school.

2.2

Access arrangements available

Parsonage Barn Lane Ringwood Hampshire BH24 1SE T: 01425 475000

E: reception@ringwood.hants.sch.uk www.ringwood.hants.sch.uk

Registered in England and Wales Registration Number: 7552519

Some students with disabilities and learning difficulties are likely to have a number of needs and therefore may require a range of access arrangements. **Here are some examples of possible access arrangements. These examples are not exhaustive.**

- supervised rest breaks (to be considered before extra time)
- smaller room (medical evidence required, not for general anxiety)
- examination reading pen or read aloud
- extra time
- a computer reader or a reader
- a scribe
- a word processor
- a prompter
- a live speaker for pre-recorded examination components
- an alternative site arrangement
- practical assistant
- a language modifier
- coloured overlays
- bilingual translation dictionaries
- Modified papers (e.g. coloured/enlarged paper/braille papers/modified language)

All access arrangements must reflect the student's normal way of working, supported by classroom evidence, teacher input, and mock exam practice, as required by JCQ 2025. If the candidate has never made use of the arrangement granted to them, the SENCo may consider withdrawing the arrangement.

Access arrangements are made on the basis of an individual candidate's needs. **Consideration must be given as to whether the proposed access arrangement is effective and suitable for the candidate's particular learning difficulty.**

Privately commissioned assessments will only be accepted if prior consultation with the SENCo has taken place, and the assessor meets JCQ qualification standards

The JCQ and the awarding bodies can only enter into discussions over access arrangements with the candidate's centre and not with parents/carers.

2.3

Digital and Onscreen Assessments

Where assessments are conducted using digital or onscreen platforms, Ringwood School will ensure that all approved access arrangements are appropriately adapted for the digital environment. This includes ensuring compatibility with assistive technology (e.g. screen readers, speech-to-text) while maintaining exam security in accordance with JCQ guidance.

2.4

Temporary or Emergency EAAs

In cases of short-term injury or illness, temporary arrangements such as a scribe or rest breaks may be approved by the SENCo and Exams Officer without a full online JCQ application. These will

be recorded internally and retained for inspection in line with JCQ temporary arrangement procedures.

3. Accountabilities

The head of centre, members of the senior leadership team, SENCo, assessor and access arrangements coordinator **must** familiarise themselves with the entire contents of the latest JCQ guidance.

3.1

The SENCo **must**:

- **arrange for the candidate to be assessed by an assessor;**
- ensure applications are processed **on time, no later than the published deadline;**
- ensure that the **full supporting evidence** is in place **before** the on-line application is processed;
- review the evidence **before** an on-line application is processed, **ensuring that the candidate does meet the published criteria for the respective arrangement;**
- hold all supporting evidence and present such evidence to a JCQ Centre Inspector upon request; **and**
- ensure that the agreed access arrangement has been put in place **before** the candidate's first examination, e.g. internal school assessments and mock examinations;
- complete **Sections A and B of Form 8** to pen a portrait of the candidate's needs and confirm that **the candidate has an impairment that substantially affects their performance.**

3.2

The assessor **must**:

- record the results of any tests completed indicating that the impairment has **a substantial and long-term adverse effect** on the candidate's performance;
- work only within their expertise **and** in an ethical fashion;
- use **current editions** of nationally standardised tests appropriate to the candidate;
- report the results of the assessment **within Section C of Form 8;**
- **and** provide the centre with evidence of their qualification(s) **before assessing any candidate;**
- discuss access arrangement with the SENCo;
- have administered each particular assessment themselves;
- sign and date Form 8, Section C.

3.3

The exams officer **must**:

- ensure that the agreed **EAA provisions are in place** for exams and are communicated to the invigilators;
- manage any 'on the day' **questions and queries** regarding EAA provision;

- put in place (in conjunction with the SEN department) any ‘**on the day**’ provisions – such as medical emergencies;
- ensure **candidates are roomed suitably** for their access arrangement and there is zero disruption for other candidates also sitting exams;
- make arrangements for candidates who require special consideration due to individual circumstances.

3.4

Teaching Staff must:

- provide the SENCo with **relevant information/evidence of the candidate’s needs** e.g. observations in the classroom, intervention strategies, differentiation in the classroom, normal way of working in the classroom, arrangements made for subject-based examinations;
- **provide appropriate opportunities to practise** using the access arrangement(s) before their first examination.

4. **Deadlines for submitting applications for access arrangements and orders for modified papers using *Access arrangements online***

Access arrangements are ideally applied for at the beginning of the course i.e. at the end of Year 9.

Arrangements must be processed and approved before an examination or assessment no later than the published deadline as below.

<u>Month of examination</u>	<u>Access Arrangement</u>	<u>Final deadline</u>
November 2025	Modified paper	20 September 2025
November 2025	All other access arrangements	1 November 2025
January 2026	Modified paper	4 October 2025
January 2026	All other access arrangements	21 October 2025
June 2026	Modified paper	31 January 2026
June 2026	All other access arrangements	21 March 2026

5. **Medical letters**

Access arrangements cannot be awarded purely on the basis of a medical letter. Medical documentation must describe how the candidate’s condition affects their ability to access assessments, not solely provide a diagnosis. The SENCo will gather additional evidence from classroom practice to confirm impact.

6. **Monitoring arrangements**

This policy will be reviewed annually by the SENCo following the release of the JCQ AARA publication. Interim updates may occur where JCQ releases amendments mid-year or where the school identifies operational improvements.

It will be approved by the governing board.