

Exam Access Arrangements Policy

2021-22

What are 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.

At Evelyn Grace Academy we will use every opportunity to identify students' needs from their first contact with the school. Professional reports are requested that demonstrate an Additional Educational Needs (AEN) and a recommendation for a reasonable adjustment to be made to meet the pupil's needs and the type of access arrangements that are appropriate. Exam access arrangement extends and reflects the support that is given to a pupil who has SEND/AEN in the classroom, internal exams, and mock exams.

Access Arrangements are pre-examination adjustments for candidates based on evidence of need. Access Arrangements fall into two distinct categories: some arrangements are delegated to centers; others require prior JCQ awarding body approval. Access Arrangements allow candidates/learners with special educational needs, disabilities, or temporary injuries to access the assessment without changing the demands of the assessment. For example, readers, scribes, and Braille question papers. In this way Awarding Bodies will comply with the duty of the Equality Act 2010 to make 'reasonable adjustments'.

ARK Evelyn Grace Academy Policy for Access Arrangements is written in line with the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) Regulation's document: 'Adjustments for candidates with disabilities and learning difficulties – Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments'.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the academy's **SEND and Inclusion Policy**, which sets out the procedures for identifying SEND and making and evaluating provision for pupils with SEND.

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. How reasonable the adjustment is will depend on a number of factors including the needs of the disabled candidate/learner.

Duty to make a reasonable adjustment

The duty for an awarding body to make a reasonable adjustment will apply where assessment arrangements would put a disabled candidate at a substantial disadvantage in comparison with a candidate who is not disabled. In such

circumstances, the awarding body is required to take reasonable steps to avoid that disadvantage.

Definition of disability: Section 6 of the Equality Act 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’.

Definition of special educational needs: A candidate has ‘special educational needs’ as defined in the SEND Code of Practice 2014: 0 to 25 years.

Access arrangements may include:

1. Supervised rest breaks.
2. Extra time of up to 25%.
3. Extra time of up to 50%.
4. Extra time of over 50%. 5. Reader/Computer reader.
6. Read aloud.
7. Scribe/Voice Activated software.
8. Word processor. 9. Transcript.
10. Prompter.
11. Oral Language Modifier.
12. Live speaker for pre-recorded examinations components.
13. Sign Language Interpreter.
14. Practical Assistant.
15. Alternative accommodation away from the centre may be made for him/her.
16. Other arrangements for candidates with disabilities: amplification equipment; Braille; closed circuit TV; colour naming by the invigilator for candidates who are Colour Blind; Coloured overlays; low vision aid/magnifier; optical character reader scanners; separate invigilation with the Center.

In line with JCQ regulations, ARK Evelyn Grace Academy will make all decisions with regard to access arrangements based upon whether the candidate has a substantial and long term impairment which has an adverse effect, in conjunction with the access arrangement being the candidate’s normal way of working at ARK Evelyn Grace Academy – demonstrating the involvement of the teaching staff in determining the need for the access arrangement.

Appropriate evidence of need will be available at ARK Evelyn Grace Academy for inspection.

Identifying the need for access arrangements within Ark Globe

Students who may qualify for formal access arrangements during KS4 are identified early in KS3 (Y7). At this stage needs are identified, rather than formally assessed. Adjustments to Quality First Teaching within lessons are then made according to need to enable a student to access their learning and make progress. All staff are involved in monitoring the adjustments.

Formal assessments for Access Arrangements takes place in Y11 from the Autumn Term till the first half of Spring Term.

Although students may have received, in their primary school, EAA at KS2 , it does not necessarily mean that they automatically receive it at KS4 exams because their needs may have changed. For example, a student who had a reader at KS2 SATs may not qualify for a reader at KS4 because their reading has improved to the extent it does not meet the exam board criteria.

Assessment:

- For those students potentially requiring access arrangements formal assessment and application to JCQ is carried out in Year 10/11 as standard. Assessments may also be carried out at other points, where necessary. When granted, access arrangements are valid for 26 months.
- Any student with scores which indicate a substantial impairment will be considered for access arrangements. The most recent tests are binding and determine any subsequent Access arrangements.
- Specialist assessments for access arrangements will be carried out at ARK Evelyn Grace Academy by an appropriately qualified assessor.
- Parents may request an independent assessment. However, ARK Evelyn Grace Academy may elect to accept or reject a privately commissioned report. If rejected the SENCo or a member of the Senior Leadership team must provide a brief, written rationale to support this decision which must be available for inspection purposes (Please refer to the last section below).**
- At ARK Evelyn Grace Academy examination officers, specialist assessors, SENCos and teaching staff all work together to ensure that appropriate access arrangements are put in place for all tests and examinations.
- If a student chooses continually not to use the agreed access arrangements either because their needs change or they do not feel it aids their learning or achievement, then access arrangements can be removed.
- If the SENDCo and/or specialist assessor considers that access arrangements cease to be the student's 'normal way of working', they reserve the right to withdraw the permission, providing written confirmation to parents/careers.

Procedures for processing an application

Parents must declare at the time of enrolment and when completing the school application form if their child has any medical or psychological condition, SEND needs, previous EEA at another educational institution or any other issues that may require an EEA. Failure to disclose this negates Evelyn Grace Academy from their responsibilities.

Once diagnostic tests have been conducted and there is a recommendation for EEA, there is a named person at the academy who is qualified to carry out EEA related assessments and tests who applies to the exam board and if the application is successful informs the Exams Officer. Since the application requires evidence of need, the Academy will hold evidence in its files that can be inspected at short notice. This can include:

- Educational psychologist reports.
- Speech Therapist reports.
- Occupation Therapist reports.
- Letters from outside agencies such as hospitals, doctors, and CAHMS (Children and Adolescent Mental Health Service).
- Reports from Hearing Impairment (HI) and Visual Impairment (VI) advisory teachers.
- Copies of Statements of Special Educational Needs, or Education, Health Care Plans (EHCP).
- Permission from the exam board for the arrangements.
- A signed copy of Form 8 report by the academy's designated assessor/tester.
- A record of all occasions when a pupil has been supported by EEA. Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) deadlines are fully adhered to.

Evidence needed to apply for EEA

There are a number of pieces of evidence that can be used to apply for EAA to JCQ:

- Form 8 reports from specialist teacher carrying out EEA assessments/tests.
- Previous EEA from another school.
- Subject teachers- examples of work as appropriate and support given in class or evidence from tests or mock exams.
- Results from baseline tests such as reading age, writing tests.
- Medical reports outlining significant medical needs and disability.
- An educational psychology report which explicitly diagnoses severe dyslexia.
- A Speech therapy report which diagnoses severe language impairment.

How do staff and parents know whether a student has access arrangements?

When a need for Access Arrangements has been identified, the relevant parties are informed:

- Parents in writing – the letter outline the type of arrangements that have been awarded.
- Students are informed verbally.
- Access Arrangement list is made available to the exam officer.
- A list of those who receive Access Arrangements is made available to all staff.

This information will be placed on the academy's relevant shared drives.

Private Educational Psychologists' Reports

A parent may have their children assessed by a private educational psychologist and submit the report to the academy's SENDCo as evidence that their child should be awarded extra time or EAA. Private educational psychologists' report cost a significant amount of money. Therefore, this means that parents who are unable to obtain a private report through their financial circumstances are put at a disadvantage. As an exam Centre Ark Evelyn Grace Academy must be consistent in its decisions and ensure that **no student is either given an unfair advantage or disadvantaged by any arrangements put in place**. Therefore, when parents submit such reports to Ark Evelyn Grace Academy, we will look for evidence of a history of need. Such privately commissioned reports can conflict with what Ark Evelyn Grace Academy's tester (specialist teacher) recommends. If the academy's diagnostic tests contradict privately commissioned reports, then the academy's tests and assessments will take precedence and will inform EAA decisions and no further negotiation regarding this matter will take place with the parent/carer.