

EXAM ACCESS ARRANGEMENTS (EAA)

1. Introduction

Exam access arrangements are regulated by the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ). These regulations are updated every September. Below you will find details of the current regulations and application procedures. Mrs Ingrouille manages this at The Ladies' College, in conjunction with the exams officer, Mrs Duguid. JCQ inspects the school's paperwork every year to ensure that procedures and regulations are being adhered to.

2. What Are Exam Access Arrangement?

2.1. Exam access arrangements are granted on account of:

- cognition and learning needs
- communication and interaction needs
- a medical condition
- sensory and physical needs
- social, mental and emotional needs

2.2. Types of exam access arrangements include:

- 25% extra time
- Exam papers photocopied onto coloured paper
- Supervised rest breaks
- Separate invigilation (sitting exams in a separate room)
- Use of a word processor (see separate document regarding this arrangement)
- Use of dictation and reader software

PLEASE NOTE: The school has to provide JCQ with evidence to support the implementation of any access arrangement which must reflect the student's normal way of working in school that is based on an evidence of need, in order to ensure the candidate is not placed at a substantial disadvantage to their peers. If it is not their normal way of working, we will be unable to put it in place.

3. Who qualifies for exam access arrangements?

3.1 JCQ guidelines state that the Head of Learning Enrichment ‘must be satisfied that the candidate has an impairment which has **substantial** and **long term** adverse effect, giving rise to **persistent and significant** difficulties.’

3.2 JCQ guidelines state that ‘The Centre must be satisfied that the candidate has an impairment which has substantial and long-term adverse effect, giving rise to persistent and significant difficulties.’ It is also states that, as a school, we must be aware of any conditions or learning needs that might warrant application for access arrangements **well in advance of any application being made**. These should be made known to the student’s Year Coordinator as well as the Head of Learning Support and/or any of the Senior Leadership Team.

3.3 Qualification for extra time is determined primarily on speeds, e.g. of reading, writing, speed of processing that fall below the average expected level and it is the Head of Learning Support who will activate the application process.

3.4 In the event of the application being accepted by JCQ, then the student will be placed on the EAA register (if not previously on it) and the access arrangement is recorded.

3.5 Occasionally separate invigilation or use of a scribe can reflect the candidate’s normal way of working in internal school tests and preliminary examinations as a consequence of a long-term medical condition or long term social, mental or emotional needs. Any such arrangements which incur additional costs will be charged to parents.

4. How do you apply for exam access arrangements?

4.1 Qualification for arrangements such as extra time is based on the student’s assessment results falling below a specified level or on the production of relevant medical evidence.

4.2 Up to the end of Upper 4 (Year 9) access arrangements for internal exams are applied based on information from assessments that take place up to that point as a result of teacher referral, parent or student concerns or information from a previous school.

4.3 For access arrangements to be applied in external exams, an up-to-date assessment of need must undertake an assessment by our assessor. This needs to have been carried out no earlier than the start of Upper 4 (Year 9).

4.4 Applications for Exam Access Arrangements must reflect a student’s normal way of working. Ladies’ College’s procedures align with the requirements of the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) Regulations which state, Access arrangements/reasonable adjustments should be processed at the start of the course. Schools, for example, should be able to process applications at the start of or during the first year of a two-year GCSE course having firmly established a picture of need and normal way of working during Years 7 to 9.

4.5 Students newly referred for assessment must be assessed in the academic year before public examination. Parents, students, and teachers must therefore make any referrals to the Head of Learning Support before 31 December in Lower 5 (Year 10) or Lower 6 (Year 12). In exceptional circumstances internal assessments/observations may reveal a need for assessment for Access Arrangements. Where this is the case referrals must be made before 1 October in Upper 5 (Year 11) or Upper 6 (Year 13).

5. Procedures for candidates with specific learning difficulties e.g. dyslexia, dyspraxia

5.1. A student with a specific learning difficulty is not automatically entitled to extra time. As mentioned above, the criteria for approval of extra time is based primarily on speeds. An up-to-date assessment needs to be carried out to ascertain eligibility.

5.2. Students who use coloured overlays or glasses are permitted to take them into exams without any authorisation from school or JCQ.

6. Procedures for candidates with a medical condition

6.1. Long-term medical conditions

Evidence from the student's health professional (consultant/specialist, not GP) must be provided which specifies the access arrangements that are to be considered to support the student's needs. It must be clear from this evidence that the student requires the arrangement(s) outlined to avoid being put at a substantial disadvantage compared to the rest of the cohort when sitting public examinations.

6.2. Short-term medical conditions

If a student is unwell during the exam period, notification can be sent to the relevant exam board as part of a process called 'special considerations'. The board may then decide to adjust the student's marks slightly to reflect this. Evidence is required from any health professional involved in the student's care. In exceptional circumstances, it may also be possible to grant an emergency access arrangement (e.g. where an injury prevents a candidate from handwriting legibly, but they are still able to use a word processor)

7. Please note, all external examinations take place in the hall/gym or a reasonable space. A student is not automatically entitled to sit exams in another room or a smaller room.