

## John Ruskin School Exam Access Arrangements Policy

This document outlines John Ruskin School's policy on Exam Access Arrangements. These are the arrangements put in place to ensure that all students are given a fair opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge and skills in examinations, without being disadvantaged by any learning, physical, sensory or psychological difficulty they may experience.

### What are Exam Access Arrangements?

Access Arrangements are actions taken to remove the disadvantages to a student accessing an examination caused by physical, learning, sensory or psychological difficulties, without creating any unfair advantage or compromising the integrity of an assessment. These arrangements are agreed before an assessment, and reflect the student's 'normal way of working' within John Ruskin School.

### 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 candidate with a disability or difficulty which has **a substantial and long term effect** on performance in examinations may qualify for access arrangements. An adjustment may not be considered reasonable if it involves unreasonable costs, timeframes or affects the security or integrity of the assessment.

### Available Exam Access Arrangements may include:

- Supervised rest breaks
- Extra time
- Reader/Computer reader
- Scribe
- Word processor
- Prompter
- Alternative site for exams
- Bilingual translation dictionaries
- Modified papers (e.g. enlarged or modified papers)

Please note that other reasonable adjustments may not be included in the list of available access arrangements because it may be unique to an individual student.

### Evidence needed for Access Arrangements.

Various pieces of evidence are required to apply for an Exam Access Arrangement from the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ), depending on the arrangement required.

These include:

- Form 8 report from Access Arrangements Assessor (Sarah Hodgson)
- Previous Access Arrangements from other schools (including Primary school)
- Subject teachers – examples of work as appropriate
- Results of standardised tests e.g. reading/comprehension scores, writing tests etc (from testing by Sarah Hodgson)
- Any letters from outside agencies, hospitals or doctors / consultants (not GP)
- Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP)

Once the Access Arrangement is granted, this evidence will be held on file and available for inspection, together with:

- Permission from the awarding body for the arrangement
- A data protection form signed by the student
- A record of evidence where the student has been supported by Access Arrangements in school assessments, exams, mock exams etc.

### Medical Letters and Private Assessments

Letters from medical professionals can trigger an investigation but any request for an Access Arrangement also needs to be supported by evidence from within the school as the students “normal way of working”. Private assessments or reports from Educational Psychologists will only be accepted as part of the wider evidence for an access arrangement if supported by school evidence and assessments carried out by the Access Assessor (Sarah Hodgson). A student’s ‘normal way of working’ in school is key and Access Arrangements will not be awarded purely on the basis of a private report in line with JCQ guidelines.

### Identifying the need for Access Arrangements

#### Stage 1:

Early Screening. Students who may qualify for formal Access Arrangements during KS4 are preferably identified early in KS3.

At this stage needs are screened and identified by the Learning Support Department (from Primary information, parents and teachers), benchmark testing in Year 7. Where appropriate students have intervention with IDL (literacy and numeracy), paired reading, 1:1 individual literacy support, shared TA support in lessons, lunchtime HW club, the Accelerated Reader programme for all students at KS3; differentiation in lessons; targeted support from Pupil Premium HLTA (if applicable).

Adjustments to teaching within lessons are made according to need to enable a student to access their learning and make progress. All staff are involved in monitoring these adjustments and students are on the Learning Support Register.

### Stage 2:

Formal Testing. Assessments take place during Y9 by Access Assessor (Sarah Hodgson), ongoing monitoring from teachers determines the specific assessments required for each individual's needs. Access Arrangements are always determined by the most recent testing. These assessments are delivered in accordance with the JCQ guidelines. Permission to allow Access Arrangements expires after 26 months, after which the student may need to be re-tested, depending on which arrangement(s) they have when they move onto 6th Form, College, Apprenticeships.

### Stage 3:

The outcomes of the assessments are recorded and summarised on JCQ Form 8 by the assessor. Completed forms are then passed to the SENDCo to authorise. The online submission is carried out by the Access Arrangements Assessor and exam secretary. Feedback is instant and permission for the Access Arrangement will be recorded and held by John Ruskin School. The student and parents will be notified in writing at the start of Year 10.

### Stage 4: Ensuring Access Arrangements are the student's 'normal way of working':

Where formal Access Arrangements are awarded by JCQ, the SENDCo, Access Arrangements Assessor will work with colleagues and students to ensure that they continue to be the "normal way of working" for the student. This means that appropriate Access Arrangements are taken into consideration in everyday teaching and formally applied in any internal or external assessments.

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, after discussion and consultation with the student and their parents / carers, these Access Arrangements can be removed. The Access Assessor and Head of Centre will make the final decision on this, in the best interests of the student.

### Support offered to students with Access Arrangements

Students with Access Arrangements in place take part in small group sessions to show them how to effectively use these arrangements. Students who have access to a reader or scribe are shown how to use them appropriately in exam situations and it is explained to them what they can and can't do with the reader/scribe during the exam, and how much support the adult is allowed to give. The guidelines given to readers/

scribes is glued into the front of planners to allow students to fully understand requirements and this also allows practice at home with an adult.

Students with extra time are encouraged to apply the techniques and strategies given to them in internal exams and assessments. All teachers are provided with a list of students with Access Arrangements in the September training days and they are also on the Learning Support Register.

Teachers liaise with the Learning Support department before they carry out any 'in class' assessments with students, so that support can be provided for students who require it during the tests/exams.

During mock exams in Year 10 and Year 11 every effort is made to ensure that students receive their Access Arrangements so that they have the opportunity to practise using their Access Arrangements effectively.

### Exceptional Circumstances

#### Temporary Arrangements

Temporary Access Arrangements may be required for a student suffering from unforeseen illness or injury. In these cases, John Ruskin School must be informed at the earliest possible opportunity and a letter from a GP, consultant or other professional detailing the problem and any arrangement deemed necessary should be obtained as soon as possible.

#### Alternative Accommodation

On very rare occasions, a student may need to sit an examination at a residential address or at a hospital due to a severe medical condition which prevents them from taking examinations within the centre. In this situation, the school will ensure that JCQ guidelines are followed with regard to conduct, procedures and staffing. We must be satisfied that the candidate is well enough to take the examination and there must be appropriate evidence of need held on file.

#### Special Consideration

Special Consideration is a post examination adjustment to a candidate's mark or grade to reflect temporary injury, illness or other indisposition at the time of the examination/assessment. The candidate will have been fully prepared for the exams, but due to some unforeseen circumstance could not demonstrate what they knew.

Sarah Hodgson 8/3/19 Updated 1/12/20 Updated 29/3/23