



Exam Access Arrangements Policy

Nov 2023

This information should be read in conjunction with Lawn Manor Academy's Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) policy, which sets out the School's procedures for identifying SEND, making and evaluating provision for pupils with SEND, and monitoring the pupils' needs for access arrangements and the word processing (exams) policy.

This policy, and its approach to Exam Access Arrangements, reflects our vision of *inspiring and creating futures for all* which seeks to create a learning environment whereby every individual student may fulfil their full potential. It explains the actions taken to ensure inclusion throughout the School for all students with Special Educational Needs (SEN), including those with formally diagnosed SEND.

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 a national/public exam, where a particular need has been identified and it is provided so that the student has appropriate access to the exam. EAAs are intended to give all candidates equal opportunity to demonstrate their skills, knowledge and understanding.

Procedures and practices relating to the awarding of EAAs are governed by the statutory duty to make reasonable adjustments to provision under guidelines produced by the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ). The JCQ adjusts its regulations periodically and the School is bound to comply with the current regulations.

The most commonly used access arrangements at Lawn Manor Academy are as follows:

Scribe: a trained adult who writes for the student. The student would dictate their answers including all punctuation, grammar and relevant spellings and the scribe would write exactly what the student says. This provision is usually not encouraged for Maths or Modern Foreign Languages.

This provision also includes the use of a word processor with spelling and grammar functions enabled. However, relevant spelling/grammar marks would then be deducted from the final exam score. Pupils who are eligible for a scribe can use additional support provided in DOCs+ as their normal way of working. At present the School cannot support the provision of speech recognition technology for this arrangement.

Reader: a trained adult who would read the question and relevant text (with the exception of an exam testing the students' reading such as English comprehension and Modern Foreign Languages) for the student. The student would then write the answers themselves although this text could then be read back to the student if requested.

Under JCQ Regulations, three or four candidates may share one reader and candidates with individual readers may be required to share a room.

A Computer Reader: Pupils have access to DOCs+ software which will read highlighted text from a PDF or non-interactive question paper.

Word processing: access to a computer for an exam (if appropriate but not usually for subjects such as Maths and Modern Foreign Languages) so the student would word process their answers. Spelling and grammar checks would be disabled other than in exceptional circumstances where the student has 'scribe' provision (see above).

25% Extra Time: students may be entitled to an allowance of 25% extra time depending on their history of need and two standardised scores below 85 relating to two different types of processing, including but not limited to speed of reading, writing or visual or auditory processing. Before applying for additional time the use of rest breaks should be given full consideration.

Rest Breaks: where students are permitted to stop for short breaks during the exam and this time is then added to the finish time, with the effect of elongating the exam but not actually using any extra time.

Prompter: used for students with little sense of time or ability to concentrate, a trained adult/invigilator can prompt them with a few permitted phrases to refocus or move the student on to the next question or indicate how much time is left.

The above list is not exhaustive but does cover the most commonly used exam access arrangements but the School would ensure each student's needs are met as required.

EAs may also differ according to the students' needs within each subject i.e. extra time may be awarded to extended writing subjects only.

Procedures for EAA

Students will be identified for possible access arrangements through a combination of the following criteria:

- From Year 7 as a result of information from primary schools, prior access arrangements and/or low attainment scores in relevant assessments
- Referral from a teacher and evidence supporting student's area of need
- EAAs granted/officially approved by previous secondary school – subject to relevant paperwork being sent to Learning Support at Lawn Manor Academy, in addition to clear evidence of need and confirmation of qualifications of prior school's specialist assessor.
- Presentation of a recent medical letter/diagnosis from a qualified health care professional
- Parental concern expressed to a subject/form teacher

'Provisional' access arrangements granted in Years 7, 8 or 9 are not automatically guaranteed for GCSE exams. Official approval is normally requested by the Autumn Term of Year 10 and is subject to results from the School's designated specialist and/or a medical diagnosis/report.

EAAs have to be officially approved for all students taking GCSE, AS and A Levels.

However, it is our aim to have 'provisional' access arrangements in place for internal assessments for students in younger years as soon as additional needs are identified so this becomes the students' normal way of working.

Students who are deemed eligible for access arrangements in Key Stage 4 will be tested (at the earliest in Year 9) by the School's designated 'specialist assessor' to ensure the results are valid for official approval for the entire GCSE period.

Exam access arrangements for current students in Year 11 will only be considered for those students identified before the autumn half term break commences. This allows the School sufficient time to gather evidence of need in the classroom, evidence of normal way of working (including the mock exams) and assessment by the School's designated 'specialist assessor'. This evidence is required to meet the JCQ deadline for submissions.

As advised by the JCQ, the School will not accept privately commissioned assessments as sole evidence for exam access arrangements. Privately commissioned assessments will only be considered as background evidence additional to qualitative and quantifiable evidence gathered by the School to reflect the candidates' significant, persistent and long-term need and their normal way of working in school.

With the exception of temporary illness or injury on the day of the examination, students who require EEA provision for medical purposes will need to provide written evidence from an appropriate medical professional in March of the year they will be sitting exams, stating their current diagnosis, treatment

and details of how it might affect their performance. Historical information will not be taken into consideration.

Any EEA provision will then be put in place to comply with current JCQ regulations, which may differ from that suggested by the medical professional.

The Assistant Headteacher Personalised learning / SENDCO is responsible for EAA provision and duties include the following:

- Ensuring there is appropriate evidence for a student's exam access arrangement.
- Informing subject teachers at regular intervals regarding student's exam access arrangements and how they should be supported in the classroom.
- Liaison with Exams Team
- Informing parents/carers about student's provisional access arrangements, specialist assessor tests and official approval of arrangements for GCSE
- Ensuring each student understands how to use their access arrangements and under what circumstances
- Monitoring the use of exam access arrangements to ensure they remain appropriate and they become the student's normal way of working.

Please note, it is the responsibility of the student and the subject teacher to ensure EAAs are put in place for any assessments and tests taking place in lessons (these do not include formal GCSE). This will be done with the support of the Learning Support where required.

Policy date: November 2023

Staff responsible: Assistant Headteacher, Personalised Learning

Ratified and approved by the SLT: Nov 2022

Due for review: Annually when new JCQ regulations updated.