RIPLEY ST THOMAS
A CHURCH OF ENGLAND ACADEMY

Disability (Exams) Policy

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Access Arrangement Policy

This document outlines the 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.

Principles

Access Arrangements are the principal way in which Awarding Bodies comply with the duty under the Equality Act (2010) to make "Reasonable Adjustments". This requires that an Awarding Body makes reasonable adjustments where a disabled person would be at a substantial disadvantage in undertaking an assessment.

All Access Arrangements in school are granted in accordance with the regulations laid out by the Joint Council of Qualifications (JCQ Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments 2018/2019 and ICE to JCQ Instructions for conducting examinations 2018-2019.)

Where Access Arrangements are in place –

The integrity of the assessment must be maintained whilst providing access for disabled candidates;

Access Arrangements must not compromise the assessment objectives of the specification in question.

Examples of Access Arrangements

Access Arrangement	Description
Reader	A trained adult reads the question and any relevant text for the student (but not where the skill of reading is being assessed e.g the reading section of the English papers).
Scribe	A trained adult writes or types for the student. The student dictates their answers. The scribe writes exactly as the student dictates. In MFL, the student must dictate letter by letter in the relevant language.
Prompter	A trained adult can prompt the student with a few permitted phrases to • refocus • indicate how much time is left.
Read Aloud or use of an Exam Reading Pen	When a student is reading difficult text he/she may work more effectively if he/she can hear him/herself read.
Modified Papers	Specially prepared papers, e.g. enlarged to a specific font size.

Rest Breaks	Students are permitted to stop for short break/s during the exam and the time taken is added to the finish time. Students are not permitted to have exam materials with them during rest breaks.
Extra Time	Students may be entitled to an allowance of up to 25%. More than 25% is granted only in extraordinary circumstances.
Live Speaker	A student with a hearing impairment my need a live speaker for pre-recorded examination components, e.g. MFL listening examinations. The live speaker will speak or read aloud the contents of the CD or tape in a listening examination.
Practical Assistant	Help with practical tasks such as turning the pages in music or holding a ruler in maths.
Laptop/Word Processor	Access to a laptop for an exam for a student to word process their answers – see appendix.

Further access arrangements are available to meet pupils' needs as appropriate.

Candidates may not require the same Access Arrangements in all exams and all Access Arrangements in place for examinations must reflect a pupils' normal way of working in school. The Access Arrangement Assessor must be able to show a history of need and a history of normal way of working with the arrangement in place.

Timeline for Awarding Access Arrangements
Years 7-11

1. Year 6 - A student's primary school or parent informs the SENCo of any history of need or Access Arrangements implemented in KS2 examinations. Information is also passed from parents.

2. Year 7 – the whole year group is screened with Progress tests and CAT tests. The results highlight pupils who need extra literacy screening by the Access Arrangement Assessor.

3. KS3 – Teachers monitor students closely and gather any evidence of need for Access Arrangements, passing it to the Learning Support Department. Access Arrangements trialled in tests/exams.

4. Year 9 summer term – Further testing by the Access Arrangement Assessor to ensure pupils are still within the criteria needed for Access Arrangements. Section A Form 8 completed based on evidence supplied by teachers.

5. Year 10 - The arrangements continue to be monitored for their use and effectiveness before an online application is made by the Access Arrangement Assessor before the deadline for GCSE applications.

6. October of Year 11 – Final deadline for teachers to submit evidence and requests for Access Arrangements. Mock examinations provide last opportunity to trial Access Arrangements.

7. Summer of Year 11 – Examinations completed with Access Arrangements in place.

Years 12-13

1. Students to declare any Access Arrangements they had at KS4 when they apply to sixth form or within the first half term.

2. For new students, the Access Arrangements Coordinator will contact feeder school for evidence of Access Arrangements at KS4.

3. Teachers monitor students closely in the autumn term of Year 12, gather evidence from initial assessments and feedback concerns and evidence to the SENCo/Access Arrangements Coordinator.

4. In light of evidence received from teachers and previous schools, the Access Arrangements Assessor carries out any testing necessary during the autumn and spring terms and applies/reapplies for Access Arrangements.

5. Trial Access Arrangements are put in place for the mock examinations in January of Year 12. Teachers give feedback from the mocks. (Did students use them? Were they effective?) The mock examinations also provide a final chance to identify any other students who have not been identified or who haven't declared a difficulty with examinations.

6. Occasionally students can slip through the net, be undiagnosed or struggle with the transition to A level. However, Year 12 exams provide a final opportunity to identify any difficulties a student may have.

Medical Letters and Private Assessments

Letters from consultants will trigger an investigation but any request for an access arrangement also needs to be supported by evidence from within the school. Likewise, private assessments or reports from Educational Psychologists will only be accepted as evidence for an access arrangement if supported by school evidence, which must be sent to the assessor in advance of the assessment.

We may choose not to accept a private assessment report as evidence for an access arrangement if it conflicts with evidence gathered at school by our Access Arrangements Assessor. In this case, a written rationale for rejecting the report will be held on file.

Temporary Arrangements

Temporary arrangements may be required by students suffering from injury or illness. Students with an illness or injury that has a direct impact on their ability to access the examination should obtain a letter from a GP, consultant or other professional giving a brief outline of their condition and the access arrangements that are deemed to be necessary. For example, a right-handed student whose right arm is broken may need a scribe and some extra time, as it is not their normal way of working and dictating to a scribe may be difficult for them. A student with acute back pain may require supervised rest breaks in order to stand and move around.

In all cases where an Access Arrangement or a reasonable adjustment is needed, the school is entitled to expect reasonable notice to carry out its responsibilities. Where a need for access arrangements has been identified before an examination session, the Access Arrangement Assessor and Examinations Officer should be provided with medical evidence in reasonable time.

Temporary arrangements last for one examination session. If the condition persists another letter may be required for the next session.

Evidence Held and Malpractice

Schools are regularly inspected to ensure they have followed JCQ regulations – usually during the summer examination season. The school is required to hold evidence in its files that can be inspected at short notice. For this reason, the school will keep copies of evidence of need, form 8, letters from outside agencies, record of Access Arrangements used and any EHCP, together with a data protection form signed by the student. The consequences of malpractice can be severe. These may include disqualification of the student from one or more examinations.

Examples of malpractice include:

- Students being granted Access Arrangements which are not their normal way of working
- Access Arrangements being granted when a student has no history of need or provision
- Access Arrangements being granted without sufficient evidence

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APPENDIX

Word Processor Policy for Exams

This policy on the use of word processors in examinations and assessments is reviewed and updated annually, on the publication of updated JCQ regulations and guidance contained in the publications Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments and Instructions for conducting examinations.

References to 'AA' relate to JCQ Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments 2018/2019 and ICE to JCQ Instructions for conducting examinations 2018-2019.

Purpose of the policy

This policy details how Ripley St Thomas CE Academy authorises the use of a word processor in examinations and assessments. The policy also contains a written statement on the centre criteria for the allocation of a word processor as required by JCQ.

Principles for using a Word Processor

Ripley St Thomas CE Academy complies with AA chapter 4 Adjustments for candidates with disabilities and learning difficulties regulations and guidance as follows:

4.2.1 Candidates with access to a word processor are allowed to do so in order to remove any barriers to assessment which prevent them from being placed at a substantial disadvantage as a consequence of persistent and significant difficulties.

The use of a word processor is only permitted whilst ensuring that the integrity of the assessment is maintained, at the same time as providing access to assessments for a disabled candidate.

4.2.2 The use of a word processor is not permitted where it will compromise the assessment objectives of the specification in question.

4.2.3 Candidates may not require the use of a word processor in each specification. As subjects and their methods of assessments may vary, leading to different demands on our candidates, the need for the use of a word processor is considered on a subject-by-subject basis.

4.2.4 The use of a word processor is normally considered and agreed where appropriate at the start of the course providing the centre has firmly established a picture of need and normal way of working for a candidate.

4.2.5 The use of a word processor for candidates is only granted if it reflects the support given in the classroom as their 'normal way of working', which is defined as support:

- in the classroom; or
- in support lessons; and
- in internal school tests/examinations
- mock examinations

<u>The use of the word processor</u>

Some students may benefit from the use of a word processor during some or all of their examinations. For example, candidates with:

- A specific learning difficulty which has a substantial and long term adverse effect on their ability to write legibly or fluently.
- Formal assessment has shown the student to have a below average speed of handwriting.
- Formal assessment has indicated that a student has illegible handwriting and teachers judge this to be significantly impacting on his/her performance in assessed work.
- A student has a medical condition or physical disability which impacts on his/her ability to write by hand. (Here evidence will be required from a relevant medical professional).

The use of a word processor will not be granted to a student because he/she prefers to type rather than write or because he/she can work faster on a keyboard or because he/she uses a laptop at home.

Before the start of any formal external exam period all candidates using a word processor are invited to a meeting with Learning Support to run through the use of a word processor in the examinations. A written sheet of instructions will also be given to candidates to read. If they are unable to attend the meeting for any reason, it is their responsibility to find a member of staff to find out what was discussed.

Before an examination the Learning Support Department will:

- Clear word processors of any previously stored data
- Clear USB sticks of any previously stored data
- Make sure word processors are in good working order
- Set up word processors ready for candidates in the examination hall

Please note – Ripley St Thomas CE Academy ensures that all word processors are used with mains cables and connected to an electricity socket. We do not rely upon battery life.

At the beginning of the examination it is the candidate's responsibility to:

- Write at the top of the document their name, candidate number, centre number and paper reference
- Check that the word processor is plugged in and charging
- Let the invigilator know if there are any problems

During the examination it is the candidate's responsibility to:

- Save their work regularly
- Let an invigilator know if there are any problems with the word processor

At the end of the examination the candidate must:

- Make sure a copy of their work is saved to the hard drive, USB data stick and they must also leave the document on their screen.
- Wait to be escorted by either an invigilator or member of Learning Support to Learning Support to have their work printed off.
- Stay under exam conditions until their work has been printed off and they have been dismissed from the Learning Support Classroom.

Once the work is printed the candidate must:

- Check the work is their own, and all their work is there.
- Sign each sheet.
- Verify that it is being attached to the correct exam booklet and Form 4.

Once all the above has been completed the papers will be passed securely to the Exams' Officer for inclusion with the papers from the larger cohort.

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