

What are they?
Who gets them?
How do we do it?

Examination access arrangements

A guide for candidates and parents

Definitions

The awarding of Access Arrangements is governed by strict regulations as set out by the JCQ (Joint Council for Qualifications, see <http://www.jcq.org.uk/examinationsystem/access-arrangementsand-special-consideration> for more information).

Access arrangements are agreed before an assessment. They allow candidates with specific needs, such as special educational needs or disabilities* to access the assessment and show what they know and can do **without changing the demands of the assessment**. The intention behind an access arrangement is to meet the particular needs of an individual candidate without affecting the integrity of the assessment.

Access arrangements are the principal way in which awarding bodies comply with the duty under the **Equality Act 2010** to make 'reasonable adjustments'.

*(or indeed temporary conditions or injuries)



Rationale

There are a number of arrangements we can apply for in order to help students with exams if:

- they have an identified need
- it is their normal way of working in the classroom or internal school tests
- we can provide evidence of that

A substantial impairment

The evidence of need will vary depending on the disability and the access arrangement(s) being applied for.

There are a number of arrangements that have a higher threshold and we must show a substantial impairment.

For example:

- Extra time
- Read or computer reader
- Scribe or voice recognition software

Long term

- We must show that the needs are persistent and have existed for at least 12 months.
- Most candidates will have their access arrangements stated in their personalised **Pupil Profile (PP)**.

Procedure

1. Students trial access arrangements – we will gather **normal way of working** from their teachers, exams, tests. This can start as soon as their needs are identified, even at primary school.
2. We will also ask subject teachers for their opinions and advice, as well as **evidence of need** from the classroom (copies of past exam papers, and other written work for example).
3. (No earlier than Year 9 but usually in Year 10) one of the school's Specialist Assessors will carry out standardised assessments with the student. We will produce an assessment summary report which will include the results of a range of assessments and tests. **This will take approximately 2 lessons, but sometimes longer.**



Procedure continued

If the access arrangement is for medical or physical reasons or mental health difficulties, written confirmation is required. If so, we will ask you to provide that.

- Hospital or clinic consultant's letter (not GP)
- Letter from specialist service such as CAMHS

What we don't need

At Finham Park 2, we do not need a full Educational Psychologist diagnostic assessment (a new report or a re-assessment). **This may be different at other schools.**

Any previous reports are taken into consideration.

Advice from a psychologist or specialist teacher report (eg from the BDA) is taken note of.

What we don't do

Our assessments in school are not diagnostic. We write an access arrangements assessment report, not a full diagnostic one.

It is not necessary for a candidate to have a labelled difficulty (such as 'dyslexia' or 'dysgraphia')

For a full assessment, we can advise on an Educational Psychologist.

What access arrangements might be necessary?

The following slides are not exhaustive, but these are the access arrangements most commonly granted for GCSE/ A Level at our school.

Separate invigilation

Some students will need to sit their exams in a different room than Edwards Keep. **This may be because of mental health difficulties, attention needs or a medical condition.**

Separate invigilation can be individual – a room alone with the invigilator. It can be a shared smaller room.

This will be decided on a case by case basis, based on the evidence that we have (including medical evidence where relevant).



Supervised rest breaks

Rest breaks are awarded where there is a need for students to stop during an exam to take a break - for various factors that may be **medical, physical or emotional/psychological reasons**.



The candidate needs to put their hand up and let the invigilator know that they need a break. The exam is paused and then re-started when the student is ready to begin again. **No exam time is lost**. If the candidate needs to leave the room, they are supervised at all times.

This is trialled in advance in school exams and mocks in order to plan for the final exam papers.

Use of a word processor

Word processor is awarded if it is the student's normal way of working and if it significantly improves the quality of language written down.

Due to a learning difficulty, a medical condition, a physical or sensory impairment, writing organisation difficulties or illegible handwriting. Use of a laptop will already be their **normal way of working**.

They will take the exam on a school laptop. Spelling and grammar check will be turned off.



A prompter

A candidate may be assisted by a prompter who can keep the candidate focused on the need to answer a question and then move on to answering the next question.

Will trial this in school examinations. Usually due to identified attention difficulties.

Candidates with a prompter are generally grouped in a small room so that the invigilator will need to help just a few young people.

Coloured overlay

If a candidate has identified visual stress when reading.

Normal way of working.

The Exams Officer keeps a spare backup overlay in the correct colour (in case they forget it on the day).



Coloured paper and/or enlarged font

If a candidate has identified visual stress when reading.

Normal way of working.

We print the exam paper onto the correct colour on the day of the exam.

For modified papers, we must order in advance.

- A4 modified 18 point bold
- A3 modified 24 point bold
- A4 modified 24 point bold
- A3 modified 36 point bold

SECTION D – Biological Psychology

CRIMINAL BEHAVIOUR

17 Some psychologists suggest that one facial feature associated with criminals is a low forehead.

Give TWO OTHER facial features which have been associated with criminals.

1 _____

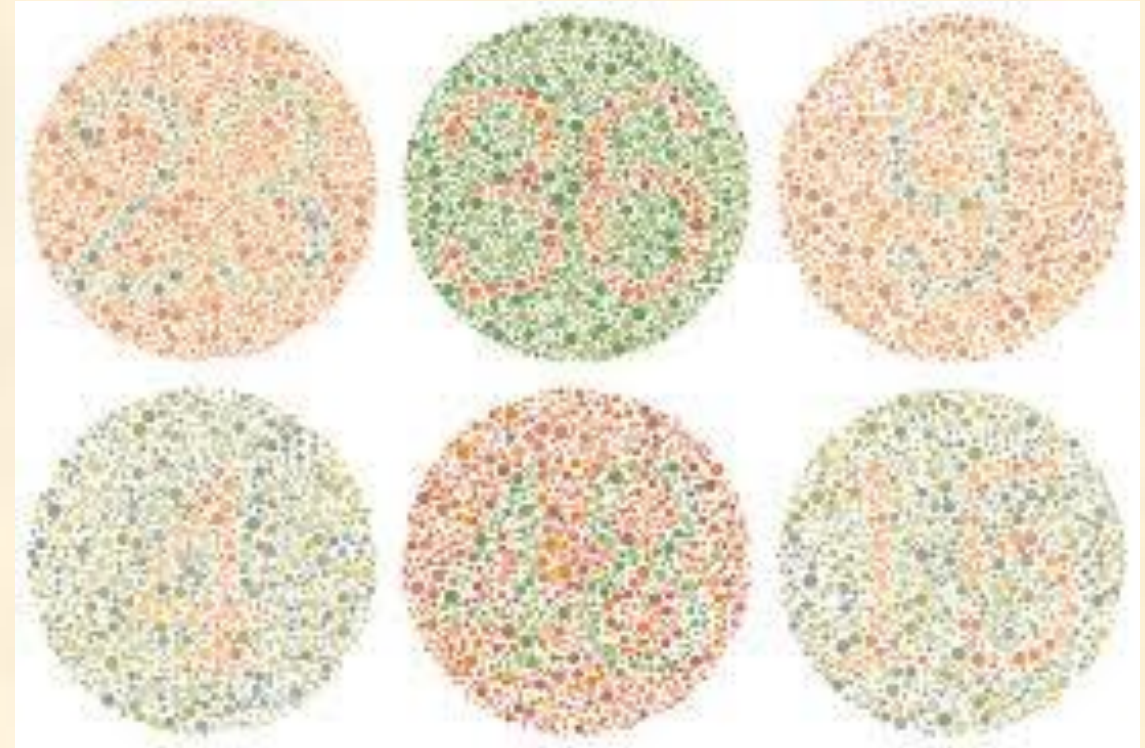
2 _____ [2]

18 Explain ONE difficulty of measuring crime.

_____ [3]

Colour naming

If a candidate has identified colour processing difficulty (colour blindness) and the exam papers have coloured elements.



Read out loud

Some students may benefit from being able to read the questions out loud and hear their own voice, working out etc.

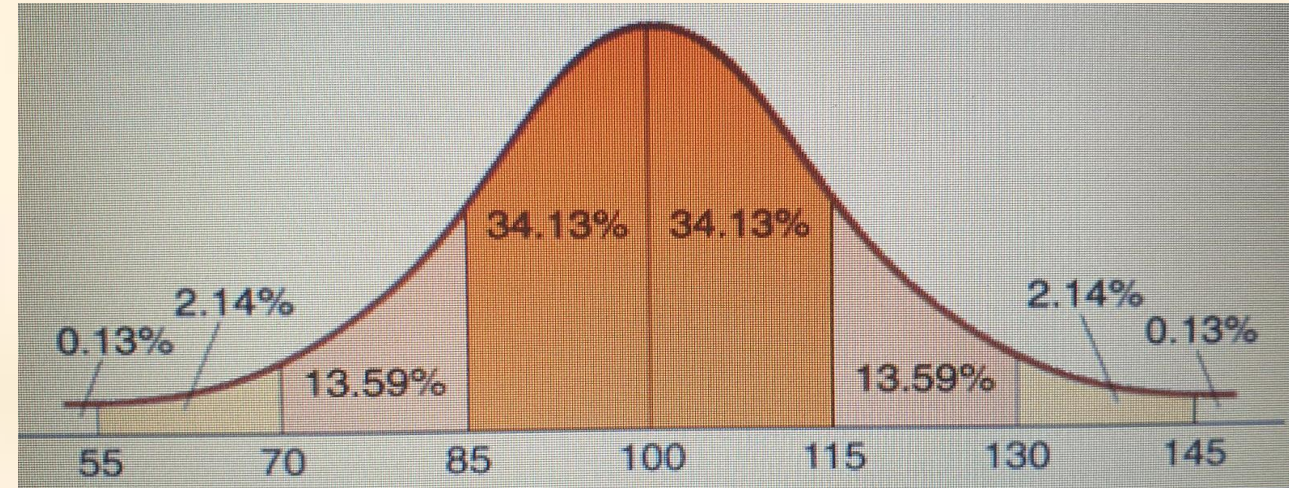
They will be invigilated in a room on their own, and this will have been their normal way of working in the classroom, in internal exams.

Usually due to a difficulty with processing language – **such as a Specific Learning Difficulty including dyslexia.**

Arrangements that are only available to certain candidates following standardised assessment

Significant difficulty = below average on current assessment – 1 standard deviation.

Students with below average scores in a particular area.



Extra time

In almost all cases, 25% additional time added at the end.

Students are awarded 25% extra time (ET) if they need longer **to process information and/or longer to read and/or write.**

We have to provide evidence that the student has needed extra time to complete written work and exams and that it is their normal way of working.

In exceptional circumstances we can apply for extra time of more than 25% extra time. This is highly unusual and we will have to gather evidence of very substantial impairment in **two different tests** of the assessment, in addition to **a compelling and substantial picture of need.**

Reader (or computer reader)

Students awarded **a reader** may take their exams in a separate room with an invigilator. The reader will read out loud all the exam text and questions. The candidate can also ask the invigilator to re-read single words, sentences, labels on diagrams etc as well as their own written answers.

Readers may not re-word or elaborate questions in any way. To increase student independence we encourage students to use **a computer reader**. This is a piece of software which reads text to the student in an exam. They can highlight the text as many times as they like and listen to it through headphones. We strongly encourage the use of a computer reader, **as it can be used in exam papers that test reading. A human reader cannot.**

Reading software

<https://www.texthelp.com/en-gb/>



Lots of advice on BDA website



A scribe or voice recognition software

The invigilator acts as a scribe and writes down (or may type) the dictated answers to the questions under direction of the candidate. They write exactly what the candidate says.

Usually for pupils who have very poor spelling or writing skills, compared with strong verbal responses. Must be normal way of working and they will practice with a scribe in internal exams and regularly leading up to final papers.

The student will not have access to the marks awarded for spelling. **They can choose to dictate punctuation, in which case they will get those marks.**

JCQ encourages the use of voice activated (speech recognition) software as well.

Another possibility is that the student word processes their own work, but has the spellchecker and the grammar checker turned on.

Voice recognition software

Instead of a scribe, candidates are much more independent. They can use voice recognition software daily for homework, classwork or coursework tasks on their own device.

This is recommended because it is a more realistic access arrangement for university and for the workplace.

Students are currently trialling software on the school laptops.

Any questions?

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