

26.11.2021

Dear Parent/Carer,

**Re: Exam access arrangements**

With assessments fast approaching across all key stages, I am writing to you to clarify the school's procedures on exam access arrangements. Please read this information carefully as there have been changes that may affect your son/daughter.

**Classroom Assessments - Key Stage 3, 4 and 5**

If a student is eligible to receive access arrangements, for any assessments that take place within the classroom, this support will be provided by the class teacher and any Teaching Assistants (TAs) within the usual classroom context. This support will be indicated on the Access Arrangements Register. To illustrate how this works in practice:

- Where it has been identified that a student requires a reader, a reading pen will always be encouraged in the first instance. These can be loaned from the SEND faculty.
- Where a reading pen is not appropriate, they will be put in a group and the teacher/TA will act as a reader for them.
- Where it is identified that a student may require support with writing, they will be encouraged to use a word processor in the first instance. A scribe must only be used where a candidate is not sufficiently confident or competent in using a word processor with the spelling and grammar check disabled; a candidate cannot write, type or Braille independently, or at a sufficient speed to record their answers with extra time.
- Chromebooks can be loaned from the SEND faculty on a daily basis by the student themselves once they have signed an acceptable use policy. Students may also use their own device.
- Assessments with enlarged text or on buff paper will be prepared in advance by the class teacher/TA.
- The teacher or TA can prompt a student/s to keep focused on the assessment.
- In all cases, the SENCo must first explore the possibility of rest breaks before extra time is granted.
- Teachers will make a professional judgement on how to apply extra time to any students who are entitled to it. It may be that they start the assessment slightly early or have longer time at the end.

*Nb: If a student intends to use their access arrangement for formal exams, the student must also apply the same way of working during classroom assessments and normal lessons. E.g. if a student intends to use a word processor in their GCSEs, they must use a word processor for in-class assessments and normal lessons.*

**Formal Assessments - Key Stage 3**

In the case of formal assessments for EBacc subjects that take place in the Sports Hall, the Exams Team will cater for all Access Arrangements in accordance with the student's normal way of working. This includes: sitting exams in a smaller venue; use of a word processor; scribe; access to a reader; reading pen; use of assistive technologies; enlarged exam papers; exams printed on coloured paper; use of a prompt; rest breaks, or any extra time requirements.

In all cases, prior written confirmation of a recommendation for additional support will have been received from a clinician e.g. dyslexia report, orthoptic report.

At the end of KS3, all students listed on the Access Arrangements register must undergo formal testing by a suitably qualified assessor – as required by the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ). Access Arrangements will then need to be applied for, formally, by the SENCo, using the results from the assessment. If eligible, access arrangements will automatically apply for both KS4 and 5.

### **Formal Assessments - Key Stage 4 and 5**

For Mock Examinations or any externally assessed work, the Exams Team will cater for all Access Arrangements such as: sitting exams in a smaller venue; use of a word processor; scribe; access to a reading pen/reader/group reader; use of assistive technologies; enlarged exam papers; exams printed on coloured paper; use of a prompt; rest breaks or any extra time requirements.

It is rare that a student would have a new Access Arrangement applied at KS4 and 5. But, in these cases, students will complete formal testing by a qualified assessor.

### **Updates to JCQ Guidance 2021 (excludes current Year 11 and 13)**

JCQ have recently published new guidance on the regulations for applying Access Arrangements for exams. The main changes are summarised below:

Students will require two below average standardised scores of 84 or less which relate to an assessment of:

- Speed of reading
- Speed of writing
- Cognitive processing which has a substantial long-term effect on speed of working

**Further information can be found here:** [AA regs 21-22.pdf \(jcq.org.uk\)](#)

I hope that this clarifies the school's procedures on Access Arrangements. The SEND team are available to discuss any concerns by contacting: [send@lymmhigh.org.uk](mailto:send@lymmhigh.org.uk). Or, you can contact the Exams Officer, Mrs Monks: [jmonks@lymmhigh.org.uk](mailto:jmonks@lymmhigh.org.uk).

Kind regards,



Miss Katie Yates  
SENCo