

# Maplewell Hall School



## Exam Access Arrangements & Reasonable Adjustments Policy

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## 1. Purpose of the policy

Maplewell Hall School is committed to ensuring that the Examination Access Arrangements Policy explains the actions taken to ensure inclusion for all students with additional learning needs (ALN), including those with formally diagnosed Special Educational Needs Disabilities (SEND). The policy forms an integral part of our teaching and learning philosophy, which seeks to create a learning environment whereby every individual student may fulfil his or her full potential.

## 2. Access Arrangements at Maplewell Hall School

Maplewell Hall School aim to ensure that all students have equal access to examinations and are neither advantaged nor disadvantaged over their peers by any long term, substantial SEND/or ALN.

Professional reports are requested that demonstrate a SEND/ALN and a recommendation for a reasonable adjustment to be made to meet the student's needs and the type of access arrangements that are appropriate.

Access arrangements reflect the support that is usually given to the student in the classroom, internal exams and mock examinations. This is commonly referred to as 'normal way of working.'

### **The centre will:**

- Ensure that learners will have the correct information and advice on their selected qualification(s) in an accessible format and that the qualification(s) will meet their needs. The recruitment process will include the centre assessing each potential learner and making justifiable and professional judgements about the learner's potential to successfully complete the examinations/assessments and achieve the qualification(s). The centre's assessment will identify, where appropriate, the support that will be made available to the learner to facilitate access to examinations/assessments;
- Ensure that where a student with a learning difficulty requires an assessment of his/her needs, he/she is assessed by an appropriately qualified specialist assessor as appointed by the head of centre;
- Assist the awarding bodies in the discharge of their duty to make reasonable adjustments by requesting access arrangements, where required, and effectively implementing those arrangements once approved;
- Submit any applications for access arrangements or reasonable adjustments by the published deadline ensuring that appropriate documentary evidence is held on file to substantiate such an arrangement and is open to inspection.
- Ensure that for GCSE qualifications, a file is presented by the Additional & Exceptional needs co-ordinator which must contain for each application the downloaded approval for the respective arrangement(s), supporting evidence of need (where required) and a signed data

protection notice and will be available for inspection at the venue where the student is taking the examination;

- Submit requests for modified papers by the published deadline;
- Recognise its duties towards disabled students as defined under the terms of the Equality Act 2010. This must include a duty to explore and provide access to suitable courses, submit applications for reasonable adjustments and make reasonable adjustments to the service the centre provides to disabled students.
- Ensure all arrangements will be carried out in accordance with the most current JCQ publication Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments

The term **Additional Learning Need** is used as an umbrella term to incorporate ALL students known to be receiving intervention Learning Support provision including those pupils identified as having SEND.

**Disability Section 6** of the Equality Act 2010 defines **disability** as a *'physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long term adverse effect on someone's ability to carry out normal day to day activities'*.

### 3. Special Educational Needs

A student has "special educational needs" as defined in the SEND code of practice: 0 to 25 years. Children have special educational needs if they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for them.

The Equality Act 2010 definition of disability includes substantial and long-term sensory impairments such as those affecting sight or hearing, mental health difficulties and long-term health conditions such as asthma, diabetes, epilepsy and cancer. Children and young people with such conditions do not necessarily have SEN, but there is a significant overlap between disabled children and young people and those with SEN.

### 4. What are Access Arrangements?

Access arrangements are agreed before an assessment. They allow students to demonstrate their skills, knowledge and understanding without changing the demands of the assessment. The intention behind access arrangements is to meet the particular needs of a student 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.'

This can be in the form of:

- **A scribe:** a trained adult who writes for the student. The student would dictate their answers. The scribe would write exactly what they say
- **A reader:** a trained adult who would read the question and any relevant text (with the exception of Section A of an English GCSE Exam) for the student. The student would then write the answer/s themselves
- **ICT:** access to a computer for an exam (if appropriate – not for subjects such as Maths) so the student would word process their answers. Spelling and grammar checks would be disabled and a special exam account would be used with no internet access. In some exceptional circumstances students may be entitled to use a spell check enabled computer
- **Extra time:** students may be entitled to an allowance of up to 25% depending on the history of evidence of need and the recommendation of the designated Specialist Teacher. In some exceptional circumstances students may be entitled to an allowance up to 50%
- **Rest breaks:** where students are permitted to stop for short break/s during the exam and the time stopped is added to the finish time, with the effect of elongating the exam but not actually using any extra time
- **Prompter:** where a student has little sense of time or loses concentration easily, a trained adult can prompt them with a few permitted phrases to refocus, move the student on to the next question or indicate how much time is left

## 5. When might students need to be given Exam Access Arrangements?

Scribe	Where there is a physical disability; where their writing:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is illegible and may hamper their ability to be understood</li> <li>• speed is too slow to be able to complete the exam in the allotted time</li> </ul>
Reader	Where there is a standardised score of below 85 in a test delivered by Specialist Teacher (100 is the average).
ICT	Where there is a physical disability; their writing would be:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• illegible and may hamper their ability to be understood</li> <li>• speed is too slow to be able to complete the exam in the allotted time</li> </ul>
Extra Time	Where a student's ability to process information is slower than average
Rest Breaks	Where a student has a physical disability which prevents them from concentrating for long periods of time. This is now the recommended option from the exam boards before considering extra time.
Prompter	For a student who loses concentration/focus, and is not aware of time.

Separate Room	For a student with a medical condition such as epilepsy/diabetes where it isn't appropriate for them to sit an exam in the main exam hall. Students who are agoraphobic/have a psychological condition may also
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## 6. Reasonable Adjustments

The Equality Act 2010 requires an Awarding Body to make reasonable adjustments where a disabled person would be at a substantial disadvantage in undertaking an assessment.

A reasonable adjustment for a particular person may be unique to that individual and may not be included in the list of available Access Arrangements.

How reasonable the adjustment is will depend on a number of factors including the needs of the disabled student/learner. An adjustment may not be considered reasonable if it involves unreasonable costs, timeframes or affects the security or integrity of the assessment.

There is no duty on the Awarding Bodies to make any adjustment to the assessment objectives being tested in an assessment.

## 7. Special Consideration

Special Consideration is a post examination adjustment to a student's mark or grade to reflect temporary injury, illness or other indisposition at the time of the examination/assessment.

## 8. Processing access arrangements and adjustments

### Arrangements/adjustments requiring awarding body approval

Access arrangements online (AAO) is a tool provided by JCQ member awarding bodies for centre to apply for required access arrangement approval for the qualifications covered by the tool. This tool also provides the facility to order modified papers for those qualifications included.

AAO is accessed within the JCQ Centre Admin Portal (CAP) by logging in to one of the awarding body secure extranet sites. A single application for approval is required for each candidate regardless of the awarding body used.

In order to determine which arrangements/adjustments should be applied for, information is collected from teaching staff on what the candidate's normal way of working is, information is retrieved from any medical diagnosis/letters held on file and

## **Centre-delegated arrangements/adjustments**

An AAO approval is not required for some arrangements/adjustments therefore we as a centre get to decide on these. These arrangements/adjustments are determined by teacher feedback, evidence provided through a candidate's Education Health Care Plan (EHCP) or medical letters, this will also need to be confirmed as the candidate's normal way of working in lessons, in class tests and mock exams. The evidence will be held on file and be summarised in a 'file note' that will be held on file for inspection purposes.