



ASPIRATIONS

Access Arrangements

Magna Academy

Version Control	
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Introduction and Rationale

Access arrangements are agreed before an external examination. They allow students with specific needs such as special educational needs, disabilities or temporary injuries to access the assessment and show what they know and can do without changing the demand of the assessment. The intention behind an access arrangement 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 Equality Act 2010 to make 'reasonable adjustments'.

The following access arrangements are the most common at Magna Academy:

- 25% Extra time
- Reader
- Scribe
- Word Processor
- Supervised rest breaks

Access arrangements will reflect the student's normal way of working.

The Equality Act 2010 requires an awarding body to make **reasonable adjustments** where a disabled person would be at a substantial disadvantage in comparison to someone who is not disabled. The awarding body is required to take reasonable steps to overcome that disadvantage. 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 student. 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.

The purpose of this policy is to confirm that Magna Academy has a written record which clearly shows the centre is leading on the access arrangements process and is complying with its "...obligation to identify the need for, request and implement access arrangements..." (JCQ 'General regulations for approved centres' Chapter 5)

The policy is annually reviewed to ensure that processes are carried out in accordance with the current edition of the JCQ publication Adjustments for students with disabilities and learning difficulties Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments.

1. Roles and Responsibilities

1.1 Principal

The principal is responsible for ensuring that all public examinations held at the school are administered according to the JCQ regulations, and must therefore be familiar with the JCQ Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments document. The Principal must appoint the Access Arrangements Assessor and obtain evidence of the assessor's qualification. The Principal must also ensure that those who are employed to facilitate access arrangements, including adults acting as readers and scribes are appropriately trained, have sufficient time and fully understand the rules of a particular access arrangement.

1.2 Senior leadership team

Members of the senior leadership team must be familiar with access arrangements procedures and the contents of the JCQ Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments document.

1.3 SENDCo or person appointed by the Principal to coordinate the access arrangements process

The Assistant Principal Inclusion is the SENDCo and is responsible for leading on the access arrangements process within Magna Academy. The SENDCo is supported by the Specialist Assessor whose role includes

- Assessing students with learning difficulties in order to identify access arrangements that may be suitable.
- Managing the application procedure, ensuring that full supporting evidence is available before starting the application (e.g. Teacher Evidence Form).
- Maintaining a portfolio of all the required documentation, including evidence of need, updating this as required (e.g. transfer into the Sixth Form). This evidence must be available for JCQ inspection.
- Ensuring the qualification of the assessor is saved centrally and available for JCQ inspection.
- Liaising with the Examinations Officer to ensure access arrangements are applied correctly for all relevant examinations
- Liaising with Heads of Department and teaching staff to ensure that they know which students are entitled to access arrangements, that these should correspond to the student's normal way of working, and that access arrangements should also be made for internal school texts, examinations and mock examinations.

1.4 Exams officer

The examinations officer is responsible for the practical application of access

arrangements in public examinations. This will involve:

- Being aware of which students are eligible for access arrangements, and any particular conditions (e.g. arrangements being appropriate in some examinations and not others)
- Applying for the access arrangements through Access Arrangements Online (AAO)
- Putting access arrangements in place according to the regulations
- Making practical arrangements, e.g. for extra rooms, extra invigilation etc.

1.5 Teaching staff

Teaching staff support the SENDCo and Specialist Assessor in determining and implementing appropriate access arrangements. This involves:

- Being aware of which students are eligible for access arrangement
- Ensuring that access arrangements are made for these students in internal tests, examinations and mock examinations
- Collaborating with the SENDCo to provide evidence of students' normal way of working.

2. The assessment process

The SENDCo and Specialist Assessor must make a decision about an access arrangement based on whether the student has a substantial and long term impairment which has an adverse effect and the student's normal way of working with the academy. A reasonable adjustment is agreed at the pre-assessment planning stage and is any action that helps reduce the effect of a disability or difficulty, which places the learner at a substantial disadvantage. Reasonable adjustments must not however affect the reliability or validity of assessment outcomes nor must they give the learner an unfair assessment advantage over other learners undertaking the same or similar assessments.

In line with JCQ guidelines, modified papers for Summer 2023 exams must be applied for by 31st January 2024 with all other applications completed by 21st March 2024.

2.1 Qualifications of the assessor

Assessments are carried out by the SENDCO or the Specialist Assessor who have both successfully completed a post-graduate course at or equivalent to Level 7, including at least 100 hours relating to individual specialist assessment.

Evidence of the assessor's qualification will be held on file for inspection purposes and be presented to the JCQ Centre Inspector by the SENDCO or the Exams Officer.

Assessors must record the results of any tests completed indicating the impairment has a substantial and long term effect on the student's performance. Current editions of nationally standardised tests appropriate to the student must be used and the results reported within part 2 of Form 8.

The SENDCO or Specialist Assessor will attend annual update training in order to have a thorough understanding of the current edition of the JCQ publication 'Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments' updating the principals, procedures and accountabilities involved.

2.2 How the assessment process is administered

At Magna Academy key stage 3 students are screened annually using the GL assessments, these assessments provide evidence for which students may require access arrangements in key stage 4.

Students can self-refer or teachers, tutors, parents/ carers or a member of the Phoenix team can ask for an assessment where a student is having significant and persistent difficulties in lessons, internal tests and mock examinations.

Assessments must be completed by the assessors personally and they must not sign off assessments carried out by another professional. Assessments used for access arrangements must not be completed any earlier than the start of Year 9.

2.3 Recording evidence of need and normal way of working

Before a student is assessed teachers, tutors and support staff must provide the assessors with a picture of need. This will be done by completing an access arrangement teacher evidence form.

2.4 Processing applications for access arrangements

A Form 8 must be used for students with learning difficulties where Magna Academy is applying for the following arrangements

- extra time
- a scribe
- word processor with grammar and spelling enabled
- practical assistant
- modified papers.

A Form 9 can be used to apply for access arrangements for students with an EHCP (Education, Health and Care Plan) or for a substantial impairment. Evidence of need for

substantial impairment can include

- CAMHS
- Medical consultant (not a GP)
- Psychiatrist
- Speech and Language Therapist
- Current EHCP

A Form 8 or Form 9 must be presented by the SENDCo for inspection.

A Form 8, with part 2 completed no earlier than the start of Year 9 for GCSE qualifications, may roll forward to GCSE qualifications where a student requires 25% extra time and/or a scribe.

Once a Form 8 or Form 9 has been completed, the application will be processed by the Exams Officer using Access Arrangements Online. A signed and dated copy of Form 8 or Form 9 with evidence for substantial impairment, the approved application, a signed data protection notice and a data protection SENDCO confirmation must be kept in hard copy in **G35**.

Online application approvals last for 26 months from the date of application is made online. No application will be made any earlier than the May of Year 9.

3. Access arrangements

3.1 Extra time

A student can qualify for 25% extra time in one of the following ways:

- They have an EHCP which confirms the student's disability or learning difficulty relating to secondary education.
- Two below average standard assessment scores of 84 or less or one below average standard score and one low average standard score (85-89) from two different areas of speed of working which relates to an assessment of:
 - speed of reading
 - speed of writing
 - speed of processing
- A letter from CAMHS, a hospital consultant, a psychiatrist or a speech and language therapist confirming the student has a complex need.

Supervised rest breaks will always be considered before a recommendation of 25% extra time.

In exceptional circumstances, a student may require more than 25% extra time. A substantial body of centre-based evidence to show a learning difficulty which has substantial and long-term adverse effect on speed of working and which justifies more than 25% extra time is needed.

3.2 Reader/Reading Pens

A reader is a responsible adult who reads instructions on the question paper and the questions to the students. This may involve reading the whole paper to the student or the student may request only some words to be read.

A reading pen is a portable device that is used to scan text and hear it read aloud. The use of the reading pen promotes independent working as the student is in control of the exam reading pen, meaning that particular words or pieces of text can be scanned and listened to as many times as he/she requires. The reading pens can be used with earphones.

A short concise file note signed and dated confirming the nature of the student's impairment and that the use of a reader or a reading pen reflects his/ her normal and current way of working.

3.3 Scribe

A scribe is a responsible adult who writes or types as a student dictates answers to the questions. If a word processor is the student's normal way of working then it should be used in examinations in order to encourage independent working and access to marks awarded for spelling, punctuation and grammar. A scribe must only be used where a student is not sufficiently competent or confident in using a word processor with the spelling and grammar check disabled.

A student can qualify due to :

- A spelling accuracy score below 84 where target words are unrecognisable and the writing is incomprehensible
- free writing which is produced so slowly that answers could not be fully recorded even with extra time allowed. A timed standardised test for free writing speed is required.

A form 8 will be completed for students requiring a scribe.

If a student has illegible writing, incomprehensible grammar or not able to write in enough detail then an application can be made directly to the awarding body.

3.4 Word processor

A student may use a word processor with spelling and grammar facility disabled because they have:

- A learning difficulty which has a substantial and long term adverse effect on the ability to write legibly
- A medical condition
- A physical disability
- A sensory impairment
- Planning and organisation problems when writing by hand
- Poor handwriting

The use of a word processor will not be granted to a student because he/she prefers to type, works faster using a keyboard or because they use a laptop/computer at home.

A short concise file note signed and dated confirming the nature of the student's difficulties and that the use of a word processor reflects his/ her normal and current way of working is required.

3.5 Supervised Rest breaks

Supervised rest breaks allow the timing of an examination to be paused and restarted when the student is ready to continue. During the supervised rest break the student must not have access to the questions paper or answer booklet. If the student needs to leave the examination room an invigilator must accompany them. Supervised rest breaks should not be used to give the student additional thinking time.

Evidence in the form of a letter from CAMHS, Educational Psychologist, Paediatrician or equivalent must be presented to the SENDCO before January 30th 2024. A short concise file note on headed paper, signed and dated confirming the need for supervised rest breaks. This must confirm the nature of the student's impairment and that supervised rest breaks reflect their normal way of working within Magna Academy.

3.6 Separate invigilation within the centre

Separate invigilation (sitting the examination outside of the main examination room, e.g a room for a smaller group of students) is an arrangement that enables a student who has a long term medical condition or SEMH (Social Emotional and Mental Health) needs to sit the examination in a separate room, either singly or in a smaller group. Nervousness, low level anxiety or being worried about exams is not sufficient ground for separate invigilation. Each room in which the examination is being taken will require a separate invigilator.

Evidence in the form of a letter from CAMHS, Educational Psychologist, Psychiatrist or equivalent must be presented to the SENDCO before January 30th 2024.

3.7 Centre-delegated access arrangements

These are access arrangements that do not need to be processed online. The arrangement must still reflect the student's normal way of working and be put in place for a student on the basis of need. These arrangements include:

- Exam reading pen
- Prompter
- Coloured overlay
- Coloured paper
- Colour naming by invigilator
- Bilingual dictionary
- Fidget toys
- Ear defenders

3.8 Access arrangements for students with English as Additional Language (EAL)

Two access arrangements are specifically intended for students with English as an additional language.

- **Bilingual dictionary.** The student may use an electronic or hard copy dictionary for word to word translations with no clarification or pictures. The dictionary should be kept at Magna Academy for the duration of the examination series and checked for unauthorised revision notes. The use of a dictionary must be the student's normal way of working. A dictionary cannot be used for subjects that assess spelling, punctuation and grammar (English Literature, Geography and History)
- **Up to 25% extra time to use the dictionary** can be permitted for GCSE. An application should be made with Access Arrangements online if the following conditions have been met.
 - have been in the UK for less than three years
 - came with no prior knowledge of English
 - was not taught English prior to UK arrival
 - English is not spoken at home
 - Needs to use the dictionary extensively
 - Extra time to use the dictionary is the normal way of work

A student does not have a learning difficulty simply because their first language is not English and we cannot assume that every EAL student can have access to these arrangements based on evidence of weak literacy skills or slow speed of processing. If necessary it must be shown that the student has underlying difficulties in their first language.

3.9 Use of electrical equipment in the exam

If a student requires the use of any electrical equipment during an exam then an application must be made to the awarding body. This may include:

- Diabetic using phone to check blood sugars
- Students needing to use headphones to listen to music

5. Students moving from another centre

If a student moves to Magna Academy from a centre with an established working relationship to retake GCSE examinations, the existing Form 8 can continue to be used as evidence for access arrangements providing:

- All sections of the Form 8 are completed and signed
- All assessments used are age-appropriate and nationally standardised
- The student was assessed no earlier than the start of Year 9
- Evidence has been provided that the assessor holds an appropriate qualification in assessment

A new application is made through Access Arrangements online, after the student has signed a new data protection notice and an updated picture of need is gained from teaching staff.

6. Moving on to Post 16 study

When a student progresses to Post 16 study, Magna Academy will either roll forward the Form 8 or the student can be re-assessed.

A form 8 can be rolled forward if a student progresses from Year 11 into Sixth Form at Magna Academy or if a student joins Magna Academy with a fully completed form 8.

The SENDCO will complete a cover sheet to update the evidence to include:

- Confirmation that the student continues to have persistent and significant difficulties.
- Evidence of the difficulties and how they substantially impact on teaching and learning.
- Show the involvement of teaching staff in determining the need for access arrangement
- Confirm that without the access arrangements the student would continue to be at a substantial disadvantage
- Confirm the arrangement continues to be the student's normal way of working.

If a Form 8 cannot be rolled forward then a new assessment will take place, starting with gathering evidence from teaching staff.