



Tring School

Exam Access Arrangements Policy & Procedures

Policy Review	
Review Schedule	2-yearly
Reviewed by:	Local Governing Body
Accepted by:	Local Governing Body
Date of Review:	November 2020
Date of Next Review:	November 2022

Tring School is committed to equality of opportunity for all pupils, staff, parents and carers. Policies have been written and reviewed with due regard to the Equalities Act 2010.

Scope

The RLP is at the heart of the community delivering an inclusive education to students of all ages. Our mission is to embrace challenge and to celebrate success in all that we do by striving for every learner to reach their full potential. The culture that we have in our schools means that they each retain their distinctiveness but learn and grow together and remain collectively responsible for providing all students with exciting and inspiring opportunities.

Introduction

We believe that students thrive in a happy, secure and caring environment. It is an essential part of a school ethos that the values of peace, love and caring for others should be core values that we respect and agree.

For Church Schools in the Ridgeway Learning Partnership the following biblical narrative applies:

'There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit distributes them. There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord. There are different kinds of working, but in all of them and in everyone it is the same God at work. 1 Corinthians 12 4-6

Attachments to the policy are: Special Education Needs & Disability Policy

What are exam access arrangements?

An Exam Access Arrangement (EAA) is a provision or type of support given to a student (subject to exam board approval) in an exam, where a particular need has been identified so that the student has appropriate access to the exam. 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 Computer reader/ reader:** Computer software that accurately reads out text, but does not decode or interpret the paper may be used as a computer reader or 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. Students at Tring School use Read and Write as the platform for scribe/speech recognition technology. A scribe will only be used where a candidate is not sufficiently competent in using this technology. A reading pen can be used instead of a reader if the student prefers. This pen can also be used in English language exams.
- **ICT:** access to a computer for an exam (chromebook for internal examination) (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.
- **Extra time:** students may be entitled to an allowance of 25% if there is evidence of need and the recommendation of the designated Specialist Assessor. In certain circumstances 50% extra time will be awarded, however this is very unusual.
- **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:** a trained adult can prompt a student with a few permitted phrases to refocus, move the student on to the next question or indicate how much time is left.
- **Alternative Room:** a student may require access to another space to complete their exams, other students will be in this room completing their examinations as well.

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">● Is illegible and may hamper their ability to be understood● speed is too slow to be able to complete the exam in the allotted time
Reader	Where there is a standardised score of below 85 in a test delivered by Specialist Assessor (100 is the average). Reading pens are used by students and these are used for both internal and external exams. A reading pen will be used first for most

	students in internal exams. In in class tests/assessments the teacher will be used as a reader.
ICT	<p>Where there is a physical disability; their writing would be:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • illegible and may hamper their ability to be understood • speed is too slow to be able to complete the exam in the allotted time <p>Where external examinations have the option to use online assessment, the decision for this lies with the subject leader and class teacher and not the student/parent.</p> <p>For external examinations students will be expected to use school devices and not their own devices due to JCQ regulations.</p>
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.
Alternative 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 need to sit an exam in an alternative room. An alternative room will only be awarded if there is long term evidence of a psychological condition which is substantiated by a letter from a medical consultant. A letter from a GP will not meet the criteria to be awarded alternative room provision. The school will decide if this provision is appropriate in line with JCQ regulations.
Use of assisted technology	Where the exam permits and students meet the criteria, the use of assisted technology such as speech enabled technology. The school only uses Read and Write as its dictation tool.

What evidence is needed to apply for EAA?

There are a number of pieces of evidence that can be used to apply for EAA to the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ):

- Form 8 report from a specialist assessor in school
- Previous EAA from a Primary School
- Subject teachers – examples of work as appropriate
- Results of baseline tests e.g. reading/comprehension age, writing tests
- Letters or referrals (private referrals NOT accepted) from a medical professional (a consultant in the case of alternative room provision). Please be aware that if a student has been awarded EAA in a previous school there is no guarantee that this will be awarded again.

Extra Time

For extra time (the most applied for EAA), students will have an assessment to determine their speed of processing. A standardised score of less than 85 (100 being average) can qualify for extra time, however JCQ **also** requires ongoing evidence from student's class teachers to prove that this is their normal way of working, in addition JCQ expects school to consider the need for extra time on a subject by subject basis.

There are rare cases where students get a score of more than 84. In these cases more evidence is needed to prove that a student should receive extra time. This could be in the

form of an extensive history of need, formal diagnosis of a significant learning difficulty, or evidence of a substantial long term adverse effect on the performance of a child's speed of working.

All students now receive either 25% or 50% additional time which is determined by the Specialist Assessor and based upon child's processing speeds.

The Exam Boards recommend that before extra time is awarded, rest breaks must be considered, since this may be more appropriate for a student with a medical or psychological condition.

It is usual that a student would receive 25%-extra time in the first instance. To receive 50% is very unusual, and applies to those students with a severe learning/physical difficulty. Exam boards would recommend putting other EAA in place before this occurs. For students to be eligible for 50% extra time, there needs to be substantial evidence to support the need, including two below average scores from the specialist assessor assessments, in two separate areas. There is evidence to suggest that students who receive more extra time than they need do not use it effectively, and may in fact damage their chances of achieving a good grade because they go back and undo the work that they have produced. Therefore giving extra time needs careful consideration.

Private Educational Psychologists Reports

A number of parents choose to have their children assessed by private educational psychologists and submit the reports to Learning Support as evidence that their child should be awarded EAA.

Private educational psychologist reports cost a significant amount of money. This therefore means that parents who are unable to obtain a private report through their financial circumstances are put at a disadvantage. As an exam centre we must be consistent in our decisions and ensure that arrangements put in place represent *'their normal way of working'*. Often private educational psychologists recommend that children should receive EAA, which can be in conflict with what the centre assessor (Specialist Assessor) recommends. We also look for and consider evidence of a history of need. JCQ states that *"if a candidate can complete a paper in the normal length of time, and never uses the extra time which has been made available, then it is not an effective time management. **It would not be appropriate to process an application for extra time.**"*² As such the school will not accept the recommendations of a private educational psychologist report, but will instead follow the recommendations of the specialist assessor.

³ JCQ advise that: *"...the specialist assessors should be guided by the following:*

- ***The specialist assessor should ideally be employed within the centre***

¹ JCQ Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments 2020

² JCQ Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments 2020

³ JCQ Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments 2020

- *The second choice is a specialist assessor employed at another centre*
- *The third choice would be a local authority specialist assessor*
- *The fourth choice would be an external specialist assessor **who has an established relationship with the centre** [Tring School]”*

JCQ also states that ‘a **privately commissioned assessment carried out without prior consultation within the centre cannot be used to award access arrangements and cannot be used to process an application online**“*Where a centre elects either to accept or reject a privately commissioned report from an external professional, the head of centre [the Headteacher] or a member of the senior leadership team must provide a brief, written rationale to support this decision which must be available for inspection purposes.*”

Procedures

How would students be identified for Exam Access Arrangement?

- They would have had EAA at KS2 for their SAT’s
- From baseline testing completed on the Induction Days in Year 6
- Parental Referral
- Subject Teacher Referral
- Information from Primary schools
- Concerns about progress forwarded by teachers to the SENCo despite quality first teaching

KS2 SAT EAA

Students who have EAA at KS2 are screened for EAA at KS3 and KS4. Although they may have received EAA at KS2, it doesn’t mean that they automatically receive it at KS3 or KS4 because their needs may have changed. For example, a student who had a Reader for KS2 may not qualify for a Reader at KS4 because their reading has improved to the extent it does not meet the exam board criteria.

Baseline Testing in Year 6 All students are tested during their first few days in September of Year 7. We use the Access Reading and Comprehension test, a spelling test and a writing test. These tests can help identify learning difficulties such as dyslexia. Learning Support will contact parents where this is the case, do further testing, and if necessary put an appropriate intervention into place.

Parent Referral

Parents can contact the school to ask for advice about testing if they have concerns with the progress and learning of their child. Once contact has been made with the parent, Learning Support will investigate their concerns by sending a “round robin” to the child’s teachers to

gain information. Following this, a decision will be made as to whether it is appropriate to test a student.

Year 12 students new to the school will need to be re tested by the specialist assessor in school, previous school evidence will not be accepted.

Teacher Referral

As with Parent Referrals, teachers can refer a student to Learning Support where they have concerns about the learning and progress of a student in their class. All of the student's current teachers will be asked to give feedback in order to gather information. Following this, a decision will be made as to whether to test a student for EAA. Where a teacher thinks that a student requires extra time, they are asked to get the student to change the colour of the pen that they are using once the allotted time is up, and continue writing until they have finished. This is then used as proof to JCQ and the exam boards of a history of need. Teachers are asked to refer students to Learning Support initially if they feel that a child may be dyslexic rather than contacting parents about their concerns. Learning Support will then contact the parents if the concerns are founded.

The deadline for teachers to complete this referral for Year 11 is three weeks prior to their mock examinations and only under exceptional circumstances will any further referrals be accepted. The exams officer will remind staff after Year 9 & 10 exams if there are any students who raised a concern and these referrals would go through the SEN department.

How do staff and parents know whether a student has Exam Access Arrangements?

- Teaching and support staff can access the information on Go 4 Schools.. It is updated on a regular basis. The information about results of assessments for EAA are kept confidentially in line with school policy, and are shared on a needs to know basis.
- Staff are informed of any changes to the EAA list via the Staff Bulletin which goes out every Friday.
- Parents will be formally told by the SEN department of any tests results via a letter home which states what they are entitled to, why and when.

How are Exam Access Arrangements applied for?

Students need to be tested at each Key Stage for EAA. An entitlement to EAA at KS2 does not automatically entitle them to it at KS3 or KS4. Therefore the specialist assessor tests students who are referred to us, or who have had EAA in earlier Key Stages.

The specialist assessor will assess students using a variety of nationally recognised tests such as:

- Edinburgh 4 Reading Comprehension Test
- Access Reading Comprehension Test
- Wide Range Achievement Test
- (i) Spelling

- (ii) Single-word reading
- Vernon Graded Word Spelling Test
- Detailed Assessment of Speed of Handwriting
- British Picture Vocabulary Scales (2&3)
- Comprehensive Test of Phonological Processing 2
- Phonological Assessment Battery
- Test of Word Reading Efficiency
- Test of Auditory Processing Skills
- Symbol Digital Modalities test

The tests that the specialist assessor uses are replaced/upgraded periodically in line with current practice.

The tests that the specialist assessor uses depends very much upon the type of barrier to learning that the student may have. Should the student need further testing to assess for other learning issues or further EAA, this will be arranged. Following a report produced by the specialist assessor, an application is made to the Exam Boards for permission to implement the specified arrangement/s. Students are tested formally in Year 9 so that any permitted exam access arrangements are in place for the full GCSE period of both Year 10 and 11.

Students may not require the same access arrangements for each subject. Subjects and their methods of assessment may vary, in particular the style of questions, leading to different demands of the student. The SENCo and exam access arrangements in place must consider the need for access arrangements on a **subject by subject basis**.

What support is given to students with EAA?

Students with EAA take part in small group sessions to show them how to effectively use EAA. In addition, students with EAA should use their EAA during internal assessments and exams so that they gain practice at using it effectively. If students are not using their provision either as a whole or an individual subject, this will be reviewed and if necessary no longer provided for example use of extra time or ICT.

Students who have access to a reader or scribe are shown how to use them appropriately in exam situations, and it is explained to them what they can and can't do with the reader/scribe during the exam, and how much support the adult is allowed to give.

Students with extra time are given sessions with a teaching assistant on how to use the additional time allowance effectively. They then need to apply the techniques and strategies given to them in internal exams and assessments.

All teachers have access to Go 4 Schools which provides them with information about students with EAA. The exams office arranges EAA for formal exam periods.

It is the responsibility of the students to practice using their examination access arrangements well in advance of any internal / external examination series.

What are the procedures for processing an application?

Once the tests have been conducted and there is a recommendation from the specialist assessor for EAA, the SENCo or Assistant SENCo then applies to the exam boards. The feedback is instant and at this point the EAA is added to the list of students and the parents are informed of the EAA by letter.

The application will require evidence of need, and the centre needs to hold evidence in its files that can be inspected at short notice. This can include:

- Recommendations by teachers
- Student feedback
- Parental feedback
- Educational psychologist reports
- Letters from outside agencies such as CAMHS (Children and Adolescent Mental Health Services), hospitals or doctors
- Information from SALT (Speech and Language Team)
- EHCP
- Permission from the exam boards for the arrangement/s
- A signed copy of the Form 8 report by the designated assessor
- A data protection form signed by the student
- A record of all occasions when a student has been supported by EAA
- For Extra Time – history of evidence of need in the form of copies of work where a student has regularly used more than the allotted time and regular feedback from subject teachers to indicate how the student is using their extra time allowance.