



SIR THOMAS RICH'S

Access Arrangements (Examinations) Policy

Date reviewed: February 2018

Status: For external examinations

Responsibility: It is the Governor's Curriculum and Evaluation committee's responsibility to review this policy, agree its principles and monitor its implementation.

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1. What are access arrangements?

Access Arrangements

Access Arrangements are pre-examination adjustments for candidates based on **evidence of need** and **normal way of working**. Access Arrangements fall into two distinct categories: some arrangements are delegated to centres, others require prior JCQCIC awarding body approval.

Access Arrangements allow candidates/learners with special educational needs, disabilities or temporary injuries to access the assessment without changing the demands of the assessment. In this way Awarding Bodies will comply with the duty of the Equality Act 2010 to make 'reasonable adjustments'.

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 candidate/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.

[JCQ website]

2. Purpose of the policy

The purpose of this policy is to confirm that Sir Thomas Rich's fulfils "its obligations in respect of identifying the need for, requesting and implementing access arrangements."

The policy is annually reviewed to ensure that arrangements are carried out in accordance with the current edition of the JCQ publication '**Adjustments for candidates with disabilities and learning difficulties, Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments, General and Vocational qualifications.**'

3. Disability policy (examinations)

A large part of the access arrangements policy is covered in the Disability policy (examinations) which covers staff roles and responsibilities in identifying the need for, requesting and implementing access arrangements and the conduct of examinations.

Sir Thomas Rich's Disability Policy can be found on the School's website in the **About Us** section, under **Governors and Policies**.

This access arrangements policy further covers the assessment process and related issues in more detail.

4. The assessment process

Assessments are carried out by assessors appointed by the Head of Centre. The assessors are appropriately qualified as required in JCQ regulations as follows:

- *an access arrangements assessor who has successfully completed a post-graduate course at or equivalent to Level 7, including at least 100 hours relating to individual specialist assessment. An access arrangements assessor may conduct assessments to be recorded within Section C of Form 8; and/or*
- *an appropriately qualified psychologist registered with the Health & Care Professions Council who may conduct assessments to be recorded within Section C of Form 8 and where necessary undertake full diagnostic assessments; and/or*
- *a specialist assessor with a current SpLD Assessment Practising Certificate, as awarded by Patoss, Dyslexia Action or BDA and listed on the SASC website, who may conduct assessments to be recorded within Section C of Form 8 and where necessary undertake full diagnostic assessments.*

An access arrangements assessor must have successfully completed a post-graduate course at or equivalent to Level 7, including at least 100 hours relating to individual specialist assessment, which must include training in all of the following:

- *the theoretical basis underlying psychometric tests, such as the concepts of validity and reliability; standard deviations and the normal curve; raw scores, standard scores, quotients, percentiles and age equivalent scores; the concept of statistically significant discrepancies between scores; standard error of measurement and confidence intervals;*
- *the appropriate use of nationally standardised tests for the age group being tested;*
- *the objective administration of attainment tests which can be administered individually. This must include tests of reading accuracy, reading speed, reading comprehension and spelling. Appropriate methods of assessing writing skills, including speed, must also be covered;*
- *the appropriate selection and objective use of tests of cognitive skills, see paragraph 7.5.12, page 86;*
- *the ethical administration of testing including the ability to understand the limitation of their own skills and experience, and to define when it is necessary to refer the candidate to an alternative professional...*

[AA 7.3]

a) Checking the qualification(s) of the assessor(s)

The School currently uses one specialist assessor, who is qualified to carry out full diagnostic assessments for SpLDs. Copies of her certificates are on file in the Headmaster's office. She and the SENCo check the

JCQ regulations annually, and our assessor confirms with her awarding body that her qualifications continue to meet the JCQ criteria. Written confirmation of this is also held in the Headmaster's office.

b) How the assessment process is administered

Assessment for SpLDs

Subject teachers, Heads of Year, parents or pupils may make a referral for a SpLD assessment. These referrals often follow end of Year examinations, but not exclusively so. The Assistant SENCo then consults with all concerned parties to determine if a full diagnostic assessment is appropriate. If so, the pupil is placed on our waiting list.

Key Stage 5 pupils, particularly Year 12 pupils who are new to the Sixth Form take priority over other Key Stages.

Key Stage 3 pupils will not be assessed by our literacy assessor until the end of Year 9, or the beginning of Year 10. This is to ensure the assessor's diagnostic report and Form 8 will be valid for both Key Stages 4 and 5.

A full diagnostic assessment includes the use of:

- Lucid Exact (reading comprehension speed and accuracy)
- WIAT 11 (reading and spelling accuracy)
- Dash (speed of handwriting)
- WRIT (underlying ability/academic potential)
- CTOPP (phonological processing speeds)
- SDMT (visual processing speeds)

Other evidence supporting the need for additional time

Pupils with a physical or sensory disability, or a long term medical or mental health condition may be eligible for additional time. Applications for additional time may be made on receipt of a letter from medical professionals e.g. Consultants, Psychiatrists or following a recommendation from CYPS. **Letters from GPs are not acceptable and an application will not be made on this basis.**

c) Recording evidence of need

Sir Thomas Rich's School ensures that all applicants for additional time have an Individual Education Plan. This details support from the School and/or external agencies, and contains strategies used in the classroom to support the individual learners. IEPs make up part of the evidence portfolio that is compiled for each pupil entitled to an additional time allowance. Other documentation includes diagnostic reports, Form 8s and copies of AAO documentation. These portfolios are held in the Headmaster's office.

d) Gathering evidence of normal way of working

All candidates who qualify for additional time for public examinations have established working patterns within school. For classroom tests the pupils are awarded additional time, and this **usual way of working** information is recorded on a central spreadsheet by the classroom teacher. These pupils also receive additional time in end of year or mock examinations. Again this information is recorded, this time by invigilators, and is held in the pupil's evidence portfolio. [AA 4.2.5]

e) Processing applications for access arrangements

Access arrangements online

Access arrangements online is a tool provided by JCQ member awarding bodies for GCSE and GCE qualifications. This tool also provides the facility to order modified papers for GCSE and GCE qualifications.

For GCSE and GCE qualifications, Access arrangements online enables centres to make a single on-line application for a candidate requiring access arrangements using any of the secure awarding body extranet sites. Access arrangements online will provide an instant response and will only allow a maximum of 26 months for any arrangement.

Further information on Access arrangements online is available from:
<http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/aao-access-arrangements-online>

[AA 8.1]

The Headmaster, who is also the SENCo, makes the online applications. Applications are in the main submitted from January to February, during the academic year of the pupil's first public examination. The evidence portfolios, as described above are held in the Headmaster's office for inspection purposes.

5. Centre-delegated access arrangements

Rest Breaks

Candidate with a physical disability or sensory impairment, a medical or mental health condition may be entitled to rest breaks. This does not require an online application. However, a SENCo file note must be held in the Headmaster's office detailing the reasons for the rest break, duration and frequency. The SENCo file note, written by either the SENCo or Assistant SENCo, must also confirm this is the **usual way of working** within the centre.

Other centre delegated access arrangements include

- Colour naming for colour blind candidates
- Low vision Aid/magnifier for visually impaired pupils
- Use of a laptop
- Separate invigilation within the centre
- Use of modified papers which are ordered online from the examining bodies.

These arrangements do not require an online application. Evidence of need does not need to be held centrally.

6. Use of word processors

Sir Thomas Rich's School will allow some pupils to use a word processor in public examinations. In order to qualify for this arrangement the following criteria must be met:

- There must be a good reason for the use of the word processor, for example illegible handwriting, or an exceptionally slow handwriting speed, or a compelling medical reason
- Laptop use must be agreed by the SENCo and the relevant Head of Year
- The pupil must commit to using a laptop for all subjects where he or she wishes to use it for public examinations. Laptop use must therefore be the pupil's **usual way of working** in class
- The pupil must utilise the laptop for classroom tests where appropriate
- Parents will need to provide their son or daughter with a laptop for use in class
- The School will provide a laptop or computing facilities for mock and public examinations.

Laptop use cannot simply be granted to a candidate because he/she prefers to type rather than write or can work faster on a keyboard, or because he/she uses a laptop at home.

7. Separate invigilation within the centre

A decision where an exam candidate may be approved separate invigilation within the centre will be based on whether the candidate

- Has a substantial and long term impairment which has an adverse effect; and
- It will be the candidate's normal way of working within the centre.

[AA 5.16]

Candidates diagnosed with a physical disability, sensory impairment, developmental condition (e.g. ASD or ADHD) or a medical or mental health condition, may be eligible for separate invigilation within the centre. The centre requires a letter from either a Consultant, Psychiatrist or a recommendation from CYPS in order to facilitate this arrangement.

Candidates with a medical or mental health condition may occasionally be eligible to sit examinations in a smaller room. In order to qualify for this arrangement there must be a thoroughly documented history of need (within School) and compelling written evidence from an outside agency.