



BRAUNTON ACADEMY

ASPIRE & ACHIEVE

Access Arrangements - Information for Parents

What is an Access Arrangement?

If a student has an identified learning need or disability that means that he or she is disadvantaged in comparison to other students of similar ability, he or she may qualify for access arrangements for public examinations. There are a number of different types of access arrangement and these are determined by the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ). The main ones are listed at the bottom of this document. The criteria that must be met for an access arrangement changes frequently and JCQ issue guidance booklets every year. You can access these online – www.jcq.org.uk for information.

Reasonable Adjustments

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

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.
(JCQ 2017)

When we will assess a student

We will assess all students at the end of year 9 or start of Year 10 in order to ascertain whether students meet the criteria and subsequently apply for access arrangements to be granted. Any application is only valid for 26 months and it is for this reason that we do not apply earlier. Access arrangements are passed on to FE colleges.



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In order for us to apply we need to provide evidence of an ongoing need and show that the access arrangement we apply for is the student's normal way of working. Therefore, throughout Years 7, 8 and 9 we may trial various strategies and conduct a number of different tests and assessments in order to make sure that we are not only meeting the criteria but that we can work out what might be the best provision for your child.

No access arrangement is formalised until the end of Year 9/start of Year 10 and any arrangement made before that time is essentially part of the assessment process. This can be quite confusing for parents as we are aware that students have sometimes been granted an access arrangement for tests at primary school. Please be aware that these do not carry forward and that the assessment process for GCSE examinations, does not occur until year 9/10. Please also be aware that having a diagnosis of a Specific Learning Difficulty, does not necessarily mean that a student will qualify for access arrangements, even if your child has regular in class support or participates in regular intervention sessions.

At the end of Year 9/Start of Year 10, our Exams Access Arrangements Co-Ordinator will write to parents/carers and inform them that the school have arranged for a Specialist Assessor to assess their child., as part of the exams access evidence process. We will then write to confirm any Access Arrangements that the candidate is eligible for.

If you have any queries, please contact Ms Young, Exams Access Arrangements Co-Ordinator at l.young@braunton.academy

Access arrangements information

"The SENCo must be satisfied that the candidate has an impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect, giving rise to persistent and significant difficulties; and the candidate is disabled within the meaning of the Equality Act 2010".

Access Arrangements and Reasonable adjustments - JCQ 2025-26



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Below is a summary of the current JCQ directives regarding access arrangements.

Supervised rest breaks:

- These must always be considered before applying for extra time.
- These will be allowed where it is the candidate's normal way of working.
- Medical conditions – rest breaks can be agreed if you have a serious medical condition, examples of this are type 1 diabetes or a sensory need. Medical evidence is required.
AD(H)D - if you have a diagnosis we will look at the recommendations and consider whether rest breaks will be helpful in exams. Evidence of your diagnosis is required.
- Evidence from CAMHs of current treatment for a condition that requires rest breaks.
However, we do not accept evidence from this service if you have been discharged from treatment.

Please Note: We are not able or allowed to provide rest breaks in advance for anxiety/worry/stress caused by taking exams. It is normal to feel stressed and worried about exams. Please feel reassured that our exam invigilators are experienced and trained to deal with students who are upset and worried on the day.

Prompter:

- These do not need to be registered on Access Arrangements Online.
- A prompter may be permitted where a candidate has a substantial and long-term adverse impairment resulting in persistent distractibility or significant difficulty in concentrating.

25% extra time:

- These must be applied for and registered on Access Arrangements Online.
- Applications will be considered based on either a Statement of Special Educational Need or an assessment carried out no earlier than Year 9 by a specialist assessor to confirm a learning difficulty.



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- Candidates with 25% extra time normally sit their examinations in the hall (unless an additional arrangement such as a reader/scribe is in place).
- Candidates must have at least two below average standardised scores of 84 or less; or one below average standardised score of 84 or less and one low average standardised score (85-89). In either scenario, the two standardised scores must relate to two different areas of speed of working as below:
 - speed of reading and speed of writing; or
 - speed of reading and cognitive processing; or
 - speed of writing and cognitive processing; or
 - two different areas of cognitive processing which have a substantial and long-term adverse effect on speed of working.

Allocation of a reader:

- These must be applied for and registered on Access Arrangements Online.
- A candidate for whom English is an additional language may use a computer reader/reader.
- For a candidate with reading difficulties, a computer reader may allow them to demonstrate their attainment more effectively and independently than would be possible with a reader. However, a computer reader must be appropriate to the candidate's needs.
- There must be sufficient time and training to ensure the candidate can use a computer reader effectively.
- A reader will only be allowed if; language and vocabulary difficulties have a substantial and long-term adverse effect on the candidates' ability to access written text or there is a substantial and long-term visual impairment which means the candidate cannot access Braille or enlarged print independently.
- Where substantial impairment is evidenced, the SENCO must be able to demonstrate the candidate would be at a substantial disadvantage when compared with other, non-disabled candidates undertaking the exam.



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Allocation of a scribe:

- These must be applied for and registered on Access Arrangements Online.
- Applications will be considered based on either a Statement of Special Educational Need or an assessment carried out no earlier than Year 9 by a specialist assessor to confirm a learning difficulty.
- If a word processor is the candidates' normal way of working within school, then it should be used within examinations.
- The use of a scribe must reflect the candidates' normal way of working within school.
- A scribe should only be used where a candidate cannot use a word processor with the spelling and grammar check disabled.
- A scribe will only be allowed where; impairment has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on the candidates' writing or a candidate cannot write, type or Braille independently, or at sufficient speed to record their answers even with extra time allowed.

Word Processor:

The following criteria details how the centre awards and allocates word processors for examinations and controlled assessments.

- The use of a laptop will only be granted to a student if it is appropriate to their needs and approved by the SENCo.
- The centre will consider candidates that would benefit from the use of a word processor. For example, a candidate with:
 - a learning difficulty which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to write legibly
 - a medical condition
 - a physical disability
 - a sensory impairment



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planning and organisational problems when writing by hand

- poor handwriting
- The use of a word processor must reflect the candidate's normal way of working within the centre.
- If the Exams Access Arrangements Co-ordinator agrees that a word processor is acceptable for a candidate to use in their examinations (as set out in Section 5.8 of the JCQ Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments), they will inform the Examinations Officer by email.
- The Examinations Officer will then add this entitlement to their Exams profile, so it is recorded for public examination seasons and controlled assessments. However, please note that the candidate may or may not wish to use the word processor on the day of the examination and may only use the word processor for certain subjects.
- The subject leader must make sure that the word processor is ready if the candidate wants to use this for their controlled assessment. However, the candidate may or may not wish to use the word processor on the day of the controlled assessment. Please note that word processors cannot be used in controlled assessments if prohibited for that unit and/or specification. The examinations officer will be able to advise and/or contact the relevant awarding body to seek clarification or permission to use a word processor in that controlled assessment unit. The Subject leader needs to contact the Examinations Officer 2 weeks before a controlled assessment is due to take place.
- The JCQ requirement and recommendation for candidates regarding the use of word processors in examinations and/or controlled assessments is that this is their **normal way of working**

This centre follows the 2025-26 JCQ rules from the Access Arrangements regulation book regarding the use of word processors, noted below:

5.8.1 Centres are allowed to provide a word processor with the spelling and grammar check facility/predictive text disabled (switched off) to a candidate where it is their normal way of working within the centre. For example, the quality of language significantly improves as a



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result of using a word processor due to problems with planning and organisation when writing by hand. (This also extends to the use of electronic braille and tablets.)

5.8.2 The use of word processors in non-examination assessment components will be considered standard practice unless prohibited by the specification.

5.8.3 It is permissible for a candidate using a word processor in an examination to type certain questions, i.e. those requiring extended writing, and handwrite shorter answers. NB Examinations which have a significant amount of writing, as well as those that place a greater demand on the need to organise thought and plan extended answers, are those where candidates will frequently need to type. Examinations which require more simplistic answers are often easier to handwrite within the answer booklet as the candidate avoids the difficulty of visually tracking between the question paper and computer screen.

5.8.4 For the regulations on the use of word processors in written examinations, please see the JCQ publication Instructions for conducting examinations (commonly known as the JCQ 'ICE' booklet):

Please note: Re: Maths - The use of a word processor in exams is for students who need to do extended writing. Unless there is a medical reason or a specific need, we do not permit the use of a word processor for Maths

Separate Invigilation: (students sit with others in a smaller room rather than in the Sports Hall) for examinations and controlled assessments.

There is an exceptionally high demand for separate invigilation and we require medical evidence of need from a consultant or specialist. We cannot accept a letter from GPs. This must be dated within one year of the exam to be taken. Unless it is for a serious, acute and/or chronic medical or psychological condition, we cannot provide Separate Invigilation.



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General anxiety, low mood, stress indicators or other common conditions or factors will generally not provide adequate evidence for separate invigilation.

Individual Invigilation

Individual Invigilation can only be accommodated in highly exceptional circumstances. We require evidence of need from a consultant or specialist which provides details of the student's condition and states exactly why Individual Invigilation is necessary. Following submission of this evidence, the SENCo and Examinations Officer will make a final decision and communicate this back to the applicant and parents/carers.

Temporary Access Arrangements and applications for **special consideration** can also be made in certain situations. These arrangements can be processed as the need arises. An example could be, a Year 11 pupil has fallen off their bike and broken the wrist of her writing hand. In such a case, the school would look at the most appropriate and reasonable adjustment to make to ensure that the pupil can access the exam but is not given an unfair advantage. As with all applications, the school is required to ensure that the appropriate documentation is held on file to support any arrangement made.

In line with JCQ regulations, Braunton Academy will make all decisions with regard to access arrangements based upon whether the candidate has a **substantial and long term impairment** which has an adverse effect, in conjunction with the access arrangement being the candidate's **normal way of working** in lessons – demonstrating the involvement of the teaching staff in determining the need for the access arrangement.

Appropriate evidence of need will be available at Braunton Academy for inspection. A portfolio of 'evidence of need' will be put together by the SEND team to support any application for access arrangements; this will include teacher feedback and evidence of a pupil's work.



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Identifying the need for access arrangements within Braunton Academy

Students who may qualify for formal access arrangements during KS4 are identified during KS3. At this stage needs are identified, rather than formally assessed. Adjustments are made by using Ordinarily Available Provisions (OAIP) within lessons, according to need to enable a student to access their learning and make progress.

All staff are involved in monitoring the adjustments.

Formal assessments for Access Arrangements take place during Year 10

Although they may have received EAA at KS2, it does not necessarily mean that they automatically receive it at KS4 exams because their needs may have changed. For example, a student who had a reader at 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.

Assessment:

- During the transition process from Year 6 into Year 7 the transition team will also gather relevant information from feeder schools regarding a student's needs.
- Any student with scores which indicate a substantial impairment will be considered for access arrangements. The most recent tests are binding and determine any subsequent Access arrangements.
- Specialist assessments for access arrangements will be carried out at Braunton Academy by an appropriately qualified independent assessor. In line with JCQ guidance, private reports may be taken into consideration however these **will not** form the basis of any decisions about Access Arrangements without evidence of need in the academy and from this evidence of Normal Ways of Working in lessons. Where evidence of need and normal ways



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of working demonstrate that the student may be entitled to Access Arrangements, they will still be tested by the independent assessor employed by the academy.

- At Braunton Academy examination officers, specialist assessors, primary and secondary SENCos and teaching staff all work together to ensure that appropriate access arrangements are put in place for tests and examinations.
- If a student chooses continually not to use the agreed access arrangements either because their needs change or they do not feel it aids their learning or achievement, then access arrangements will be removed, and parents/carers informed.
- If the SEND team in school and/or specialist assessor considers that access arrangements cease to be the student's '**normal way of working**', they reserve the right to withdraw the permission, providing written confirmation to parents/carers.

Procedures for processing an application

In all cases, the following steps will be followed to ensure that the required evidence is collated, and the correct application procedure followed:

1. Teachers will complete a '**Normal way of working**' questionnaire.
2. Exam Access Arrangement Co-ordinator will look at results of recent in-house literacy assessments.
3. A member of SEND team or Exam Access Arrangement Co-ordinator will meet with the student to discuss their needs.
4. The SEND team and Exam Access Arrangement Co-ordinator will collate the information and decide whether or not to assess and which areas of assessment are required.
5. The SENDCo or Exam Access Arrangement Co-ordinator will complete Part 1 of the JCQ Form 8.
6. Assessments will take place with the external Specialist Assessor employed by Braunton Academy
7. The assessor will assess the student and complete, sign and date Part 2 of Form 8.



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8. Part 3 of Form 8, making recommendations for access arrangements, must be completed by the SENCO following the assessment.
9. The student will be informed that EAA will be applied for online
10. The SENDCo will make an application for access arrangements to the JCQ through Access Arrangements Online. Applications must be processed and approved no later than the JCQ published deadline. Late applications are only permitted in very specific circumstances and may be subject to scrutiny.
11. The student, parents/carers, teachers and the Examinations Officer will be notified of the outcome.
12. Evidence will be kept on file for inspection by the JCQ inspector, including the original copy of Form 8, the signed Data Protection Notice, confirmation of approval of the access arrangement and the portfolio of evidence of need/**normal way of working**. Evidence must be available on request.

Evidence needed to apply for EAA

- There are a number of pieces of evidence that can be used to apply for Exam Access Arrangements to the JCQ:
- Form 8 reports from the specialist assessor carrying out EAA assessments/tests.
- Previous EAA from another school (Form 8 and evidence of the Assessor's qualifications).
- Subject teachers- examples of work as appropriate and support given in class or evidence from tests or mock exams.
- Results from in-house literacy tests such as reading age, writing tests.
- Medical reports outlining significant medical needs and disability (hospital consultant).

How do staff and parents know whether a student has access arrangements?

When a need for Access Arrangements has been identified, the relevant parties are informed:



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- Parents/carers in writing – the letter outlines the type of arrangements that have been awarded.
- Students are informed verbally that an application for EAA will be made online.
- Access Arrangement list is made available to the Exams Officer.
- A list of those who receive Access Arrangements is made available to all staff. This information will be placed on the academy's relevant shared drives.

Use of externally commissioned reports

A parent/carer may choose to have their child assessed by a private educational psychologist or private dyslexia assessor. Where parents/carers do commission diagnostic assessments for their child the organisation or individual performing the assessment must have prior contact with the academy to gather background information on the student before going ahead with the assessment. A privately commissioned assessment carried out without prior consultation with the centre cannot be used to support the access arrangements process.

Private reports cost a significant amount of money. This means that parents/carers who are unable to obtain a private report due to their financial circumstances are put at a disadvantage. As an exam centre Braunton Academy must be consistent in its decisions and ensure that **no student is either given an unfair advantage or disadvantaged by any arrangements put in place**. Therefore, when parents/carers submit such reports to Braunton Academy, we will look for evidence of a history of need and the student's **normal way of working**. Such privately commissioned reports can sometimes be in conflict with what Braunton Academy's Specialist Assessor recommends. If the academy's diagnostic tests contradict privately commissioned reports, then the academy's tests and assessments **will** take precedence and will inform Exam Access Arrangement decisions and no further negotiation regarding this matter will take place with the parent/carer.



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Access Arrangements Timeline

Autumn term

Year 7

As previously stated, information is gathered from primary transition and the enrolment form. The academy begins collecting evidence of the student's normal way of working.

Year 7 All students sit the NGRT reading assessment.

Year 10 Completion of any outstanding testing for Access Arrangements. Applications to the JCQ made and finalised arrangements shared with relevant students, their parents/carers and staff. These remain in place for the remainder of KS4.

Year 11 mock examinations. Access Arrangements are implemented as confirmed in Year 10.

Further evidence of need collected during this exam period to supplement the application made.

Spring term

Year 11 core mock examinations. Access Arrangements are implemented as confirmed in Year 10. Further evidence of need collected during this exam period to supplement the application made. During mock examinations a form is attached to a student's assessment indicating whether EAA was needed.



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Summer term

Year 6 – collection of information from primary feeder schools and parents/carers of children due to transition to Braunton Academy recorded on the transition document.

Years 7 – 10 Students complete assessments/exams in all subjects. Evidence of need, including rooming and prompts, and the impact of this collected as part of the process.

Year 9 Access Arrangements Testing for students identified as potentially qualifying for arrangements at KS4.

Year 11 GCSE exams. Access Arrangements in place as per individual student entitlement.