

Process for Exam Access Arrangements

At Winchcombe School we aim to be as transparent as possible about how we award exam access arrangements, in line with the Joint Council for Qualifications' (JCQ) regulations, which can be viewed [here](#) . Every year, these guidelines are updated and criteria for awarding access arrangements modified. This document sets out our process in detail, but please look at the Exam Access Flowcharts for a simplified version.

Access arrangements that are available to students are as follows:

- Supervised rest breaks
- Extra time (up to 25%, between 25% and 50% or over 50%)
- Computer reader/reader
- Read aloud or examination reading pen
- Scribe/speech recognition software
- Word processor
- Braille transcript
- Prompter
- Language modifier
- Live Speaker for pre-recorded examination components
- Communication professional (eg sign language)
- Practical assistant
- Alternative site for the conduct of examinations (eg a hospital)
- Reasonable adjustments such as the use of colour naming for colour blind students.
- Bilingual translations dictionaries (with 10% extra time)
- Modified papers
- Separate invigilation within the school

The most common access arrangements at Winchcombe School are supervised rest breaks and up to 25% extra time.

Under Normal Circumstances:

- Students are identified via the SEN Register during KS3 and highlighted to teachers so they are aware and can allow appropriate access arrangements if needed. Not being on the SEN register does not exclude a student from access arrangements and teachers are able to use their professional judgement to allow, for example, some extra time. Teachers would inform the SEN Department and such students would be added to the list for further consideration.
- Suggested Access Arrangements are detailed on student profiles but may change with time, especially as students develop and progress.
- Teachers are asked to facilitate access arrangements (especially extra time) for all classroom tests and assessments, if practical, to establish normal way of working. Teaching Partners often assist with this. It is not always possible to allow extra time in the normal lesson time so students may be offered it during the following lesson or, if that is not possible, teachers will take it into consideration when considering their evidence.
- During Year 9, questionnaires are sent out to all teachers requesting evidence.
- **For extra time**, Pictures of Need are written in the official Form 8 from JCQ, allowing our in-house assessor to test students according to their need and normal way of working at the end of Year 9/start of Year 10. These assessments can measure processing, reading and writing speeds, in line with JCQ requirements. Students with EHCPs or certain medical diagnoses do not need to be assessed but we still need to demonstrate need and normal way of working. For medical diagnoses cases, we must have on file a formal confirmation from, for example, a hospital consultant. New for 2021-22, we are now required to *exhaust* the option of Supervised Rest Breaks before making an application for extra time, especially for students with medical conditions, physical disabilities or psychological conditions.
- **For a computer reader/reader**, JCQ requires us to produce a cover note confirming the nature of the candidate's impairment and that this is the normal way of working within the centre. Candidates are not allowed a reader for exams (or sections of exams) that assess reading, notably English Language. An alternative option is an Exam Reading Pen, which is useful for reading single words and is allowed in the English Language exam.
- **For a scribe** to be awarded, we must confirm that the candidate is not able to use a word processor/laptop, that the candidate has an impairment that has a substantial and long term adverse effect on his/her writing and that it is normal way of working within the centre. JCQ prefer students to use a word processor to encourage independent working and to help candidates to gain marks for spelling, punctuation and grammar. Students using a scribe will lose valuable marks unless they dictate words letter by letter.
- The formal application is made on-line. If assessment scores are low enough for extra time and/or we have all the evidence we need, the decision is automatic and immediate. If not, we can make an appeal directly to the exam boards which takes a couple of weeks.

For Late Considerations:

It is sometimes the case that concerns are raised about a student late in year 10 or even year 11. It may be, for example, that the student has never been on the SEN register but is falling significantly behind their GCSE targets despite having a good work ethic and parents are understandably concerned about final grades. In school, we have a screening tool which can indicate the probability of dyslexia, the most common issue in this scenario. However, parents may wish to undertake a private assessment to highlight more detailed problems and we are able to provide a list of local, qualified assessors.

As soon as a concern is raised, we follow the following process:

- Teachers are asked to complete questionnaires for evidence.
- Extra time, etc are trialled in mock exams and evidence slips attached to papers for teachers to comment.
- If enough evidence exists, along with evidence from external assessors, a picture of need is drawn up on Form 8, students assessed by our in house assessor and the application made as above.
- Allowing and using extra time in Mock exams is enough to demonstrate normal way of working.

Things worth noting:

- We can only use assessments from external assessors to apply for extra time without assessing a student ourselves, if we have an *established working relationship* with them. Providing details of external assessors to parents does not constitute a “working relationship” in this context.
- Form 8s must be completed in the correct order. An assessment for exam access can only be carried out after Section 1 (picture of need) has been completed following gathering of evidence. So, if we were to use an assessment from a private assessor, we must first establish a working relationship and provide, at least, a skeleton picture of need on the Form 8.
- As we have a fully qualified in-house assessor, it is highly unlikely we would use an external assessor for the purpose of exam access.
- Every year we are visited by the Exams Inspector who will want to look at our Exam Access files. If malpractice is suspected we would be subject to a more detailed inspection and, at worst, lose our status as an exams centre. Examples of malpractice include:
 - Falsifying assessment scores
 - Using assessments from private assessors with whom we do not have a working relationship
 - Assessing students before Section 1 of Form 8 is completed

From 2021 onwards

- It is our intention to use an online dyslexia screening tool as part of our induction process for all Year 7 and in-year admission students.
- This will identify students with a moderate or high probability of dyslexia, whose parents will be contacted with the suggestion they may like to commission a private, formal assessment to diagnose dyslexia and highlight specific difficulties.
- We can provide a list of local assessors, although parents should be aware that we do not have an *established working relationship* with these professionals and that, regardless of the diagnosis, we would still need to carry out our normal procedures of gathering evidence, establishing normal way of working and in-house assessment as set out above.
- A private assessor's report is useful for highlighting difficulties and can be used as part of our evidence of need, but does not necessarily guarantee a student will be awarded extra time although this would be highly unusual.

Further Information

- Please contact sen@winchcombeschool.co.uk if you have any questions about exam access.



- Further details on the JCQ regulations can be found [here](#) .



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