

Exam Access Arrangement Policy

Author	Head of Additional Learning Support
Date	February 2023
Person Responsible	Vice Principal Curriculum
Approval/ review body	SLT
Frequency of Review*	36 months

*Policies will be reviewed outside of the review cycle where required

Date	Reviewer	Reason for Review
Feb 23	Head of ALS	Policy re-written

Contents

1. Purpose and Scope of this Policy	2
2. Exam Access Arrangements.....	2
3. Key Principles	2
4. Exam Access Arrangement Process	3
4.1 Student must	3
4.2 Additional Learning Support and Exams Responsibilities.....	4
4.3 Curriculum Staff Responsibilities	5
4.4 Assessment Process	5
5. Centre Delegated Access Arrangements.....	6
6. Awarding Body Approved Access Arrangements	7
7. Examples of specific needs and available access arrangements	7
7.1 Word processor Statement.....	7
7.2 Assistive technology	8
7.3 Small Room and Separate Invigilation	8
8. Temporary arrangements	9
9. Retention of Evidence.....	10
10. Useful Links	10

Related Policies:

Additional Learning Support policy
Equality and Diversity policy
Admission Policy
Data Protection Policy

1. Purpose and Scope of this Policy

This policy provides clarity to students, parents/carers and staff in relation to the Exam Access Arrangements (“EAA”) at North Kent College (“the College”) which incorporates Hadlow College. EAA are informed and guided by the Joint Council for Qualifications (“JCQ”) and other Awarding Bodies. The scope of this policy relates specifically to Further Education learners, across all its campuses/sites, including Apprentices.

2. Exam Access Arrangements

North Kent College’s policy for access arrangements in examinations is determined by the JCQ which regulates the exam access arrangements available and the way these are applied to examinations which are conducted for the Awarding Bodies. Exam access arrangements must reflect a student’s normal way of working.

Exam access arrangements allow students with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (“SEND”), medical conditions, disabilities or temporary injuries to access exams and assessments. In this way, the College acts as an agent of the Awarding Bodies to comply with the duty of the Equality Act 2010 to make “reasonable adjustments”.

A reasonable adjustment may be unique to an individual and may not be included in the list of available access arrangements included in this policy.

An adjustment may not be considered reasonable if it involves unreasonable costs, time frames, or affects the rigor and security of the assessment. *The College is bound by immovable deadlines for JCQ and the organisation/administration of examinations within the College.*

The Additional Learning Support and Exams teams work with all departments in the College to ensure a whole College approach, embracing equality and diversity to provide an equal opportunity for all its learners.

3. Key Principles

The College will endeavour to follow this policy to apply for and implement EAAs for eligible students, however these key principles will ordinarily apply:

- 3.1 The College is required to review the exam access arrangements requested by learners when considering whether continue to be required at College. The Team will review learner requests for EAAs based on the JCQ guidance, the history of need, evidence and history provided by the SENCO or other relevant member of staff from their previous educational setting.
- 3.2 Students must declare the requirements for EAAs at interview and at enrolment, or by the October half term or within four weeks of enrolling.
- 3.3 Although evidence for EAAs can roll over from school or a previous educational provider not all EAAs automatically carry over and the

College cannot guarantee that a student will continue to receive the same arrangements.

- 3.4 To receive EAAs students must declare previous EAAs, so evidence can be rolled over where applicable, meet with College assessors and, where required, undertake a formal assessment, have a current Education Health and Care Plan (“EHCP”), provide appropriate medical evidence or, in some cases, via clear evidence of observed need reflected in “normal way of working” in their learning.
- 3.5 Evidence must be obtained that EAAs represent a student’s normal way of working and are applied within the classroom and not just in examinations and / or assessments.
- 3.6 If students do not make use of their EAAs during assessments and examinations, the College may withdraw the provision of them.

4. Exam Access Arrangement Process

4.1 Student must

Declare their need for exam access arrangements by the October half term or within four weeks of enrolling and, where requested, provide the Additional Learning Support team by the October half term or within four weeks of enrolling, with all relevant information and evidence of their specific need to enable them to make the appropriate assessment and recommendations for the learner. This evidence may include:

- 4.1.1 Information about EAAs from their school or previous educational provider.
- 4.1.2 Evidence of need, this will vary depending on the student’s specific learning difference, disability, or medical condition:
 - 4.1.2.1 Learning difficulties: Students should talk to their school or previous educational provider and give permission for them to provide their Form 8 and details of their exam access arrangements.
 - 4.1.2.2 Physical, sensory, mental health or neurodevelopmental impairment: Students should provide their diagnosis letter/report or evidence from a medical professional or specialist.
 - 4.1.2.3 EHCP: Students should check the College has a copy of the plan; learners should ask their school or previous educational provider for details of their exam access arrangements.
- 4.1.3 Students will need to inform the College if anything changes (e.g. new diagnosis of specific need or deterioration of condition) – this may have an impact on the recommended exam access arrangements.

- 4.1.4 Attend exam access arrangement assessment appointments and sign the required Data Protection consent forms. In the event of students not attending or missing appointments, a further appointment will only be arranged in exceptional circumstances (for example, bereavement or medical emergency) as agreed by the Head of Additional Learning Support. Any student will only be offered a maximum of two opportunities to re-arrange an appointment.
- 4.1.5 Make reasonable use of allocated exam access arrangements to allow them to follow through to subsequent exams and assessments

If students do not provide the evidence required by the October half term or within four weeks of enrolling, or if the necessary assessment appointment is missed, it will result in exam access arrangements not being agreed or not being in place in time for the exams.

4.2 Additional Learning Support and Exams Responsibilities

- 4.2.1 Comply with the current regulations as set out by JCQ Regulations, *Access Arrangements, Reasonable Adjustments and Special Consideration*, or other Awarding Bodies as required.
- 4.2.2 Co-ordinate the exam access arrangements process within the College (see assessment process below).
- 4.2.3 Complete and submit relevant documentation required by JCQ Regulations and appropriate Examination Boards by the set College Internal Deadlines and/or JCQ/Awarding Body External Deadlines in order to allow the Exam Office to prepare for the exams.
- 4.2.4 Explain and agree exam access arrangement recommendations with the learner and inform staff via appropriate College systems.
- 4.2.5 Comply with I Data Protection Regulations to ensure protection of learners' personal data.
- 4.2.6 Arrange an appointment as required with a member of the Additional Learning Support team to review exam access arrangements.
- 4.2.7 Respond to queries regarding exam access arrangements within 10 working days. Queries can be sent to the Additional Learning Support team at the relevant campus:

Dartford and Gravesend:	alsdg@northkent.ac.uk
Tonbridge:	alstonbridge@northkent.ac.uk
Hadlow:	alshadlow@northkent.ac.uk

4.3 Curriculum Staff Responsibilities

- 4.3.1 Course leaders, subject tutors and/or English and Maths tutors will provide the differentiations and adjustments required within the learning environment to support identified learning need.
- 4.3.2 Course leaders, subject tutors and/or English and Maths tutors will need to complete a normal way of working form (the differentiations in place to support learning).
- 4.3.3 Course leaders, subject tutors and/or English and Maths tutors will provide the dates of the students' first assessment/examination.
- 4.3.4 Where a course leader, subject tutor and/or English and maths tutor identifies a previously undiagnosed learning support need, through observation or assessment of written work, they will inform the Additional Learning Support team and provide supporting evidence to inform any future EAA assessment.
- 4.3.5 A report will be available for course leaders, subject tutors and/or English and Maths tutors (as required) to confirm the agreed and approved exam access arrangements for their students.

4.4 Assessment Process

At interview, students will be asked about any specific needs, including learning differences, disabilities and / or medical conditions and to confirm whether exam access arrangements were provided at their school or previous education provider.

College joining instructions, sent out prior to enrolment, asks students to bring in EAA evidence at enrolment.

At enrolment students will complete a short questionnaire confirming the exam access arrangement they had at school or previous education provider. Students will need to provide appropriate evidence by the October half term or within four weeks of enrolling, evidence can include; Form 8, diagnosis letter/report or evidence from a medical professional or specialist.

- 4.4.1 If a learning differences, disabilities and / or medical conditions is declared, appropriate evidence will be requested (see students' responsibilities); Information can be sent electronically to the Additional Learning Support team.
- 4.4.2 If a current EHCP is in place students will be asked to provide evidence from their previous school or education provider confirming the exam access arrangements that were applied.

Once the appropriate evidence has been received it will be reviewed and either processed so that exam access arrangements can be

applied for or, an appointment made to undertake further assessments.

If the required evidence is not received by the October half term or within four weeks of enrolling, the College may not be able to process any exam access arrangements request in time for exams, except in extenuating circumstances (for example bereavement or medical emergency).

The College will endeavour to process exam access arrangement requests at the earliest opportunity, based on the expected date of a student's first assessment or examination.

5. Centre Delegated Access Arrangements

Exam access arrangements fall into two categories, Centre Delegated arrangements and Awarding Body approved arrangements.

Organisations are able to implement a range of EAAs without application to the JCQ / Awarding Body approval for the arrangements however the College must be satisfied that:

- 5.1 The student has, or presents as having, an impairment which has a substantial and long-term effect, giving rise to persistent and significant difficulties and the candidate is, or is likely to be, disabled within the meaning of the Equality Act. This must be evidenced by the student holding a current EHCP, medical evidence of disability, evidence or history of learning difficulties or through a significant history and / or current and compelling observed difficulties in learning reflected by reasonable adjustments and normal way of working. In all cases this arrangement must reflect the student's normal way of working.

The student has a need on a temporary basis as a consequence of a temporary injury. This must be evidenced by medical evidence in the form of a letter from a GP or treatment centre.

5.2 Centre approved arrangements can include:

- 5.2.1 Supervised rest breaks;
- 5.2.2 Prompter;
- 5.2.3 Fidget items;
- 5.2.4 Non-electronic ear defenders/ear plugs;
- 5.2.5 Coloured overlay;
- 5.2.6 Use of a word processor;
- 5.2.7 Reading Pen; and/or
- 5.2.8 Separate Invigilation.

6. Awarding Body Approved Access Arrangements

This list is not exhaustive. All exam access arrangements are assessed based on the needs of the individual learner, their normal way of working, supporting evidence and what is considered reasonable by the College.

- 6.1 Extra time;
- 6.2 Computer reader/reader;
- 6.3 Scribe/speech recognition technology;
- 6.4 Practical assistant; and/or
- 6.5 Modified paper.

7. Examples of specific needs and available access arrangements

Some candidates with specific needs are likely to require a range of provision. This list is not exhaustive. All exam access arrangements are assessed based on the needs of the individual learner, their normal way of working, supporting evidence and what is considered reasonable by the College.

Examples of specific need	Examples of available access arrangements
Cognition and learning Learning difficulties or specific learning difficulties (such as Dyscalculia and Dyslexia)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Word processor• Prompter• Coloured overlays• Coloured/enlarged papers• Communication professional• Modified papers• Alternative seating arrangements• Separate invigilation
Communication and interaction Autistic Spectrum Disorder, Speech, Language and Communication Needs	
Sensory and Physical Hearing Impairment ("HI"), Vision Impairment, Multi-Sensory Impairment, Physical Disability	
Social, Emotional and Mental Health Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder Mental Health Conditions	

7.1 Word processor Statement

Students with approved access to word processors are allowed to do so in order to remove barriers for disabled candidates which prevent them from being placed at a substantial disadvantage as a consequence of persistent and significant difficulties.

Students can only be granted the use of a word processor if it is appropriate to their needs (for example, poor/illegible handwriting; the quality of

language significantly improves because of using a word processor). The use of a word processor must reflect the student's normal way of working within the College.

The use of a word processor is requested either as part of a JCQ or an application from tutors providing reasoning and evidence as to why use of a computer is appropriate for the student and includes evidence that this is their normal way of working.

A student will not be granted the use of a word processor just because they prefer to type rather than write or can work faster on a keyboard or because they use a laptop at home.

The use of a word processor will not be granted if it affects the security or integrity of the examination.

7.2 Assistive technology

The JCQ Regulations allows assistive technology to be used in examinations. For example:

- 7.2.1 Computer reader software;
- 7.2.2 Speech recognition technology; and/or
- 7.2.3 Exam reading pen

Assistive technology can only be used if it is compatible with the Awarding Body specifications and available within the College resources. The use of assistive technology should reflect a learner's specific need and be their normal way of working.

7.3 Small Room and Separate Invigilation

The College will consider accommodating a small group; up to 30 students, in a classroom where it can be evidenced that sitting an exam in a large room would place a candidate at significant disadvantage to their peers and that this is their normal way of working, and where the exam access arrangement assessment indicates that:

- 7.3.1 Candidates need exam access arrangements, which would NOT disturb others.
- 7.3.2 Candidates need or use strategies, which would NOT disturb others.
- 7.3.3 Candidates have a medical condition NOT needing privacy.
- 7.3.4 Candidates have a long-term mental health condition – with supporting evidence from a Consultant or Specialist.
- 7.3.5 Candidates have a physical condition – either temporary or permanent NOT needing privacy.

A separate room may be recommended where it can be evidenced that a small group provision would put the student at a 'substantial disadvantage' to other candidates, and where this is their normal way of working and where the EAA assessment indicates that:

A separate room (learner and invigilator in a room entirely separate from other learners) can be recommended for students in the following circumstances:

- 7.3.6 Exam access arrangements which would disturb other candidates e.g. read aloud;
- 7.3.7 Assistance dog or other aid/device, which would disturb other candidates;
- 7.3.8 Medical condition needing privacy – with supporting evidence from a Consultant or Specialist;
- 7.3.9 Mental health condition – with supporting evidence from a Consultant or Specialist; and/or
- 7.3.10 Physical condition – either temporary or permanent needing privacy.

In order to provide a separate room, evidence is required from the learner.

- 7.3.11 Evidence can be in the form of:
- 7.3.12 History of provision at a previous Examination Centre e.g. school.
- 7.3.13 Medical recommendation from a Consultant or Specialist.
- 7.3.14 Mental health recommendation from a Consultant or Specialist.
- 7.3.15 EHCP recommendation.

Nervousness, low level anxiety or being worried about examinations is not sufficient grounds for separate invigilation.

8. Temporary arrangements

It may happen that a learner has a temporary illness or injury at the time of the examination. In this situation, the learner must supply medical evidence of their condition. Whilst the College will endeavour to put suitable adjustments in place, this may not be possible if there is insufficient time or evidence to organise the exam access arrangements prior to the exam. In the event that arrangements cannot be applied a learner might consider submitting a Special Consideration form at the time of the examination / assessment.

9. Retention of Evidence

Colleges are regularly inspected to ensure they have followed JCQ Regulations; the College is required to hold evidence in its files that can be inspected at short notice. For this reason, the College will keep copies of evidence of need, Form 8, centre notes, letters from outside agencies, record of access arrangements used, together with a data protection form signed by the learner. All information and data, whether electronic or paper based, will be stored in accordance with the College's Data Protection policy.

10. Useful Links

JCQ Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments: [AA regs 22-23 FINAL.pdf \(jcq.org.uk\)](#)

Understanding the requirements for Separate Invigilation: [Understanding the requirements for separate invigilation - JCQ Joint Council for Qualifications](#)