Enfield County School for Girls

Examination Access Arrangements Policy:

Key information for parents/carers, students and teachers

September 2026

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The Examination Access Arrangements Policy explains actions taken to ensure inclusion throughout the school for all students with learning needs, including those with formally diagnosed Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND).

Introduction:

1.1. Enfield County School for Girls is committed to ensuring that all of our students receive the support they need and are eligible for. Examination Access Arrangements (EAA) are to ensure that students who are disabled within the meaning of The Equality Act 2010 are able to access examinations as far as is possible. This means that EAA work to remove barriers to students showing their knowledge and ability without compromising the integrity of the examination. Enfield County School for Girls wants to ensure that we are levelling the playing field for those that are disadvantaged, not advantaging students unfairly. EAA are not designed to enable students to achieve higher grades.

Definitions:

Disability: Section 6 of the Equality Act 2010 defines disability as a 'physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long term adverse effect on someone's ability to carry out normal day to day activities'.

Factors that might reasonably be expected to have a substantial adverse effect on day to day activities include:

- Persistent and significant difficulty in reading and understanding written material where this is in the person's native language, for example because of learning difficulty or a sensory or multi-sensory impairment;
- Persistent distractibility or difficulty concentrating;
- Difficulty understanding or following simple verbal instructions;
- Physical impairment – for example, difficulty operating a computer because of physical restrictions in using a keyboard.

Factors that might reasonably be expected not to have a substantial adverse effect include:

- Minor problems with writing or spelling;
- Inability to read very small or indistinct print without the aid of a magnifying glass;
- Inability to converse orally in a language which is not the speaker's native spoken language (JCQ definitions).

Special Educational Needs: A candidate has 'special educational needs' as defined in the "SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years" if they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for them.

The Equality Act 2010 definition of disability includes substantial and long-term sensory impairment such as those affecting sight or hearing, mental health difficulties and long-term health conditions such as asthma, diabetes, epilepsy and cancer. Children and young people with such conditions do not necessarily have SEN, but there is a significant overlap between disabled children and young people, and those with SEN.

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1. What are Access Arrangements?

1.2. Access arrangements allow students to demonstrate their skills, knowledge and understanding without changing the demands of the assessment. This is to meet the particular needs of a candidate without affecting the integrity of the assessment. Access arrangements are the principal way in which awarding bodies comply with the duty under the Equality Act 2010 to make 'reasonable adjustments'.

1.3. Enfield County School for Girls applies for access arrangements following clear rules set out in the most recent Joint Council for Qualifications guidelines booklet 'Adjustments for candidates with disabilities and learning difficulties'. The JCQ guidelines state what reasonable adjustments can be made and are always the first reference point in determining the appropriate access arrangement for a student. These are updated every year on 1st September and run through until 31st August. It is important to abide by these regulations as "failure to comply… has the potential to constitute malpractice which may impact on the candidate's result(s)".

1.4. Schools are regularly inspected to make sure they are following the JCQ regulations – usually every summer during the examination season. The consequences of malpractice can be severe. These may include disqualification for the student from one or more examinations, disqualification for a whole cohort of students, or even the centre being closed down for up to 5 years. Examples of malpractice include:

- Students being granted EAA which are not their normal way of working
- EAA being "suddenly" granted before examinations
- A student having no history of need or provision
- EAA being granted without sufficient evidence
- Students not using their EAA in a mock examination and still being allowed it in the public examinations

What evidence is needed to apply for EAA?

1.5. Examination access arrangements are driven by a student's normal way of working in school. To meet JCQ regulations, the access arrangements that are put in place must reflect the support given to the candidate in the centre e.g.:

- In the classroom, or
- Working in small groups for reading and or writing, or
- Literacy support lessons, or
- Literacy intervention strategies and, or
- In internal school tests and mock examinations. (JCQ 4.2.5)

Therefore, we assess students on the basis of their normal way of working in school as required by the JCQ regulations; for example, with the help of someone reading to them as they are unable to read independently. If their normal way of working in school (not at home) is the same as the majority of students then they will not be eligible for EAA and will not be assessed as an assessment result alone is not sufficient to award EAA.

1.6 Educational psychologist reports can only be used to support our findings and cannot drive the EAA process as it is driven by a student's normal way of working in school and the evidence collected in school.

Private Educational Psychologist reports are expensive, and therefore you should contact the school if you are considering arranging for an Educational Psychologist assessment as this may not be necessary and it will not gain EAA.

1.7 For candidates with a medical condition, it is the SENDCo along with the Examinations Officer who must determine the appropriateness and reasonableness of access arrangement(s) to be awarded, and not a GP or similar. In order to assess the need for EAA, we need evidence of a formal diagnosis from a clinical paediatrician or a hospital consultant to supplement our centre based evidence. In line with JCQ regulations, a doctor's note is not sufficient to support evidence of a need for EAA.

2. Our EAA process:

2.1. We start the assessment process as early as possible in Year 10 and, by this point, the student's normal way of working in school is well established.

2.2. We do not normally put any EAA in place in KS3 examinations unless the student's normal way of working is considered irrefutable and we are very confident that they will certainly be awarded EAA at GCSE. (For example, student whose EHCP documentation has already ascertained that they need additional processing time). In addition, evidence of how students perform in examinations without support can assist in demonstrating the need for support. KS3 examinations are an opportunity for us to gather this evidence. In the best interests of the students, we must ensure students do not become used to EAA which they may not be eligible for at GCSE.

2.3. All teachers are consulted about which students need EAA due to their normal way of working in their lessons.

2.4. Students whose normal way of working indicates they may be eligible for EAA are tested by a suitably qualified, external assessor in Year 10 or in the Autumn term of Year 11. These assessments are standardised by age so that the results of a 14 year-old and 25 year-old are directly comparable. There is therefore no need to retest and we do not retest. Initial screeners for potential exams access arrangements are being introduced for all Year 9 students from July 2026.

2.5. Evidence for EAA includes results of assessments administered by the external (and independent) EAA assessor in line with JCQ regulations, evidence from teachers (i.e., usual way of working over time), and evidence from exercise books, tests and examinations.

2.6. Please be aware that EAAs can only be discussed with the SENDCo or Exams Officer. Other teachers are not able to comment on eligibility of students for EAA and, therefore, cannot discuss EAA eligibility with students or parents. Any concerns shared with teachers will be reported to the SENDCo and Exams Officer.

2.7. The EAA process is driven by a student's normal way of working in school and the support which they are eligible for and normally receive in school. Sometimes we may require additional information, such as letters of diagnosis from hospital consultants, and we will then contact you to seek that information.

However, it is not a process of consultation or negotiation with home but one where we apply strict regulations from the JCQ to ensure the correct outcome. Final decisions regarding access arrangements are made by the school, and inclusion on our SEND register does not automatically mean an access arrangement will be awarded. Hence we will inform you of the outcome once the EAA assessment and investigation process is complete.

2.8 Teachers should inform their Curriculum Leader, the Progress and Achievement Leader and the SENDCo early in the academic year of any students they have concerns about **by at least 16 weeks before the exam**.

3. Informing parents of the results of the Year 10 EAA assessments:

3.1. We share the outcomes of the assessments and evidence with parents in a letter informing them of whether a student who has been assessed is eligible for EAA and, if so, which EAA. We do not share actual assessments as these are kept for the JCQ inspector and only form part of the decision and would not be useful in isolation.

3.2. All parents of students who have been assessed are informed of the final outcome. Due to the time-consuming nature of the assessments, evidence gathering and application process, the letter should be expected before the end-of-Autumn-term Year 11 pre-public examinations. Please retain this letter for information as it will apply throughout the GCSE period.

3.3. Please be aware that the assessment programme is very rigorous and time-consuming. A great deal of work goes into it before parents are informed of the final outcome which has been agreed by JCQ. Whilst we appreciate that all parents want the best for their children, it must be remembered that EAA are to level the playing field for students with disabilities and not to advantage students. For example, all students would do better with extra time but part of the purpose of examinations is to see what can be done under timed conditions. We try to give as much information as possible in the letter informing parents of the outcome.

4. Types of Exams Access Arrangements:

4.1 These will only be awarded if there is significant evidence (this is evidence that is collected by school over a sustained period of time, in most cases the collection of evidence takes place over the course of a full key stage) that this the normal way of working:

- Supervised rest breaks
- Extra Time
- Computer reader
- Read aloud and/or the use of an examination reading pen
- Scribe/Speech recognition technology
- Word processor
- Transcript
- Prompter
- Live speaker for pre-recorded examination components
- Sign Language Interpreter

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- Practical assistant
- Alternative room for the conduct of examinations
- Other arrangements for candidates with disabilities
- Exemptions
- Bilingual translation dictionaries

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Access arrangement	Why apply for this?	What to include on Evidence of Need referral form	Evidence required by exam board
Coloured overlay	• Learner experiences visual disturbance and uses an overlay in class	• Evidence of Need form not necessary	• No further evidence required • Learner responsible for bringing overlay to exam (spares can be borrowed from SEN room in emergencies)
Prompter	• Learning Difficulty or medical condition that leads to lack of focus, easy distraction or poor time estimation that will lead to exam performance being seriously impaired	• Describe the nature of the problem, its impact in class and what measures are in place to support in class	• Evidence of Need form • Any formal assessment or medical notes that are available • In class documentation
Separate invigilation in a smaller, accessible room **Please note that individual invigilation **is provided ONLY in exceptional circumstances** when there is significant medical evidence of need (for example, for a student with a diagnosis of epilepsy)*	• Behavioural, emotional, social need, medical condition, physical disability, psychological need that will lead to impaired performance within normal exam conditions • Please note that our smaller, accessible room is **not** individual invigilation; rather a small group of students in a smaller and more accessible space. Individual invigilation is rare, and will only be offered to students with serious medical conditions (for example, epilepsy) backed up by a paediatric consultant's report.	• Describe the nature of the need and how it is supported within the classroom Include medical or other evidence where possible • Discuss the option of being in a small group and record the outcome of this discussion	• Evidence of Need form • Any formal assessment or medical notes that are available • In class documentation
Supervised Rest Breaks	• Learning difficulty, behavioural emotional social need, medical condition, physical disability, psychological need that leads to learner needing rest breaks in order to sustain performance in exam conditions	• Describe the nature of the need and how it is supported within the classroom • Include medical or other evidence where possible	• Evidence of Need form • Any formal assessment or medical notes that are available • In class documentation

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		• Confirm that having frequent breaks is the learner's normal way of working	
Use of Word Processor	• Slow rate of writing, illegible handwriting or handwriting that deteriorates under stress • Injury, physical disability, normal way of working	• Describe the nature of the learner's difficulties • Provide evidence of handwritten and typed scripts (ideally mock exam questions) and note differences in quality of language or rate of writing • Confirm that word processing is the normal way of working within the classroom for this learner	• Evidence of Need form • Examples of typed and handwritten scripts • Learner may be invited for further assessment
Extra time 25%	• Learning difficulty, medical, physical or physiological requirement or visual or hearing impairment which has an adverse effect on the candidate's speed of processing	• Indicate the nature of the learner's processing problem and how it is supported in the classroom • Include examples of unfinished timed assessments • Discuss with learner how extra time will be used and record this on referral form • Confirm that it is the learner's normal way of working to use extra time	• Evidence of Need form • Examples of learner's work • In class documentation • Statement of Special Educational Need or assessment by specialist tutor showing below average standardized scores in processing speed or reading and/or writing speed or letter from specialist detailing precise nature of processing difficulty
Reader	• Visual impairment or learning difficulty that leads to learner performing significantly less well than peers in either reading accuracy, comprehension or speed	• Describe nature of learner's need – indicate that the learner performs significantly below peers in reading accuracy, comprehension or speed • Describe how this is supported in class and confirm that reading support is the learner's normal way of working	• Evidence of Need form • Classroom documentation • Specialist assessment showing below average score in reading accuracy, comprehension or speed
Scribe	• Physical disability, medical condition or recent injury preventing writing • Visual impairment and cannot touch type or use a brailler	• Describe the nature of the difficulty – include examples of handwritten and scribed work (where appropriate) and comment on quality of language	• Evidence of Need form • Examples of learner's work • Classroom documentation • Specialist assessment indicating severe problems of legibility,

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	• Learning difficulties that means that writing cannot be read by others • Writes so slowly that answers cannot be fully recorded even with extra time	• Describe how need is supported in class and confirm that using a scribe is the learner's normal way of working	incomprehensibility or processing speed • Covering letter explaining precise nature of need

5. Checking the Qualifications of the Assessor:

5.1 Assessments are carried out by an assessor(s) appointed by the Head of Centre. The assessor(s) is (are) appropriately qualified as required by JCQ regulations in AA, Section 7.3.

5.2 The qualification(s) of the current assessor: MA in Specific Learning Difficulties, Dip RSA

5.3 Appointment of assessors of candidates with learning difficulties: At the point an assessor is engaged/employed in the centre, evidence of the assessor's qualification is obtained and checked against the current requirements in AA. This process is carried out prior to the assessor undertaking any assessment of a candidate.

5.4 Checking the qualification(s) of the assessor(s): In the event of a student joining the school, with learning disabilities that qualifies them for exam access arrangements, the previous school is contacted to request a current Form 8 and associated proof of assessor qualifications. These are then signed off by the Head of Centre. Reporting the appointment of the assessor(s) Assessors' qualifications are held centrally in the exams office and in the SEN Department Exams Access Arrangements online AA files.

6. Exams Access Arrangements complaints procedure:

5.1. A candidate (or his/her/parent/carer) may make a complaint on the grounds below (this is not an exhaustive list):

- Candidate not assessed by the centre's appointed assessor
- Candidate not involved in decisions made regarding his/her access arrangements
- Candidate did not consent to record their personal data online (by the non-acquisition of a completed candidate personal data consent form)
- Candidate not informed/ adequately informed of the arrangements in place and the subjects or components of subjects where the arrangements would not apply
- Exam information not appropriately adapted for a disabled candidate to access it
- Adapted equipment/ assistive technology put in place failed during exam/assessment
- Approved access arrangement(s) not put in place at the time of an exam/assessment
- Appropriate arrangements not put in place at the time of an exam/assessment as a consequence of a temporary injury or impairment 4
- Candidate unhappy with centre decision relating to access arrangements or special consideration (complainant to refer via SLT/HT to the centre's internal appeals procedure)
- Centre fails to adhere to its internal appeals procedure