



St Peter's Catholic High School & Sixth Form Centre

Exam Access Arrangements policy

What are Exam Access Arrangements?

St Peter's Policy for Access Arrangements is written in line with the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) Regulations document: 'Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments' booklet. These are the regulations with which SPHS must comply, and this policy will outline how we do this.

Access Arrangements are the principal way in which Awarding Bodies comply with the duty under the Equality Act (2010) to make 'Reasonable Adjustments'. This requires that an Awarding Body makes reasonable adjustments where a disabled person would be at a substantial disadvantage in undertaking an assessment. A candidate with a disability or difficulty which has a **substantial and long-term effect** on performance in examinations may qualify for access arrangements. These arrangements are agreed before an assessment and must reflect a student's normal way of working within the school.

Rationale for Access Arrangements

- Access Arrangements are intended to facilitate students with the required knowledge, understanding and skills, who are unable to demonstrate these in an assessment due to a difficulty or disability, to access the exam without changing the demands of the assessment.
- The Equality Act 2010 requires an awarding body to make reasonable adjustments where a candidate who is disabled (within the definition of the Equality Act 2010) would be at a substantial disadvantage in comparison to someone who is not disabled.
- Access Arrangements are intended to increase access to assessments but cannot be granted where they will directly affect performance in the skills that are the focus of the assessment.
- Access Arrangements are not intended to give an unfair advantage, but rather are to remove a disadvantage.
- Access Arrangements may vary between subjects because different subjects and methods of assessments may have different demands.



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- Access Arrangements should reflect a student's normal way of working, unless such arrangements would compromise the integrity of the assessment.

Access Arrangements encompass a wide range of provisions, 'reasonable adjustments', which may include: being allowed to sit examinations in a smaller room, supervised rest breaks, use of colour overlays, prompter, extra time, reader, scribe, use of a word processor, practical assistant, etc. An Access Arrangement may be unique to an individual and therefore not appear in a standard list.

Awarding Access Arrangements

Before suggesting Exam Access Arrangement to a student/home &/or making a referral to the SEND Team, staff are requested to ensure the following criteria has been addressed:

- All tasks and activities have been differentiated within the subject for the individual student using Pupil Passport teacher planning strategies.
- A learning conversation has taken place with the student, Tutor, and SEND Dept (and/or parents/guardians of the student) to discuss progress and other intervention strategies to be used by teachers and students within the classroom.
- If appropriate, communication with the student's Teaching Assistant or a Teaching Assistant within the group.

Timeline for Years 7-11

1. Year 6 - A student's primary school or parent informs the SENCo of any history of need or Access Arrangements implemented in KS2 examinations.
2. KS3 – Teachers monitor students closely and gather any evidence of need for Access Arrangements, passing it to the SENCo/Access Arrangements Coordinator. Access Arrangements trialled in tests/exams.
3. Following assessment, appropriate Access Arrangements are put in place and become the student's normal way of working.
4. Year 9 spring/ summer term – Part 1 of Form 8 is completed (for students with learning difficulties) based on evidence supplied by teachers. The Access Arrangements Assessor will then assess the student using standardised tests. Examinations Officer applies online for indicated Access Arrangements.



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5. Evidence for the Form 9 (for students with a substantial impairment such as a physical disability, sensory impairment or medical condition) is gathered and the form is completed.
6. KS4 – Access Arrangements in place and becomes their normal way of working for the student.
7. Term 6 of year 10 – Final deadline for teachers to submit evidence and requests for Access Arrangements using the SEN Referral process (MS Forms). Mock examinations provide last opportunity to trial Access Arrangements.
8. Summer of Year 11 – Examinations completed with Access Arrangements in place.

Years 12-13

1. Students to declare any Access Arrangements they had at KS4 when they apply to sixth form or within the first half term.
2. For new students, if informed of previous arrangements, the SENCo/Access Arrangements Coordinator will write to the previous school for evidence of Access Arrangements at KS4.
3. Teachers monitor students closely in the autumn term of Year 12, gather evidence from initial assessments and feedback concerns and evidence to the SENCo/Access Arrangements Coordinator.
4. In light of evidence received from teachers and previous schools, the Access Arrangements Assessor carries out any testing necessary during the autumn and spring terms and the SENCO applies/reapplies for Access Arrangements.
5. Trial Access Arrangements are put in place for the mock examinations in Year 12.
6. If teachers have a body of evidence gathered throughout Year 12, they should see the SENCo/Access Arrangements Coordinator or Access Arrangements Assessor by the end of term three of Year 12.

Temporary Arrangements

Temporary arrangements may be required by students suffering from injury or illness. Normally, students with leg injuries can be accommodated in the main rooms near the doors for easy access and exit. Students with an illness or injury that has a direct impact on their ability to access the examination should obtain a letter from a GP, consultant or other professional giving a brief outline of their condition and the access arrangements that are



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deemed to be necessary. For example, a right-handed student whose right arm is broken may need a scribe and some extra time, as it is not their normal way of working and dictating to a scribe may be difficult for them.

In all cases where an access arrangement or a reasonable adjustment is needed, the school is entitled to expect reasonable notice to carry out its responsibilities. Where a need for access arrangements has been identified before an examination session, the SENCo/Access Arrangements Coordinator and Examinations Officer should be provided with medical evidence in reasonable time. Temporary arrangements last for one examination session. If the condition persists another letter may be required for the next session. The Access Arrangements Coordinator will then prepare any necessary paperwork and the Exam Officer will process the Online Application.

Evidence Held and Malpractice

Schools are regularly inspected to ensure they have followed JCQ regulations – usually during the summer examination season. The school is required to hold evidence in its files that can be inspected at short notice. For this reason, the school will keep copies of evidence of need, Form 8, letters from outside agencies, record of Access Arrangements used and EHCP, together with a data protection notice signed by the student.

The consequences of malpractice can be severe. These may include disqualification of the student from one or more examinations. Examples of malpractice include:

- Students being granted Access Arrangements which are not their normal way of working
- Access Arrangements being granted when a student has no history of need or provision
- Access Arrangements being granted without sufficient evidence

Private Educational Psychologists Reports and/ or External Agency Reports

A growing number of parents are having their children assessed by private educational psychologists and submitting the reports to the SENCo as evidence that their child should be awarded extra time, or other Access Arrangements. Private educational psychologist's reports cost a significant amount of money, putting those unable to obtain a private report due to financial circumstances at a disadvantage. We can only accept private reports as part of wider school evidence. External Assessors are required to contact the SENCo before carrying out the assessment. The SENCo will provide the Assessor with any existing information about previous support and current difficulties.



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The Centre (SENCo) must make the decision on the appropriate access arrangements for students. While external professionals may give advice or recommendations, they cannot make the decision for the centre. This is stated in the JCQ regulations, therefore Access Arrangements will not be awarded purely on the basis of a private report