



SIR THOMAS BOTELER

CHURCH OF ENGLAND HIGH SCHOOL

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ACCESS ARRANGEMENTS AND REASONABLE ADJUSTMENTS

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COMMITTEE: HEADTEACHER

AUDIENCE: SENDCO, STAFF, STUDENTS, PARENTS/ CARERS, GOVERNING BODY

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Key staff involved in internal appeals procedures

Role	Name(s)
Head of centre	Mrs Beverley Scott-Herron
Senior leader(s)	Mr James Koltan
Exams Manager	Miss Jane Morris
SENDCo	Miss Faye Power

1. Purpose of the Policy

The purpose of this policy is to outline the procedures and responsibilities at Sir Thomas Boteler High School regarding the provision of access arrangements and reasonable adjustments for students with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND), in line with the regulations set by the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ). This policy aims to ensure that all students have equal opportunities to demonstrate their knowledge, skills, and abilities in public examinations, while receiving the appropriate support to address their individual needs.

2. Scope of the Policy

This policy applies to all students at Sir Thomas Boteler High School who are eligible for access arrangements or reasonable adjustments in their public examinations, including GCSEs, A-Levels, vocational qualifications, and any other formal assessments governed by JCQ regulations.

3. Definitions

- **Access Arrangements:** Access arrangements are adjustments made for students to ensure they can take exams fairly and in a way that compensates for their individual needs. These arrangements are intended to reduce the disadvantage caused by a disability or specific learning difficulty (SpLD) without giving the student an unfair advantage. Examples include extra time, a reader, a scribe, or modified papers.
- **Reasonable Adjustments:** Reasonable adjustments are modifications or accommodations made to ensure that disabled students are not disadvantaged in comparison to non-disabled students. These adjustments are designed to ensure equitable access to assessments, consistent with the aims of the Equality Act 2010.

4. Legislative Framework

The policy aligns with the following legislation and guidelines:

- **Equality Act 2010**
- **The Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Code of Practice**
- **JCQ Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments Regulations**
- **The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (amended 2005)**

5. Eligibility for Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments

To be eligible for access arrangements and/or reasonable adjustments, students must meet the criteria as outlined in the JCQ regulations. This typically includes:

- Students with a diagnosed disability or specific learning difficulty (e.g., dyslexia, ADHD, visual or hearing impairment, physical disabilities, mental health conditions).
- Students who have a history of support within school and can demonstrate a need for the arrangement in the context of formal examinations.

6. Identification of Need

The school will identify students who may be eligible for access arrangements or reasonable adjustments through a variety of methods:

- **Screening Tests:** Students may be screened for learning difficulties or disabilities in Year 7 and subsequent years if needed.
- **Teacher Referrals:** Teaching staff may refer students to the SEND team if they identify specific learning difficulties or other concerns.
- **Parental Requests:** Parents can inform the school about specific learning difficulties or other concerns.
- **External Professional Assessments:** If required, the school will consider external assessments by qualified specialists (e.g., educational psychologists).
- **Referral to CAMHS or local NHS:** a referral confirmation/ acceptance letter **must** state an agreement to formally assess. Referrals only are no longer sufficient.

7. Application Process

- **Initial Assessment:** Students who may require access arrangements will undergo an initial assessment by the school's SENDCo (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Coordinator) and/or a qualified professional Assessor. This may involve diagnostic testing, interviews with the student, and input from teachers.
- **Documentation:** The SENDCo/Exams Manager will collect necessary documentation, including reports from external specialists (e.g., educational psychologists), and ensure that there is clear evidence of the student's needs. Evidence must demonstrate the student's normal way of working and a clear picture of need. Supporting evidence includes examples of timed tests and mock exams.
- **Submission to JCQ:** The Exams Manager will submit the required paperwork to JCQ to request specific arrangements for students. This may include applications for additional time, use of a reader or scribe, or other adjustments based on individual needs.
- **Approval:** Access arrangements must be approved by the relevant awarding bodies. The Exams Manager will ensure that all deadlines for submissions are met and that the arrangements are implemented in accordance with JCQ regulations.

8. Types of Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments

The school will consider a range of access arrangements and reasonable adjustments in line with JCQ guidelines. These may include, but are not limited to:

- **Extra Time:** Typically, up to 25% additional time, depending on the student's needs.
- **Reader/Computer Reader:** A person/computer who reads the exam paper aloud to the student.
- **Scribe:** A person who writes the student's answers as dictated by the student.
- **Prompter:** A person who assists students with maintaining focus during the exam.
- **Use of a Computer:** If a student's handwriting is not legible, they may be allowed to use a computer to complete written examinations.
- **Rest Breaks:** Short breaks during long exam sessions for students who require this due to physical or mental health conditions.
- **Modified Papers:** This could include large print, Braille, or audio versions of exam papers for students with visual impairments.
- **Assistive Technology:** Provision of technology such as voice-to-text software for students with physical disabilities or learning difficulties.

9. Responsibilities

- **SENDCo:** The SENDCo is responsible for coordinating access arrangements within the school, liaising with relevant staff, ensuring that assessments and applications are completed on time, and ensuring that appropriate records are kept.

- **Examinations Manager:** The Examinations Manager will work closely with the SENDCo to ensure the smooth implementation of access arrangements during exams, including rooming, invigilation, and compliance with JCQ regulations.
- **Teaching Staff:** Teachers will provide necessary evidence of the student's need for access arrangements, including any observations of the student's academic performance, and will collaborate with the SENDCo to ensure that arrangements are in place.
- **Students and Parents:** It is the responsibility of students and their parents to inform the school of any new or changing conditions that **may** require access arrangements or adjustments. Parents should also cooperate with any assessments or reviews of the student's needs.
- **Students** should ensure that they use the access arrangements that have been awarded to them. Failure to do so may result in the arrangement being removed from the student as it no longer represents a picture of need and their normal way of working.

10. Confidentiality and Data Protection

All information regarding access arrangements and reasonable adjustments will be kept confidential in accordance with data protection laws. Only those staff directly involved in supporting the student's needs will be informed about the specific arrangements in place. This may include teachers, the Exams Manager, and invigilators.

Personal data is shared with the awarding bodies for the purposes of approval of access arrangements. Students will be informed that an application for access arrangements will be processed using Access Arrangements Online, complying with the UK GDPR/Data Protection Act 2018.

11. Monitoring and Review

The effectiveness of access arrangements and reasonable adjustments will be regularly monitored and reviewed:

- **Student Feedback:** Students will be asked to provide feedback on the arrangements provided and whether they felt the adjustments allowed them to demonstrate their true abilities.
- **Invigilator monitoring:** Invigilators will monitor and record usage/ non usage of access arrangements in mock examinations. This will be used to inform decisions with the student about whether the adjustments are suitable or no longer required.
- **Annual Review:** The SENDCo will conduct an annual review of the access arrangements policy to ensure it aligns with the latest JCQ guidelines and addresses the needs of all students.

12. Appeals Process

If a student or parent feels that access arrangements have not been appropriately applied or that the decision to provide certain arrangements is incorrect, they may appeal the decision using the Internal Appeals Procedures (Access Arrangements and Special Considerations):

1. **Informal Discussion:** Initially, the student or parent should discuss the concern with the SENDCo.
2. **Formal Appeal:** If the issue is not resolved informally, a formal appeal can be made in writing to the school's Headteacher, who will review the case in consultation with the SENDCo.
3. **External Review:** If the issue remains unresolved, the school will support the student or parent in seeking an external review in line with JCQ's complaints procedure.

13. Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed annually by the school's Senior Leadership Team, in consultation with the SENDCo, Exams Manager and other relevant staff, to ensure its effectiveness and compliance with current regulations.