



## Access Arrangements Policy

Signed:

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be "G. M. L.", written over a light blue horizontal line.

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# Ebor Academy Filey Access Arrangements Policy

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## **Purpose**

This document outlines the academy policy on access arrangements. These are arrangements put in place to ensure **all** students have equal access to examinations. Students should not be disadvantaged by any learning, medical, physical, sensory or psychological difficulty they may experience

The academy must comply with the rules for Access Arrangements as set out in the most recent Joint Council for Qualifications publication.

Access arrangements are the principal way in which awarding bodies comply with the duty under the Equality Act 2010 to make 'reasonable adjustments'.

*The Equality Act 2010 requires an awarding body to make reasonable adjustments where a candidate, who is disabled within the meaning of the Equality Act 2010, would be at a substantial disadvantage in comparison to someone who is not disabled.*

*Generally, impairments have to meet the statutory requirements set out in section 6 and Schedule 1 to the Equality Act 2010 and associated regulations to be defined as a disability.*

A candidate with a disability or difficulty which has a **substantial and long term effect** on performance in examinations may qualify for access arrangements.

Access arrangements should allow students with substantial long term special educational needs, illnesses or injuries to demonstrate their skills, knowledge and understanding without affecting the integrity of an assessment or examination. Access arrangements are not intended to help certain candidates, or give them an advantage, but to give them a fair opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge and skills.

The intention is to remove barriers that may prevent them from demonstrating their knowledge and to allow them on to a 'level playing field' with other candidates.

However, the academy must assess each potential learner and make justifiable and professional judgements about the learner's potential to successfully complete and achieve the qualifications. Some types of disability may affect the candidate's ability to demonstrate one or more of the assessment objectives. An alternative route may be available in the specification and advice **must** be sought from the awarding body. In some cases, a disabled candidate may have to be exempted from a component if that is the only reasonable adjustment available to enable him/her to overcome a substantial disadvantage in accessing the specification. The SENCo must ensure that the proposed access arrangement does not disadvantage or advantage the candidate.

Access Arrangements encompass a wide range of provisions 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, communication professional etc.

## ***The Identification of candidates who might need access arrangements***

There are several ways in which this might occur:

1. Ebor Academy Filey acts on the information provided by students' previous schools to identify those who may need access arrangements. These students normally have a history of Special Educational Needs (SEN).
2. A teacher may voice a concern about a student with difficulties that prevent them from completing tests or practice papers.
3. A parent / carer may raise concerns about their child who is attempting but unable to complete work set in class and as homework.

In all cases, there must be a genuine need for the arrangement. The academy *must be satisfied that the candidate has an impairment which has a substantial and long term adverse effect, giving rise to persistent and significant difficulties. 'Long term' means the impairment has existed for at least 12 months, or is likely to do so.*

Students with special educational needs are not automatically eligible for access arrangements. For example, a student with a slight hearing impairment, a previous diagnosis of 'mild dyslexia' or a physical disability that does not affect performance in an examination may not meet the criteria for access arrangements.

However, when concerns are raised about a particular student, the SENCo, will gather information from all the student's teachers to see whether they have similar concerns. If the initial concerns are echoed by others, the student will be assessed for access arrangements.

### ***Candidates with a history of SEN and Candidates with medical, physical, sensory, behavioural or complex needs***

Where access arrangements are requested due to medical or physical difficulties, a letter from a GP or consultant is required. The SENCo may ask parents/carers to obtain a letter with details of the student's condition or disability and the access arrangements that are deemed to be necessary.

Parents/carers may be requested to obtain letters from other professionals when a student requires arrangements due to their psychological, behavioural, sensory or communication difficulties.

### ***Candidates with learning difficulties***

There would normally be a long history of learning difficulties. Late identification of learning difficulties can occur, but concerns should be raised during the early months of a course leading towards an examination. JCQ publish deadlines by which arrangements must be processed, in advance of an examination series. Arrangements should not be requested just before or at the time of a candidate's examinations, unless they are to be temporary and due to illness or injury.

A student with learning difficulties must be formally assessed by:

- an access arrangement assessor who has successfully completed a post-graduate course at or equivalent to Level 7, including at least 100 hours relating to individual specialist assessment **and/or**;

- A specialist assessor with a current SpLD Assessment Practicing Certificate as awarded by BDA, the Dyslexia Guild or Patoss and listed on the SASC website **and/or**;
- An appropriately qualified psychologist registered with the Health and Care Professionals Council.

The assessment must have taken place no earlier than the start of Year 9. An approved range of standardised tests are used and recorded within Part 2 of Form 8.

Parents may choose to arrange an assessment out of the academy. However, **it must be noted that private assessments do not guarantee arrangements without the 'picture of need' that is required before an application is made.** If a private assessment is carried out, it should be undertaken by a suitably qualified person and accepted as such by the academy as the name of the assessor must be included on the application. The parents should provide the academy with a copy of the report, which should include a section laid out as Form 8. A copy of the appropriate qualification of the specialist assessor is required to be held on file by the academy, and must be provided by the parent before an application is made.

A Personal Data Consent form must be signed by the student and countersigned by the parent/guardian, which enables the SENCo to make the online application using their information and results.

An application is made online, and the awarding bodies approve access arrangements only if the student's scores meet the criteria issued by JCQ. Supporting evidence must be filed and available for inspection.

In all cases, access arrangements should reflect the support that is usually given to the student in the classroom, internal tests and mock examinations. This is commonly referred to as the 'normal way of working.'

The decision to apply for access arrangements is based on evidence of a history of need, history of provision and reports from teachers or other professionals. Students with no previous history of SEN will require significantly more evidence of need. For instance, the evidence required for extra time must include comments and observations from teaching staff as to why the student needs extra time and how s/he uses the time awarded. Therefore **it may be necessary for the student to sit tests or practice papers with extra time for a trial period.** It can then be gauged whether the *quality and quantity of written answers improves significantly with the allowance of extra time*, and will establish having extra time as a 'normal way of working'.

A candidate may require access arrangements in all his/her written examinations, or they may only need arrangements in those requiring extended answers. The academy must compile evidence that supports each candidate's particular need for arrangements.

If not already on the SEN Record, the student will be placed at 'School Action' / SEN Support and a new Individual Education Plan will be drawn up. In this way their teachers will be provided with information on their needs, targets, teaching strategies and access arrangements.

### ***Notification about access arrangements***

Parents / carers are informed by letter when formal applications for access arrangements are approved. The arrangements are named and an information leaflet is provided.

## **Conduct and procedures, staffing and accommodation**

The SENCo liaises with the Examinations Officer, departmental and associate staff to ensure sufficient rooms and staffing are organised for candidates with access arrangements when examinations or controlled assessments are taking place.

Candidates sitting their exams in smaller rooms are expected to comply with the general regulations issued by JCQ. For example, mobile phones and data recording devices are not permitted in examination rooms for candidates with access arrangements under any circumstances.

However, some procedures may vary slightly from those followed in the main rooms. For instance, in a room for candidates with extra time or rest breaks there may be more than one exam taking place and so the seating is arranged to accommodate their needs and to take into account the duration of each exam: wherever possible, those with the shortest exam and/or those with rest breaks are seated nearest to the door.

It must be noted that staffing and room constraints mean that candidates **cannot normally be seated alone** in a separate room.

In the event of there being a core subject examination with a large number of candidates having access arrangements, it may be necessary for some of them to sit the examination at a later time so that sufficient staffing is available for all the arrangements to be maintained. Those candidates must arrive at the scheduled time but will have to be kept in isolation until their examination can take place.

Candidates' evidence files are kept in a secure area, but must be available for inspection. The JCQ Inspector visits during each examination session and may check several Access Arrangement files at random. In addition the centre may receive a separate Access Arrangement inspection. The documentation must be presented to the JCQ Centre Inspector by the SENCo.

### **Notes regarding the use of word processors**

Ebor Academy Filey has a separate policy regarding the use of word processors which has been attached as an appendix to this policy.

### ***Candidates with access arrangements sitting several exams on the same day***

The exams officer will be responsible for arranging supervision, identifying a secure venue and arranging overnight supervision for candidates whose total exam time, including extra time, exceeds the maximum allowed in either a single session or a full day. The exams officer must work with the SENCo to ensure that candidates with Access Arrangements are accommodated according to their need whilst ensuring that all exam board and JCQ regulations are adhered to.

### ***Candidates sitting examinations set by awarding bodies not regulated by JCQ***

When a candidate is entered for an examination set by an awarding body that is not regulated by JCQ, s/he may find that the rules regarding access arrangements are different. In most cases, the candidate's evidence of need will be accepted, although a separate application must

be made, but the awarding body set their own rules regarding access arrangements and their use in specific subjects, eg. a scribe may be allowed in English by JCQ but not by CIE.

## ***Vocational Qualifications***

A large number of access arrangements and reasonable adjustments can be used to facilitate access to vocational qualifications, *as long as they do not impact on any competence standards being tested*. They must not **affect the reliability or validity of assessment outcomes nor must they give the learner an unfair advantage**.

## ***Recording the use of access arrangements***

Ebor Academy Filey follow the advice given by JCQ and maintain a record of the use of access arrangements. If an access arrangement is never used then it is not a candidate's normal way of working and *the arrangement should not be awarded for examinations*.

## ***Staffing and training***

The staff employed to provide candidates with access arrangements are drawn from Ebor Academy Filey support and teaching staff, although the latter cannot assist or invigilate or support in those examinations for which their own students are entered.

During busy examination periods, external invigilators may also be employed, but access arrangements are usually provided by academy staff.

Training is provided for all new invigilators, and refresher sessions held each year for existing staff a record of which will be kept, to comply with JCQ guidelines.

## ***Temporary arrangements***

Temporary arrangements may be required by candidates suffering from illness or injury. In general, candidates with leg injuries are accommodated in the main rooms near the doors for easy access and exit.

Candidates 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 deemed to be necessary. For example, a right-handed candidate 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. A candidate with a painful back condition may require supervised rest breaks in order to stand and move around.

In all cases where an access arrangement or a reasonable adjustment is needed, the academy 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 and Examinations Officer should be provided with medical evidence in reasonable time. For example:

- a candidate who suffers from panic attacks in test or exam situations should obtain a letter from their CAMHS worker well before the start of formal examinations
- in an emergency, a scribe can be provided with 24 hours' notice. It may not be possible to provide a scribe if the request is made without notice.

Temporary arrangements last for a maximum of one examination session.

***Alternative accommodation away from the centre***

On very rare occasions, a candidate may need to sit an examination at a residential address or at a hospital due to a severe medical condition or profound psychological condition which prevents them from taking examinations within the centre.

The centre must ensure that JCQ guidelines are followed with regard to conduct, procedures and staffing. The centre must be satisfied that the candidate is well enough to take the examination and there must be appropriate evidence of need held on file.



## Word Processor Policy 2020/2021

### Introduction

This document is the Word Processor policy for Ebor Academy Filey. References to 'AA' relate to JCQ Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments 2020-21 and references to 'ICE' relate to JCQ Instructions for conducting examinations 2020/21.

### 1 - Principles for using a word processor

- (AA 4.2.1) Candidates with access to word processors at Ebor Academy Filey 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. The use of word processors is only permitted whilst ensuring that the integrity of the assessment is maintained, at the same time as providing access to assessments for a disabled candidate.
- (AA 4.2.2) The use of a word processor at Ebor Academy Filey is not granted where it will compromise the assessment objectives of the specification in question.
- (AA 4.2.3) Candidates at Ebor Academy Filey may not require the use of a word processor in each specification. As subjects and their methods of assessments may vary, leading to different demands of our candidates, the need for the use of a word processor is considered on a subject-by-subject basis.
- (AA 4.2.4) The use of a word processor at Ebor Academy Filey is agreed/processed at the start of the course. Candidates are subsequently aware that they will have the use of a word processor for examinations and controlled assessments/coursework/NEA for approved subjects.
- (AA 4.2.5) The use of a word processor for candidates at Ebor Academy Filey is only granted if it reflects the support given to the candidate as their 'normal way of working', which is defined as support: 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.

### 2 - The use of a word processor

(AA 5.8.1) Ebor Academy Filey provides a word processor with the spelling and grammar check facility/predictive text disabled (switched off) to a candidate where it is their normal way of working within the centre and is appropriate to their need.

For example, the quality of language significantly improves as a result of using a word processor due to problems with planning and organisation when writing by hand.

(AA 5.8.3) Ebor Academy Filey allow candidates to use a word processor in an examination to type certain questions, i.e. those requiring extended writing, and handwrite shorter answers. Ebor Academy Filey are also aware that examinations which have a significant amount of writing, as well as those that place a greater demand on the need to organise thought and plan extended answers, are those where candidates will frequently need to type. Examinations which require more simplistic answers are often easier to handwrite within the

answer booklet. The candidate avoids the difficulty of visually tracking between the question paper and screen.

(AA 5.8.4) Where it is required by the awarding body, Ebor Academy Filey ensures that a word processor cover sheet is completed and attached to each candidate's typed script.

(AA 5.8.4) Ebor Academy Filey does not simply grant the use of a word processor to a candidate because he/she prefers to type rather than write or can work faster on a keyboard, or because he/she uses a laptop at home. Ebor Academy Filey will only grant the use of a word processor where it is the candidate's normal way of working within the centre.

### 3 - Word Processor and their programmes

(ICE 14.25)

At Ebor Academy Filey word processors:

- Are used as a type-writer, not as a database, although standard formatting software is acceptable.
- Have been cleared of any previously stored data, as must any portable storage medium used. An unauthorised memory stick is not permitted for use by a candidate. Where required, candidates are provided with a memory stick, which has been cleared of any previously stored data, by a nominated member of centre staff.
- Are in good working order at the time of the examination.
- Are accommodated in such a way that other candidates are not disturbed and cannot read the screen.
- Will be either connected to a printer so that a script can be printed off, or have the facility to print from a portable storage medium. Candidates will be present to verify that the work produced is their own, and the printed script will be attached to the answer booklet. This will take place after the examination is over.
- Are only used to produce scripts under secure conditions.
- Are not used to perform skills which are being assessed.
- Are not connected to an intranet or any other means of communication.
- Will not give the candidates access to other applications such as a calculator (where prohibited in the examination), spreadsheets etc
- Will not include graphic packages or computer aided design software unless permission has been given to use these
- Will not have any predictive text software or an automatic spelling and grammar check enabled **unless the candidate has been permitted a scribe or is using speech recognition technology (in which case a scribe cover sheet will be completed) or the awarding body's specification permits the use of automatic spell checking**
- Will not include speech recognition technology **unless the candidate has permission to use a scribe or relevant software**
- are not used on the candidate's behalf by a third party unless the candidate has permission to use a scribe

#### 4 - Word Processors

At Ebor Academy Filey:

- Candidates using a Word Processor for examinations are given instructions at the start of each examination when approval is granted.
- Candidates using Wordpad software (which does not allow for the insertion of a header or footer) are instructed to handwrite the centre number, candidate number and the unit/component code as a header or footer once they have finished the examination and printed off their typed script. They are also supervised to ensure that they are solely performing this task and not re-reading their answers or amending their work in any way.
- Each page is appropriately numbered by the candidate.
- Candidates are provided with instructions to use minimum 12pt font and double spacing and are advised to save their work at regular intervals.
- Candidates granted the use of a word processor are present at the end of the examination when their script is printed off so they can verify that the work printed off is their own.
- Where possible examination laptops will be provided in the main examination hall.

#### Statement from SLT

The SENCo in consultation with Curriculum Leaders will decide if a candidate requires a word processor for examinations. This arrangement will only be permitted to remove barriers for disabled candidates, which prevent them from being placed at a **substantial** disadvantage as a consequence of persistent and significant difficulties. The use of word processors is only permitted whilst ensuring that the integrity of the assessment is maintained, at the same time as providing access to assessments for a disabled candidate. The arrangement is not granted where it will compromise the assessment objectives of the specification in question. Candidates will not require the arrangement in each specification, the need for the use of a word processor is considered on a subject-by-subject basis. The use of a word processor is agreed/processed at the start of the course. Candidates are subsequently aware that they will have the use of a word processor for examinations and controlled assessments/coursework/NEA for approved subjects only.

The use of a word processor for candidates is only granted if it reflects the support given to them as their 'normal way of working', which is defined as support: 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. The candidate must be proficient in word processing to ensure it is an appropriate arrangement.

