Examination Access Policy

Last Reviewed/Updated: May 2019
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1. Introduction

This policy should be read in conjunction with Regent Independent College's (hereafter referred to as 'Regent') SEN(D) Policy and DDA Policy, which sets out the school's procedures for identifying SEND, making and evaluating provision for pupils with SEND, and monitoring the pupils' needs for access arrangements for examinations.

Regent recognises that some students will meet the criteria for access arrangements in exams, due to specific difficulties which result in having below average processing speed or working memory, slow or poor handwriting, below average literacy skills or difficulties in attention. In putting access arrangements in place, Regent is bound to comply with the Equality Act 2010 and with JCQ regulations. Regent also uses information and data using Access tests in numeracy and literacy, as well as documentation from other educational institutions, correspondence and records from medical and other health practitioners, and internal assessments.

Regent is therefore only able to put access arrangements in place, where these arrangements are specifically recommended in a formal report carried out by an educational psychologist or by a medical practitioner, within the time frame stipulated by JCQ. Assessments must demonstrate in quantitative and qualitative measures, that the pupil meets JCQ criteria for access arrangements as set out in the JCQ 'ICE' booklet. JCQ adjusts its regulations periodically and the college is bound to comply with the current regulations. The Examinations' Officer is responsible for all procedures relating to the conduct of public examinations at Regent.

In accordance with JCQ regulations, the college will exercise its judgement regarding a pupil's eligibility for access arrangements. Privately commissioned reports will only be accepted by JCQ - and therefore by Regent - if they are written to the required standard and demonstrate the pupil's need in quantifiable terms. In addition, Regent is also required to gather qualitative evidence that the access arrangements reflect the candidate's needs and their normal way of working within an educational environment. To this end, Regent will permit access arrangements as above, for pupils in curriculum Year 10 and above. Following internal progress tests and mock examinations the Examinations' Officer will carry out a review with each student who has access arrangements, in order to gather the evidence that the arrangement was needed and used. A selection of the student's work will be kept as evidence should JCQ inspectors request this.

Please note that Regent must be informed about such special requirements on enrolment.

2. Use of extra time

In compliance with JCQ Guidelines: Regent will permit the use of up to 25% extra time under the following conditions:

There must be evidence of a substantial and long-term disability (as defined in the Equality Act 2010), which places the candidate at a substantial disadvantage when working under timed conditions.

Examples of this would include an identified specific learning difficulty resulting in below average scores for speed of writing, speed of reading, processing speed, working memory or spelling. JCQ defines 'below average' as a standard score of 84 or below, or two standard scores between 85 - 89.

There must be evidence of this need in the form of an up to date medical or educational psychologist's report, or a report by an appropriately qualified professional holding a current practising certificate and using JCQ approved standardised tests in compliance with JCQ regulations. Reports that are out of date will not be accepted as evidence of need. The college will comply with JCQ regulations in reviewing the need for, and use of, extra time at GCSE, AS Levels and A-Levels. The college will agree to apply for extra time for public examinations on the basis of the evidence above, and provided there is also evidence that this is the candidate's normal way of working in exams and timed tests. To this end, the college will collect evidence of the need for, and use of, extra time in internal exams.

3. Use of a word processor

In compliance with JCQ guidelines, the college will permit the use of a word processor in examinations, where this is the candidate's normal mode of working within the school. The spell check facility must be disabled and the arrangement can only be put in place if a student has:

- Difficulty in writing legibly even after support and intervention strategies have been exhausted
- Poor handwriting as a results of identified specific learning difficulties resulting in planning and organisational difficulties when writing
- Any medical condition or physical disability that affects handwriting
- Sensory impairment

In all of the instances there will need to be evidence of need in the form of a medical or educational psychologist's report, or a report by an appropriately qualified professional. Regent will collect evidence of the candidate's need for, and use of, word processing in lessons and in exams. Candidates will not be permitted to word process their exams simply because they prefer to type pr can work faster on a word processor.

The college will consider the need and eligibility for other access arrangements on a case-by-case basis, according to the need for and appropriateness of the arrangement. The relevant terms relating to access arrangements are;

4. Additional Learning Need

The term Additional Learning Need is used as an umbrella term to incorporate ALL students known to or attending Regent including those pupils identified as having SEND.

What are exam access arrangements?

An Exam Access Arrangement (EAA) is a provision or type of support given to a student (subject to exam board approval) in an exam, where a particular need has been identified and is provided so that the student has appropriate access to sitting examinations. This can be in the form of:

- **A scribe**: a trained adult who writes for the student. The student would dictate their answers. The scribe would write exactly what they say.
- **A reader**: a trained adult who would read the question and any relevant text (with the exception of Section A of an English GCSE Exam) for the student. The student would then write the answer/s themselves.
- **ICT**: access to a computer for an exam (if appropriate – not for subjects such as Maths) so the student would word process their answers. Spelling and grammar checks would be disabled and a special exam account would be used with no internet access.]
- **Rest breaks**: where students are permitted to stop for short break/s during the exam and the time stopped is added to the finish time, with the effect of elongating the exam but not actually using any extra time.
- **Prompter**: where a student has little sense of time or loses concentration easily, a trained adult can prompt them with a few permitted phrases to refocus, move the student on to the next question or indicate how much time is left.
- **Transcript**: This arrangement must only be used where a student's handwriting or spelling is difficult to decipher for those not familiar with it. A transcript is a copy of a student's exam script made after the exam without the participation of the student.
- **Read Aloud**: A student may work more effectively if he/she can hear themselves read. This student must be accommodated separately.
- **Extra time**: students may be entitled to an allowance of 25% depending on the history of evidence of need (Appendix 1) and the recommendation of the Designated Specialist Teacher or Teaching Assistant.

For extra time - the most applied for EAA - students will have an assessment to determine their speed of processing. A standardised score of less than 85 (100 being average) can qualify for extra time. There are rare cases where students get a score of more than 84. In these cases more evidence is needed to prove that a student should receive extra time. This could be in the form of an extensive history of need, formal diagnosis of a significant learning difficulty, or evidence of a substantial long term adverse effect on the performance of a child's speed of a working. The amount of time that students should receive is decided by the Specialist Tester and based upon their processing speeds.

The examination boards recommend that before extra time is awarded, rest breaks must be considered, since this may be more appropriate for a student with a medical or psychological condition. To receive more than 25% or more is very unusual, and applies to those students with a severe learning/physical difficulty and exam boards would recommend putting other EAA in place before this occurs.

There is evidence to suggest that students who receive more extra time than they need, do not use it effectively, and may in fact damage their chances of achieving a good grade because they go back

and undo the work that they have produced. Therefore giving extra time needs careful consideration.

What evidence is needed to apply for EAA?

There are a number of pieces of evidence that can be used to apply for EAA via Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ):

- Form 8 report from Specialist Teacher or Specialist Teaching Assistant
- Previous EAA from Middle or Upper School
- Subject teachers – examples of work as appropriate
- Results of baseline tests e.g. reading/comprehension age, writing tests

When might students need to be given Exam Access Arrangements?

Scribe	Where a student has a physical disability; where her/his writing:- • is illegible and may hamper their ability to be understood • speed is too slow to be able to complete the exam in the allotted time
Reader	Where a student has a standardised score of below 85 in a test delivered by Specialist Teacher (100 is the average).
ICT (word processor)	Where a student has a physical disability; his/her writing would be:- • illegible and may hamper their ability to be understood • speed is too slow to be able to complete the exam in the allotted time
Extra Time	Where a student's ability to process information is slower than average.
Rest Breaks	Where a student has a physical or psychological disability which prevents them from concentrating for long periods of time. This is now the recommended option from the exam boards before considering extra time.
Prompter	For a student who loses concentration/focus, and is not aware of time.
Separate Room	For a student with a medical condition such as epilepsy/diabetes where it isn't appropriate for them to sit an exam in the main exam hall. Students who are agoraphobic/have a psychological condition may also need to sit an exam in a separate room

What are the procedures for processing an application?

Parents must declare at the time of enrolment and when completing the Regent's application/registration form if their child has any medical or psychological conditions, EHP,

previous EEA at another educational institution or any other issues that may require EEA. Failure to disclose this information negates Regent from their responsibilities

Once any diagnostic tests have been conducted and there is a recommendation for EAA, the Exams' Officer then applies to the exam boards.

The application will require evidence of need, and the Centre needs to hold evidence in its files that can be inspected at short notice. This can include:

- Recommendations by teachers
- Educational psychologist reports
- Letters from outside agencies such as CAMHS (Children and Adolescent Mental Health Services), hospitals or doctors
- Information from SALT (Speech and Language Team)
- Statement of Educational Need or Education, health & Care Plans (EHCP) Permission from the exam boards for the arrangement/s
- A signed copy of the Form 8 report by the designated tester
- A data protection form signed by the student
- A record of all occasions when a student has been supported by EAA
- For Extra Time – history of evidence of need in the form of copies of work where a student has regularly used more than the allotted time

Regent Independent College must adhere to the dates which are set for applications by the JCQ and will maintain all records in accordance with the rules set by JCQ. The College will also comply with the monitoring visits carried out by the JCQ inspectors.