



# Tomlinscote School

An Academy within The Prospect Trust



## Exam Access Arrangements Policy

<b>Policy Type:</b>	Statutory/Mandatory
<b>Approved By:</b>	AQC
<b>Effective From:</b>	March 2025
<b>Revision Date:</b>	March 2026

his document outlines the school’s policy on Exam Access Arrangements. These are the arrangements put in place to ensure that all students are given a fair opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge and skills in examinations, without being disadvantaged by any learning, physical, sensory or psychological difficulty they may experience.

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. 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’.

### Examples of Access Arrangements:

Access Arrangement	Description
Electronic Reader	The student has access to the ‘speak’ function on an iPad. Text can be highlighted and read aloud electronically. This can be used in all exams, including where the skill of reading is being assessed (i.e., English Language).
Human Reader	A trained adult reads the question and any relevant text when requested by the student. This cannot be used when the skill of reading is being assessed (i.e., not in English Language).
Human Reader in Maths and Science	A trained adult decodes symbols and unit abbreviations in Maths and Science examinations when requested by the student. This is for students who require this arrangement to access the assessment, reflecting their current and normal way of working in the centre.
Scribe (or word processor with spellcheck enabled, as the technological equivalent)	The student has access to a keyboard attached to an iPad. Spellcheck is enabled.
Prompter	A trained adult can prompt the student with permitted phrases to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• refocus</li> <li>• indicate how much time is left</li> </ul>
Small room within the centre	The student takes the examination in a small classroom-sized room, rather than the main hall.
Modified papers	Specially prepared papers are provided, i.e., enlarged to a specific font size or coloured.

Supervised Rest Breaks	The student is permitted to stop for short break/s during the exam. The time taken is added to the finish time. The student is not permitted to have exam materials with them during rest breaks.
Extra Time	The student may be entitled to an allowance of 25% extra time in some or all exams. Between 26 and 50% may be granted in extraordinary circumstances. In very exceptional circumstances, a student may require more than 50% extra time.
Live Speaker	A student with a hearing impairment may need a live speaker for pre-recorded examination components, e.g., MFL listening examinations. The live speaker will speak or read aloud the contents of the CD or tape in a Listening examination.
Language Modifier	An adult who has successfully completed accredited training may clarify the carrier language used in the examination paper when requested to do so by a student. The Language Modifier must not explain technical or subject-specific terms.
Bilingual translation dictionary (with up to 25% extra time if eligible)	For students who have English, Irish or Welsh as an additional language. The bilingual dictionary must be held in the centre to ensure no unauthorised information e.g., notes/revision is enclosed or written inside.
Timer on a candidate's desk	The student has access to a countdown clock, a small analogue or digital clock, or a digital timer, to support time management.
Word processor / keyboard attached to iPad	The student has access to a keyboard attached to an iPad for an exam so they can word process their answers. Spelling and grammar checks to be disabled.

### Timeline for awarding Access Arrangements:

#### 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. Access Arrangements provided in KS3 for these students, and those with a diagnosed impairment.

2. Year 7 & 8 - Feedback is gathered from a selection of 'k code / watch' students' teachers at the end of year 7 to determine their normal way of working in lessons. Referral form enables teachers to flag up any other students who they feel would benefit from provisional arrangements. Provisional Access Arrangements trialled in end of topic / end of year assessments.
3. Year 9 summer term – Part 1 of Joint Council for Qualifications Form 8: Profile of Learning Difficulties is completed (for students with learning difficulties) based on evidence supplied by teachers. A qualified Access Arrangements Assessor will then assess the student using standardised tests. SENCo/Access Arrangements Assessor applies online for indicated Access Arrangements and informs the Examinations Officer and parents.
4. Evidence for Joint Council for Qualifications Form 9: Profile of Need (for students with a substantial impairment such as a physical disability, sensory impairment, or medical condition) is gathered and Form 9 is drawn up.
5. KS4 – Access Arrangements in place and being used as normal way of working for the student.
6. December of Year 11 – Final deadline for teachers to submit evidence and requests for Access Arrangements. Exceptional circumstances will be considered after this deadline. Mock examinations provide last opportunity to trial Access Arrangements.
7. Summer of Year 11 – Examinations completed with Access Arrangements in place.

### **Medical letters and private assessments:**

Letters from medical professionals will trigger an investigation but any request for an Access Arrangement also needs to be supported by evidence from within the school. Likewise, private assessments or reports from Educational Psychologists will only be accepted as evidence for an Access Arrangement if supported by school evidence, which must be sent to the assessor in advance of the assessment. We may choose not to accept a private assessment report as evidence for an Access Arrangement if it conflicts with evidence gathered at school and by our Access Arrangements Assessor. In this case, a written rationale for rejecting the report will be held on file and made available.

### **Temporary Arrangements**

Temporary arrangements may be required by students suffering from injury or illness. 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 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. A student with acute back pain may require supervised rest breaks to stand and move around. 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 SENDCo/Access Arrangements Assessor 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.

### **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 any Statement of Special Needs or EHCP, together with a data protection notice signed by the student in line with GDPR.

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