



Bexley Parent Carer Forum

Supporting parents and carers of a child or young person under 25 with a disability, additional or special need living in Bexley and giving parent/carers the opportunity to have a 'voice'
Together we can make a difference...



VOLUNTEER HELPLINE: 07512 409936

EMAIL: bexleyvoice@hotmail.co.uk

WEBSITE: www.bexleyvoice.org.uk

REG CHARITY NUMBER: 1142306

EXAM ACCESS ARRANGEMENTS AND REASONABLE ADJUSTMENTS – Parent/Carer Information Sheet

Some pupils may need extra support at any time during their education for various tests and exams. During national tests/exams including key stage 1 and 2 national curriculum tests (commonly called SATs) and key stage 4 GCSE exams, pupils may need to have official pre-arranged support in place, known as 'Access Arrangements', as required by the exam board/awarding body.

What are 'Access Arrangements'?

Access Arrangements allow pupils with special educational needs or disabilities to access exams without changing the demands of the exam/assessment. Access arrangements are 'adjustments' that can be put in place to support those pupils. They are based on evidence of need, the normal way of working in the classroom and must be appropriate to the student and the exam. Access arrangements must never advantage or disadvantage the pupil. The support given must not change the test questions and the answers must be the pupil's own.

A candidate who qualifies for access arrangements in exams that involve reading, spelling and writing would not necessarily get the same arrangements for practical based tests or exams such as painting, photography or sports.

Schools must consider whether any of their pupils will need access arrangements **before** they administer the tests.

Access arrangements should not be confused with post-examination adjustments to the marks of students who have not been able to demonstrate their ability in an assessment due to exceptional circumstances, such as bereavement at the time of the assessment/exam, these are normally referred to as special considerations.

Access arrangements might be used to support pupils who have (but not limited to):

- difficulty reading
- difficulty writing (also due to an injury)
- difficulty concentrating
- processing difficulties
- a hearing or visual impairment

Who assesses Exam Access Arrangements?

Schools and colleges must have a designated member of staff, usually the SENCo, who organises exam arrangements and then works with an exam officer to put the arrangements in place.

What things can access arrangements include?

- additional time to complete the tests
- the use of scribes (a writing assistant who writes out answers), readers and prompters.
- computers, word processors or other technical or electronic aids

- coloured paper, overlays, exam approved scanning pens
- written or oral translations and making transcripts
- modifications of test papers and the use of accessibility objects in the mathematics test
- compensatory marks for spelling
- the use rest breaks
- administering the tests to pupils who are absent on the planned day
- administering the tests at an alternative location or separate room

The Standards and Testing Agency (STA) produces modified versions of the tests, primarily for pupils with a visual impairment, which are designed to meet a wide spectrum of needs.

When can the school/college apply for them?

Detailed guidance is given to all schools regarding access arrangements and applications.

If you think that your child or young person will need extra help to enable them to successfully take exams, you should contact the SENCO and/or Examinations Officer at school to confirm that any individual requirements have been requested in advance. The school will need to submit an application and provide appropriate evidence.

Some arrangements can be made at the discretion of the school or college, such as photocopying onto coloured paper, enhancing diagrams or enlarging text. Others may require prior permission and evidence from the exam board/awarding body. Most schools would apply at least 6 months in advance but this is not always possible if, for example, a pupil has an injury just prior to an exam that prevents writing.

What are 'Reasonable adjustments'?

'Reasonable adjustments' is the term generally used for post 16 education and in the work place, although it can also apply to younger pupils. They are similar to access arrangements but also include support that a person may need on a day to day basis, not just for exams. They are changes to the education/work environment that allow people with disability to learn/work safely and productively. Under the Equal Opportunity Act 2010, 'disability' includes: physical, psychological or neurological disease or disorder, illness, whether temporary or permanent.

Employers must make reasonable adjustments to make sure workers with disabilities, or physical or mental health conditions, aren't substantially disadvantaged when doing their jobs.

This applies to all workers, including trainees, apprentices, contract workers and business partners.

Reasonable adjustments can include:

- changing the recruitment process so a candidate can be considered for a job
- doing things another way, such as allowing someone with social anxiety disorder to have their own desk instead of hot-desking
- computers, word processors or other technical or electronic aids
- coloured paper, overlays, exam approved scanning pens
- making physical changes to the workplace, like installing a ramp for a wheelchair user or an audio-visual fire alarm for a deaf person
- letting a disabled person work somewhere else, such as on the ground floor for a wheelchair user
- changing their equipment, for instance providing a special keyboard

Help and support

For general enquiries about access arrangements, contact the national curriculum assessments helpline:

Email: assessments@education.gov.uk

Phone: 0300 303 3013

For queries relating to access arrangements to meet a pupil's specific needs, schools can 'Message us' via the 'Access arrangements' section of NCA tools7.

Access Arrangements - For more information (correct at time of print):

<https://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/access-arrangements-and-special-consideration>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/key-stage-2-tests-access-arrangements>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/key-stage-1-tests-access-arrangements>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/access-arrangements-for-gcse-as-and-a-level-2017-to-2018-academic-year>

Reasonable Adjustments - For more information (correct at time of print):

<https://www.gov.uk/reasonable-adjustments-for-disabled-workers>

<https://www.gov.uk/access-to-work>