**Exams Access Arrangements (EAA)Policy 2017/18**

**Developed by C Skelton – Examinations Officer in line with JCQ guidelines.**

Access arrangements is a provision or type of support to allow students (subject to exam board approval) with special educational needs, learning difficulties, disabilities or temporary injuries to access an assessment. They allow students to demonstrate their skills, knowledge and understanding without changing the demands of the assessment. The intention behind many access arrangements is to meet the particular needs of a candidate without affecting the integrity of the assessment.

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

**Extra time**: students may be entitled to an allowance of between 10 and 25% depending on the history of evidence of need and the recommendation of the designated Specialist Teacher.

 **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.

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| **When might students need to be given Exam Access Arrangements?**  **Scribe** | Where there is a physical disability; or where their 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  A diagnosis/statement of Dyslexia/SPLD |
| **Reader** | Where there is a standardised score of below 85 in a test delivered by Specialist Teacher (100 is the average).  A diagnosis/statement of MLD/Dyslexia/SPLD |
| **ICT** | Where there is a physical disability; their 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 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. |

St Colm’s High School aims to ensure that all students have equal access to examinations and are neither advantaged nor disadvantaged over their peers by any learning, medical or psychological difficulty they may experience. We will do this by applying the rules for Access Arrangements as set out in the most recent Joint Council for Qualifications

St Colm’s High School strives to identify students’ needs from their first contact with the school. Professional reports are requested that demonstrate an identified need and a recommendation for an adjustment to meet the student’s needs and the type of access arrangements that are appropriate.

Access arrangements reflect the support that is usually given to the student in the classroom, internal exams and mock examinations. This is commonly referred to as ‘normal way of working.’ For example, the use of a word processor can be used by a student if this truly represents a student’s normal day to day method of working. The provision is put in place to address an underlying difficulty such as speed of handwriting, medical condition, physical disability, sensory impairment, planning and organisational difficulties or poor legibility.

The decision to apply for access arrangements is the school’s based on evidence of a history of need, history of provision and a specialist teacher access arrangements report.

Students potentially eligible for EAA need to be referred by their teacher /SENCO or in the case of a medical condition with a letter from their doctor or other qualified professional via their HOY.

Requests for EAA must be processed and submitted to the awarding bodies in accordance with deadlines set out in JCQ guidelines

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

 Statement of Educational Need

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.

St. Colm’s must ensure that any arrangements made do not interfere with the integrity of the assessment – therefore late applications can not be processed any later than 24 hrs prior to the exam. The centre must also be satisfied that the conditions for the examinations are adequate and that the candidate is indeed able to take the examinations.

Full details of guidelines are available from JCQ website [www.jcq.org.uk](http://www.jcq.org.uk)

“Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments”

June 2017