

# ACCESS ARRANGEMENTS

Access Arrangements for public examinations are provisions made to ensure that students are treated fairly. The idea is that those with learning difficulties are on a level playing field with those who don't have any difficulties. There will be different requirements for different people. Some will require extra time, some will require a reader; others may need to use a computer rather than to handwrite.

The Equality Act 2010 requires an Examining Body to make reasonable adjustments where a disabled person would be at a substantial disadvantage in undertaking an assessment. Disability is viewed broadly here and dyslexia is covered under this act.

At primary level, access arrangements are organised by considering a child's learning history and making suitable provision. It used to be the case that testing was needed but this has now been discontinued in favour of the school making a case from their knowledge of a child. It is the primary school's responsibility to do this; if this hasn't been put in place please discuss this in a formal meeting with your school SENCo.

At GCSE and A level the requirements are more specific. To gain extra time, a student has to gain a low score on a prescribed test. To gain a reader, the SENCO has to complete a Readers Note and state why the student needs this arrangement. No testing is necessary and a Form 8 is not needed. The school still needs to apply on-line but it is a tick box to say it is needed and there is a SENCO Reader Note on file. To gain a scribe, the student has to gain a low score on a writing and/or spelling test. Any student can use a word processor as long as it is their usual way of working. NB: this should be put in place by the school as early as possible. All arrangements must be the student's 'normal way of working'. No arrangement is allowed just for examinations.

It is usual for a school to organise access arrangements. Many schools have the use of a specialist teacher who can carry out the necessary testing. If you feel that your child is in need of a provision such as extra time, you should talk to the school SENCo to find out what they are doing.

If your child has a medical diagnosis of, for example, dyspraxia, reasonable adjustments should be put in place without the need of this testing. If your child has a statement of special educational needs or an EHC plan (this has replaced statements), this is also the case. If your child has a sensory impairment, again, more testing is not necessary. However, you may want to check with the school SENCo that these arrangements are in place.

You may find it useful to look at this link:

<https://www.bdadyslexia.org.uk/advice/children/my-childs-education/exam-access-arrangements>