

## Exam Access Arrangements Quick Guide

### Role of teachers and support staff

It is essential that all teachers and support staff understand the differences between SEND and Exam Access Arrangements (EAA) and are aware of their roles and responsibilities in contributing to the process of evidence collection in a timely fashion.

This is so that all staff are able to manage expectations and advise students and their parents/carers accurately as a first responder, and only have to pass on to the SEND team if there are supplementary questions.

**There are two types of EAA school-delegated and exam board delegated assessment. Both require us to demonstrate a picture of need and normal way of working.**

In order for us to apply for EAA we MUST:

- **Provide evidence of an ongoing need and show that the access arrangement we apply for is the student's normal way of working.**
- This evidence is supported by the graduated approach for SEND - Assess, Plan, Do, Review and collected over time via internal assessments to demonstrate normal way of working.
- Therefore, throughout Years 7, 8 and 9 we may **trial** various strategies and conduct a number of different tests and assessments in order to make sure that we are not only meeting the criteria but that we can work out what might be the best provision for the student.
- Having an Education Health and Care Plan or diagnosis of a Specific Learning Difficulty, does not necessarily mean that a student will qualify for access arrangements, even if the student has regular in class support.
- If an access arrangement has never been used, the application cannot be made.
- There is a deadline and cut-off point for applications each year (usually around March) and exam access arrangements cannot be added after this point. However - it would be increasingly difficult to justify 'normal way of working' if the EAA is not used in PPEs in December and March of Year 11.
- **No access arrangement is formalised until the end of Year 9/ start of Year 10\*** and any arrangement made before that time is essentially part of the assessment process and will only be 'trialled' until the application is made which will issue confirmation.

**\* This can be quite confusing for parents/carers as we are aware that students have sometimes been granted an access arrangement for tests at primary school or believe that if an access arrangement is being trialled in Key stage 3 that this will follow through to their KS4 examinations.**

**This is NOT the case** - for exam board delegated EAA we must get an assessment by a qualified assessor within 26 months of the exams to confirm the EAA and this is submitted to the exam board. The official assessment can show that the threshold is not met and/or the requested EAA is not accepted by the exam board.

## School Staff Responsibilities

- **Complete the Graduated Approach to identifying needs (RANGE 1) to build picture of need:**
  - Your professional judgments need to follow a structured approach to provide supportive evidence of need.
  - This structure is provided by the graduated approach: Assess, Plan, Do, Review **before** initiating the SEND referral process if you have concerns about a student's progress due to cognition.
  - This allows us to build up a picture over time.
  - Include all of the adjustments you are making in the classroom to support the students' learning needs - we have to record 'current difficulties in the classroom' and 'normal way of working' as part of the EAA application process.
- **Apply the strategies on the One Page Profile (SLP) consistently** - report back to SEND if students do not need/use the provision, especially in assessments.
- **Collect and submit evidence as part of internal assessments** - if a student is trailing or has an EAA - make sure it is applied in your in-class assessments and that evidence is gained (ie ask students to draw a line / change colour after normally allowed time so additional time use is evidence). Photocopy papers and return to the SEND Administrator to file.
- **Have a working overview of how Exam Access Arrangements are allocated** and provide accurate information to students, parents and carers as a first response.
- **Respond in a timely manner to requests for information via a round robin** - this is part of building the evidence to establish need. A partial picture potentially disadvantages the students.
- **Manage expectations and de-escalate** by not making suggestions or promising that a student may need extra time/ a smaller space or other exam access arrangements outside of the SEND referral process - we must have evidence of a cognitive need!
- **A simplified, parental version of this guidance will be on the website** and so parents/carers can be directed there for more information.

**Please note:** we are subject to no notice exam board inspection to check that the evidence for students identifies the **substantial and long-term adverse effect of their need**. We all have a role to play in ensuring that this evidence is present and robust for students we support / teach.