

Access Arrangements & Reasonable Adjustments:

Parent FAQ

1. What are Access Arrangements?

Access Arrangements are supports that enable eligible students to demonstrate their knowledge and skills in exams without changing the assessment itself. They reduce or remove barriers caused by a disability, learning difficulty, medical condition, or long term need.

Common arrangements include:

- Extra time
- Reader or reading software
- Scribe or speech to text
- Rest breaks
- Laptop use
- Prompting
- Alternative room arrangements
- Modified papers (e.g., enlarged print)
- Ear loops



JCQ regulations are updated annually, SGGS review all procedures each year to ensure full compliance.

2. What are Reasonable Adjustments?

Reasonable Adjustments are changes made for students with a disability under the Equality Act 2010. They ensure students are not disadvantaged compared with their peers. Examples include **modified materials, specialist equipment, or assistive technology**. Adjustments must be appropriate, proportionate, and evidence based.

3. How does SGGS decide if my child is eligible?

Eligibility is based on:

- Evidence of **normal way of working**
- Assessment data from qualified staff Specialist Teaching Service (STS)
- Teacher feedback
- Medical or clinical evidence (where relevant)
- JCQ criteria for each arrangement

Needs must be **long term, significant, and consistent**.

4. What does “normal way of working” mean?

JCQ requires that any exam arrangement must already be used in class. Examples:

- Regular laptop use

Access Arrangements & Reasonable Adjustments:

Parent FAQ

- Frequent need for rest breaks
- Difficulty working in large exam halls, supported by classroom evidence

SGGS monitors this through teacher reports, SEND records, and observations.

5. Can parents request Access Arrangements?

Parents can raise concerns or share evidence, but SGGS cannot grant arrangements solely on request. JCQ rules require formal assessment and documented evidence.

6. Does a medical diagnosis automatically qualify my child?

No. A diagnosis alone does not guarantee eligibility. JCQ requires evidence of how the condition affects exam performance and confirmation that the adjustment is part of normal way of working.

7. What assessments are used?

For learning difficulties, SGGS, through STS, uses standardised assessments such as:

- Reading tests
- Writing speed assessments
- Cognitive processing measures
- Working memory and phonological assessments

These must be completed by appropriately trained staff.

8. When are assessments carried out?

Typically:

- Year 9 or 10 for GCSE
- Year 12 for A Level Earlier assessments may occur if needs are well established.

9. What evidence is needed?

SGGS compiles a JCQ compliant evidence portfolio, which may include:

- Teacher comments
- SEND records
- Assessment scores
- Work samples
- Medical/clinical reports
- Records of normal way of working



Access Arrangements & Reasonable Adjustments:

Parent FAQ

10. How long do Access Arrangements last?

Most arrangements last for the duration of the qualification (GCSE or A-Level). However, **JCQ regulations change every academic year**, so SGGs reviews all arrangements annually to ensure they remain compliant. Access arrangements are reapplied for in Year 12, we collect evidence from the start of year 12, when the student has a change of key stage.

Arrangements may be updated if:

- Needs change
- New evidence emerges
- JCQ guidance is revised

11. Will my child get extra time?

Extra time is only granted when assessment evidence shows a **significant and long-term** processing or working speed difficulty. JCQ requires:

- Standardised scores below a set threshold
- Evidence of slow working in class
- Proof that extra time is part of normal way of working

12. Can my child use a laptop in exams?

Yes, if:

- There is evidence of need (e.g., handwriting difficulties, slow writing speed, physical disability)
- They use a laptop routinely in lessons, based on their learning need
- JCQ criteria are met

SGGS ensures laptops are exam compliant.

13. What if my child has anxiety?

SGGS may support students with:

- Rest breaks
- Smaller room arrangements
- Prompting



Wellbeing support medical evidence may be required if anxiety significantly affects exam performance.

Under the [Joint Council for Qualifications \(JCQ\)](#) regulations, **general anxiety, nervousness, or exam-related stress alone are not sufficient grounds for major access arrangements** like extra time or separate rooms. However, if a student has a **diagnosed, severe, long-term anxiety disorder** that constitutes a mental health disability under the Equality Act 2010, they **may** qualify for tailored reasonable adjustments.

Access Arrangements & Reasonable Adjustments:

Parent FAQ

14. What support is available without formal Access Arrangements?

SGGS provides a range of in school support, such as:

- Pastoral check ins
- Wellbeing strategies
- Study skills support
- Classroom differentiation
- Quiet spaces

These do not require JCQ approval.

15. How will I be informed?

Parents will receive:

- Confirmation of approved arrangements
- A summary of how they will be used
- Opportunities to discuss arrangements with staff

16. What if my child's needs change?

Please speak to your child's **pastoral team** or **teaching staff**. They will gather updated information and liaise with the SENDCo to review needs and ensure JCQ compliance.

17. Who can I contact?

If you have questions or wish to share new evidence, please contact:

- **The pastoral support team, or**
- **Your child's teaching staff**

They will advise, support, and direct queries to the SENDCo where appropriate.

