

St Michael's Catholic Grammar School

ACCESS ARRANGEMENTS AND REASONABLE ADJUSTMENTS POLICY

Approved 22nd March 2021

Access Arrangements are pre-examination adjustments for candidates based on evidence of need and normal way of working. Access Arrangements fall into two distinct categories: some arrangements are delegated to centres, others require prior JCQ^{CIC} awarding body approval.

1. St Michael's Catholic Grammar School's Policy for Access Arrangements and Reasonable adjustments is written in line with the **Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) Regulations document: 'Adjustments for candidates with disabilities and learning difficulties – Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments'** – with effect from 1st September 2017 to 31st August 2018
2. St Michael's adheres to the definitions in relation to access arrangements, reasonable adjustments, disability, special educational needs and learning difficulties as agreed by the JCQ awarding bodies and the Federation of Awarding Bodies (FAB). (See Annexe 1).
3. In line with JCQ regulations, St Michael's will make all decisions with regard to access arrangements based upon:
Whether the candidate has a substantial and long term impairment which has an adverse effect, in conjunction with the access arrangement being the candidate's normal way of working at St Michael's– demonstrating the involvement of the teaching staff in determining the need for the access arrangement.

Appropriate evidence of need will be available at St Michael's for inspection.

The School will:

- Provide relevant evidence of the nature and extent of the disability or difficulty/impairment which has a substantial and long term effect (history of need/history of provision/intervention strategies)
- Provide evidence that the difficulties are persistent and significant (history of need - assessment results/provision/intervention strategies)
- Show evidence of how the disability/difficulty/impairment has impacted on teaching and learning in the classroom (intervention strategies – assessment results – history of need/ provision – staff observations)

- Confirm that the candidate would be at a substantial disadvantage when compared with other candidates undertaking the assessment (history of need/provision/staff observations)
- Confirm that the access arrangement is the candidate's normal way of working within the school as a direct consequence of their disability (history of need/ provision/intervention strategies/staff and exam officer observations).
- Ensure that the arrangement (s) put in place reflect the support given to the candidate in school e.g.:
 - In the classroom;
 - and*
 - In internal school tests and mock exams.

As subjects vary, leading to different demands of the candidate, support may be needed in just one or two subjects; another candidate may need support in all their subjects. The key principle is that the specialist assessor can show a history of support and provision.

If a candidate never makes use of the arrangement granted to them – then it is not his or her normal way of working and the arrangement should not be awarded for examinations or indeed it should be removed.*

** The only exception to this is where an arrangement is put into place as a consequence of a temporary injury or impairment.*

For most common access arrangements refer to annexe 2.

4. Supporting evidence:

As per JCQ regulations certain applications may need to be supported with for example:

- A letter from CAMHS or a clinical psychologist or psychiatrist; *or*
- A letter from a hospital consultant; *or*
- A letter from the Local Authority Educational Psychology Service; *or*
- A letter from the Local Authority Sensory Impairment Service; *or*
- A letter from a Speech and Language Therapist (SALT).

5. Assessment:

- For those students potentially requiring access arrangements formal assessment and application to JCQ is carried out in Year 9 and/or 10 and Year 12 as standard. Assessments may also be carried out at other points, where necessary. When granted access arrangements are valid for 26 months.
- Parents may request an independent assessment. However St Michael's may elect to accept or reject a privately commissioned report. If rejected a member of the Senior Leadership team must provide a brief, written rationale to support this decision which must be available for inspection purposes.
 - At St Michael's the examination officer, examination secretary (member of SLT) and teaching staff all work together to ensure that appropriate access arrangements are put in place for all tests and examinations.

6. Special Consideration

Special Consideration is a post examination adjustment to a candidate's mark or grade to reflect temporary injury, illness or other indisposition at the time of the examination/assessment

Annexe 1:

Access Arrangements:

Access arrangements are agreed before an assessment. They allow candidates/learners with special educational needs, disabilities or temporary injuries to:

- Access the assessment;
- Show what they know and can do without changing the demands of the assessment.

The intention behind an access arrangement is to meet the particular needs of an individual disabled candidate without affecting the integrity of the assessment. Access arrangements are the principal way in which awarding bodies comply with the duty under the Equality Act 2010 to make 'reasonable adjustments'.

Reasonable Adjustments:

The Equality Act 2010 requires an awarding body to make reasonable adjustments where a candidate, who is disabled within the meaning of the Equality Act 2010, would be at a substantial disadvantage in comparison to someone who is not disabled. The awarding body is required to take reasonable steps to overcome that disadvantage. An example would be a Braille paper which would be a reasonable adjustment for a visually impaired person who could read Braille.

A reasonable adjustment for a particular person maybe unique to that individual and may not be included in the list of available access arrangements.

Whether an adjustment will be considered will depend on a number of factors which will include, but are not limited to:

- The needs of the disabled candidate/learner;
- The effectiveness of the adjustment;
- The cost of the adjustment; and
- The likely impact of the adjustment upon the candidates.

The responsibility of an awarding body is principally one of making reasonable adjustments for a candidate defined as disabled within the meaning of the Equality Act 2010.

Duty to make a reasonable adjustment

The duty for an awarding body to make a reasonable adjustment will apply where assessment arrangements would put a disabled candidate at a substantial disadvantage in comparison with a candidate who is not disabled. In such circumstances, the awarding body is required to take reasonable steps to avoid that disadvantage.

Definition of disability:

Section 6 of the Equality Act defines disability as a *'physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long term adverse effect on someone's ability to carry out normal day to day activities'*.

Definition of special educational needs

A candidate has 'special educational needs' as defined in the Education Act 1996 if he/she has a learning difficulty which calls for special educational provision to be made for him/her.

A candidate has a 'learning difficulty' if:

- He/she has a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of children of his/her age;

OR

- He/she has a disability which either prevents or hinders him/her from making use of the educational facilities of a kind generally provided for children of his/her age in schools within the area of the local authority.

The existence of a medical diagnosis or physical disability in itself does not imply that the candidate in question has special educational needs.

Annexe 2:

1. Supervised rest breaks
2. Extra time of up to 25%
3. Extra time of up to 50%
4. Extra time of over 50%
5. Reader/Computer reader
6. Read aloud
7. Scribe/Voice Activated software
8. Word processor
9. Transcript
10. Prompter
11. Oral Language Modifier
12. Live speaker for pre-recorded examinations components
13. Sign Language Interpreter
14. Practical Assistant
15. Alternative accommodation away from the centre
16. Other arrangements for candidates with disabilities: amplification equipment; Braille; closed circuit tv; colour naming by the invigilator for candidates who are Colour Blind; Coloured overlays; low vision aid/magnifier; optical character reader scanners; separate invigilation with the centre.

Date of original Policy:	1 st March 2016
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Date reviewed by Head of Centre:	March 2021
Signature of Head of Centre:	M Stimpson
To be reviewed:	Annually

