



Access arrangements for entrance test applicants who have special educational needs, disabilities or temporary conditions

Introduction

Some pupils who apply to sit the entrance tests may be considered to be at a disadvantage due to the testing arrangements that would normally apply. The Equality Act 2010 places a duty upon schools not to discriminate against disabled people or pupils in their access to education.

Selection for admission for St Edmund's College by way of academic testing is a "permitted form of selection" under the Equality Act 2010. Schools do, however, have a duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils in operating a selection process. Such adjustments may include making access arrangements.

The purpose of an access arrangement is to ensure, where possible, that barriers to assessment are removed for an applicant preventing them from being placed at a substantial disadvantage as a consequence of persistent and significant difficulties or a temporary injury. The integrity of the assessment is maintained, whilst at the same time providing access to assessments for the applicant. The arrangement(s) put in place must reflect the support given to the applicant in their current school, e.g. in the classroom or in internal school tests. This is commonly referred to as "normal way of working". The only exception to this is where an arrangement is put in place as a consequence of a temporary injury or impairment.

Applicants with disabilities, learning difficulties and/or temporary conditions are likely to have a number of the needs and may require a range of access arrangements, and may include:

- supervised rest breaks
- a prompter
- extra time
- a reader
- a scribe
- coloured overlays
- coloured/enlarged papers

(Note that the examples given are illustrative only and not exhaustive)



### The Process

Applications for access arrangements must be received by the deadline set. The application must be accompanied by the supporting evidence. This will allow St Edmund's College to consider each application and evidence in detail, and to make provision for the agreed access arrangements.

St Edmund's College will expect parents at the time of application for access arrangements to:

- be specific about the access arrangements that they are requesting;
- provide relevant information/evidence of the nature and extent of the disability or difficulty; or provide evidence of the extent of a temporary injury;
- confirm that the candidate has persistent and significant difficulties when accessing and processing information, or that their temporary injury necessitates access arrangements being made;
- confirm that the access arrangement requested is the applicants normal way of working in their current school as a direct consequence of their need (The only exception to this is where an arrangement is put in place as a consequence of a temporary injury or impairment)

### The Evidence required

- a letter from CAMHS, a clinical psychologist, a hospital consultant, or a psychiatrist;
- a letter from the Local Authority Educational Psychology Service, Local Authority Sensory Impairment Service or Occupational Health Service;
- a letter from a Speech and Language Therapist (SaLT);
- a specialist assessment completed no earlier than the start of Year 4 showing standardised scores in relation to:
  - speed of reading; **or**
  - speed of reading comprehension; **or**
  - speed of writing; **or**
  - cognitive processing measures which have a substantial and long term adverse effect on speed of working
- an Education, Health and Care Plan, which confirms the candidate's disability;
- Information from the applicant's current school to evidence their "normal way of working".



So as not to give an unfair advantage, the specialist assessor's report must also confirm that the candidate has two low average standardised scores (85-89) or one below average and one low average standardised score of 84 or less which relates to an assessment of:

- speed of reading; **or**
  - speed of reading comprehension; **or**
  - speed of writing; **or**
  - cognitive processing measures which have a substantial and long term adverse effect on speed of working.
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- Where a candidate reads for him/herself, a measure of text reading speed can be used as one of the two required scores for 25% extra time.
  - Where the candidate uses a computer reader, a reader or an examination reading pen, a measure of reading speed cannot be used as evidence for 25% extra time.
  - Where a candidate writes by hand, a measure of writing speed can be used as one of the two required scores for 25% extra time.
  - Where the candidate uses a scribe, speech recognition technology or a word processor, a measure of writing speed cannot be used as evidence for 25% extra time.

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

The above arrangements will be determined by the SENCo or an equivalent member of staff.