# King David High School

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# Exams Access Arrangements Policy

# 2026-2027

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| **Approved by:** | T Basger | **Date:** October 2026 |
| **Last reviewed on:** | October 2026 | |
| **Next review due by:** | October 2027 | |

# 1. Introduction and Purpose

## 1.1 Definition of Access Arrangements

1.1.1 Access arrangements are agreed **before an assessment** and allow candidates with a disability or long-term impairment to access examinations and demonstrate their knowledge and skills **without changing the demands or integrity of the assessment**.

1.1.2 Access arrangements are intended to **remove barriers** to assessment where a candidate would otherwise be placed at a substantial disadvantage.

1.1.3 Access arrangements are **not intended to improve performance**, compensate for gaps in learning, or reduce examination anxiety where this does not arise from a disability.

## 1.2 Legal Framework

1.2.1 This policy is informed by the Equality Act 2010 and the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) *Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments* and *General Regulations for Approved Centres*.

1.2.2 A reasonable adjustment will not be approved where it:
a) compromises the security or integrity of the assessment;
b) gives the candidate an unfair advantage;
c) is not reasonable in terms of time, cost or effectiveness.

## 1.3 Purpose of the Policy

1.3.1 This policy confirms that the centre leads the identification, assessment, approval and implementation of access arrangements.

1.3.2 The policy ensures that access arrangements are applied **consistently, lawfully and based on evidence**, not preference.

# 2. Scope of the Policy

## 2.1 Applicability

2.1.1 This policy applies to all internal and external examinations and assessments covered by JCQ regulations.

2.1.2 It applies to all staff involved in teaching, assessment, SEND provision and examinations administration.

# 3. Core Principles

## 3.1 Centre-Led Decision Making

3.1.1 Decisions regarding access arrangements are made by the centre, through the SENDCo and Exams Officer, using professional judgement and JCQ criteria.

3.1.2 Parental requests or external reports **do not determine entitlement** to access arrangements.

## 3.2 Evidence-Based Practice

3.2.1 Access arrangements are awarded only where there is **clear evidence of need**.

3.2.2 Evidence must demonstrate:
a) a substantial and long-term adverse effect;
b) persistent and significant difficulty under timed conditions;
c) that the arrangement reflects the candidate's **normal way of working**.

## 3.3 Normal Way of Working

3.3.1 An access arrangement must reflect the support the candidate **routinely uses in lessons and internal assessments**.

3.3.2 Arrangements will not be introduced solely for public examinations.

# 4. Identification of Need

## 4.1 Identification Process

4.1.1 Potential need for access arrangements is identified through:
a) classroom practice;
b) teacher observation;
c) internal assessments and mock examinations;
d) SEND review processes.

## 4.2 Insufficient Grounds for Access Arrangements

4.2.1 The following, in isolation, are **not sufficient grounds** for awarding access arrangements:
a) parental request;
b) diagnosis without functional impact;

c) examination anxiety not linked to a disability;
d) a desire to improve examination outcomes.

# 5. Roles and Responsibilities

## 5.1 Head of Centre

5.1.1 The Head of Centre holds overall responsibility for compliance with JCQ regulations.

## 5.2 SENDCo

5.2.1 The SENDCo is responsible for:
a) arranging evidence of need;
b) determining appropriate access arrangements;
c) ensuring decisions comply with JCQ guidance;
d) exercising professional judgement in all cases.

## 5.3 Exams Officer

5.3.1 The Exams Officer is responsible for:
a) processing applications through Access Arrangements Online (AAO);
b) maintaining required records;
c) ensuring approved arrangements are implemented correctly.

# 6. Supervised Rest Breaks

## 6.1 Nature of Supervised Rest Breaks

6.1.1 Supervised rest breaks are a **centre-delegated access arrangement**.

6.1.2 Their purpose is to allow a candidate to **pause from the examination**, not to provide thinking time.

## 6.2 Criteria for Awarding Supervised Rest Breaks

6.2.1 Supervised rest breaks may be considered where the SENDCo is satisfied that:
a) the candidate has an impairment with a substantial and long-term adverse effect;
b) there is a genuine need for the arrangement;
c) it is the candidate's normal way of working;
d) the difficulty is established within the centre.

## 6.3 Conditions of Use

6.3.1 Supervised rest breaks:
a) must be fully supervised;
b) require the examination clock to be stopped;
c) do not permit access to the examination paper;
d) must not be taken in the first or last 20 minutes of the examination.

6.3.2 The number, timing and duration of rest breaks are determined by the SENDCo, not the candidate.

# 7. Relationship Between Rest Breaks and Extra Time

## 7.1 Consideration of Appropriate Arrangements

7.1.1 Where a candidate has an impairment other than a learning difficulty, the SENDCo will consider supervised rest breaks before applying for 25% extra time.

7.1.2 This consideration is based on professional judgement, and the evidence of how the candidate works under timed conditions.

## 7.2 Awarding Extra Time

7.2.1 Extra time will only be approved where evidence demonstrates that supervised rest breaks do not adequately address the candidate's needs.

7.2.2 Extra time will not be awarded where the difficulty primarily relates to stamina, attention, or anxiety that can be managed through rest breaks.

7.2.3 Extra time can only be awarded if assessments and normal way of working support the need for extra time.

# 8. Parental Requests and Communication

## 8.1 Parental Involvement

8.1.1 The centre values constructive dialogue with parents and carers.

8.1.2 However, access arrangements are **not an entitlement** and are not awarded on request.

## 8.2 Challenging Requests

8.2.1 Where evidence does not meet JCQ criteria, the centre will decline requests for access arrangements.

8.2.2 Decisions will be clearly explained and grounded in national regulations to ensure fairness and consistency.

# 9. External and Private Assessments

## 9.1 Use of External and Private Assessments

9.1.1 The centre recognises that some parents and carers may commission external or private assessments relating to learning difficulties, neurodevelopmental conditions or medical diagnoses.

9.1.2 Any external or private assessment submitted to the centre does not automatically confer entitlement to examination access arrangements.

## 9.2 Requirements for Validity

9.2.1 For an external or private assessment to be considered by the centre, it must:

a) be completed by a professionally qualified assessor recognised by the appropriate governing or regulatory body;

b) be conducted in line with current JCQ requirements for access arrangements;

c) provide clear evidence of functional impact under timed conditions.

9.2.2 Reports that do not meet these requirements may be considered informative only and will not be used as the basis for awarding access arrangements.

## 9.3 Prior Notification to the Centre

9.3.1 The centre must be informed in advance of any external or private assessment intended to support an application for access arrangements.

## 9.3.2 This requirement ensures that:

a) the assessment is appropriate for its intended purpose;

b) the assessor’s qualifications meet regulatory expectations;

c) the assessment aligns with JCQ regulations and centre processes.

## 9.4 Consequences of Failure to Inform

9.4.1 Where an external or private assessment is commissioned without prior notification to the centre, the centre reserves the right to determine that the assessment cannot be accepted as valid evidence for access arrangements.

9.4.2 In such cases, the centre is under no obligation to use the assessment to support an application for access arrangements.

### 9.5 Relationship to Centre Evidence

9.5.1 Any external or private assessment will only be considered alongside robust centre-based evidence of the candidate's normal way of working.

9.5.2 Where centre evidence does not support the conclusions of an external report, the centre's evidence and professional judgement will take precedence.

## 10. Record Keeping and Monitoring

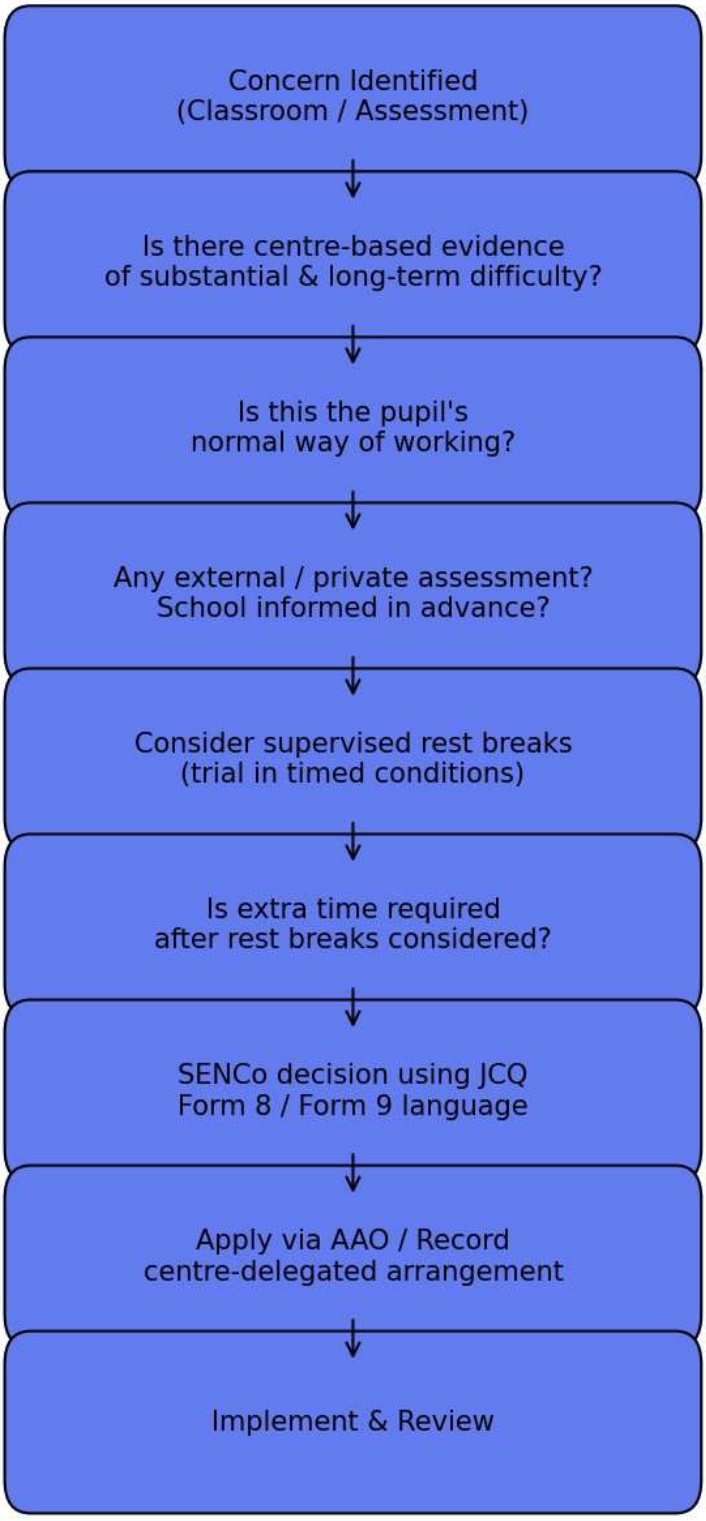
### 10.1 Records

9.1.1 The centre maintains appropriate records for all candidates with approved access arrangements in line with JCQ requirements.

### 10.2 Review

9.2.1 This policy is reviewed annually to ensure compliance with the most current JCQ guidance.

**Staff Guidance Flow Chart**


Concern Identified
(Classroom / Assessment)
Is there centre-based evidence
of substantial & long-term difficulty?
Is this the pupil's
normal way of working?
Any external / private assessment?
School informed in advance?
Consider supervised rest breaks
(trial in timed conditions)
Is extra time required
after rest breaks considered?
SENCo decision using JCQ
Form 8 / Form 9 language
Apply via AAO / Record
centre-delegated arrangement
Implement & Review