

ACCESS ARRANGEMENTS - INFORMATION FOR PARENTS/CARERS

What are Access Arrangements?

These are reasonable adjustments for students who have a disability under the Equality Act 2010, a temporary injury or a special educational need that could significantly affect their ability to perform in exams.

The awarding of access arrangements is overseen by the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) and procedures are set out in detail in the [Regulations and Guidance - JCQ Joint Council for Qualifications](#). For a full copy of the document please follow the link. Failure to comply with these can lead to a school losing its right to act as a centre for students taking examinations

Access Arrangements at Birkdale

In order to enable our students to perform in line with their potential, appropriate arrangements must be put in place. However, these must level the playing field rather than give a student an unfair advantage.

Students who may require access arrangements for a special educational need must be referred to the Special Education Needs Co-ordinator (SENCo), Lisa Marsh. Referrals can be made by teachers, parents or by the student themselves.

In order for Access Arrangements to be granted for GCSE and GCE A level. The SENCo must "paint a picture of need" by providing evidence that demonstrates the need. This includes:

- the provision of relevant information /evidence of the candidate's persistent and significant difficulties
- demonstrating how the candidate's difficulty/disability has affected teaching and learning in the classroom. Provide evidence from teachers, and
- detailing the candidate's normal way of working within the centre, the support given and how this relates to the proposed arrangement(s).

The SENCo or specialist assessor will then conduct assessments to verify cognitive or literacy difficulties.

What is your role as Parent/Carer?

As parents/carers, you may of course advise school if you feel that your child may benefit from a particular access arrangement but this alone is not a reason to grant or trial that arrangement. This decision rests with the school and is made by the SENCo informed by your child's teachers. Reports from outside agencies are considered and used to evidence an application for Access Arrangements. However these can only advise. Letters from GPs cannot be used as evidence.

A full copy of the access arrangements policy can be found on the school website. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the **SENCo Lisa Marsh** by email lemarsh@birkdaleschool.org.uk or by telephone on 0114 2668408 extension 647.