



Reasonable Adjustments for Examinations: Policy and Procedures

INTRODUCTION

Truro and Penwith College is committed to providing an inclusive and supportive learning environment, where all learners have the opportunity to access and engage with their learning. To this end, the College strives to make reasonable adjustments for learners with long-term learning difficulties and disabilities, (as defined within the terms of the Equality Act 2010), who would otherwise be at a substantial disadvantage in relation to their peers.

Exam Access Arrangements are just one form of support that a student may require. The college provides other support such as study tuition to help with preparation for exams and assessment. Our Specialist Assessors and Learning Support team can discuss options for support with students/Next of Kin (NOK) on request.

Learners whose difficulties and/or disabilities consistently and substantially affect their learning will be invited to be assessed for Exam Access Arrangements (EAA), in order to have fair and equal access to examinations and assessments through a range of reasonable adjustments. Subject to the necessary supporting evidence, the College will make recommendations to the appropriate awarding bodies for suitable access arrangements. EAA will be put in place following confirmation from the Awarding Body.

Access Arrangements will vary according to the assessment of the needs of the individual learner and the demands of their examination subjects.

Access Arrangements must not affect the integrity of the assessment, nor should they give candidates an unfair advantage.

1.1 Scope

To make appropriate additional assessment and examination arrangements for all Truro and Penwith College learners.

An **Exam Access Arrangement** (EAA) may include:

- Extra time
- Rest breaks
- Readers
- Scribe
- Word Processor (see Appendix 1)
- Smaller or separate rooms (determined strictly according to need within resources available)
- Modified papers
- Prompter
- Access to assistive technology/specialist software or equipment
- Bi-lingual dictionary

The list is not exhaustive as arrangements are unique to the individual; therefore, other provision may also be appropriate.

Access arrangements should reflect a normal way of working for which there is robust evidence.

All arrangements require approval and confirmation from the Awarding Bodies prior to the exam. We follow the application deadlines as set out in the JCQ regulations booklet, which are updated every year.

Special consideration is an adjustment that can be applied for only after an examination has taken place. It is an adjustment made to a candidate's grade to reflect the impact that a temporary illness, injury or other disposition at the time of the assessment may have had on the results. Any application will be considered on a case-by-case basis and needs to be accompanied by supporting evidence.

2. Procedures

Identification

It is essential that candidates who may require EAA are identified as early as possible so that application deadlines for EAAs are met and reasonable adjustments are established quickly in learners' day to day lessons.

These are usually identified through the enrolment process e.g. application, interview. If this is the case a **Confidential Additional Learning Support Referral Form/Medical Form (CAMF)** will be completed at interview and sent to the **Learning Support and Inclusive Practice Team**. Details are recorded on the ALS pages of a student's MIS record.

EAAs permitted at school do not automatically apply at college. Further assessment may be required if prior documentation does not meet JCQ qualifying criteria. New classroom evidence **must** also be submitted to demonstrate consistent and substantial need.

A recommendation from an external source is only advisory e.g. Educational Psychologist's Report and does not supersede the specialist assessor's decision.

Some learners are identified after enrolment by members of staff, other professionals, parents/carers or learners themselves. Where no prior information exists to indicate a learner's need, a body of evidence will need to be gathered before an assessment is offered. Initially, students will need to be referred to the Learning Support department for an 'EXACT' screening test to determine eligibility for EAA. If appropriate, the learner will be referred to the Specialist Assessors for further individualised assessment.

Students who require assessment for access arrangements must be identified before October Half-term in their first year, so the appropriate arrangements can be made throughout their entire course. Learners identified after this date can be offered learning support but not considered for EAA (with the exception of apprentices and the development of any new medical condition that may have a substantial effect on learning and assessment).

Assessment

An EAA assessment is the means by which the College determines the appropriate exams provision required by a student, to address a substantial disadvantage in learning. For some learners e.g. those with Education Health Care Plans, it can constitute a meeting to review existing paperwork and for others, through the administering of appropriate reading, writing and/or processing tasks, (dependent on individual need). These tools use standardised scores to identify those students who fall substantially below the average range in specific areas of learning, thereby indicating that EAAs should be put in place to allow fair access to assessment.

The consideration, and where appropriate assessment, is carried out by our level 7 qualified Specialist Assessors. The results are then reviewed, along with any additional information provided, including the feedback from lecturing staff. Appropriate EAAs are awarded only where indicative results are accompanied by sufficient evidence to substantiate the need. The type of provision can vary according to the subject being examined, the student's individual requirements and what is deemed to be a 'reasonable adjustment'.

In determining whether an access arrangement is 'reasonable', consideration should be made for the student's needs, the effectiveness of the arrangement, the logistics of implementation and its likely impact on both the individual and other candidates. **Where appropriate, the Examinations Officer may also be consulted.**

Assessment appointments are prioritised according to the complexity of a learner's difficulties, the exams being taken and their respective EAA application deadlines. In all cases, sufficient time is required to conduct the assessment, gather the supporting evidence, consider all relevant documentation and make the appropriate recommendations, before any application can be made to the Awarding Bodies.

Learners will only be offered one appointment as standard – this is clearly explained in the appointment invitation via student email. If a learner is unable to attend, they must advise the College as soon as possible.

A learner who does not attend their first appointment must request a second themselves, via the Learning Support team.

When arranging assessments for EAA, every effort will be made to minimise disruption to a student's learning. Where an appointment does coincide with a lesson, the appropriate lecturer and/or tutor will be advised by email in advance and asked to encourage the student to attend.

Students with physical or medical needs

Students with physical or medical needs including mental health will be sent an email requesting supporting evidence from the specialist medical professional treating your condition (this cannot be a letter from the GP). This should detail the nature of their needs and recommendations for provision in the classroom and exams.

This evidence should be returned to learningsupport@truro-penwith.ac.uk. The Specialist Assessor may contact the student/NOK thereafter to discuss appropriate arrangements if further clarification is required.

Students with exam anxiety

JCQ regulations state that disabilities need to be supported by evidence of a long-term medical condition or long-term social, mental or emotional needs. Therefore, exam anxiety does not qualify students for exam access arrangements.

Students with exam anxiety are referred to the **Student Services Team** for coping strategies in advance of the exams.

Word Processor

The JCQ regulations set out the following with regard to the provision of a word processor for exams:

There are particular types of candidates that might benefit from the use of a word processor in exams. These include:

- Those with a learning difficulty which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to write legibly
- Those with a medical condition
- Those with a physical disability
- Those with a sensory impairment
- Those with planning and organisational difficulties when writing by hand
- Those with illegible and unintelligible handwriting.

The use of a word processor must reflect the candidate's normal way of working within the centre as a result of one or more of these difficulties.

A word processor **cannot** simply be granted to a candidate because he/she now wants to type rather than write in examinations or can work faster on a keyboard, or because he/she uses a laptop at home.

In accordance with these parameters, Truro and Penwith College will provide candidates with a word processor for exams only when they meet one or more of the criteria set out above

Late applications

Late applications are those who notify us of their needs or provide their evidence beyond October Half-term in their first year of study.

Truro and Penwith College does not consider new requests after this date but will consider provision of evidence for those were aware of.

Evidence of “normal way of working”

In order to approve EAAs, Awarding Bodies require evidence of a student’s normal way of working. The EAAs “must reflect the support given in the Centre”.

Picture of Need Forms (PONs) will be required from all relevant lecturing staff for completion as appropriate to demonstrate ‘normal way of working’ (JCQ). The PON provides evidence of a student’s normal way of working and is used to support assessment findings.

It is a regulatory requirement that PONs must be in place before an EAA application can be made.

It is imperative that candidates use any arrangements that they are entitled to on a regular basis – in class, classroom-based assessments and internal examinations – in order to demonstrate that they are part of their normal way of working. Failure to do this could result in the removal of the EAA provision. Candidates are made aware of this at the time of the assessment and sign to declare their acceptance of these terms. They can also sign to decline assessment if required.

Approved EAA

Approved access arrangements are detailed on the Additional Learning Support (ALS) pages of a student’s Staff Advantage record.

Confirmation of the arrangements will be sent to the individual students and their Next of Kin.

Reviews

A College EAA assessment is valid for 26 months. For those who have been awarded 50% extra time or an Oral Language Modifier (OLM), this should be reviewed annually. For all other access arrangements, there is no need to carry out another assessment whilst the student is continuing to study at College, although further classroom evidence may be required. Students should inform the **Learning Support team** if an EAA is no longer being used, or if additional arrangements may need to be made. Students will be sent a further email to confirm provision, *only if* adjustments have been made.

Appeals

The Specialist Assessors decision is final and is not subject to appeal.

For any other concerns please follow the complaints procedure.

Appendix 1

Roles and responsibilities

Head of Centre – responsible for the appointment of the Examination Officer and Examinations Assessment Advisor at both centres.

Director of Quality – responsible for the work of the Learning Services and Examinations teams on the Truro campus

DTL Learning Support and Inclusive Practice – oversees the implementation of all reasonable adjustments.

Examinations Officer/ Deputy Exams Officers– oversees the operations of examinations.

Specialist Assessors - hold appropriately documented qualifications and undertake continued professional development, in line with JCQ requirements– responsible for carrying out assessments and determining appropriate access arrangement provision for examinations; applies to Awarding Bodies.

Student Services Mental Health Advisor - responsible for offering advice on examination coping strategies.

Ultimate responsibility rests with the Principal and the Senior Management Team