

Supporting SENCOs with Access Arrangements

Supporting SENCOs with access arrangements is a crucial part of ensuring students with additional needs are given a fair opportunity to succeed in assessments

Understanding Access Arrangements

Access arrangements are pre-exam arrangements made for students with specific needs, such as special educational needs, disabilities and/or temporary injuries to access the assessment, and show what they know, without changing the demands of the assessment. (JCQ AARA 2025).

Identifying students

1. Early identification

- SENCOs work closely with subject teachers to identify need early and monitor ongoing support.
- Early identification allows for timely support and ensures arrangements reflect the student's typical classroom experience.

Strategies:

- Review KS2 SATS or baseline assessments
- Reading/Spelling age tests
- Track teacher concerns and observations
- Use transition information

Referral Systems

Create a clear and accessible referral process for staff to flag concerns about student performance or exam access needs.

Referral indicators may include:

- Poor handwriting speed or legibility
- Difficulty completing timed tasks
- Needing frequent repetition or prompts
- Slow processing or reading speed
- Anxiety or sensory needs during assessments.

Monitoring 'Normal Way of Working'

Any arrangement used in exams **must** be the student's normal way of working in the classroom.

Evidence to gather:

- Use of a laptop for extended writing tasks
- Extra time in in-class assessments and/or homework
- Teacher records of rest breaks or prompts
- Reader/scribe support in lessons and/or tests.

Access Arrangement Assessments

If classroom evidence suggests the student has an impairment which substantially affects their performance, the SENCO **must** arrange for a formal assessment to be completed by the Centre's appointed assessor.

Prior to assessment the SENCO must provide the assessor with background information i.e. a picture of need has been painted as required in Part 1 of from 8.