# Examination Access Arrangements Policy and Procedure

## 1. Purpose and Commitment

**1.1.** This document explains how the College Group approaches [topic e.g. student behaviour, complaints, appeals, data protection] in a way that is fair, transparent, and respectful.

**1.2.** The College Group is committed to creating an environment where students, staff and other stakeholders feel safe, respected, and able to participate fully in learning and work. Our policies aim to support wellbeing, dignity, and inclusion while ensuring that concerns and issues are addressed consistently and fairly.

**1.3.** Where possible, the College Group seeks to resolve concerns in ways that promote understanding, accountability, and positive outcomes for everyone involved.

## 2. Scope

**2.1.** The aim of this policy is to inform students, staff, and other parties of the procedures in place to make appropriate additional assessment and examination arrangements for disabled students or those with specific learning difficulties across the Colleges i.e., for Further Education, Higher Education and Apprenticeships. The policy also aims to ensure that appropriate, effective, and additional assessments and exam access arrangements are in place for disabled students and those with specific learning difficulties and that these arrangements are communicated to the student, Exams Team, Course Tutors, parents/guardians, and employers, as appropriate. Some adjustments may not be permitted by particular Awarding Organisations. In all cases, the Exams Team will request approval and confirmation from the relevant Awarding Organisations.

**2.2.** The Loughborough College group is committed to the success and achievement of all students, including those with additional learning support needs, learning difficulties and disabilities in accordance with and defined by the Equality Act 2010. This policy is written in line with the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) regulations document, which is updated annually, 'Adjustments for Candidates with Disabilities and Learning Difficulties: Access Arrangements



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and Reasonable Adjustments.' The policy and procedure set out how the college will comply with Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) legislation to provide all students with fair and equal access to examinations and assessments for students at The Loughborough College Group.

**2.3.** This policy applies to Loughborough College Group, its colleges, and its subsidiaries.

## 3. Definitions

**3.1.** Definitions are intended to help readers understand this guidance document and should be interpreted in a reasonable and supportive way, rather than used to make assumptions about individuals or situations. Where there is uncertainty about how a term should be understood, individuals are encouraged to seek clarification from the College Group.

| Key Term/Acronym | Definition |
|---|---|
| **Access Arrangements** | Adjustments agreed before an examination or assessment that allow an eligible student to access the assessment without changing what is being assessed. |
| **JCQ – Joint Council for Qualifications** | The organisation that sets common regulations and guidance for examinations, including the rules for access arrangements and reasonable adjustments. |
| **Reasonable Adjustment** | An adjustment made for a disabled student to reduce a substantial disadvantage while maintaining the integrity and assessment objectives of the examination. |
| **SEND – Special Educational Needs and Disabilities** | A term covering students who have special educational needs and/or disabilities that may require additional support or adjustments. |
| **EHCP – Education, Health and Care Plan** | A statutory plan describing a young person's education, health and care needs and the support required to meet them. |
| **Form 8** | JCQ documentation used to record evidence and assessment information supporting certain applications for access arrangements. |
| **Form 9** | JCQ documentation used to record evidence supporting access arrangements where the required evidence is not recorded through a Form 8. |
| **Centre Note** | A record produced by the College to document evidence supporting an access arrangement where permitted under JCQ regulations. |



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| | |
|---|---|
| **Special Consideration** | A post-examination adjustment that may be made by an awarding organisation where a student was temporarily affected by illness, injury or other circumstances at the time of an assessment. |
| **Standardised Assessment/Test** | A formally developed assessment administered and scored consistently against established standards, used to provide evidence of a student's needs. |
| **Standardised Score** | A score that allows an individual's performance to be compared against a standardised population. The assessments referred to in this policy use a mean score of 100 and a standard deviation of 15. |

**3.2.** Unless the context requires otherwise, singular words include the plural and vice versa, references to a person include an individual or legal entity, and references to legislation include any amendments or replacements.

**3.3.** The terms "including", "include", and similar expressions are illustrative and do not limit the meaning of the preceding words. References to the Group or College refer to all parts of the group.

## 4. Policy Impact Assessments

**4.1.** This document has been assessed for its impact on equal opportunities and will be informed by the aim to eliminate all forms of discrimination in all strands of the equal opportunities' legislation.

**4.2.** This document has been assessed for potential risk on data subjects due to the processing of personally identifiable information. All processing has been reviewed and is in line with all current Data protection laws and appropriate safeguards implemented to ensure that the policy has privacy by design as its underlying approach.

**4.3.** This document has been impact assessed where appropriate for Safeguarding, Health and Safety and Sustainability Factors to ensure that all potential risks are identified and mitigated, and that the policy supports a safe, inclusive, and environmentally responsible learning and working environment.

**4.4.** This document has been mapped against the ISO 9001 principles to ensure that Loughborough College Group are following and embedding these principles across and throughout all of their policies and procedures.



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## 5. Policy/Procedure

**5.1.** The Loughborough College Group will take every opportunity to identify students' needs from their first contact with the College and throughout their time at the College. A student with a disability or difficulty, which has a substantial and long-term effect on performance in examinations, may qualify for access arrangements.

**5.2.** **Access arrangements** Access arrangements are agreed before an assessment or examination and before the published deadline dates. They allow a student with special educational needs, disabilities, or temporary injuries to access the assessment - show what they know and can do without changing the demands of the assessment.

**5.3.** 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 can only be applied for if the candidate meets all of the following criteria:

5.3.1. They must be disabled within the meaning of the Equality Act 2010*.

5.3.2. The Access Arrangement/s being applied must be their normal way of working.

5.3.3. Their disability is persistent and significant.

5.3.4. There must be evidence of the student's current difficulties and how they substantially impact on teaching and learning in the classroom

5.3.5. Teaching staff must provide written evidence of the need and the provision of reasonable adjustments in the classroom to meet the student's needs due to their disability.

5.3.6. Written confirmation must be provided to say that without the Access Arrangement applied for, the student would continue to be at a substantial disadvantage.

**5.4.** Who is eligible for Examination Access Arrangements

5.4.1. Students who have been formally identified as having a condition, which adversely affects their ability to learn or take tests and examination, may be eligible for examination access arrangements. The criteria by which individuals are identified are set out clearly by the JCQ. The decision is based on whether the student has a substantial and long-term impairment, which affects their ability to display their knowledge within an assessment situation. Students may have a range of diagnosed conditions or disabilities requiring 'reasonable adjustments' to be made for them.



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5.4.2. If a student has an issue or experiences anxiety on the day of, or in the days leading up to an examination, it is unlikely that an access arrangement can be put in place in time. However if a small change can be made to assist a student, and it is in line with the JCQ regulations we will endeavour to put this in place.

5.4.3. Students with special educational needs are not automatically eligible for access arrangements. For example, a student with a slight hearing impairment, a previous diagnosis of 'mild dyslexia' or a physical disability that does not affect performance in an examination may not meet the criteria for access arrangements.

5.4.4. However, when concerns are raised about a particular student, information from all teaching and support staff is sought to see if similar concerns are confirmed by others, prior to the implementation of access arrangements.

5.4.5. Access Arrangements may vary due to the different demands in some subject areas. If this is the case, then access arrangements may be awarded only for those subjects or adapted and changed for other subjects. All access arrangements decisions are based in line with the student's normal way of working.

5.4.6. The Learning Support team and specialist assessors must work with teaching staff, support staff and exams office staff to ensure that approved access arrangements are in place for internal assessments/tests, mock exams, and exams.

5.4.7. How reasonable the adjustment is will depend on a number of factors including the needs of the student. An adjustment may not be considered reasonable if it involves unreasonable costs, time frames or affects the security or integrity of the assessment.

5.4.8. There is no duty on the Awarding Organisations to make any adjustment to the assessment objectives being tested in an assessment.

**5.5. Special Consideration**

Special Consideration is a post examination adjustment to a student's mark or grade to reflect temporary injury, illness, or other indisposition at the time of the examination/assessment requiring authoritative support and at the discretion of the Awarding Organisation.

**5.6. Procedure**



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5.6.1. Guidelines for the assessment of the candidate's learning difficulties by an assessor at The Loughborough College Group

5.6.1.1. Only assessors appointed by The Loughborough College Group with the relevant qualifications will conduct assessments.

5.6.1.2. Assessors must personally conduct the assessments and must not sign off assessments carried out by another professional. Assessments will normally be carried out face to face, however, remote appointments may be provided where an application is unable to get into college.

5.6.1.3. Before the assessment, the assessor will check the candidates background information and history of need to paint a picture as required in Part 1 of the Form 8.

5.6.1.4. The assessor will carry out tests which are relevant to support the application and only use current editions of nationally standardised tests which produce standardised scores.

5.6.1.5. The candidate's chronological age must be less than the test ceiling unless there is no published test for the candidate's age.

5.6.1.6. All results must be given as standardised scores which use a mean of 100 and a standard deviation of 15.

5.6.1.7. Form 8 or Form 9 must be used to record information about a candidate's access arrangements/ reasonable adjustments and be available to be presented for inspection. These will be stored electronically and only accessible by authorised College staff.

5.6.1.8. JCQ regulations for the completion of forms must be adhered to at all times.

**5.7.** Information for students with a learning support need who require an exam access arrangement request:

5.7.1. Learning support need declared prior to enrolment

5.7.1.1. Students are asked to declare at application and enrolment whether they need support to help them achieve their studies; this includes prior support and exam concessions they may have had at school.



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5.7.1.2. When a student declares a support need at application, they will be sent a form to gather more information about their support need and how this may affect their learning. This form will be sent twice, and a reminder sent to the student and parent/ carer (if under 18 years of age). Once the College has received the completed form, they will be invited into college for an initial assessment of support needs, where a learning support plan will be written.

5.7.1.3. At the learning support meeting with the student, where an exam access arrangement is identified as being required, the student may be asked to provide evidence to support the request. An exam access arrangement appointment will be booked in after the student has enrolled. If there are pre-existing diagnosed condition, evidence will be required to support an application for an exam arrangement. Students will be required to bring this to the meeting with them.

**5.8. Student support need declared or identified after enrolment:**

5.8.1. Onsite students:

If the student declares a support need at enrolment, the Learning Support team will be informed by the enroller, or the curriculum team and an initial assessment of need meeting will be arranged. If a support need is observed by staff after enrolment, a referral can be made, using the learning support referral form located on the staff Dashboard. Evidence of normal ways of working will be required at the point of referral, the referral window for FE is open from 10th September to 20th February. If there are pre-existing diagnosed condition, evidence will be required to support an application for an exam arrangement. Students will be required to bring this to the meeting with them.

5.8.2. Apprentices and full-time off-site students:

can also declare a support need at application. It is the responsibility of the apprenticeship team and Enrolment team for offsite students to inform the Learning Support team of the student's support need and request an initial assessment of need meeting. The learning support team will arrange the meeting and a learning support plan will be written and shared with the relevant teams. A referral for an apprentice needs to be made within 8 weeks of enrolment.



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5.8.3. Prior to submitting a referral for an exam access appointment, teachers will identify and provide evidence of a student's normal way of working. Students will be assessed for their exam access arrangements within the specified windows to allow sufficient time for approved concessions to be put in place prior to the exam.

**5.9. Supporting evidence.**

5.9.1. Students will be required to provide the college with evidence such as medical reports outlining significant medical needs and disability; an educational psychologist report which explicitly identifies a learning difficulty, such as dyslexia or CAMs. The evidence required by the student will be clearly stated prior to or at the exam access arrangements appointment.

5.9.2. The college will provide evidence of normal way of working (including medical evidence) and information provided within an Education, Health, and Care Plan (EHCP) where a student has one.

5.9.3. Students that have previously had exam arrangements in school will need to be reassessed or provide a form 8 or 9 from their previous school for their access arrangements to be put in place. JCQ regulations state that the supporting evidence for access arrangements must come from within the Centre or a Centre approved assessor.

5.9.4. All examination arrangements awarded have to be supported by documentary evidence kept on file. Awarding Organisation inspections take place unannounced throughout the year and must have the requested evidence available; failure to comply with the regulations can result in institutional malpractice, which may affect the candidate's result(s).

5.9.5. The College will hold evidence in its files that can be inspected at short notice. This can include, but is not limited to:

**5.10.** Supporting statements from teaching staff and the Inclusive learning team, if applicable, identifying the student's current difficulties in classroom and examinations, and the adjustments that are in place in the classroom and exams.

5.10.1. Educational Psychologist reports.

5.10.2. Speech Therapist reports Occupation Therapist reports.



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5.10.3. Letters from hospital consultants and other medical practitioners in support of e.g. epilepsy, asthma, diabetes, Carpal Tunnel Syndrome.

5.10.4. Reports from Hearing Impairment (HI) and Visual Impairment (VI) advisory teachers.

5.10.5. Copies of Statements of Educational Needs, or Education, Health Care Plan (EHCP).

5.10.6. Permission from the exam board for the arrangement.

5.10.7. A signed copy of the Form 8 or Form 9 by College's designated assessor.

5.10.8. Letters from outside agencies such as CAHMS (Children and Adolescent Mental Health.

5.10.9. Letters from outside agencies such as CAHMS (Children and Adolescent Mental Health Services) and other mental health professionals".

5.10.10. Signed student data protection forms.

5.10.11. In cases where a GP has provided medical letters for anxiety or depression, then the normal way of working evidence must show that the College has been working with this student to ensure that they are not at a disadvantage. If the teaching staff are unable to provide this information, then the access arrangement cannot be awarded.

**5.11.** Processing exam access arrangements and adjustments requiring Awarding Organisation approval

5.11.1. Student is seen by specialist assessors who will conduct appropriate standardised assessments, examine existing paperwork to gather evidence of need.

5.11.2. If assessors are not satisfied that there is enough evidence of need/provision/normal way of working, they will liaise with appropriate staff to gather evidence:

5.11.3. **Teaching staff**: evidence of normal way of working within the classroom.

5.11.4. **Welfare and Development team**: mental health difficulties.

5.11.5. **Learning Support assessors:** ASD (where cannot be assessed) medical conditions, sensory impairments, physical disabilities.



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**5.12.** Once supporting evidence is gathered the specialist assessor will fill in form 8, form 9 or Centre note, sign a paper copy, scan in data protection form, and save all paperwork to the student's folder within shared drive. Submit a request to the Exams team.

**5.12.1. The exams office will:**

5.12.1.1. Use the form 8, 9 to apply to exam boards.

5.12.1.2. Inform students via their ILP and tutors of the outcome of an application and update the information on ProSolution.

5.12.1.3. Arrange and implement the exam access arrangements for the student.

**5.13.** Separate invigilation within the Centre

*5.13.1 Due to Mental Health*

The Learning Support assessment team will be required to provide form 9 or Centre note for the Examinations team confirming:

- A comprehensive Learning Support Plan has been produced by the welfare team which outlines a students needs.
- A referral has been completed including evidence of normal way of working.
- Medical evidence of mental health needs is provided.

In all cases, the student will be offered a smaller room with others. Only in exceptional circumstances will they be offered a room to themselves. Substantial evidence of need will be required for this.

*5.13.2 Due to ASD/ADHD/behavioural problems*

The appointed member of support staff will be required to provide a letter-headed statement or Centre note confirming:

- The student is known to the college support team.
- There is sufficient evidence that a separate room is required.



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5.13.3 *Due to a medical condition/sensory impairment or physical disability/temporary disability (injuries and accidents):*

The assessor will be required to provide a letter-headed statement or Centre note confirming:

- The student is known to the college support team.
- There is sufficient evidence that a separate room and/or recommended concessions are required.
- There is evidence from a medical professional e.g., doctors' letter confirmed the need.

**5.14. Rest breaks**

5.14.1. The appropriate assessor (mental health, ASD, physical difficulties etc.) will be required to liaise with the student to provide the appropriate evidence.

5.14.2. The appropriate assessor will need to meet with the student to discuss the length of a rest break and to determine the type of rest break activity that will be taking place.

5.14.3. The length of the rest break is to be communicated to the exams team when sent for processing

5.14.4. The amount of time taken for rest breaks will be added to the end of the exam.

**5.15. Use of a Word Processor (laptop) with spellcheck disabled**

5.15.1. Students must be assessed by Learning Support.

5.15.2. Students might be entitled to this exam arrangement due to slow handwriting speed or illegible handwriting but also due to an underlying need such as a medical condition or mental health.

5.15.3. Students cannot have this exam arrangement in place just because they prefer typing or they work faster on a word processor.

5.15.4. Evidence must be provided by the teaching staff that this is normal way of working.



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**5.16. Withdrawal of access arrangements**

Where a student does not use the agreed access arrangements, or their circumstances have changed the allocated exam access arrangements may be withdrawn.

**5.17.** *Exams that are not regulated by JCQ*.

Students entered for an examination set by an Awarding Organisation that is not regulated by JCQ, may find that the rules regarding access arrangements are different. The Awarding Organisations set their own rules regarding access arrangements and their use in specific subjects.

**5.18. Failure to comply**

5.18.1. Failure to comply is defined as putting into place Access Arrangements not agreed by the Awarding Organisations or permitting access arrangements within the centre which are not supported by appropriate evidence may constitute malpractice which may impact on the candidate's result'.

5.18.2. Failure of Reader/Scribe/prompt to abide by the regulations can lead to the disqualification of a student.

# 6. Roles and Responsibilities

**6.1.** Students

The process for ensuring that the most appropriate classroom support and examination access arrangements are identified, assessed and put in place for all students for the right qualification and at the right time can take some arranging and relies on students, parent/carers, staff and sometimes partner organisations working together to get the very best possible support in place and outcome for our young people. In order to do this as smoothly as possible, it is essential that all parties engage with the assessment process, supplying information and attending appointments without delay.
At the application stage, students are asked to provide details of any SEND or medical need on application forms; students will then be contacted by the Learning Support Team for further details. Contact may be made with previous school(s), college (s) or agency to provide further information. This evidence may include:

- Learning difficulties: Students should ask their school or previous educational provider for their Form 8 or 9 and details of their exam access arrangements. Physical, sensory, mental health or neuro developmental impairment: Students should provide their diagnosis



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letter/report or evidence from a medical professional or specialist and form 8 or 9 from their previous school.

- EHCP: We will have a copy of the plan; students should ask their school or previous educational provider for details of their exam access arrangements and for a copy of their form 8 or 9.

Students should inform the Learning Support team via their course manager if anything changes (e.g., new diagnosis of specific need or deterioration of condition) – this may have an impact on the recommended exam access arrangements and should attend their appointment or inform the Learning Support team if they are unable to attend.
During induction, students are again provided with the opportunity to declare an additional learning need. If students do not provide the evidence prior to the Awarding Organisation deadline dates, it will result in exam access arrangements being declined or not being in place in time for the exams.

**6.2 Head of Centre** Overall responsibility for examination policy.

**6.3 Learning Support**

- Will prioritise referrals based on several factors such as students with an EHCP, exam dates and emergencies
- Complete the Access Arrangements Assessment.
- Act in accordance with JCQ guidelines.
- Clearly communicate policies and procedures for exam access arrangements to students and curriculum teams.
- Gather evidence to clearly describe need and normal way of working.
- Produce Form 8, Form 9 reports or Centre notes as appropriate.
- Use standardised tests to assess eligibility and need.
- Submit requests for exam concessions in a timely manner to the exams team outlining the difficulties the student presents within the assessment and classroom setting.
- Store paperwork needed by inspection in shared drive.
- Provide readers and scribes as required by the exams team.
- Keep hard copies of test papers in a secure environment.

**6.4. Exams staff**

- Use the Form 8, form 9 reports or Centre notes to apply to exam boards for examination access arrangements in a timely fashion. It is the exam board who must approve the application before the arrangement can be put in place.
- Implement examination access arrangements once approved.



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- Liaise with Learning Support regarding requests for readers, scribes etc.
- Inform curriculum staff, students, and parents / carers if appropriate when access arrangements are approved.
- Securely storing all access arrangements documentation and evidence.
- Inform students and parents / carers if appropriate of special arrangements for exams such as room numbers etc.
- Invigilation, rooms, and support for access arrangements candidates, as defined in the JCQ access arrangements regulations.

### 6.5. Curriculum staff

- Ensure that they are aware of students in their class who have examination access arrangements already approved and in place.
- Familiarise themselves with the adjustments for candidates with disabilities and learning difficulties Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments policy and of the evidence requirements.
- Submit all appropriate referrals during the approvals window and not after the deadline. For FE the window is open from **10th September to 20th February**, for apprenticeships referrals need to be made within the **first 8 weeks of their start date**. Student emergencies such as a new diagnosis, broken limb or other emergency will be reviewed outside of these windows as required.
- Assist Learning Support and Exams in applying for access arrangements.
- Respond in a timely manner to Learning Support requests for information regarding a student.
- To ensure that examination access arrangements are implemented in 'mock' exams as well as live ones.
- To liaise with exams/Learning Support if readers/scribes/extra time is required for 'mock' exams.

### 6.6. Parent / Carer responsibilities

Parents and carers may be required to obtain letters from other professionals to support an application when a student requires arrangements due to psychological, behavioural, sensory or communication difficulties.

Parents and carers should be aware that the regulations state that access arrangements cannot be put in place purely on the evidence of a medical professional. A medical letter will trigger an internal investigation, but there needs to be internal evidence found to support such an application.

## 7. Related Documents

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Name: | Exam Access Arrangements Policy & Procedure | Owner: | Exams |
| Approved by: | Executive | Applicable to: | Staff/Students |
| Reference: | XM-PCG-016 | Last Review: | August 2026 |
| Version: | 2.0 | Next Review: | September 2027 |

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**7.1.** This document should be read with:

7.1.1. Equality Act (2010)

7.1.2. JCQ exam access and reasonable adjustments

## 8. Document Access

**8.1.** This document can be found on the College Group's website and on the Document Control SharePoint.

## 9. Review and Continuous Improvement

**9.1.** The College Group is committed to actively periodically reviewing its documents in line with legislation and best practice, to ensure they remain accurate, transparent, compliant, inclusive, effective, and supportive.

## 10. Change Log

| Date | Version | Details of Change | Reviewer |
|---|---|---|---|
| 27/08/26 | 1.1 | Change of template. Wording reviewed and updated | Lisa Hatton |
| 07/09/26 | 1.2 | Document formatted and checked | Michelle Hopkins |
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# Appendix 1

Appendix

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| Name: | Exam Access Arrangements Policy & Procedure | Owner: | Exams |
| Approved by: | Executive | Applicable to: | Staff/Students |
| Reference: | XM-PCG-016 | Last Review: | August 2026 |
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