Top Tips for Access Arrangements

1. **Use a yearly planner**
   Use this to map out key tasks such as assessment points in the year and key deadlines for Access Arrangement applications (e.g.: modified papers, additional time, etc)

2. **Policy and Procedures**
   Ensure you have a clear school policy for the way you manage and administer assessment arrangements for Access Arrangements. Including a visual flowchart or a timeline can be helpful.

   Guidance on Access Arrangements can be shared on your school website.

3. **JCQ Regulations**
   Make sure you have a copy of the most up to date JCQ regulations for Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments. You can find this here:

   https://www.jcq.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/AA_regs_21-22_v11.pdf

   https://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/access-arrangements-and-special-consideration/regulations-and-guidance/

   Make sure you are very familiar with this guidance as it clearly sets out all the information, steps and criteria for the administration and management of Access Arrangements.

4. **Reasonable Adjustments and a picture of need**
   You need to show clear evidence of a picture of need and of reasonable adjustments being a pupil's normal way of working.

   The arrangement(s) put in place must reflect the support given to the candidate in the centre†, for example:
   • in the classroom (where appropriate);
   • working in small groups for reading and/or writing; • literacy support lessons;
   • literacy intervention strategies;

• in internal school tests/examinations;

• mock examinations.

This is commonly referred to as 'normal way of working'. For candidates with learning difficulties this is typically the background information recorded within Part 1 of Form 8 by the SENCo or the assessor working within the centre.

SENCos and assessors must refer to Chapter 7, paragraph 7.6.1 for information on how to confirm 'normal way of working'. (JCQ: 4.2.5)

5. Assessor and Assessment

Access arrangements/reasonable adjustments should be processed at the start of the course. Schools, for example, should be able to process applications at the start of or during the first year of a two-year GCSE course having firmly established a picture of need and normal way of working during Years 7 to 9. (JCQ: 4.2.4)

Chapter 7 of the JCQ regulations sets out the criteria for an access arrangements assessor. Ensure you are familiar with this.

'an access arrangements assessor who has successfully completed a post- graduate course at or equivalent to Level 7, including at least 100 hours relating to individual specialist assessment*. An access arrangements assessor may conduct assessments to be recorded within Part 2 of Form 8' (JCQ: 7.3.3)

6. Preparing pupils for using their Access Arrangements

It's important to prepare pupils for using their access arrangements so they get best use out of this.

The access arrangement should be a normally part of their day to day practice and normal way of working. You can also run workshops for pupils before any internal or external examinations to run through what to expect in the examination, where to go, how to best use their access arrangements. A visual crib sheet can also be helpful.

Here are some helpful resources for supporting pupils with Autism during exams:

https://www.autism.org.uk/advice-and-guidance/topics/education/exams

https://reachoutasc.com/5-ways-to-support-autistic-students-through-exams/

7. CPD

Communicate Ed

They offer a wide range of online courses for Access Arrangements

https://www.communicate-ed.org.uk

https://www.communicate-ed.org.uk/courses/access-arrangements/

Patoss

They offer training courses for Specialist Teachers/Assessors and helpful resources

https://www.patoss-dyslexia.org

https://www.patoss-dyslexia.org/Online/aaa-assessing-for-access-arrangements/6452?OccId=18620

8. Useful Resources

Assessing the need for Access Arrangements in Examinations: A Practical Guide

https://www.jcq.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/Sixth-Edition-Flyer.pdf