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GLOSSARY: EXAM ACCESS ARRANGEMENTS

You will find here some of the most commonly used words and phrases associated with application for access arrangements in external exams.

Access Arrangements Online (AAO):

- Applications for exam concessions in public exams must be made through the AAO by the SENCO or the Exams Officer. There are a few exceptions, including: the use of a word processor, supervised breaks, separate invigilation and the use of a reading pen.

Articulation:

- The production of sounds that make up speech.
- A candidate with poor articulation may struggle to express their thoughts on paper and may require Modified Papers.

Auditory (Verbal) processing:

- How the brain interprets the sounds which we hear. Also known as verbal or phonological processing.
- This may, or may not, be associated with speed of processing.
- A candidate with very weak verbal processing may require extra time in exams

Auditory discrimination:

- Being able to discern or discriminate fine differences between verbal information

Auditory sequential memory:

- The ability to remember a sequence of information delivered only verbally.
- A candidate with below average auditory sequential memory may require extra time in exams

Cognition:

- The ability to think, reason and problem-solve.
- A candidate with moderate learning difficulties, as demonstrated by a below average score, may require extra time in exams

Evidence of Need:

- All applications for exam access arrangements must be supported by evidence of need, as shown by the requirement within class and internal exams.

Expressive language/vocabulary:

- Conveying thoughts and ideas through verbal means.
- A candidate with expressive language difficulties may require an oral language modifier (OLM).
- The difficulty must be in their first language.

Fluency:

- Being able to deliver information quickly, efficiently and accurately.
- Reading fluency difficulties may qualify a candidate for extra time or a reader

Form 8:

- The application form required to make an application for access arrangements. It consists of three parts:
 - Section A: background information collated by the SENCO from the evidence of need and normal way of working. It is important for the School or College to complete this section **before** referring for an assessment, in order for the assessor



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to understand the background to the learning needs, as outlined in the JCQ Regulations.

- Section B: completed **after** assessment, by the SENCO, outlining the access arrangements to be requested.
- Section C: The specialist assessor who conducted the assessment must complete this section

Full-scale IQ

- General measure of ability, usually a summation of verbal and nonverbal reasoning performance.

JCQ: Joint Council of Qualification:

- Regulatory body which oversees the implementation of national, public examinations: GCSE, GCE A Level, BTECH Diploma, Level 3 Technical Qualifications, Cambridge Nationals, Progression and Technicals, City and Guilds Level 2 & 3 Technical qualifications, Functional Skills, Welsh Baccalaureate Qualification

Non-Verbal Ability/Reasoning:

- This is the ability to interpret information which is presented in a non-verbal format, such as through diagrams, patterns and sequences. It measures the ability to reason and problem-solve. It is a useful measure for determining underlying ability in individuals with language and communication difficulties.

Normal Way of Working:

- Applications for exam access arrangements must be supported by evidence of the arrangement being the candidate's normal way of working in class and prior internal examination.

Oral Expression:

- Ability to express oneself through words.
- A candidate may need an oral language modifier (OLM) if they present with difficulties in processing language and English is their first language

Phonics and phonology:

- The range of sounds used for speech. Systematic phonics is one approach to reading instruction that teaches students the principles of letter-sound relationships, how to sound out words, and provides exceptions to the principles. A difficulty in processing phonics may lead to reading accuracy and spelling difficulties.

Phonological Awareness/Difficulties:

- Phonological awareness is the ability to identify and manipulate sounds in words. It is a foundation skill for reading and spelling development. Phonological Difficulty is a difficulty in selecting, creating, discriminating or using correct speech sounds when speaking. This may affect the development of Literacy skills such as reading and spelling.
- A candidate with phonological awareness difficulties may need extra time

Processing speed:

- Rate at which an individual is able to decode information and produce an accurate response either verbally or visually.
- A candidate with slow speed of processing information may need extra time

Reading Accuracy:

- Ability to read with accuracy; not related to speed or comprehension.



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Reading Comprehension:

- Reading comprehension measures the ability to read for meaning and being able to provide an accurate interpretation of reading material.
- A candidate who has difficulty in interpreting written text when compared to it being presented orally, may need a reader, read aloud or a reading pen

Reading Speed:

- This is the speed at which an individual can read individual words.
- A candidate who demonstrates a slow reading speed may need additional time or a reader

Receptive language/vocabulary:

- Understanding spoken language.
- A candidate with a weak receptive language might require an Oral Language Modifier (OLM).

Short-term Memory:

- Capacity for holding a small amount of information in an active and readily available state for a short period of time. The average capacity of the short-term memory is said to be 7 units of information +/- 2 units and can be held for just a few seconds.
- It can be easily diverted by external factors.
- Difficulties in short-term memory may affect the ability to retain information during exams and may result in the individual taking longer than normally expected to read, and re-read questions whilst aiming to retain the information and formulate a response.
- A candidate with short term memory difficulties may require extra time.

Single-Word Accuracy, also known as reading vocabulary or single word reading:

- Ability to read with accuracy single words when not placed within a context. This score provides an indicator of an individual's ability to read written text accurately and automatically recall a word.
- A candidate with a difficulty in this area may benefit from a reading pen, read aloud or a reader

Standard Score:

- The score which is calculated from the raw score obtained in a test. It allows candidates to be compared with others of a similar age.
 - average range is from 90-110,
 - low average 85-100,
 - high average 110-115,
 - below average below 85
 - above average: above 115

NOTE: To qualify for access arrangements in public exams, the standard score in the relevant area must fall below average i.e. **84 or below**.

Verbal (auditory) Memory

- The ability to retain an ordered sequence of verbal or auditory information for a short period of time.



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- A candidate with verbal (auditory) memory difficulties will have difficulty demonstrating their true ability during oral exams, may struggle to organise and sequence their thoughts and may lose the thread in a conversation.
- A candidate with difficulties in auditory memory may need extra time in exams as it takes them longer to internalise information.

Verbal Reasoning

- The ability to process information to make judgments and conclusions based upon a thorough understanding of language and vocabulary. It is related to understanding the issues of cause and effect and requires cognitive elements of understanding, considering, explaining, making deductions and rationality.

Verbal Processing Speed

- The time taken to process familiar verbal (aural) information such as letters and digits.
- If a candidate demonstrates significantly reduced verbal processing speed, they may require additional time in exams in order to be able to allow time to process the information and formulate responses.

Visual Stress

- This is a term used to describe the experience of eye strain, difficulty in focussing, headaches and illusions of colour or movement in written text.
- A candidate may require the use of a coloured overlay or modified papers in exams.

Visuospatial processing

- Ability to understand visual representations and their spatial relationships. For instance, an individual may be able to match a 3D object with another 3D object, but may have difficulty in interpreting a 2D representation of a 3D object. They may also have difficulty in interpreting the 3D object from a different position or angle.
- Where rate of working is impacted (through a measure of visual processing speed) a candidate may require extra time

Visual-motor perceptual skills

- Ability to process information visually and make an appropriate motor (movement) response.
- Difficulties may impact the ability to write quickly or legibly and a candidate may need to use a *word processor* or (if not proficient) have extra time in exams

Working Memory

- This is the memory used to hold temporarily, process, manipulate and retrieve information. It is the executive and attentional aspect of short-term memory.
- A difficulty in working memory can lead to a reduction in the ability to be able to process information and may impact ability within a number of situations such as mathematical problem-solving. Jottings may need to be encouraged to enable a student to keep track of their thought processes.
- A candidate in this area may need extra time, as they lose information quickly