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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 wordprocessor, 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 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.



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### **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 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

### **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.



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**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 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



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### **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 85-109,
  - 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.
- 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.



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### **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