

## **Guidelines for Candidates who are eligible for Access Arrangements during GCSE and GCE examinations**

The main access arrangements are:

- **Extra time**, for candidates who work very slowly
- **Rest breaks**, for poor concentration or extreme stress
- **Word processors**, for candidates who **use a WP in class**
- **Prompters**, for candidates who lose concentration easily
- **Bilingual Dictionary**, for candidates who have English as an Additional Language

Here are some guidelines which will help you to use your access arrangement.

### **Extra time**

*Because you work slowly you may be allowed up to 25% extra time. This means that if your exam usually takes one hour, you will be allowed 1 hour 15 minutes to complete it. You may be in the main hall, or in a room away from the main hall.*

It is important to decide the best way to use the extra time before you go into the exam. You need to:

- Find out how many questions need to be answered in the time
- Allow plenty of time to read:
  - i. the questions through carefully at the start (many marks are lost when students don't read and understand the questions properly)
  - ii. your answers through at the end of the paper (correcting spelling or grammatical errors)
- Work out how many minutes this leaves you for each question
- When long answers are needed (e.g. essays) take time to plan each answer. You should know what type of plan suits your learning style. If you are not sure your teacher will help you to find out.
- If you feel stressed or panicky, take a few deep breaths to help calm you down.

## **Rest breaks**

*Rest breaks can help if you find it hard to concentrate, or get very tired.*

There are two ways to take rest breaks.

- Stay in the room where you are taking the exam (this might be the main hall or in a separate room)
- Go for a short walk with a member of staff. You will **not** be able to talk about the exam during your break

You should be able to ask when you feel that you need to take a break, though if there are other students needing breaks you might have to wait for a member of staff to be available to help you.

All the time taken for your rest breaks will be added to the end of the exam. For example if you have two breaks, one taking 5 minutes and the other 7 minutes, 12 minutes will be added to the end time. You will not be allowed any more time, but you will not lose time either.

## **Word Processors**

*You may be allowed to use a word processor for your exam papers.*

There are a few things to remember about using a word processor:

- You cannot type directly onto the exam paper but your typed script will be attached to the paper.
- You must label answers clearly. You might like to note under each question on the paper where the answer can be found.
- You should record your name, candidate & centre number as a header or footer on all pages.

- You will not be allowed access to files on the word processor, or to spreadsheets, graphic or design packages, voice activated software or to the internet.
- The following applications will be disabled; thesaurus, grammar check, calculators. If these applications are found to be enabled, you may be disqualified from that exam or exams in that series.
- You must not disturb other candidates.
- Other candidates must not see the screen.
- The word processor will be connected to a printer or a portable storage device will be used to save your work and a member of staff will print it.
- Your script will be printed after the exam; you will be given the opportunity to can confirm that it is your work.

## **Prompters**

*You may be allowed an adult to prompt you if you lose concentration.*

To keep you focused on the paper an adult, possibly the invigilator, will attract your attention by:

### **tapping:**

- the table
- your arm

### **saying:**

- your name
- "focus on the question"
- "there are x minutes left"

The prompter cannot:

- speak to you, except to say your name or one of the above instructions
- advise you on which questions to choose
- tell you in which order to do the questions

## **Bilingual Dictionary**

*If English is not your first language you may be allowed to use a Bilingual Dictionary.*

It must be a dictionary that has word for word translation of the English word, with no explanation of the meaning of the word. You can only use a paper dictionary; you cannot use an electronic dictionary, reading pen, translator, wordlist or glossary.

You will be given a dictionary.

You will not be able to use a dictionary if you are sitting an exam in your first language or in an English exam.

If you came to the UK less than 2 years ago you may be allowed up to 25% extra time to use the dictionary.

### **Please remember that**

the teachers at your school or college must make sure that you are not given an unfair advantage over other students by being allowed an access arrangement. The rules are strict, and if you or a member of staff are found to be breaking the rules you may lose marks in your assessments.

If you have any questions about access arrangements, you should discuss them with Mr Lewis or Miss Silverman.

Mr J Lewis, Director of Academic Administration  
Miss L Silverman, Head of Learning Support

Access Arrangements for 2011-2012