



# Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustment Policy 2020/21

This policy is reviewed annually to ensure compliance with current regulations

Approved/reviewed by Exam Officers, SENDCo & SEN Governors.

Date of next review

Autumn 2021

## Key staff involved in the policy

Role	Name(s)
SENDCo	Dr N Alexander-Passe
Deputy SENDCos	Mr S Bull/Ms M Mogaji
Assessors	Dr N Alexander-Passe
Access Arrangements Facilitators	SSU staff/invigilators
SENDCo line manager (Senior Leader)	Mrs K Brice
Heads of centre	Mrs D Lebrecht/ Mrs K Brice

Exams Officer	<b>Mrs J Leigh/Miss N James</b>
Joint SEN Governors	<b>M Zeltser &amp; C Posen</b>

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## 1. What are Access Arrangements?

### Access arrangements

[AA](#) (Definitions, page 3) state... **Access arrangements are agreed before an assessment.** They allow candidates with **specific needs**, such as special educational needs, disabilities or temporary injuries to access the assessment and show what they know and can do without changing the demands of the assessment. The intention behind an access arrangement is to meet the needs of an individual candidate without affecting the integrity of the assessment. Access arrangements are the principal way in which awarding bodies comply with the duty under the Equality Act 2010\* to make 'reasonable adjustments'.

### Reasonable adjustments

[AA](#) (Definitions, page 3) state... The Equality Act 2010\* requires **an awarding body** to make reasonable adjustments where a candidate, who is disabled within the meaning of the Equality Act 2010, would be at **a substantial disadvantage** in comparison to someone who is not disabled. The awarding body is required to take reasonable steps to overcome that disadvantage. An example would be a Braille paper which would be a reasonable adjustment for a vision impaired candidate who could read Braille. A reasonable adjustment may be unique to that individual and may not be included in the list of available access arrangements. Whether an adjustment will be considered reasonable will depend on several factors which will include, but are not limited to:

- the needs of the disabled candidate;
  - the effectiveness of the adjustment;
  - the cost of the adjustment; **and**
  - the likely impact of the adjustment upon the candidate and other candidates.
- An adjustment will not be approved if it:
- involves unreasonable costs to the awarding body;
  - involves unreasonable timeframes; or
  - affects the security and integrity of the assessment.
- This is because the adjustment is not 'reasonable'.

An access arrangement or reasonable adjustment, for instance, extra time, a reader or a scribe put in place to make sure that all students have a '**level playing field**' when sitting examinations.

They are only available to students with **substantial, long-term difficulties** that are known to **have an adverse effect on normal day-to-day activities** in school.

In some cases, where there is a substantial, but short-term difficulties (e.g. a broken arm), the exam officer and the centre may choose to make access arrangements available (e.g. a scribe).

According to JCQ guidance, 'the Equality Act 2010 requires an awarding body (examination board i.e. AQA, OCR, EDEXCEL) to make reasonable adjustments where a candidate, who is disabled as defined in the Equality Act 2010, would be at a substantial disadvantage in comparison to someone who is not disabled. The awarding body is required to take reasonable steps to overcome that disadvantage.'

'The intention behind an access arrangement is to meet the particular needs of an individual candidate without affecting the integrity of the assessment.'

Hasmonean Multi Academy Trust, is committed to providing equal opportunities for all students. This means ensuring that students are neither advantaged nor disadvantaged in examinations. The School abides by the strict regulations set out by the JCQ.

This document is written in line with the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) guidance: 'Adjustments for Candidates with Disabilities and Learning Difficulties: Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments,' which can be found via the link below:

## 2. Purpose of the policy

The purpose of this policy is to confirm that Hasmonean High School has a written record which clearly shows the centre is leading on the access arrangements process and is complying with its ...obligation to identify the need for, request and implement access arrangements...

[JCQ General Regulations for Approved Centres, (section 5.4)]

This publication is further referred to in this policy as [GR](#)

This policy is maintained and held by the SENDCo alongside the individual files/e-folders of each access arrangements candidate. Each file/e-folder contains detailed records of all the essential information that is required to be held according to the regulations.

Where the SENDCo is storing access arrangements documentation electronically he/she **must** create an e-folder for each individual candidate. The candidate's e-folder must hold each of the required documents for inspection. ([AA](#) 4.2)

The policy is annually reviewed to ensure that processes are carried out in accordance with the current edition of the JCQ publication Adjustments for candidates with disabilities and learning difficulties - Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments.

This publication is further referred to in this policy as [AA](#)

## 3. General principles

The general principles of access arrangements for the centre to consider are detailed in [AA](#) (section 4.2). These include:

The purpose of an access arrangement is to ensure, where possible, that barriers to assessment are removed for a disabled candidate preventing him/her from being placed at a substantial disadvantage due to persistent and significant difficulties. The integrity of the assessment is maintained, whilst at the same time providing access to assessments for a disabled candidate.

The SENDC must ensure that the proposed access arrangement does not disadvantage or advantage the candidate.

Arrangements must always be approved before an examination or assessment.

The arrangement(s) put in place must reflect the support given to the candidate in the centre.

The candidate **must** have had appropriate opportunities to practise using the access arrangement(s) before his/her first examination.

## 4. Equalities Policy (Exams)

A large part of the access arrangements process is covered in the Equalities Policy (Exams) which covers staff roles and responsibilities in identifying the need for, requesting and implementing access arrangements and the conduct of exams. This can be found at Policy D.

The Access Arrangements Policy further covers the assessment process and related issues in more detail.

## 5. The assessment process

Assessments are carried out by an assessor(s) appointed by the head of centre. The assessor(s) is (are) appropriately qualified as required by JCQ regulations in [AA](#) 7.3.

### The qualification(s) of the current assessor(s)

The current assessor(s) hold suitable qualifications in accordance with JCQ-AA regulations.

### Appointment of assessors of candidates with learning difficulties

At the point an assessor is engaged/employed in the centre, evidence of the assessor's qualification is obtained and checked against the current requirements in [AA](#). This process is carried out prior to the assessor undertaking any assessment of a candidate.

### Checking the qualification(s) of the assessor(s)

**As with all recruitment processes the head of centre ensures that evidence of the assessor's qualification(s) are obtained at the point of engagement/employment and/or prior to the assessor undertaking any assessment of a candidate. Evidence of the assessor's qualification(s) is held on file for inspection purposes and be presented to the JCQ Centre Inspector by the SENCo. ([AA](#) 7.3)**

## 6. How do we know who needs Access Arrangements?

All Year 7 students are screened for cognitive ability and literacy strengths and difficulties when they start at the School. However, it is important that parents alert the School to any pre-existing conditions on entry and ensure that any documentary evidence is transferred from the primary school in order to build up a picture of the student's needs.

Such documents may include evidence of access arrangements for SATS, school reports; personal plans/pen portraits/Individual Education Plans (IEPs); and reports written by professional such as psychologists, occupational therapists, psychiatrists and speech and language therapists.

Students will be monitored once at the School to consider whether examination access arrangements may be needed. Concerns about a student's ability to access assessments should in the first instance be raised by the subject teacher and Year Leader/SENDCo, who will investigate whether concerns persist across the curriculum or are specific to a particular subject.

Depending on the outcome of this investigation, concerns may then be raised with the SENDCo.

Students with a history of the following needs may need access arrangements. Please note that a diagnosis alone cannot entitle students to access arrangements unless there is supporting evidence from School. This is a requirement of the JCQ.

- Cognition and Learning Needs (e.g. General and/or specific learning difficulties).
- Communication and Interaction Needs (e.g. Autistic Spectrum Disorder, Speech, Language and Communication Needs)

- Sensory and Physical Needs (e.g. Hearing Impairment, Multi-Sensory Impairment, Physical Disability, Vision Impairment)
- Social, Mental and Emotional Needs (Attention Deficit Disorder, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder, Mental Health Conditions)
- English as an Additional Language

There is a difference between access arrangements for students in years 7 to 10, and those for years 10 to 13. In the former, all year 7 students are screened using a computer screening program e.g. Lucid Exact is used to inform the SENDCo. For the latter, Lucid Exact is then used to screen all Year 9 students in their summer term, which will advise the SENDCo as to whether a substantial long-term difficulty is present, and a student may need further testing to allow the School to apply for access arrangements for formal examinations, through the JCQ (Joint Council of Qualifications).

### **Use of private assessment reports (see Appendix 3, letter to parents)**

The School recognises there are sometimes long waiting lists for external services (e.g. CAHMS assessments), however, referrals for private assessments should be made in conjunction with the School. This way any results are reflective of both the School and home. The School may see any assessment report as advisory, if it does not reflect the experience of School staff with the student in question. Such a policy is reflective of the policy by JCQ (Joint Council of Qualifications) that governs the use of private assessment reports to apply for additional allowances for formal examinations.

Regarding access arrangements, the JCQ guidelines specifically highlight the use of private educational reports (e.g. educational psychologist or specialist teacher assessments), indicating they may not be used for evidence for schools to apply for additional time.

### **Medical grounds (see Appendix 3, letter to parents)**

Access arrangements awarded on medical grounds will only be accepted by JCQ if the School has been made aware of the student's medical history and relevant evidence has been gathered for the arrangement to be put into place (see below). For students who require temporary access arrangements due to medical problems such as broken limbs, the School must have a medical letter before the arrangement can be put into place and the School Exams Officers must be made aware of the situation as soon as possible. Medical letters relating to anxiety or depression which the School was not made aware of before the deadline for access arrangements will not be considered. The deadline for the current academic year will be early February for the May/June exam period.

However, on medical grounds, if from a registered professional (e.g. General Medical Council) assessment reports or letters may be accepted if no more than 3 years old. These letters/reports must be very specific to the type of support required in examinations:

- A letter from CAMHS or a clinical psychologist; or
- A letter from a hospital consultant; or
- A Letter from the Local Authority Educational Psychology Service; or A letter from the Local Authority Sensory Impairment Service; or A letter from a Speech and Language Therapist (SALT).

## Why a letter from a GP is insufficient?

The school follows JCQ guidelines regarding medical evidence, noting that only a specialist is able to make recommendations regarding examination allowances.

The SENDCo, Dr Neil Alexander-Passe may be contacted via email [n.alexander-passe@hasmonean.co.uk](mailto:n.alexander-passe@hasmonean.co.uk) for more information regarding his role. You may also contact the deputy SENDCos (boys' Mr Simon Bull) via email [s.bull@hasmonean.co.uk](mailto:s.bull@hasmonean.co.uk) (girls' Ms Moni Mogaji) via email [m.mogaji@hasmonean.co.uk](mailto:m.mogaji@hasmonean.co.uk)

If the School is not made aware of a student's medical history prior to receiving a medical letter, then an access arrangement cannot be put into place for public examinations, as the School will be unable to build this evidence of need and provision. **Schools are not obliged to accept private medical reports** and are required to evidence that any medical problem present a long-term (more than 12 months), being a substantial difficulty, or impairment, that places the candidate at a substantial disadvantage compared to other candidates without the medical problem. Medical evidence should not normally be more than 24 months old, at the time of application for the allowance.

## Extra time/allowances in some or all subjects

Access arrangements may vary between subjects due to their different demands. If this is the case, then access arrangements may be awarded only for those subjects e.g. a laptop may be required for longer written exams such as History but not for a Maths exam. Where formal access arrangements are determined and agreed these become the '**normal way of working**'. This means that the appropriate access arrangements should be taken into consideration in all planned assessments. An access arrangement must be the student's normal way of working in order for the application to comply with regulations. If a student chooses to continually not use their access arrangement in class or in internal tests or assessments, then the access arrangement will be removed for public examinations, this is part of JCQ's 'use it or lose it rule'.

## Transferring students e.g. to 6<sup>th</sup> form at Hasmonian

For students transferring from other schools during the course of their secondary schooling, relevant documentation regarding existing conditions and examination access arrangements must be provided. This can be sent on by the previous school or provided by parents. The following documents will be required if the access arrangements are to continue at the School, but additional testing may also be required if the feeder school doesn't have an 'existing relationship with Hasmonian':

- Form 8 (a JCQ form held by the previous school) and any report which was used as evidence;
- Application Approved (a JCQ form held by the previous school);
- Supporting documents such as medical letters and professional reports, if necessary;
- Anecdotal evidence from teachers regarding the need for examination access arrangements;
- Pieces of work showing the use of extra time by means of a different coloured pen.

## 7. Why do we need to evidence access arrangements?

JCQ inspections require all schools to have the required evidence for every student that has been awarded access arrangements. Schools are subject to at least two unannounced inspections from the JCQ every year. If the School fails to provide sufficient evidence, in line with JCQ regulations, then the

student in question **could have marks deducted due to their unfair advantage and our status as an approved examination centre could be jeopardised.**

The required evidence needed from the School for JCQ inspection is:

- Relevant evidence of the nature and extent of the disability or difficulty/impairment which has a substantial and long term effect i.e. history of need/history of provision.
- Evidence that the difficulties are persistent and significant (this will be ascertained from progress data)
- Show evidence from School staff of how the disability, difficulty or impairment has had long term impact on teaching and learning in the classroom.
- Confirmation that the student will be at a substantial disadvantage when compared with other non-disabled candidates undertaking the assessment.
- Evidence that the student is using any allowances provided, as part of the 'normal way of working' requirements as set by the JCQ.

### **The 'use it or lose it' rule**

The JCQ are very clear that any access arrangements given should be a student's 'normal way of working', and so if the school believes that students are consistently not using the additional allowances agreed (e.g. extra time or use of a laptop), then the school is at liberty to withdraw such allowances, this could be for all subjects or select subjects. This can be evidenced by the school through mock examinations, end of term tests, or by comments by subject teachers. Also, if allowances are misused, as viewed by their teachers e.g. such as using the internet or gaming during subject lessons; then the school is at liberty to withdraw such allowances both at school and for formal examinations.

### **8. When are Access arrangements awarded?**

With the exception of students with recognised complex needs, including those with an EHCP (Education Health Care Plan) students in Years 7 and 8 are not typically provided with any access arrangements, even if these were put in place at primary school. This is for a number of reasons: first, their needs may have changed; secondly we need to collate evidence over time of what their specific needs are. Students in Years 7 and 8 who are permitted to use laptops at the School may use a word processor in exams and planned assessments. The decision that a student is eligible to use a laptop depends on the outcome of the Hasmonian Laptop Screening Process detailed in Appendix 1.

In Year 9, students with a school history of persistent and significant difficulties impacting on their learning may be screened in school for eligibility for access arrangements in line with current JCQ regulations. After this screening, parents will be informed by letter from the SENDCo only if an access arrangement is going to be offered in preparation for Key Stage 4.

Given the requirement for there to be evidence of a long history of need, it is unlikely that any new access arrangements will be awarded beyond Year 10.

Access arrangements awarded for GCSEs will not automatically roll forward for GCE. The JCQ requires evidence from the School to demonstrate there is still a need for access arrangements. Sixth form students who are new to the School will complete an application form and interview, which will ask



about SEN and any access arrangements awarded during their GCSE examinations. This information will be passed onto the Deputy SENDCo. Students are responsible for providing the JCQ 'Form 8' and a copy of the JCQ approval document from their previous school. Once this is received, the Deputy SENDCo may request further information and evidence.

## 9. Who can assess and how are decisions made?

Decisions regarding access arrangements are determined by the outcome of the Hasmonean Access Arrangement Screening Process, described in Appendix 2. The Head of Centre (the Headteacher) is ultimately responsible for appointing an appropriately qualified Access Arrangement Assessor with the required level of competence in compliance with JCQ regulations in [AA 7.3](#). As with all recruitment processes the head of centre ensures that evidence of the assessor's qualification(s) are obtained at the point of engagement/employment and/or prior to the assessor undertaking any assessment of a candidate.

**Schools are not obliged to accept private reports** from specialists, and the JCQ has specified that private educational psychologist reports should not be allowed.

The JCQ only allows educational assessors with a relationship with the School, and the School's SENDCo is a qualified assessor. The assessor's qualifications are kept on file in preparation for JCQ inspection. The current assessor(s) hold suitable qualifications in accordance with JCQ-AA regulations.

The School has in previous years used external assessors, and in such cases these professionals have had a relationship with the School to abide by JCQ guidelines, and their practising certificates are also kept on file for inspection.

In addition, access arrangement assessments cannot be completed without JCQ's Form 8, and section A and B must be first completed by the School. This will only be done if, in the School's opinion, there is a sufficient history of need; this must be supported with School data and evidence. If there is insufficient School evidence, the School will reject the assessor's recommendations and notify parents in writing of this decision. **Final decisions regarding access arrangements are made by the Headteacher.**

## 10. Processing access arrangements

### Arrangements requiring awarding body approval

Access arrangements online (AAO) is a tool provided by JCQ member awarding bodies for centres to apply for required access arrangement approval for the qualifications covered by the tool. This tool also provides the facility to order modified papers for those qualifications included. (Refer to [AA, \(chapter 8\) Processing applications for access arrangements](#) and (chapter 6) **Modified papers**)

AAO is accessed within the JCQ Centre Admin Portal (CAP) by logging in to one of the awarding body secure extranet sites. A single application for approval is required for each candidate regardless of the awarding body used.

## **11. Assistive technologies**

Where possible students should work towards greater independence; scribes should only be considered when a student does not have sufficient word processing skills to use a laptop, and readers should only be considered after the possibility of using Read Write Gold has been explored. Access arrangements must reflect normal way of working and therefore it is unlikely that students not identified as SEN Support would be offered a scribe or 1:1 reader.

## **12. Supervised Rest Breaks**

Supervised rest breaks must always be considered before making an application for extra time. To qualify for rest breaks medical evidence must be on file before the deadline in early February 2020.

Rest breaks are the appropriate provision for a range of difficulties including:

- Cognition and learning needs
- Communication and interaction needs
- A medical condition
- Sensory and physical needs
- Social, mental and emotional needs

Supervised rest breaks will only be awarded to those students with an impairment that has a substantial and adverse effect, and where the impairment is long term - it has existed for at least 12 months. (In exceptional cases, rest breaks can also be used by students with a temporary condition such as an injury.)

The School recognises that exams are stressful and this is especially true for students with evidenced social, emotional and mental health difficulties such as anxiety. Therefore, in order to 'level the playing field', the School has decided to offer supervised rest breaks when students are in their seat and before they receive their exam paper. This stipulation is in place to offer these students an additional opportunity to employ the self-calming strategies they should have learned as part of their treatment with an external professional, in an attempt to settle themselves without gaining any advantage over their peers. Any further rest break will only be offered to these students after half of the exam time has passed. If this can be determined, these rest breaks will only be available for subjects that students possess a particular phobia or anxiety.

For students with physical difficulties, it is fair to assume that these candidates will experience more discomfort as time passes in the exam. Therefore, they will be allowed to take a supervised rest break again when half of the exam time has passed. Also, these rest breaks will only be available for subjects with extended writing, such as, English, Geography and History.

In addition, no supervised rest break will last more than five minutes and no student can take more than 25% of the overall time. Also, no extra time and rest breaks should be awarded together (unless an exceptional need is verified and determined by the School).

## **13. English as an Additional Language**

Up to 10% extra time may be awarded for students who have lived in the UK for less than three years, providing they arrived in the UK with no prior knowledge of English and English is not the spoken language at home; the extra time is for the use of a bilingual dictionary. Due to the nature of set

assessment objectives this provision will not be awarded in GCSE: English Language, English Literature, Geography, History, and Religious Studies. Furthermore, extra time is not awarded for GCE.

#### 14. Data Protection

Students will have to sign a Data Protection Notice giving the School permission to make an application online to the JCQ. Failure to do so will mean that an application cannot be made and examination access arrangements cannot be granted.

#### 15. Some examples of examination access arrangements (EAA)

Extra time of 25%	For the student who has slower than average speed of processing information or handwriting speed.
Reader	For the student who has below average reading skills assessed by means of tests of single word reading, reading comprehension and reading comprehension speed. Students may be offered a shared reader
Scribe	The student who has below average spelling and illegible handwriting, below average handwriting speed or a medical condition. Due to the natures of this EAA, the student will lose 8-10% of their final marks (SPAG marks) due to the grammar and spelling being automatically corrected for them.
Laptop	For the student who has a handwriting difficulty, processing difficulty or medical condition. Spelling and grammar checks are disabled. Access to the internet is prohibited.
Supervised Rest Breaks	For the student who is unable to concentrate for long periods of time due to a medical condition or social and emotional difficulties.
Prompter	For the student who loses concentration/focus and is not aware of time often caused by a medical condition such as ADHD
Separate Room	For students who have a medical condition such as epilepsy/diabetes where it is not appropriate for them to sit in the main hall. Students who are agoraphobic/have a psychological condition may also need to sit an exam in a separate room.

#### 16. Personnel

Reader	A reader is a trained adult who reads the question and any relevant text (with the exception of Section A of a GCSE English Language Exam) for the student. The student writes the answers themselves.
Scribe	A scribe is a trained adult who writes for the student. The student dictates their answers. The scribe writes exactly what the student says. The student forfeits marks for spelling, punctuation and grammar.

## Appendix 1.

### Laptop Eligibility Screening Process for Classroom Purposes

Stage	Comments and Next Steps
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Handwriting concerns raised by parents and/or staff</li> <li>• School to seek medical evidence if applicable (e.g. GP letter, OT report)</li> <li>• Move to stage 2</li> </ul>
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Deputy SENDCo will gather class work samples to establish level of need.</li> <li>• If there is no evidence of need, no further action. Parents/staff to be informed of outcome.</li> <li>• If there is evidence of need, move to stage 3</li> </ul>
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supportive Studies staff to assess handwriting and typing speed.</li> <li>• If handwriting legibility and/or speed is insufficient but typing speed is sufficient, the Deputy SENDCo will consult with parents to discuss possibility of using a laptop in School (e.g. does the student have a laptop at home they can use?). If parents are in agreement, move to stage 4</li> <li>• If handwriting legibility and/or speed and typing speed is insufficient, the Deputy SENDCo will consult with parents to request that the student develops touch typing skills at home. Parents to inform Deputy SENDCo once the student's typing skills improve. If no further contact is made, process will end.</li> <li>• Once parents inform the Deputy SENDCo that the student is typing at a sufficient speed, Learning Support staff to rescreen typing speed. If typing speed remains insufficient, further touch typing practice will be advised. If typing speed is sufficient, move to stage 4.</li> </ul>
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student to collect a laptop consent form from the Deputy SENDCo, which will need to be signed by both the student and their parent. Student must gain consent from their teachers to be able use a laptop in their classroom. Once completed, the student must return the consent form to the Deputy SENDCo. This form must be fully completed and signed by relevant staff, parents and student in order for a laptop to be used in school. <b>The student is responsible for completing this form and submitting it to the Deputy SENDCo.</b></li> <li>• Student to use his/her personal laptop in all lessons for trial period (approx. 6 weeks)</li> <li>• Move to stage 5 after trial period</li> </ul>
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deputy SENDCo to seek teacher feedback on student's use of laptop over the trial period.</li> <li>• If the majority of teacher feedback is positive, the laptop will become a permanent arrangement for the student (including exams/planned assessments).</li> <li>• If the majority of teacher feedback is negative, laptop arrangement will be removed. Deputy SENDCo to inform parents of outcome.</li> </ul>

6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Deputy SENDCo will monitor student's use of laptop in exams/planned assessments through the School's monitoring system. Findings will determine whether laptop will remain in place or be removed.</li> </ul>
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Further details on the use of laptops are contained in the school's Word Processor Policy (Policy F) which is available on the school's website.

## Appendix 2. Access Arrangements Screening Process

Stage	Comments and Next Steps
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is the student at SEN support on the Student Support Register, or</li> <li>does the student have an EHCP, or</li> <li>have concerns been raised by teaching staff (for handwriting concerns only, follow screening process for laptop use), or</li> <li>are there concerns about a student's mental health and has there been involvement from outside agencies?</li> <li>If <b>yes</b>, move to Stage 2</li> <li>If <b>no</b>, consult recent data information to assess if there is a history of underachievement in English and/or Maths. If yes, move to Stage 2. If no, end.</li> </ul>
2	<p>The deputy SENDCo to seek information from all teachers to establish normal way of working in lessons, with a focus on the student's needs (e.g. does this student need someone to read for them in lessons? Does this student need extra time to complete work in lessons?)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If several concerns are raised, move to stage 3.</li> <li>If there are no or very few concerns from staff, the process will end.</li> </ul>
3	<p>Student is screened by a specialist assessor in School using specified standardised tests in order to establish any below average standard scores as outlined by the JCQ.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If below average standard score(s) are identified, move to stage 4</li> <li>If there are no below average standard scores, the process will end.</li> </ul>
4	All evidence will be collated and appropriate EAA will be discussed and decided.
5	The Exams Officer, Deputy SENDCo and SENDCo will apply to JCQ for specific EAA in preparation for GCSE and GCE assessments (N.B. Any EAA will expire 26 months from application to the JCQ). Teachers will be informed of the EAA. Parents will be informed of approved EAA by letter.
6	Teaching and Support staff, the Exams Officer, invigilating team and Deputy SENDCo will monitor effective use of EAA after each planned assessment. Findings from this will determine whether any EAA will remain in place or be removed by the SENDCo as advised by the JCQ. If an EAA is removed, the Deputy SENDCo will inform the students and the SENDCo will inform parents in writing.

### **Appendix 3. Letter to parents**

Dear Parents,

I am writing to update you about how the school assesses student needs, and how external assessments link to this process.

#### **SCREENING AT THE SCHOOL**

All students undertake a 45-minute computerised literacy-based screener at the start of Year 7 and towards the end of Year 9 (this year due to lockdown we have just tested all Year 10 students). These provide standardised assessment scores of your child's reading, reading comprehension, and spelling abilities; along with writing and typing speeds, which I am happy to share with you. For GCSE and A-levels, additional confirmation tests are also given to students who are in scope for possible extra allowances in examinations. We use these results to base our decisions about support for class tests and end of term/formal examinations e.g. extra time etc. Medical reports may also be considered for this.

#### **USE OF PRIVATE ASSESSMENT REPORTS - HASMONEAN SEND POLICY, LOCATED ON OUR WEBSITE\***

##### **RATIONALE**

Where teachers have thought there is a need, I contact many parents each year to make CAHMS referrals for further investigations. Ideally, we would prefer diagnostic assessments to take place through CAHMS or other NHS professionals, but appreciate the waiting lists for CAHMS can take up to a year. However, the quality of assessments and reports are generally on a much higher and more detailed level than from a private assessor.

For example, CAHMS will meet with parents at least twice, use standardised measures, and will contact the school for their views before making any diagnosis. Private assessors commonly meet parents once, use fewer assessments, and tend to not ask the school for their views. Due to Covid, some private assessments are only carried out via Zoom, meaning they will not be based on actual assessments.

When we receive any private reports, these are shared with the year and other leaders, with two questions:

1. Were you involved with this assessment?
2. Does this reflect what is seen at the school?

As part of the assessment process, the diagnostic criteria asks 'are these symptoms seen in more than one setting', therefore it is asking, are they seen at home, at school, and socially.

Hasmonean High School SEND policy is that we ask you to kindly involve us in the assessment process, as we know your child well. If the school is not involved, then the quality and robustness of the assessment will be questioned by the school and may not be accepted.

#### **MEDICAL ASSESSMENT - Psychiatrists and CAHMS will assess for ADHD-ADD, autism, anxiety, and other mental health difficulties.**

We will take on board any (non-GP) medical recommendations for formal examinations, from a

qualified and registered medical professional\*\*, and provide these to the JCQ (Joint Council of Qualifications) on inspection, as evidence to why for example, extra time has been allowed. If you see a psychiatrist or other medical consultant (not from a GP), please ask them to be highly specific about any allowances they are recommending in their reports, as the JCQ will require to see this.

**COGNITIVE-LANGUAGE ASSESSMENTS - Educational psychologists and specialist teachers will assess for processing, dyslexia, cognitive, or language-based disorders.**

If you believe, your child has a cognitive-language difficulty, please contact me, and I will share our Year 7 and Year 9 Lucid test scores as the start of our conversation, and will contact your child's Year Leaders to gain their perspectives. If required I will conduct additional testing, as I am a qualified postgraduate assessor.

The JCQ (Joint Council of Qualifications) ruled a few years ago that private educational psychologist or specialist teacher reports may not to be used for applications for extra time in examinations, only school-based assessments, so please bear this in mind when seeking an external assessment. If it is for extra time in examinations, then please see the school, as we will be the only ones to assess for this purpose.

In summary, please can you contact me if you believe your child has a difficulty which will impact on their learning, so together we can hopefully gain the outcome you desire.

Yours sincerely,

**Dr N Alexander-Passe**  
**SENDCo**  
**Associate member of the SLT**

\*<https://hasmoneanboys.org.uk/hasmonean/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/SEND-Policy-BOYS.pdf>  
<https://hasmoneangirls.org.uk/hasmonean/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/SEND-Policy-GIRLS.pdf>

\*\* Qualified and registered medical professionals will need to be registered with either the UK's General Medical Council (GMC) or The Royal College of Psychiatrists.