



ACCESS ARRANGEMENTS FOR EXAMINATIONS

A brief statement regarding Access Arrangements is given in section 6 of the existing exams policy. This document is to clarify our procedures in this respect and is heavily drawn from the JCQ publication "Access Arrangements, Reasonable Adjustments and Special Consideration". Direct quotes from this publication are italicized.

*"Access arrangements are not there to give candidates an unfair advantage, but to give all candidates a level playing field in which to demonstrate their skills, knowledge and understanding. In order to ensure this, the JCQ awarding bodies require that evidence of need **must** always be obtained by centres to support an access arrangement. Where an arrangement has been processed online and approval granted, the evidence of need **must** be made available for inspection by the JCQ Centre Inspection Service. Centres **must** ensure that appropriate evidence is on file to substantiate an access arrangement granted to a candidate."*

The Application for Admission Form has a section asking applicants to identify any disabilities and special needs that they have; students with a statement of special education needs can be identified at an early stage, and the appropriate access arrangements can be made. Such students may need extra time in examinations or the use of a word processor. Applications for access arrangements must be made by 21st February for the main May/June exam session. Once the arrangements have been approved the approval is valid for the duration of the course.

Where a candidate has a temporary injury or illness or has suffered bereavement at the time of the examination, special consideration can be applied for if the appropriate medical documentation is held on our files to substantiate the arrangement.

*"Bi-lingual translation dictionaries may only be used in examinations by candidates whose first language is not English, Irish or Welsh. **The use of a bi-lingual translation dictionary should reflect the candidate's normal way of working within the centre.**"*

Reading pens, translators, wordlists or glossaries must not be used.

Each autumn term a form is distributed to overseas AS and GCSE students via the personal tutor to identify those students who need to use a bi-lingual dictionary. For students joining in January this will be distributed with the examination entry forms. **If students do not normally use a dictionary they should not apply for this access arrangement.** If more than 25% of class time is spent using a dictionary, then access arrangements can apply:

*"**In rare and exceptional circumstances GCSE candidates** who are permitted to use bilingual translation dictionaries may also be allowed **up to a maximum of 10% extra time, depending on need, if they have been resident in the UK for less than three years at the time of the examination(s). Holiday periods are included in the three year rule.** In subjects where a dictionary is not permitted no extra time is available.*

*The candidate's need of the dictionary does **not** in itself justify allowing the candidate extra time, unless the candidate has to refer to the dictionary so often that examination time is used for this purpose instead of answering the questions.*

The centre must determine the needs of the individual GCSE candidate. Not all GCSE candidates for whom English is an additional language will need to use a bilingual translation dictionary. Very few bilingual translation dictionary users will need to have extra time.

This is an arrangement specifically for a GCSE candidate who entered the United Kingdom less than two years before the time of the examination(s), with no prior knowledge of the English Language.

Most students at Cambridge Tutors College will not normally be eligible for extra time for use of a dictionary. Our English language entry requirements, either IELTS or our own English test, demand a functional level of English.

If tutors consider that one of their students does have *“to refer to the dictionary so often that examination time is used for this purpose instead of answering the questions”* they should report this to the Examinations Officer at the earliest opportunity. If, in consultation with other subject tutors, it is agreed that there is such a need the Vice Principal will ask the Examinations Officer to make the necessary arrangements, supplying written evidence of that need for inspection if necessary. It is likely that these students will already have been the subject of conferences and remedial English support.

There is a misconception that international students are automatically entitled to extra time in exams – this is not the case. It is important that tutors fully understand the regulations in order to give appropriate information to students.

For further information and a copy of the latest JCQ publication of ‘Access Arrangements, Reasonable Adjustments and Special Consideration’ visit;

<http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/access-arrangements-and-special-consideration>

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