**Conclusion**

Access Arrangements are reasonable adjustments that should level the playing field. They are not in

place to create an unfair advantage, nor should they disadvantage a young person. As such Reasonable Adjustments should be put in place as soon as possible. This enables the student to develop their exam techniques over time so an Access Arrangement is their normal way of working. It is not an arrangement suddenly presented to them just before sitting their first examination. There are implications for schools in terms of the costs of formally assessing students and facilitating Access Arrangements that

require extra rooms, staff and computers during the exams. However, these are not insurmountable especially given the potential of enabling a young person to experience the exam success they are capable of.

**What can I do as a parent?**

Talk to your child, ask them what they feel would be the best form of support for Access Arrangements. They are the

ones that have to sit the exams. Consider the implications of Access Arrangements and the long term aim of promoting independence. Using a reader and a scribe is not a viable long term prospect for a young adult although it can prepare them for using computer readers and voice activated software. You can arrange a meeting with the Examinations Officer to discuss the options.

**Will my child lose marks if they have an Access Arrangement? Scribe**

In subjects where separate marks for spelling, punctuation and grammar (SPaG) are being awarded the student will not be credited the marks for spelling and punctuation. They will be awarded marks for grammar. These are generally 3% of the total marks. Subjects that award separate marks for SPaG are:

* GCSE English/English Language
* GCSE English Literature
* GCSE History

It should be noted that in the new GCSE English Language a student using a scribe may lose 20% of the total marks. A scribe cannot be used for Functional skills English Writing

**Reader**

Students do not lose any marks for having a reader

**Additional evidence required**

For **all** Access Arrangements the Examinations Officer must also produce a document that, according to JCQ, ‘paints a holistic picture of need’. This confirms a student’s normal way of working in school and could contain the follow-

ing:

* Arrangements used in practice papers and mock exams
* Comments and observations of teaching staff
* Interventions used during years 7,8 and 9 (individual learning plans, support given, small group work)
* Screening test results
* Reasonable Adjustments used when working in the classroom, mock exams or internal school tests.

This emphasises how important it is that schools ensure Reasonable Adjustments are in place as soon as possible for children with identified learning difficulties.

**Access Arrangements Assessments**

The assessment must be carried out no earlier than the beginning of year 9 for Access Arrangements in years 10 and 11. It is advisable that these assessments are done at the end of year 9 as they are valid for two years and will

therefore, cover a student until the end of year 11. For students in 6th Form the assessments are carried out in year

11. To qualify for any Access Arrangement that requires formal assessment, a student’s scores must fall well below the average expected for a student of the same chronological age.