Exam Access Arrangements
(Specific Learning Difficulties)
What Exam Access Arrangements are Permitted?

This is not a definitive list but merely an exemplar of the types of access arrangements that are agreed for SpLD students each year:

- 25 per cent extra time (standard maximum)
- Use of word processor (spellcheck enabled)
- Exam printed on coloured paper / use of coloured overlays
- A reader and/ or scribe
- Supervised rest breaks
- 1:1 invigilation in a separate room
- A prompter
How Do I Apply for Exam Access Arrangements?

• An application for exam access arrangements is made through your College

• You will need to provide your College tutor or College tutorial office a copy of your evidence of your specific learning difficulty

• Acceptable evidence includes
  • Educational Psychologist diagnostic report
  • Specialist Teacher diagnostic report
  • Occupational therapist diagnostic report (dyspraxia only)
  • Psychiatrist’s diagnostic report (ADHD only)
Specific Criteria

- The Board of Exams has specific criteria for evidence it requires for an application for exam access arrangements.

- If you are providing an educational assessment report it must meet the following criteria:
  
  - Conducted by a Psychologist or Specialist Teacher with a current PAToSS practicing certificate
  
  - Full diagnostic assessment report (not top-up)
  
  - Conducted after the age of 16
  
  - No more than 5 years old (8 years for postgraduate)
Specific Criteria

• The report should also:
  
  • Make a definitive diagnosis: state that the diagnosis is ‘dyslexia’, ‘specific leaning difficulty’, ‘dyspraxia’, ‘dysgraphia’
  
  • Make specific recommendations for exam access arrangements: State that 25% extra time is required (not just the extra time)
  
• If the recommendations are not specific you can ask your assessor for an addendum to accompany the report. If this is not possible, your disability adviser may be able to make the recommendations.
Specific Criteria

If your evidence is medical evidence

- Occupational Therapist report (dyspraxia)
- Psychiatrist’s report (AD(H)D)

- It does not need to be less than 5 years old
- It does need to make a definitive diagnosis (i.e. dyspraxia or ADHD)

- If it does not make specific recommendations for exam access arrangements your disability adviser will be able to provide this
If Your Evidence Does not Meet this Criteria

• If your evidence does not meet this criteria
  or
• you do not have evidence

• you may need a new full diagnostic assessment
How Do I Get a New Assessment?

Option 1

You can use one of the University’s pool of quality assured assessors.

• Cost
  
  Speak to the college if you need assistance with the cost of a report

• You may need to travel to the assessor (some come to the DRC)

• Your disability adviser will provide you with the contact details.
How Do I Get a New Assessment?

Option 2

You can use an assessor of your own choosing. If you select this option please:

- Check your practitioner is registered with the Health Professions council by following the link: http://www.hpc-uk.org/

- Ask your practitioner if they are experienced in assessing SpLD for students in Higher Education

- Your disability adviser can provide information for your assessor detailing the criteria required
Contact your disability adviser

S/he will

- Read your current evidence and let you know if it meets the Board of Exams criteria for the purposes of applying for exam access arrangements

  Then either

- Advise you to take your report to your college to apply for exam access arrangements

  or

- Provide you with the contact details of one of the University’s pool of assessors

  or

- Liaise with your own chosen assessor to ensure that the report meets the Board of Exam’s criteria
There are deadlines by which you must have provided your evidence to your college for the application for exam access arrangements.

The deadline is:

- division of Lent Term (13 February 2019) for diagnosed specific learning difficulties

After this deadline it cannot be guaranteed that you will be allowed the exam access arrangements that you need.
What Should I Do Now?

• Any questions about the suitability of your evidence or queries about the process, please contact your disability adviser at the DRC as soon as possible

• Please provide a copy of your evidence to your College tutor or College tutorial office as soon as possible after arrival
In terms of the Viva, the kinds of adjustments that could be helpful could include the following:

- The Viva should take place in a room familiar to you to reduce anxiety

**Examiners should:**

- be aware of your SpLD and the impact on processing incoming information at speed
- use straightforward and unambiguous phrasing
- avoid multiple parts to questions. These additional parts should be asked as separate questions.
- signpost questions to assist with processing
- Break Viva down into shorter sessions, rather than one long session.
You should be allowed to:

- Have a practice Viva (i.e. a 'mock')
- Note down questions and ask for repetition or clarification
- Read the question back to the examiner(s) to ensure that all the points that were being raised have been noted.
- Make some notes on the answers, as opposed to having to think instantly 'on the spot'
- Have written, detailed guidance on the expectations
- Have a basic list/outline of areas that the examiners wish to probe in more detail/question 1 day in advance; to allow you to annotate your thesis and pinpoint information
Adjustments in Viva

• Have adequate time to assimilate/process the question and then make notes and sequence ideas before being required to respond to the question

• Have time to mentally search for the word and allowances should be made if cannot be instantly recollected

• Mark areas in your thesis with coloured tabs to help you locate areas quickly and find information that is relevant to the questions asked (you may find having a study skills session to help you do this would be worthwhile)

• Use your assistive technology to support your presentation

• Have rest breaks

• Remove visually distracting items from the examination room (e.g. ‘busy’ posters) and for exam to be conducted in a quiet room
And finally.....

Any questions?