

## **Exam Access Arrangements Requests–guidance for students and parents 2018-19**

If a young person has had EAAs at school, they will be invited to be reassessed during the first week of September before their courses start to see if they need the same arrangements for their Level 3 qualifications. EAAs at BHASVIC are based on assessments carried out by our own qualified assessors in accordance with the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) recommendations. We do not accept privately commissioned reports from Educational Psychologists for this purpose.

Educational Institutions are required to follow tightly regulated guidelines with regard to EAAs. The regulation body is the Joint Council for Qualifications. The JCQ regulations for EAAs are updated annually and the college must adapt its criteria and methodology for assessing student entitlement to ensure compliance. This means that we cannot guarantee that a student will continue to receive the same EAAs they have had at school.

If a student has had EAAs due to a long term sensory need or a medical or psychological condition, upon the receipt of appropriate evidence of a diagnosis from a consultant, we will request a continuation of their EAAs for the duration of their studies at BHASVIC.

### **Exams**

The majority of students will sit exams with their peers in the Hall or the sports gym. Invigilators are trained to manage the needs of students during exams and recognise that for all students this is a highly anxious time. Our invigilators and exams team are sensitive to the needs of students during exams and recognise the symptoms of stress and anxiety. When necessary they will act in accordance with the JCQ regulations to make reasonable adjustments to support students to sit and complete exams.

**Separate Invigilation** (students sit exams with others in a smaller room rather than the exam hall). There is an exceptionally high demand for separate invigilation and we require medical evidence of need from a consultant or specialist (not a GP) which must be dated within one year of the exam to be taken. Unless it is for a serious medical or psychological condition, we cannot agree to separate invigilation.

### **Individual Invigilation**

There are some very rare cases when this is necessary. We require evidence of need from a consultant or specialist which provides details of the student's condition and stating exactly why Individual Invigilation is necessary. Following submission of this evidence, the college's assessment team will make a final decision and communicate this back to the applicant and parents or carers. Individual Invigilation can only be accommodated in highly exceptional circumstances and evidence of need must be provided at enrolment in order for us to make ongoing reasonable adjustments to support the student and to comply with JCQ regulations.

### **Rest Breaks**

Our policy is as follows:

- If you have rest breaks for a medical condition, we require evidence from a specialist or a consultant to support your request; a letter from a GP is not sufficient.
- Rest breaks are for students with ongoing difficulties and we have to provide evidence of history of need. Evidence to support a request for rest breaks must be provided in advance of the exam and be part of the students 'normal way of working' at BHASVIC. We will not provide rest breaks unless there is comprehensive medical evidence and an ongoing history of need to support the request. We will not accept evidence for rest breaks after January 21st, unless there are very exceptional circumstances.
- If you require rest breaks due to an anxiety related condition we require evidence from a specialist support service such as CAMHS or another NHS provider. We do not accept GP letters or emails/letters from private practitioners for this purpose. Anxiety related conditions are often best served by completing the exam within the normal time constraints rather than by extending the exam.

Unless there is an exceptional medical reason, students have one 5 minute rest break for each exam.

*Letters requesting rest breaks must be dated within one year of the exams to be taken; therefore, one letter is not enough to cover both first and second year exams.*

## **Use of a Word Processor in Exams**

The JCQ provides the following guidelines on when it is acceptable for individuals to be given access to word processing during examinations:

- A learning difficulty which has a substantial and long term effect on their ability to write legibly
- A medical condition
- A physical disability
- A sensory impairment

“A word processor cannot be simply granted to a candidate because he/she now wants to type rather than write in examinations or can work faster on a keyboard, or because he/she uses a laptop at home. The use of a word processor must reflect the candidate’s normal way of working within the centre and be appropriate to the candidate’s needs.” (JCQ 2017-18)

At BHASVIC we will review requests for the use of a word processor in exams if one of the following conditions is met:

- An internal assessment by one of our qualified staff has identified and verified the need for the use of a word processor.
- A medical, physical or sensory disability that confirms use of a word processor as necessary. (We require confirmation in writing by a specialist or consultant, a letter from a GP is not sufficient.)
- Slow hand writing speed. (Confirmed by an assessment carried out at BHASVIC)
- Illegible handwriting (Examiners are adept at deciphering poor handwriting, so it has to be extremely difficult to read, not just messy.) Proof required from Subject teachers.
- If a student has used a word processor for their GCSE exams, we will request supporting evidence from their school and this will be considered alongside a new assessment of need.

The use of a word processor in exams is for students who need to do extended writing. Unless there is a medical reason or a specific need, we do not permit the use of a word processor for Maths.

Following submission of a request and provision of supporting evidence, an assessment will be carried out by one of our qualified assessors to finalise a decision and provide necessary evidence of need to the JCQ.

## **Practical Exams**

Students who do the following subjects will not qualify for extra time in the practical element of their exams or assessments.

- Fine Art
- Graphic Design
- Dance
- Drama and Theatre studies
- Photography
- Music
- Sport
- BTEC diplomas in any of the above or any subject that requires them to perform a skill.

If you require further information about Exam Access Arrangements, please contact:

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