



Anxiety Exam Guidance

Here at St Mary's we take the Social, Emotional and Mental Health of our students very seriously. We appreciate that, as Exams approach, many students may well begin to feel anxious and we offer a wide range of support strategies; including a number of online courses for anxiety and depression as well as close links with external counselling services. We also offer in-house pastoral support and we try to work as flexibly as possible to accommodate and support our learners.

It is imperative you notify the Inclusion/Safeguarding team as soon as possible if you are suffering with a Social Emotional and Mental health issue.

As a College we must however abide at all times by current JCQ guidelines to ensure a fair process for all our student cohort and we endeavour to outline the processes below;

For students suffering from anxiety and panic attacks JCQ guidelines clearly outline the possibilities for Examination Access Arrangements:

4.1.4 Social, Mental and Emotional Needs† E.g. Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD), Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), Mental Health Conditions

Candidates with social, mental and emotional needs may require for example:

- *supervised rest breaks*
- *extra time*
- *a computer reader or a reader*
- *read aloud or an examination reading pen*
- *a scribe*
- *a word processor*
- *a prompter*
- *alternative site arrangement*
- *separate invigilation within the centre.*

†The candidate must have an impairment in their first language which has a substantial and long term adverse effect. A candidate does not have a learning difficulty simply because their first language is not English, Irish or Welsh.

Although many students feel they would benefit from a 'separate room' during examinations, separate invigilation within College is based upon a student's established difficulties and his/her **normal way of working**. Obviously if a student has been able to sit in an assembly or in a large group for Key Assessments/Mock Examinations then separate accommodation in final examinations cannot be awarded. Likewise, unfortunately, a separate room cannot be awarded on the basis of a GP's letter or parental concerns.

The following evidence has been suggested by the JCQ as appropriate evidence to support separate or small room invigilation;

- *a letter from CAMHS, a HCPC registered psychologist, a hospital consultant, a psychiatrist; or*
- *a letter from the Local Authority Specialist Service, Local Authority Sensory Impairment Service or Occupational Health Service†; or*
- *a letter from a Speech and Language Therapist (SaLT); or*
- *a current Statement of Special Educational Needs, or an Education, Health and Care Plan, which confirms the candidate's disability.*

Access Arrangements can only be awarded to students with genuine difficulties where a separate or small group setting would be an appropriate and reasonable adjustment in light of those difficulties. We also ask that students complete a six-week online anxiety course as part of a continuing process of self-help.

If you require any more information please contact a member of the Inclusion team in Room 1028 or call 01254 580464

Thank you