

## **Victory Charter Schools**

### **Access & Inclusion Policy**

At Victory Charter School we believe that all students should be allowed to demonstrate their ability under assessment conditions that are fair and equitable as determined by law, school policy, and IB policy. This necessitates that some students will require arrangements that eliminate disadvantages that would prevent the student from demonstrating their ability.

According to the IB organization, access arrangements may be necessary due to:

- Long-term learning support requirements.
- Temporary medical conditions.
- Additional language learning.

The Access and Inclusion Policy is not only applicable during summative assessments but is to be used during teaching and learning; this means that the policy must be used during classroom instruction, classwork and related activities and tests. This policy will guide teachers in their plans to meet the access requirements of students for all their work during their time at Victory Charter Schools. VCS is committed to working with parents, educational specialists, teachers, and student services staff to ensure that all students reach their maximum potential, regardless of exceptionality and/or condition.

### **Response to Intervention**

The Response to Intervention (RTI) process begins with either an observation conducted by the parent or classroom teacher. The findings are reported to the appropriate counselor who then, if applicable, formally implements the RTI process. RTI is a process designed to help schools find the appropriate interventions, modifications, and/or accommodations a student requires.

During tier 1 of RTI the focus and purpose is high-quality classroom instruction. If a student is not producing in this environment, he/she may proceed to tier 2. Tier 2 is targeted intervention in small group setting lasting no longer than a quarter of the school year. If a student does not show improvement or too little improvement while in tier 2, he/she moves into tier 3. Tier 3 is intensive interventions and a possible comprehensive evaluation. In tier 3 a student receives individualized intervention targeting their skill deficit. If progress is not made, the student is referred for a comprehensive evaluation conducted by a medical professional for consideration of services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act.

### **Accommodations/Modifications**

Individualized Educational Plan (IEP)

Students who show evidence of having an impairment via a psychological/psycho-educational/medical report are eligible for an IEP. A student's IEP notes all accommodations and modifications provided to the student during instruction and testing. An IEP is issued for an extended period and reviewed annually to ensure accommodations and modifications are effective.

#### Section 504

To be protected under section 504, a student must be determined to have a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities. A 504 plan is generated by the school's counseling department and includes modification offerings that allow for equal access to the curriculum for the student. Classroom and Instructional accommodations are notated in the plan. 504 plans are issued for a period and reevaluated at the end date to determine if an extension is required.

#### **Support**

Support for students with special educational needs include pull-out assistance, collaboration, and/or consultation. A certified ESE teacher provides pull-out services during assessments. During pull-out a student can work in a small group setting. Collaboration and consultation services are also provided by a certified ESE teacher. During collaboration, the ESE teacher provides one-on-one help during class time for the subject and time stated in the student's IEP. During consultation, the ESE teacher consults with the general education teacher over the student's progress as well as discuss effective strategies.

#### **Maintaining Standards:**

Arrangement requests for a student does not give the student an advantage in any assessments; the same standards of assessment are applied to all students. Access arrangements do not diminish a student's capacity to meet all assessment requirements during their coursework. Access arrangements for assessments are to reflect the student's learning experience; therefore, students cannot request access arrangements at the time of assessment but must do so with anticipation. All grades and marks are awarded based on student work meeting set criteria without influence of any access arrangement a student may have. A student capable of receiving a subject result for a course without access arrangement should not request access arrangement for the assessment (exceptions can be made depending on the circumstances). No exemption can be granted for language subjects; all students, including those with specific learning challenges, are required to study two languages without any exception.

#### **Access Arrangements During the Course of Study:**

The access arrangements provided to a student must be planned at the start or early on during the course of study and be incorporated as the usual way to access classroom work and tests.

The access arrangements provided for a student must:

- be carefully individualized, evaluated and monitored
- reflect the optimal support that the student requires
- be based on current, not past, requirements
- be drawn upon teacher observations in the classroom
- be strictly based on individual requirements

**Requesting Access Arrangements for Assessments:**

The IB coordinator is responsible for submitting an application for access arrangements on behalf of a student with the support of the school principal and consent from the student and/or legal guardians.

**Deadlines:**

Access arrangements for total vision impairment and hearing challenges.	Submitted no later than one year before the examination session.
All other requests for access arrangements.	Submitted six months prior to an examination session.  by 15 November for candidates registering for the May examinations session.  by 15 May for candidates registering for the November examinations session.

- All requests for inclusive access arrangements must be submitted on IBIS and must specify exactly which arrangements are being requested.
- Requests for inclusive access arrangements will take a minimum of four weeks to be processed. The same applies for requests for re-evaluation of decisions.
- If a request meets the standard eligibility criteria for the requested arrangement(s), the online tool will automatically approve the request.
- If a request does not meet the standard criteria, it will be referred to the IB organization for evaluation.
- Changes to access arrangements for anticipated and retake students would not normally be authorized.

- All requests for re-evaluation must be submitted within one month after the school has received the decision made by the IB upon processing the request.

### **Evidence Required:**

To submit requests for access arrangements, VCS must submit a psychological/psycho-educational/medical report or evidence from a language test for English Language Learners. Additionally, VCS must submit educational evidence such as a letter/observational report from the coordinator and/or the student's subject teacher(s) outlining any difficulties that may be apparent in class plus a summary about the arrangements provided to the candidate in order to access learning and assessment. Educational evidence can also be provided by way of a detailed individualized educational plan for the student or a sample of work done under timed conditions without the access arrangements that are being requested.

All supporting documentation must:

- Be legible, on a document with a letterhead, signed and dated.
- State the title, name, and professional credentials of the person(s) who has undertaken the testing.
- State specifically the tests or techniques used.
- Be consistent with the coordinator's request for access arrangements.
- Be accompanied by a translation into English, French or Spanish, if it is not written in one of these IB working languages.

All psychological/psycho-educational reports must:

- State the candidate's performance on nationally standardized psychological tests (where available and published, recent editions of standardized tests should be employed)
- Report results as standard scores, which have a mean of 100 and a standard deviation of 15, and not percentiles or age/grade equivalents.
- It is not mandatory to test in all areas; the assessment may be in line with the candidate's learning support requirements.

All language test reports for additional language learners must:

- State the standardized language test used.
- State the language proficiency and performance benchmark results (WIDA).

### **Administering Access Arrangements for Assessments:**

VCS is responsible for making all arrangements for approving and appointing individuals required to support an access arrangement (such as a prompter or reader). The person providing support cannot be another student, a relative of the student, the subject group teacher or a representative from an advisory service where a conflict of interest may be

apparent or perceived. VCS is also responsible for making all arrangements for assistive technology required for access to learning and teaching and IB examinations.

### **Access Arrangements not Requiring Authorization:**

- Taking an examination in a separate room if it is in the best interests of the student or other students in the group.
- Arranging for appropriate seating to meet the needs of the individual student.
- A care assistant.
- A student who normally uses an aid (such as a colored overlay, colored filter lenses, a Braille slate, a sound amplification device, a radio aid, a hearing aid, a visual aid, or a magnifying aid).
- Use of buffers such as headsets, earplugs, and individual workstations with acoustic screens for students who are hypersensitive to sound.
- A communicator for a student with hearing challenges.
- Clarified assessment directions for a student who has difficulties in reading or attention, examination directions may be clarified by the invigilator (examiner) or a designated reader.
- A designated person to name colors in an examination for a student who has color blindness.
- Rest breaks if required due to medical, physical, psychological, or other conditions.
- A prompter due to attention issues, psychological or neurological conditions.

### **Access Arrangements Requiring Authorization:**

#### **Access to Modification in the Presentation of the Examination**

Candidates with visual challenges or specific learning challenges may require modified presentation of the examinations. Candidates with total vision impairment may also need questions adapted for accessibility (without changing the learning outcome).

#### **Middle Year Program**

- Access to alternative font and/or text/background color.
- Alternative accessible font.
- Alternative text/background color.

#### **Diploma Program**

- Changes to the print and examination papers in Braille.
- Printing on color paper.
- Access to electronic examination.
- Modified Papers.

#### **Access to Additional Time**

A student with a learning, physical, sensory, neurological, medical, or psychological challenge may request additional time during learning and teaching, and assessments. The amount of additional time is dependent on the severity of the challenge as determined by a medical professional.

#### Middle Year Program and Diploma Program

Additional time	Standard score used to measure eligibility criteria
10%	90–100
25%	Below 90
50%	Below 75 Or standard scores are below 90 in at least three measures that affect speed of working and there is no request for any access arrangement for reading or writing. The three standard scores below 90 must: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• not come from sub-tests</li> <li>• be related to three different areas (so must not all be related to one area, for example, reading)</li> <li>• not be standard scores on the same area from two different tests.</li> </ul>

- The eligibility criteria for additional time is based on the standard scores from psychological/medical documentation.
- psychological/medical documentations requesting more than the allotted additional time are dealt on a case by case measure.

#### Access to Writing

Candidates may require access arrangements to provide written responses. Difficulties in writing may arise due to specific learning challenges, visual challenges, visual processing challenges, fine motor challenges, attention challenges or other psychological or medical challenges.

#### Middle Year Program

Access Arrangement	Criteria (at least one)	Guidelines
Graphic Organizer	Score 90 or less on written expression/information processing/working memory.  Demonstrate difficulties with organization.	Graphic organizers must be paper based.  They must be clean copies with no annotations provided by the school at the start of the examination.  Graphic organizers can only be used for the duration of the examination, shredded immediately after.

<p>Scribe (Typing)</p>	<p>Score 90 or less on written expression/spelling/information processing/working memory.</p> <p>Have below average typing speed for age.</p> <p>Have a medical, physical, or sensory challenge which makes it difficult to use keyboards.</p>	<p>Once approved a scribe, the same person should perform the task whenever needed.</p> <p>Having a scribe means required practice before assessments and pull out during the assessments.</p>
------------------------	--	--

### Diploma Program

Access Arrangement	Criteria (at least one)	Guidelines
<p>Graphic Organizer</p>	<p>score 90 or less on written expression/information processing/working memory</p> <p>Demonstrate difficulties with organization.</p>	<p>The graphic organizer can be either paper-based or electronic.</p> <p>It cannot contain any pre-populated words or sentences.</p> <p>While using an electronic graphic organizer, it may not contain grammar check, word/sentence prediction.</p> <p>The paper-based organizers must be provided by the school at the start of the assessment and shredded immediately after.</p> <p>Graphic organizers can only be used for the duration of the assessment.</p>
<p>Scribe (Handwriting)</p>	<p>Score below his/her age on a standard free-writing speed test.</p> <p>Score 90 or less on the written expression/spelling/information processing/working memory.</p> <p>Have a medical, physical, or sensory challenge which makes it difficult to write or write for long periods of time.</p> <p>Have illegible handwriting.</p>	<p>Once approved a scribe, the same person should perform the task whenever needed.</p> <p>Having a scribe means required practice before assessments and pull out during the assessments.</p>
<p>Word Processor (Typing)</p>	<p>Score below his/her age on a standard free-writing speed test.</p>	<p>A student can only be issued a word processor if it is the student's usual way of learning.</p>

	<p>Score 90 or less on the written expression/spelling/information processing/working memory.</p> <p>Have a medical, physical, or sensory challenge which makes it difficult to write or write for long periods of time.</p> <p>Have illegible handwriting.</p>	<p>For a word processor with spellchecker, the student must score 90 or below on spelling in a psychological test.</p>
Speech Recognition Software	<p>Score below his/her age on a free-writing speed test.</p> <p>Below average score in typing speed.</p> <p>Score 90 or less on written expression/spelling/information processing/working memory.</p> <p>Have a medical, physical or sensory condition which makes it difficult to write/type or write/type for long periods of time.</p>	<p>A student can only be issued a speech recognition software if it is the student's usual way of learning.</p>
Transcriptions	<p>Student is unable to use a word processor.</p> <p>Have a medical, physical or sensory condition that causes writing challenges such that his or her written work is largely illegible.</p> <p>Have a medical, physical or sensory condition that causes difficulties in accessing the Scantron (bubble sheets) answer sheets.</p>	<p>Work must state the use of a transcriber with name and signature.</p> <p>Transcription must be separate from student's work.</p> <p>Must be produced immediately after assessment.</p> <p>Student's work must not be annotated, only to refer to transcript.</p> <p>Transcript must e produced by a teacher familiar with the student's handwriting.</p> <p>Transcript must be verbatim.</p> <p>Diagrams cannot be transcribed.</p>

**Access to Reading**



Students may require support to read the text in the assessments. Difficulties in reading text may arise due to learning challenges, visual processing challenges, attention challenges, visual challenges or any other medical issue that may affect vision.

#### Middle Year Program

Access Arrangement	Criteria (at least one)	Guidelines
Reader	<p>Score 90 or less on psychological test on reading speed/reading accuracy/reading comprehension.</p> <p>have a medical, physical, or sensory condition making it difficult to read.</p>	<p>Students who require a reader due to total vision impairment will be provided with adapted assessment with scripted images.</p> <p>Readers are not allowed to explain questions, simply read the questions and read back the answers if requested by student.</p> <p>At the request of the student, the reader can modify reading pace.</p> <p>Having a reader means required practice before assessments and pull out during the assessments.</p>

#### Diploma Program

Access Arrangement	Criteria (at least one)	Guidelines
Reader	<p>Score 90 or less on psychological test on reading speed/reading accuracy/reading comprehension.</p> <p>have a medical, physical, or sensory condition making it difficult to read.</p>	<p>Readers are not allowed to explain questions, simply read the questions and read back the answers if requested by student.</p> <p>At the request of the student, the reader can modify reading pace.</p> <p>Having a reader means required practice before assessments and pull out during the assessments.</p>
Reading Software	<p>Score 90 or less on a psychological test on reading speed/reading accuracy/reading comprehension.</p>	<p>A student can only be issued a reading software if it is the student's usual way of learning.</p>

	Have medical, physical or sensory challenges making it difficult to read.	The reading software must be used with a word processor.
Examination (Reading) Pen	<p>Score a 90 or less on a psychological test on reading speed/reading accuracy/reading comprehension.</p> <p>Have medical, physical or sensory challenges making it difficult to read.</p>	<p>A student can only be issued an examination (reading) pen if it is the student's usual way of learning.</p> <p>Cannot have data storage facility or built in dictionary/thesaurus.</p>

\*Students who require further access arrangements may request sign language interpreters and augmentative communication devices if they are intended to form part of the student's regular learning.

### Access to Practical Assistance

A student with a physical, sensory, or medical challenge may require access to a practical assistant for tasks that require physical manipulation or movement unless it is the task being tested.

#### Middle Year Program

- The arrangement is normally confined to support with motor movements (such as moving the mouse) that are difficult for the candidate during the on-screen assessments.

#### Diploma Program

- This arrangement is normally confined to the requirements of internal assessment (for example, practical work in the sciences or geography fieldwork). It is particularly suited to situations where there is a concern for a student's health or safety.

### Access to Calculators

If a student scores 90 or less in a test of mathematical fluency, the student is eligible to use a four-function calculator (basic calculator performing only the functions of addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division).

### Exceptional Situations

- If a student presents evidence of a medical or psychological challenge that prevents the student from completing work on time, the student is eligible for extensions to deadlines. A request for an extension to a deadline must be received before the normal deadline.
- If a student presents evidence of a medical or psychological challenge that makes a deferral necessary for a student to access the program requirements, the student may defer one or more subjects. A request must be submitted at the start of the program and after registration for the assessment.
- A student may participate in a maximum of three assessment sessions to successfully attain their IB qualification.
- A student with a medical emergency may request the possibility of an alternative venue for testing. This situation is treated on a case by case bases and approval is not guaranteed.
- Reasonable adjustments are changes to the assessment process not covered with any other access arrangements. These adjustments are determined by the IB organization after reviewing a student’s unique requirements. For the MYP, reasonable adjustments can only be applied to ePortfolio summative assessment task and the personal project.

### **Access for English Language Learners**

English Language Learners are students whose current course of study and assessment is delivered in a language that is not their first, best or native language and whose language ability is below the level that is deemed linguistically competent. The eligibility for access arrangements will be based on WIDA scores conducted within one year of the assessment.

- Access for English Language Learners does not apply to assessments in language and literature and language acquisition.
- In MYP, Access for additional language learners can apply to examinations in individuals and societies, sciences, mathematics, arts, physical and health education, design, and the program core components.
- In DP, access for additional language learners can apply to oral or written examinations in individuals and societies, sciences, mathematics, the arts, and the DP/Career-related Program core components.

Access Arrangements	Criteria	Guidelines
MYP & DP: Extra Time (25% written examinations)	Evidence of a composite score from WIDA that indicates language ability that is below the level in speaking, listening, writing and reading, or in reading and writing.	Extra time will not be authorized for the five minutes’ reading time that precedes written examinations.  Extra time for different challenges or circumstances is never cumulative.

	<p>Educational evidence from the school that clearly states that the student receives language support and that the arrangements requested are the usual way of working.</p>	
<p>MYP &amp; DP: Extra Time (25% Oral examinations)</p>	<p>Evidence of a score from WIDA that indicates language ability that is below the level defined as linguistically competent in speaking and/or listening.</p> <p>Educational evidence from the school that clearly states that the student receives language support and that the arrangements requested are usual way of working.</p>	<p>The authorized extra time for oral assessments can be divided between preparation and the oral delivery.</p>
<p>MYP: Reader</p>	<p>Evidence of a score from WIDA indicates a language level that is below the level defined as linguistically competent in reading.</p> <p>Educational evidence from the school that clearly states that the student receives language support and that use of a reader is the usual way of working.</p>	
<p>DP: Reader/Reading Software</p>	<p>Evidence of a score from WIDA that indicates a language level that is below the level defined as linguistically competent in reading.</p> <p>Educational evidence from the school that clearly states that the student receives language support and that use of a reader/reading software is the usual way of working.</p>	
<p>DP: Word Processor with Spellchecker</p>	<p>Evidence of a score from WIDA that indicates a language level that is below competent in writing</p>	

	Educational evidence from the school that clearly states that the student receives language support and that use of a word processor with spellchecker is the usual way of working.	
--	---	--

### **Informing Students, Parents, and Community**

The Access and Inclusion Policy forms part of the VCS IB Handbook, available for students, parents, and the community via our school website.

### **Review of Policy**

The Access and Inclusion Policy will be reviewed annually during the leadership team retreat at the end of the school year to ensure it is up to date with the principles and practices of VCS and the IB organization.