

SUPPORTING STUDENTS WITH ASD IN HIGH SCHOOL - PLANNING FOR EXAMINATIONS

Plan for examinations

Examinations can be a stressful time for all students; however they can be particularly challenging for students with ASD. It is recommended that parents and teachers liaise with their Learning Support Coordinator or Deputy Principal to discuss strategies that could support the student with Autism during examinations. These may include:




- Providing a separate examination room.
- Putting in a formal request for extra time.
- Using scribes or assistive technology to support written output.
- Ensuring that instructions are clear, unambiguous and do not contain abstract ideas, except when an understanding of such ideas is part of the assessment.
- Giving the guidelines to plan to answer all questions and prompting to move onto a different question.

In oral examinations examiners may need to be aware that students with ASD may:

- Have difficulties understanding body language or personal space.
- Avoid eye contact
- Make inappropriate remarks or comments.
- Have difficulty understanding jokes, metaphors, exaggerations and may take things literally.
- Have difficulty responding to a question that relates to a social situation; or requires the student to consider something from another person's perspective.

During a test or exam

When I am feeling worried or overwhelmed in a test or exam I can try to do the following to calm down:

- Close my eyes and count to 10
- Take 10 deep breaths
- Squeeze a stress ball 
- Put my hand up and tell an adult 
- Have a small sip of water
- Self-talk 
 - "It's ok"
 - "It's only 3 hours"
 - "I can do this"
 - "1 question at a time"
 - "It's ok if other people are leaving and I'm still working"
 - "Just breathe"
 - "Just do my best"
- Cover distractions with a blank sheet of paper so I'm only looking at one question
- Squeeze my muscles one by one and then release them.

An individualised example of a visual prompt to help a student remain calm during a test or exam

Preparations for examinations should begin as early as possible to ensure additional supports can be arranged in time.

“Before their exams I gave them key vocabulary lists; I went through sample questions on the board; and I went through the text book with them, highlighting key paragraphs as opposed to chapters” – Teacher