



Equalities Policy (Exams)

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This policy is reviewed annually to ensure compliance with current regulations

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Purpose of the policy

This document is provided as an exams-specific supplement to the *centre-wide equalities/disability/ accessibility policy/plan* which details how the centre will:

recognise its duties towards disabled candidates, including private candidates, as defined under the terms of the Equality Act 2010†. This must include a duty to explore and provide access to suitable courses, through the access arrangements process, submit applications for reasonable adjustments and make reasonable adjustments to the service the centre provides to disabled candidates.

for any legislation in a relevant jurisdiction other than England and Wales which has an equivalent purpose and effect

[Quote taken directly from the current JCQ publication [General regulations for approved centres](#)]

This publication is further referred to in this policy as [GR](#).

This policy details how the centre facilitates access to exams and assessments for disabled candidates, as defined under the terms of the Equality Act 2010, by outlining staff roles and responsibilities in relation to:

- identifying the need for appropriate arrangements, reasonable adjustments and/or adaptations (referred to in this policy as ‘access arrangements’);
- requesting access arrangements;
- implementing access arrangements and the conduct of exams;
- good practice in relation to the Equality Act 2010.

The Equality Act 2010 definition of disability

A definition is provided on page 4 of the current JCQ publication *Adjustments for candidates with disabilities and learning difficulties* [Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments](#)

This publication is further referred to in this policy as [AA](#).

Identifying the need for access arrangements

Roles and responsibilities

Head of centre - Principal

- Is familiar with the entire contents, refers to and directs relevant centre staff to the annually updated JCQ publications including [GR](#) and [AA](#);
- Ensures the quality of the access arrangements process within the centre;
- Ensures staff roles, responsibilities and processes in identifying, requesting and implementing access arrangements are clearly defined and documented;
- Ensures an appropriately qualified assessor(s) is appointed and that evidence of the qualification(s) of the person(s) appointed has been obtained before he/she assesses candidates;
- Ensures that all assessments carried out and arrangements put in place comply with JCQ and awarding body regulations and guidance;
- Ensures a policy demonstrating the centres compliance with relevant legislation is in place;

- Ensures a statement is provided which details the criteria the centre uses to award and allocate word processors for exams.

Senior leaders

- Are familiar with the entire contents of the annually updated JCQ publications including [GR](#) and [AA](#)
- Ensures the quality of the access arrangements process within the centre;
- Ensures that all assessments carried out and arrangements put in place comply with JCQ and awarding body regulations and guidance.

Special educational needs coordinator (SENCo)

- Has full knowledge and understanding of the contents, refers to and directs relevant centre staff to the annually updated JCQ publication [AA](#)
- Ensures the assessment process is administered in accordance with the regulations;
- Leads on the access arrangements process to facilitate access for candidates;
- Defines and documents roles, responsibilities and processes in identifying and requesting access arrangements;
- If not the appropriately qualified assessor, works with the person/persons appointed, on all matters relating to assessing candidates and the administration of the assessment process;
- Ensures the qualified assessor(s) has access to the assessment objectives for the relevant specification(s) a candidate is undertaking;
- Ensures arrangements put in place for exams/assessments reflect a candidate's *normal way of working* within the centre;
- Ensures that all assessments carried out and arrangements put in place comply with JCQ and awarding body regulations and guidance;
- Ensures the need for access arrangements for a candidate will be considered on a subject by subject basis;
- Presents when requested by a JCQ Centre Inspector, evidence of the assessor's qualification which is held on file;
- Works with teaching staff, relevant support staff and the EO to ensure centre-delegated and awarding body approved access arrangements are put in place for candidates taking internal and external exams/assessments;
- Provide information to evidence the normal way of working of a candidate;
- Conducts appropriate assessments to identify the need(s) of a candidate;
- Provides appropriate evidence to confirm the need(s) of a candidate;
- Completes appropriate documentation as required by the regulations of JCQ and the awarding body;
- Provides a policy on the use of word processors in exams and assessments.

Teaching staff

- Inform the SENCo of any support that might be needed by a candidate;
- Support the SENCo in determining the need for access arrangements.

Support staff

- (where appropriate) Provide comments/observations to support the SENCo to 'paint a holistic picture of need' confirming normal way of working for a candidate.

Assessor of candidates with learning difficulties

(An assessor of candidates with learning difficulties will be an appropriately qualified access arrangements assessor/psychologist/specialist assessor)

- Has detailed understanding of the current JCQ publication [AA](#);
- Conducts appropriate assessments to identify the need(s) of a candidate.

Use of word processors

The centre's word processor policy is situated on the school website and in our policies folder on the school network

Requesting access arrangements

Roles and responsibilities

Special educational needs coordinator (SENCo)

- Determines if the arrangements identified for a candidate require prior approval from the awarding body before the arrangements are put in place for public exams or if approval is centre-delegated;
- Follows guidance in [AA](#) Chapter 8 to process approval applications for access arrangements for all qualifications listed in [AA](#)
- Applies for approval where this is required, through *Access arrangements online* (AAO), or through the awarding body where qualifications sit outside the scope of AAO with EO;
- Ensures appropriate and required evidence is held on file to confirm validation responses in AAO including (where required) the completion of JCQ Form 8 (*Application for access arrangements – Profile of learning difficulties*), and/or centre based evidence including concise file note(s) on centre headed paper, signed and dated, and a body of evidence to substantiate the candidate's normal way of working within the centre (Form 8 must only be used for candidates with learning difficulties who are not subject to a current EHCP or Statement of Special Educational Needs or those requiring a Language Modifier);
- Ensures where form 8 is required to be completed, the form is signed and dated as required **prior** to approval being sought and that the form is provided for processing and inspection purposes;
- Confirms by ticking the '*Confirmation*' box prior to submitting the application for approval that the '*malpractice consequence statement*' has been read and accepted with EO;

- Makes an *awarding body referral* through AAO where the initial application for approval may not be approved by AAO, where it is deemed by the centre that the candidate does meet the criteria for the arrangement(s) with EO;
- Ensures with EO that arrangements, and approval where required, are in place before a candidate takes his/her first public exam or assessment (which is externally assessed or internally assessed/externally moderated);
- Ensures that where approval is required that this is processed at the start of the course and at the latest by the awarding body deadline;
- Maintains a file/e-folder for each candidate (the required documentation for a candidate will either be all in hard copy within the candidate's file or all in electronic format within the candidate's e-folder) as detailed in [AA](#)
- Presents the files/e-folders when requested by a JCQ Centre Inspector and addresses any queries/questions raised;
- Liaises with teaching staff regarding any appropriate modified paper requirements for candidates.

Exams officer

- Is familiar with the entire contents of the annually updated JCQ publication [GR](#) and is aware of information contained in [AA](#) where this may be relevant to the EO role
- Follows guidance in [AA](#) to process approval applications for access arrangements for those qualifications listed in [AA](#)
- Applies for approval where this is required, through *Access arrangements online* (AAO), or through the awarding body where qualifications sit outside the scope of AAO with SENCO;
- Confirms by ticking the '*Confirmation*' box prior to submitting the application for approval that the '*malpractice consequence statement*' has been read and accepted with SENCO;
- Makes an *awarding body referral* through AAO where the initial application for approval may not be approved by AAO, where it is deemed by the centre that the candidate does meet the criteria for the arrangement(s) with SENCO;
- Ensures with SENCO that arrangements, and approval where required, are in place before a candidate takes his/her first exam or assessment (which is externally assessed or internally assessed/externally moderated);
- Liaises with the SENCO to ensure arrangements are in place to either order a non-interactive electronic (PDF) question paper or to open question paper packets in the secure room within 90 minutes of the published starting time for the exam where the centre is permitted to modify a timetabled written component exam paper (copy on coloured paper, enlarge to A3 or copy to single sided print);
- Following the appropriate process (using AAO for those qualifications included in the tool; using *Form VQ/EA*), orders published modified papers, by the awarding body's deadline for the exam series, where these may be required for a candidate.

Assistant Headteacher – Line Manager to SENCo

- If the SENCo is unavailable, presents the files/e-folders of access arrangements candidates when requested by a JCQ Centre Inspector and addresses any queries/questions raised.

Implementing access arrangements and the conduct of exams

Roles and responsibilities

External assessments

These are assessments which are normally set and marked/examined by an awarding body which must be conducted according to awarding body instructions and/or the JCQ publication [*Instructions for conducting examinations \(ICE\)*](#).

Head of centre

- Supports the SENCo, the EO and other relevant centre staff in ensuring appropriate arrangements, adjustments and adaptations are in place to facilitate access for disabled candidates to exams.

Special educational needs coordinator (SENCo)

- Ensures appropriate arrangements, adjustments and adaptations are in place to facilitate access for candidates where they are disabled within the meaning of the Equality Act (unless a temporary emergency arrangement is required at the time of an exam);
- Ensures a candidate is involved in any decisions about arrangements, adjustments and/or adaptations that may be put in place for him/her and ensures the candidate understands what will happen at exam time;
- Liaises with the EO to ensure exam information (JCQ information for candidates documents, individual exam timetable etc.) is adapted where this may be required for a disabled candidate to access it;
- Ensures that prior to any arrangements being put in place checks are made that arrangements do not impact on any assessment criteria/competence standards being tested;
- Monitors, in internal tests/mock exams, the use of arrangements granted to a candidate and where a candidate has never made use of the arrangement, may consider withdrawing the arrangement, provided the candidate will not be placed at a substantial disadvantage;
- Liaises with the EO regarding facilitation and invigilation of access arrangement candidates in exams;
- Liaise with EO to ensure that any arrangements put in place do not unfairly disadvantage or advantage disabled candidates;
- Liaises with the EO and other relevant centre staff regarding the provision of appropriate rooming and equipment that may be required to facilitate access for disabled candidates to exams;

- Ensures facilitators supporting candidates are appropriately trained and understand the rules of the particular access arrangement(s) with EO;
- Liaises with the EO to ensure that invigilators are made aware of the Equality Act 2010 and are trained in disability issues;
- Liaises with the EO where a facilitator may be required to support a candidate requiring an emergency (temporary) access arrangement at the time of exams.

Exams officer

- Understands and follows instructions for *Invigilation arrangements for candidates with access arrangements* and *Access arrangements* in [ICE](#)
- Is familiar with the instructions for *Invigilation arrangements for candidates with access arrangements* and *Access arrangements* in [ICE](#)
- Ensures exam information with SENCo (JCQ information for candidate's documents, individual exam timetable etc.) is adapted where this may be required for a disabled candidate to access it;
- Liaises with other relevant centre staff regarding the provision of appropriate rooming and equipment that may be required to facilitate access for disabled candidates to exams;
- Appoints appropriate centre staff as facilitators to support candidates (practical assistant, prompter, Language Modifier, reader, scribe or Communication Professional);
- Ensures facilitators supporting candidates are appropriately trained and understand the rules of the particular access arrangement(s);
- Ensures a record of the content of training given to those facilitating an access arrangement for a candidate under examination conditions is kept and retained on file until the deadline for reviews of marking has passed or until any appeal, malpractice or other results enquiry has been completed, whichever is later;
- Ensures where the candidate's own subject teacher will be used (in exceptional circumstances) as a facilitator, an invigilator will be present at all times;
- Ensures where a facilitator is allocated to support a candidate under exam conditions that they will not be a relative, friend, peer or private tutor of the candidate;
- Ensures the facilitator is known by or introduced to the candidate prior to exams;
- Ensures the facilitator acting as a prompter will not normally be the candidate's own subject teacher and must not be a relative, friend or peer of the candidate (understanding that a private tutor cannot act as a prompter for the candidate);
- Liaises with SENCo to ensure a facilitator acting as a prompter is aware of the appropriate way to prompt depending on the needs of the candidate;
- Liaises with the SENCo to ensure that invigilators are made aware of the Equality Act 2010 and are trained in disability issues;
- Ensures invigilators supervising access arrangement candidates are trained in their role and understand the invigilation arrangements required for access arrangement candidates and the role of any facilitator;
- Ensures cover sheets, where these are required by the arrangement are completed as required by facilitators;
- Liaises with the SENCo and other relevant centre staff to ensure appropriate arrangements, adjustments and adaptations are in place to facilitate access for disabled candidates to exams;

- Ensures appropriate seating arrangements are in place where different arrangements may need to be made for a candidate to facilitate access to his/her exams;
- Ensures candidates with access arrangements are identified on exam room seating plans and invigilators are made aware of the arrangements awarded and invigilators informed of those candidates with access arrangements and made aware of the access arrangements awarded;
- Ensures invigilators are briefed prior to each exam session of the arrangements in place for a disabled candidate in their exam room;
- Checks in advance of dated exams/assessments that modified paper orders have arrived (and if not will contact the awarding body to ensure that papers are available when required);
- Makes modifications that are permitted by the centre that may be required and either accesses a non-interactive electronic (PDF) question paper or opens the exam question paper packet in the secure room no earlier than 90 minutes prior to the awarding body's published start time of the exam;
- Understands that where permitted/approved, secure exam question paper packets may need to be opened early so the facilitator (Language Modifier, Live Speaker, Communication Professional **only**) may have access to the question paper 60 minutes prior to the awarding body's published starting time for the exam in order to prepare;
- Provides cover sheets prior to the start of an exam where required for particular access arrangements and ensures that these have been fully completed before candidates' scripts are dispatched to examiners/markers;
- prints pre-populated cover sheets were relevant from AAO where this is required for particular arrangements;
- Liaises with the SENCo where a facilitator may be required to support a candidate requiring an emergency (temporary) access arrangement at the time of exams;
- Where required for emergency (temporary) access arrangements, applies for approval through AAO or through the awarding body where qualifications sit outside the scope of AAO.

IT Support

- Support and liaise with the SENCo and the EO to ensure appropriate arrangements, adjustments and adaptations are in place to facilitate access for disabled candidates for IT exams.

Site Manager

- Support and liaise with the SENCo and the EO to ensure appropriate arrangements, adjustments and adaptations are in place to facilitate access for disabled candidates to exams.

SLT

- In advance of exam season, EO Liaise with person responsible for Health and Safety to ensure appropriate arrangements are in place for candidates with a disability who may need assistance in the event of an emergency evacuation during an exam.

Internal assessments

These are non-examination assessments (NEA) which are normally set by a centre/awarding body, marked and internally verified by the centre and moderated by the awarding body.

Special educational needs coordinator (SENCo)

- Liaises with teaching staff to implement appropriate access arrangements for candidates;
- Ensures centre-delegated and awarding body approved arrangements are in place prior to a candidate taking his/her first formal supervised assessment;
- Ensures candidates are aware of the access arrangements that are in place for their assessments;
- Ensures facilitators supporting candidates are appropriately trained and understand the rules of the particular access arrangement(s);
- Ensures cover sheets are completed as required by facilitators;
- Liaises with the teacher where a facilitator may be required to support a candidate requiring an emergency (temporary) access arrangement at the time of his/her formal supervised assessment.

Teaching staff

- Support the SENCo in implementing appropriate access arrangements for candidates;
- Ensures the centre delegated and awarding body approved arrangement(s) are in place prior to a candidate taking his/her first formal supervised assessment;
- Ensures candidates are aware of the access arrangements that are in place for their assessments;
- Ensures that the candidate has had appropriate opportunities to practice using the access arrangement(s) before his/her first assessment;
- Provide the SENCo with assessment schedules to ensure arrangements are put in place when required;
- Liaise with the SENCo regarding assessment materials that may need to be modified for a candidate.

Internal exams

These are exams or tests which are set and marked within the centre; normally a pre-cursor to external assessments.

Special educational needs coordinator (SENCo)

- Liaises with teaching staff and exams office to implement appropriate access arrangements for candidates;
- Liaises with teaching staff and EO to collect evidence of access arrangements used in order to provide a picture of need.

Teaching staff

- Support the SENCo in implementing appropriate access arrangements for candidates;
- Provide exam materials that may need to be modified for a candidate;

- Provide the SENCo with internal exam timetable to ensure arrangements are put in place when required.

Exams officer

- Provide the SENCo with internal exam timetable for those subjects and year groups who sit internal exams in a formal setting and to ensure arrangements are put in place when required.