



# Equalities Policy (Exams) 2023/2024

This plan is reviewed annually to ensure compliance with current regulations

<b>Approved/reviewed by</b>	
Tariq Mahmood - Principal	
<b>Date of next review</b>	Sept 24

## Key staff involved in the policy

Role	Name(s)
Head of centre	Tariq Mahmood
Exams officer line manager (ALT)	Gillian Matthews
Exams officer	Tracy Turton
SENCo	Amy Thompson
Inclusion Manager	Claire Croker

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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 (JCQ's General Regulations (GR) for Approved Centres 2020-2021 (section 5.4)

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**

The JCQ publication *Adjustments for candidates with disabilities and learning difficulties* Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments 2020-2021 (AA) According to the Equality Act a candidate is disabled if they have a physical or mental impairment which is substantial and long term and has an adverse effect on the normal day to day activities of that candidate.

## **Identifying the need for access arrangements**

### **Roles and responsibilities**

#### **Head of centre**

- Is familiar with the entire contents, refers to and directs relevant centre staff to the annually updated JCQ publications including General Regulations for approved centres (GR) and Access Arrangements (AA)

#### **Senior leader(s)**

- Are familiar with the entire contents of the annually updated JCQ publications including GR and AA

#### **Inclusion Manager & 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 for Access Arrangements.

## Teaching staff

- Inform the Inclusion Manager & SENCo of any support that might be needed by a candidate

## Support staff Learning Support Assistants, Teaching Assistants and Communication Support Workers

- (where appropriate) Provide comments/observations to support the Inclusion Manager & 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 JCQ publication on Access arrangements.

## Use of word processors

The centre's word processor policy is located on the school's website under the exams section.

## Requesting access arrangements

### Roles and responsibilities

#### Inclusion Manager & SENCo

- Determines if the arrangements identified for a candidate require prior approval from the awarding body before the arrangements are put in place or if approval is centre-delegated
- Ensures appropriate and required evidence is held on file to confirm validation responses in AAO including the completion of JCQ Form 8 (Application for access arrangements – Profile of learning difficulties), where required, and a body of evidence to substantiate the candidate's normal way of working within the centre
- Ensures where form 8 is required to be completed, the original form is signed (an electronic signature is permissible) and dated as required prior to approval being sought and that the original form is provided for processing and inspection purposes (This may be a hard copy paper version or an electronic version)
- Ensures 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)

- 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) that will include:
  - completed JCQ/awarding body application forms and evidence forms
  - appropriate evidence to support the need for the arrangement where required
  - appropriate evidence to support normal way of working within the centre
  - in addition, *for those qualifications covered by AAO* (where approval is required), a printout/PDF of the AAO approval and a signed candidate personal data consent form (which provides candidate consent to their personal details being shared)
- Presents the files/e-folders when requested by a JCQ Centre Inspector and addresses any queries/questions raised

### **Exams officer (EO)**

- 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 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 Section 8 to process approval applications for access arrangements for those qualifications *those qualifications included*
- 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
- 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
- Ensures the names of all other assessors, who are assessing candidates studying qualifications covered by AAO are entered into AAO to confirm their status including any professionals working outside the centre
- Confirms by ticking the 'Confirmation' box prior to submitting the application for approval that the 'malpractice consequence statement' has been read and accepted Ensures that where approval is required that this is applied for by the awarding body deadline
- 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 exams officer and other relevant centre staff in ensuring appropriate arrangements, adjustments and adaptations are in place to facilitate access for disabled candidates to exams

### **Inclusion Manager/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)
- Liaises with the EO to ensure that invigilators are made aware of the Equality Act 2010 and are trained in disability issues

### **Exams officer**

- Understands and follows instructions for Invigilation arrangements for candidates with access arrangements and Access arrangements in ICE *2020-2021*
- Ensures a 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)
- Ensures a facilitator acting as a prompter is aware of the appropriate way to prompt depending on the needs of the candidate
- 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 arrangement(s) awarded
- 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 from AAO where this is required for particular arrangements

## Other relevant centre staff

- Support the SENCo and the exams officer to ensure appropriate arrangements, adjustments and adaptations are in place to facilitate access for disabled candidates to exams
- Staff responsible for **IT or other specialist equipment** that may need to be provided or adapted for a candidate
- Estates/site staff responsible for **rooms and non-specialist equipment** (chairs, tables, clocks etc.) used for exams that may need to be adapted for a candidate
- Senior staff responsible for the centre's **emergency evacuation procedures** and the arrangements that may need to be in place for a candidate with a disability who may need assistance when an exam room is evacuated

## Teaching staff

- Support the SENCo in implementing appropriate access arrangements for candidates

## Internal exams

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

## Inclusion Manager & SENCo

- Liaises with teaching staff to implement appropriate access arrangements for candidates

## Teaching staff

- Support the SENCo in implementing appropriate access arrangements for candidates
- Ensures a candidate has had appropriate opportunities to practise using the access arrangement(s) before his/her first examination



## Facilitating access – examples

The following information confirms the centre’s good practice in relation to the Equality Act 2010 and the conduct of examinations.

On a candidate by candidate basis, consideration is given to

- adapting assessment arrangements
- adapting assessment materials
- the provision of specialist equipment or adaptation of standard equipment
- adaptation of the physical environment for access purposes

The table provides example arrangements, adjustments and adaptations that are considered to meet the need(s) of a candidate and the actions considered/taken by the centre for the purposes of facilitating access.

Example of candidate need(s)	Arrangements explored	Centre actions
<p>A medical condition which prevents the candidate from taking exams in the centre</p>	<p>Alternative site for the conduct of examinations Supervised rest breaks</p>	<p><i>SENCo gathers evidence to support the need for the candidate to take exams at home</i>  <i>Pastoral head provides written statement for file to confirm the need</i>  <i>Approval confirmed by SENCo; AAO approval for both arrangements not required</i>  <i>Pastoral head discussion with candidate to confirm the arrangements should be put in place</i>  <i>EO submits 'Alternative site form' for timetabled written exams to awarding body/bodies online through CAP</i>  <i>An on-line submission must only be made for timetabled written examinations in the following qualifications...</i>  <i>EO provides candidate with exam timetable and JCQ information for candidates</i>  <i>Pastoral head confirms with candidate the information is understood</i>  <i>Pastoral head agrees with candidate that prior to each exam will call to confirm fitness to take exam</i>  <i>EO allocates invigilator(s) to candidate's timetable; confirms time of collection of exam papers and materials</i>  <i>Invigilator monitors candidate's condition for each exam and records any issues on incident log</i>  <i>Invigilator records rest breaks (time and duration) on incident log and confirms set time given for exam</i>  <i>Invigilator briefs EO after each exam on how candidate's performance in exam may have been affected by his/her condition</i>  <i>EO discusses with pastoral head if candidate is eligible for special consideration (candidate present but disadvantaged)</i>  <i>EO processes request(s) for special consideration where applicable; incident log(s) provides supporting evidence</i>  <i>Pastoral head informs candidate that special consideration has been requested</i></p>

Persistent and significant difficulties in accessing written text	Reader/computer reader 25% Extra time	<i>Confirms candidate is disabled within the meaning of the Equality Act 2010</i> <i>Papers checked for those testing reading</i>
	Separate invigilation within the centre	<i>Computer reader/examination reading pen sourced for use in papers (or sections of papers) testing reading OR up to 50% extra time awarded</i> <i>A short concise file note produced on centre headed paper, signed and dated kept on file, confirming the nature of the candidate's impairment and that the use of a computer reader and/or a reader reflects his/her normal and current way of working within the centre</i>  <i>(25% Extra time - Form 8 completed as appropriate)</i> <i>Supporting evidence, AAO approval and signed candidate personal data consent form kept on file</i>
Significant difficulty in concentrating	Prompter Separate invigilation within the centre	<i>Gathers evidence to support substantial and long term adverse impairment</i> <i>Confirms with candidate how and when they will be prompted</i> <i>Briefs invigilator to monitor candidate and the method of prompting (call out his name to bring his attention back to the paper - confirms requirement for separate room)</i>
A wheelchair user	Desk Rooms Facilities Seating arrangements Practical assistant	<i>Applies for practical assistant to help candidate set up wheelchair and other equipment in a practical assessment; approval automatically fails so awarding body referral lists the tasks that will be performed</i> <i>Provides height adjustable desk in exam room</i> <i>Allocates exam room on ground floor near adapted bathroom facilities</i> <i>Spaces desks to allow wheelchair access</i> <i>Seats candidate near exam room door</i> <i>Confirms arrangements in place to assist the candidate in case of emergency evacuation of the exam room</i> <i>Practical assistant cover sheet printed from AAO; to be completed by facilitator and inserted inside the candidate's work where this may be applicable to the assessment</i>