



POLICY FOR DISABILITY (EXAMS)

Presented to

Governors' Sub-Committee (Curriculum and Standards)

1 March 2022

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Key staff involved in the policy

| | |
|------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| SENCo | Mrs L Baxter |
| SENCo line manager (Senior Leader) | Mr J Gilligan |
| Head of centre | Mr J Gilligan |
| Assessor(s) | Mrs K Briggs / Mrs M Cipriani |
| Access arrangement facilitator(s) | Miss S Dale |

¹ This is the date the policy was approved by the meeting

² This is the date the policy was reviewed prior to its approval above

³ This is the date as set by the policy review clause or the date approved plus three years



POLICY FOR DISABILITY (EXAMS)

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Glossary

ICE.....Instructions for Conducting Examinations
 AA.....Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments
 JCQ.....Joint Council for Qualifications
 GR.....General Regulations for Approved Centres

Purpose of the policy

This document is provided as an exams-specific supplement to the *centre-wide accessibility policy/plan* which details how the centre “*recognise its duties towards disabled candidates as defined under the terms of the Equality Act 2010†. This must include a duty to explore and provide access to suitable courses, 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 section 5.4 of 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 in the 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.

1.0 Identifying the need for access arrangements

1.1 Roles and responsibilities

a) Head of Centre

- i) Ensures a policy demonstrating the centre's compliance with relevant legislation is in place
- ii) Provides a policy on the use of word processors in exams and assessments
- iii) Defines and documents roles, responsibilities and processes in identifying, requesting and implementing access arrangements (*Access arrangements policy*)
- iv) Ensure a statement is provided which details the criteria the centre uses to award and allocate word processors for exams

b) Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCo)

- i) Has full knowledge and understanding of the contents, refers to and directs relevant centre staff to the annually updated JCQ publication [AA](#)
- ii) Ensures an appropriately qualified assessor(s) is appointed and that evidence of the qualification(s) of the person(s) appointed is held on file
- iii) Ensures staff roles, responsibilities and processes in identifying, requesting and implementing access arrangements for candidates (including private candidates) are clearly defined and documented
- iv) Ensures that all assessments carried out and arrangements put in place comply with JCQ and awarding body regulations and guidance
- v) Presents when requested by a JCQ Centre Inspector, evidence of the assessor's qualification
- vi) Ensures arrangements put in place for exams/assessments reflect a candidate's *normal way of working* within the centre
- vii) Ensures the need for access arrangements for a candidate will be considered on a subject by subject basis
- viii) Ensures where Form 8 (*Profile of learning difficulties*) is required to be completed, the original form is signed and dated as required prior to approval being sought and that the original form is provided for processing and inspection purposes
- ix) Provide information to evidence the normal way of working of a candidate
- x) Provides appropriate evidence to confirm the need(s) of a candidate
- xi) Completes appropriate documentation as required by the regulations of JCQ and the awarding body

c) Teaching staff

- i) Inform the SENCo of any support that might be needed by a candidate

d) Support staff (for example, Learning Support Assistants, Teaching Assistants and Communication Support Workers where appropriate)

- i) Provide comments/observations to support the SENCo and Assessor in painting a holistic picture of need confirming normal way of working for a candidate

e) Assessor of candidates with learning difficulties

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

- i) Has detailed understanding of the current JCQ publication AA
- ii) Ensures the quality of the access arrangements process within the centre
- iii) Leads on the access arrangements process to facilitate access for candidates
- iv) Support the SENCo in determining the need for and implementing access arrangements
- v) Ensures the assessment process is administered in accordance with the regulations
- vi) Works with teaching staff, relevant support staff and the exams officer to ensure centre-delegated and awarding body approved access arrangements are put in place for candidates taking internal and external exams/assessments
- vii) Conducts appropriate assessments to identify the need(s) of a candidate

2.0 Use of Word Processors

Arthur Mellows Village College adheres to the Word Processor Policy where a copy can be found in the Exams Office.

A word processor can only be awarded with a significant disability as defined below:

- i) a learning difficulty which has a substantial and long term adverse effect on their ability to write legibly
- ii) a medical condition
- iii) a physical disability
- iv) a sensory impairment
- v) planning and organisational problems when writing by hand
- vi) poor handwriting

3.0 Requesting access arrangements

3.1 Roles and responsibilities

a) Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCo)

- i) 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
- ii) Ensures appropriate and required evidence is held on file to confirm validation responses in Access Arrangements Online (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

- iii) Maintains a file for each candidate that will include:
- appropriate evidence to support the need for the arrangement where required;
 - appropriate evidence to support normal way of working within the centre
- iv) Presents the files when requested by a JCQ Centre Inspector

b) Exams Officer

- i) 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 Exams Officer role
- ii) Follows guidance in AA Section 8 to process approval applications for access arrangements for those qualifications listed on page 2 of AA
- iii) 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
- iv) Ensures the names of all other assessors, who are assessing candidates studying qualifications as listed on page 11 of AA, are entered into AAO to confirm their status including any professionals working outside the centre
- v) Confirms by ticking the 'Confirmation' box prior to submitting the application for approval that the 'malpractice consequence statement' has been read and accepted
- vi) 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)
- vii) 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)
- viii) Ensures that where approval is required that this is applied for by the awarding body deadline
- ix) Maintains a file for each candidate that will include:
- completed JCQ/awarding body application forms and evidence forms;
 - in addition, for those qualifications listed on page 11 of AA (where approval is required), a printout of the AAO approval and a signed data protection notice (which provides candidate consent to their personal details being shared)
- x) Liaises with teaching staff regarding any appropriate modified paper requirements for candidates
- xi) 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)
- xii) Following the appropriate process (AAO for those qualifications listed on page 93 of AA); orders published modified papers, by the awarding body's deadline for the exam series, where these may be required for a candidate

4.0 Implementing access arrangements and the conduct of exams

4.1 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)

a) Head of Centre

- i) Supports the SENCo, the Assessor, 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

b) Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCo)

- i) 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)
- ii) Ensures that any arrangements put in place do not unfairly disadvantage or advantage disabled candidates
- iii) Liaises with the Exams Officer regarding facilitation and invigilation of access arrangement candidates in exams
- iv) Liaises with the Exams Officer to ensure that invigilators are made aware of the Equality Act 2010 and are trained in disability issues
- v) Liaises with the Exams Officer where a facilitator may be required to support a candidate requiring an emergency (temporary) access arrangement at the time of exams

c) Exams Officer

- i) Is familiar with and follows the *Checklist for heads of centre and examination officers* –
- ii) Ensures 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
- iii) 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
- iv) 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
- v) Appoints appropriate centre staff as facilitators to support candidates (practical assistant, prompter, Oral Language Modifier, reader, scribe or Sign Language Interpreter)
- vi) Ensures facilitators supporting candidates are appropriately trained and understand the rules of the particular access arrangement(s)

- vii) Ensures a record of the training given to those facilitating an access arrangement for a candidate under examination conditions is kept and retained on file until the deadline for enquiries about results has passed or until any appeal, malpractice or other results enquiry has been completed, whichever is later
- viii) Ensures the facilitator is known by or introduced to the candidate prior to exams
- ix) Ensures a facilitator acting as a prompter is aware of the appropriate way to prompt depending on the needs of the candidate
- x) Ensures invigilators supervising access arrangement candidates are trained in their role and understand the invigilation arrangements required for access arrangement candidates as detailed in ICE 12.1.
- xi) Ensures cover sheets, where these are required by the arrangement are completed as required by facilitators
- xii) 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
- xiii) Liaises with the SENCo 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
- xiv) Liaises with the SENCo regarding the facilitation and invigilation of access arrangement candidates
- xv) Liaises with the SENCo regarding rooming of access arrangement candidates
- xvi) Liaises with the SENCo to ensure that invigilators are made aware of the Equality Act 2010 and are trained in disability issues
- xvii) 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
- xviii) Ensures invigilators are briefed prior to each exam session of the arrangements in place for a disabled candidate in their exam room
- xix) 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)
- xx) Makes modifications that are permitted by the centre (a question paper copied onto coloured paper, an A4 to A3 enlarged paper or a paper printed on single sheets or where a question paper may need to be scanned into PDF format where a candidate is approved the use of a computer reader) 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 published start time of the exam
- xxi) Understands that where permitted/approved, secure exam question paper packets may need to be opened early where preparation is required by the facilitator (Oral Language Modifier, Live Speaker, Sign Language Interpreter only)
- xxii) Ensures that the facilitator only has access to the papers 60 minutes prior to the published start time of the exam

xxiii) 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 those qualifications listed on page 11 of [AA](#)
- 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
- Has a process in place to deal with emergency (temporary) access arrangements as they arise at the time of exams in terms of rooming and invigilation
- 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

d) Exams Assessor

- i) 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
- ii) 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

5.0 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.

“Externally marked and/or externally set practical examinations taken at different times across centres are classified as ‘NEA’.” [Quote taken from the JCQ publication [Instructions for conducting non-examination assessments](#), Foreword]

a) Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCo)

- i) Liaises with teaching staff to implement appropriate access arrangements for candidates
- ii) Ensures centre-delegated and awarding body approved arrangements are in place prior to a candidate taking his/her first formal supervised assessment
- iii) Ensures candidates are aware of the access arrangements that are in place for their assessments
- iv) Ensures facilitators supporting candidates are appropriately trained and understand the rules of the particular access arrangement(s)
- v) 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

b) Teaching Staff

- i) Support the SENCo in implementing appropriate access arrangements for candidates
- ii) Ensures cover sheets are completed as required by facilitators

- iii) Provide the SENCo with assessment schedules to ensure arrangements are put in place when required

6.0 Internal Exams

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

a) Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCo)

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

b) Teaching Staff

- i) Support the SENCo in implementing appropriate access arrangements for candidates
- ii) Provide exam materials that may need to be modified for a candidate
- iii) Provide the SENCo with internal exam timetable to ensure arrangements are put in place when required

7.0 Facilitating Access – Examples

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

a) On a candidate by candidate basis, consideration is given to

- i) adapting assessment arrangements
- ii) adapting assessment materials
- iii) the provision of specialist equipment or adaptation of standard equipment
- iv) adaptation of the physical environment for access purposes

b) The table on page 10 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 |
|--|---|---|
| A medical condition which prevents the candidate from taking exams in the centre | Alternative site for the conduct of examinations Supervised rest breaks | <p><i>SENCo gathers evidence to support the need for the candidate to take exams at home</i></p> <p><i>SENCo provides written statement for file to confirm the need</i></p> <p><i>Approval confirmed by SENCo; Access Arrangements Online approval for both arrangements not required</i></p> <p><i>SENCo discussion with candidate to confirm the arrangements should be put in place</i></p> <p><i>Exams Officer submits appropriate 'Alternative site for the conduct of exams form'</i></p> <p><i>Exams Officer provides candidate with exam timetable and JCQ information for candidates</i></p> <p><i>SENCo/Exams Officer confirms with candidate the information is understood</i></p> <p><i>Exams Officer allocates invigilator(s) to candidate's timetable; confirms time of collection of exam papers and materials</i></p> <p><i>Invigilator monitors candidate's condition for each exam and records any issues on incident log</i></p> <p><i>Invigilator records rest breaks (time and duration) on incident log and confirms set time given for exam</i></p> <p><i>Invigilator briefs Exams Officer after each exam on how candidate's performance in exam may have been affected by his/her condition</i></p> <p><i>Exams Officer discusses with SENCo if candidate is eligible for special consideration (candidate present but disadvantaged)</i></p> <p><i>Exams Officer processes request(s) for special consideration where applicable; incident log(s) provides supporting evidence</i></p> <p><i>SENCo informs candidate that special consideration has been requested</i></p> |
| Persistent and significant difficulties in accessing written text | Reader/computer reader 25% Extra time Separate invigilation within the centre | <p><i>Confirms candidate is disabled within the meaning of the Equality Act 2010</i></p> <p><i>Papers checked for those testing reading</i></p> <p><i>Computer reader sourced for use in papers (or sections of papers) testing reading</i></p> <p><i>Original Form 8, signed and dated, with Sections A, B and C completed; kept on file with body of supporting evidence, printed approval from Access Arrangements Online and signed data protection notice</i></p> |
| Significant difficulty in concentrating | Prompter Separate invigilation within the centre | <p><i>Gathers evidence to support substantial and long term adverse impairment</i></p> <p><i>Confirms with candidate how and when they will be prompted</i></p> <p><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></p> |
| Significant Social, Emotional, Mental Health i.e Anxiety | Small room | <p><i>Gathers evidence to support substantial and long term adverse impairment</i></p> |