



Equalities (Exams) Policy

2023-24

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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

- “recognises its duties towards disabled candidates, including private candidates, ensuring compliance with all aspects of the Equality Act 2010†, particularly Section 20(7). 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. Where the centre is under a duty to make a reasonable adjustment, the centre must not charge a disabled candidate any additional fee in relation to the adjustment or aid; †for any legislation in a relevant jurisdiction other than England and Wales which has an equivalent purpose and effect

JCQ’s General Regulations for Approved Centres, Section 5.4
This publication is further referred to in this policy as GR.

This policy details how the centre facilitates access to examinations 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 examinations
- good practice in relation to the Equality Act 2010

The Equality Act 2010 Definition of Disability

A definition is provided in the current JCQ publication Adjustments for candidates with disabilities and learning difficulties Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments 2023 – 2024.

This publication is further referred to in this policy as AA.

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 GR and AA
- Ensures a appropriately qualified assessor(s) is appointed and that evidence of the qualification(s) of the person(s) appointed is held on file

Senior Leaders

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

- Ensures a appropriately qualified assessor(s) is appointed and that evidence of the qualification(s) of the person(s) appointed is held on file
- Ensures the quality of the access arrangements process within the centre
- Ensures the assessment process is administered in accordance with the regulations

Special Educational Need (SEN) Officer

- Has full knowledge and understanding of the contents, refers to and directs relevant centre staff to the annually updated JCQ publication 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 for all candidates are clearly defined and documented
- Leads on the access arrangements process to facilitate access for candidates
- Ensures that the access arrangements/reasonable adjustments approved allow the candidate to access the assessment, but do not result in the candidate gaining an unfair advantage
- Ensures that all assessments carried out and arrangements put in place comply with JCQ and awarding body regulations and guidance
- Ensures arrangements put in place for exams/assessments reflect a candidate's normal way of working within the centre
- Ensures the need for access arrangements for a candidate is considered on a subject by subject basis
- Presents when requested by a JCQ Centre Inspector, evidence of the assessor's qualification
- 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
- Provides 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
- 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
- Has detailed understanding of the current JCQ publication AA

Teaching Staff

- (Where appropriate) Inform the SEN Officer of any observations about a candidate or any support that might be needed by a candidate
- Support the SEN Officer in determining the need for and implementing access arrangements

- Leads on the access arrangements process to facilitate access for candidates

Exams Officer

- Ensures a policy demonstrating the centre's compliance with relevant legislation is in place
- Leads on the access arrangements process to facilitate access for candidates
- 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
- Completes appropriate documentation as required by the regulations of JCQ and the awarding body

Use of Word Processors

Northleigh House School has a Word Processor (Exams) Policy that details the criteria, the school uses to award and allocate word processors for examinations.

Requesting Access Arrangements

Roles and Responsibilities

Special Educational Need (SEN) and Examinations Officer (EO)

- 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
- Follows guidance in AA Section 8 to process approval applications for access arrangements for those qualifications listed on page 2 of 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
- Ensures that where approval is required the application is processed on time and no later than the awarding body's published deadline
- Ensures that the full supporting evidence is in place before an online application is processed
- Reviews the evidence before an online application is processed, ensuring that the candidate does meet the published criteria for the respective arrangement
- Holds all supporting evidence and presents such evidence to a JCQ Centre Inspector upon request
- Ensures that the agreed adjustment has been put in place before the candidate's first examination, e.g. internal tests and mock examinations
- 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). Form 9

(Profile of Need, Form8RF, Form BD25 etc. supplemented by written statements where required, etc

- Ensures where JCQ forms are required to be completed, forms are signed (a handwritten, electronic or typed signature is acceptable) and dated as required **prior** to approval being sought and that the form is provided for processing and inspection purposes (This may be a hard copy paper version or an electronic version)
- Ensures the names of all other assessors, who are assessing candidates studying qualifications as listed on page 2 of AA, are entered into AAO to confirm their status
- Confirms by ticking the 'Confirmation' box prior to submitting the application for approval that the 'malpractice consequence statement' has been read and accepted
- 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)

Maintains a file/e-folder for each candidate (the required documentation for a candidate will be in hard copy within the candidate's file/each of the required documents held electronically 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 listed on page 2 of AA (where approval is required), a print-out/PDF of the AAO approval, a signed candidate personal data consent form (which provides candidate consent to their personal details being shared)
 - (where applicable) 'Data protection confirmation by the Examinations/SEN Officer' acknowledged before an application is process online
- Presents the files/e-folders when requested by a JCQ Centre Inspector and addresses any queries/questions raised (In the event of an IT failure at the time of an inspection is able to access the required documentation in an alternative format, e.g. a memory stick or hard copy)
 - Liaises with teaching staff regarding any appropriate modified papers requirements for candidates
 - Ensures arrangements are in place to either order a non-interactive electronic (PDF) question paper from CCEA and WJEC (or to download a PDF copy of the standard question paper where provided by AQA, OCR and Pearson) or to open a question paper packet in the secure room within 90 minutes of the awarding body's published starting time for the examination where the centre is permitted to

modify a timetabled written component examination 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 examination series, where these may be required for a candidate

Implementing Access Arrangements and the Conduct of Examinations

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 SEN/Examinations Officer and other relevant centre staff in ensuring appropriate arrangements, adjustments and adaptations are in place 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 Sign Language Interpreter)
- Ensures facilitators supporting candidates are appropriately trained and understand the rules of the particular access arrangement(s)

Special Educational Needs (SEN) and Examinations Officer (EO)

- 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 examination time
- Ensures that any arrangements put in place do not unfairly disadvantage or advantage disabled candidates
- Ensures exam information (JCQ information for candidates' documents, individual examination 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
- Ensures that any arrangements put in place do not unfairly disadvantage or advantage disabled candidates

- 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 examinations
- Ensures cover sheets, where these are required by the arrangement are completed as required by facilitators
- Liaises with centre staff to ensure appropriate arrangements, adjustments and adaptations are in place to facilitate access for disabled candidates to exams
- Ensure examination 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 appropriate seating arrangements are in place where different arrangements may need to be made for a candidate to facilitate access to his/her examinations
- Ensures invigilators are briefed prior to each examination session of the arrangements in place for a disabled candidate in their examination room
- Checks in advance of dated examinations/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 (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, where approved, opens the exam question paper packet in the secure room no earlier than 90 minutes prior to the published start time of the examination
- Understands that where permitted/approved, a secure question paper packet may need to be opened early in the secure room to facilitate the following:
 - a Language Modifier may have access to the question paper 60 minutes prior to the awarding body's published start time for the examination in order to prepare
 - the Communication Professional may have access to the question paper 60 minutes prior to the awarding body's published start time or the examination in order to prepare
 - the Live Speaker may have access to the transcript of the Listening examination 60 minutes prior to the awarding body's published start time for the examination in order to prepare
- Appoint appropriate centre staff as facilitators to support candidates (Practical Assistant, Prompter, Language Modifier, Reader, Scribe of Communication Professional)
- Provides cover sheets prior to the start of an examination 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
- Has a process in place to deal with emergency (temporary) access arrangements as they arise at the time of examinations in terms of rooming and invigilation

- 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

Other Relevant Centre Staff

- 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 examination time
- Staff responsible for IT or other specialist equipment that may need to be provided or adapted for a candidate
- Site staff responsible for rooms and non-specialist equipment (chairs, tables, clocks etc.) used for examinations 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 examination room is evacuated
- 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

Internal Assessments

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

Special Educational Needs (SEN) and Examination Officer

- 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 facilitators supporting candidates are appropriately trained and understand the rules of the particular access arrangement(s)
- 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
- Ensures candidates are aware of the access arrangements that are in place for their assessments
- 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
- Ensure that assessment schedules have the appropriate access arrangements put in place when required
- Ensure that assessment materials are modified for a candidate (if appropriate)

Teaching Staff

- Support the SEN/Examinations Officer in implementing appropriate access arrangements for candidates

Internal Examinations

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

Special Educational Needs (SEN) and Examinations Officer

- Liaises with teaching staff to implement appropriate access arrangements for candidates
- Provide examination materials that may need to be modified for a candidate

Teaching Staff

- Support the SEN/Examinations Officer 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
A medical condition which prevents the candidate from taking examinations in the centre	Alternative site for the conduct of examinations Supervised rest breaks	SEN Officer gathers evidence to support the need for the candidate to take examinations at home SEN Officer provides written statement for file to confirm the need Approval confirmed by SEN Officer; AAO approval for both arrangements not required SEN/EO discussion with candidate to confirm the arrangements should be put in place EO submits appropriate 'Alternative site form' for timetabled written examinations to awarding body/bodies online using CAP

		<p>EO provides candidate with exam timetable and JCQ information for candidates An on-line submission must only be made for timetabled written examinations in the following qualifications EO provides candidate with examination timetable and JCQ information for candidates SEN Officer agrees with candidate that prior to each examination will call to confirm fitness to take examination EO allocates invigilator(s) to candidate's timetable; confirms time of collection of examination papers and materials Invigilator monitors candidate's condition for each examination and records any issues on incident log Invigilator records supervised rest breaks (time and duration) on incident log and confirms full time given for examination Invigilator briefs EO after each examination on how candidate's performance in examination may have been affected by his/her condition EO discusses with pastoral head if candidate is eligible for special consideration (candidate present but disadvantaged) EO processes request(s) for special consideration where applicable; incident log(s) provides supporting evidence, supported by appropriate evidence signed by a member of the senior leadership team (Evidence retained until after the publication of results) EO informs candidate that special consideration has been requested</p>
<p>Persistent and significant difficulties in accessing written text</p>	<p>Reader/Computer Reader 25% Extra time Alternative Rooming Arrangements</p>	<p>Confirms candidate is disabled within the meaning of the Equality Act 2010 Papers checked for those testing reading Computer reader sourced for use in papers (or sections of papers) testing reading OR up to 50% extra time awarded SEN Officer produces a statement, 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 and completes appropriate form/documentation for evidence of need AAO application for approval processed Supporting evidence, AAO approval and signed candidate personal data consent form and completed Data protection confirmation by</p>

		the examination officer or SEN officer kept on file
Significant difficulty in concentrating	Prompter Alternative Rooming Arrangements	Gathers evidence to support substantial and long term adverse impairment Confirms with candidate how and when they will be prompted 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)
A wheelchair user	Desk Rooms Facilities Seating Arrangements Practical Assistant	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 Provides height adjustable desk in exam room Allocates examination room on ground floor near adapted bathroom facilities Spaces desks to allow wheelchair access Seats candidate near exam room door Confirms arrangements in place to assist the candidate in case of emergency evacuation of the examination room 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

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