

Bishop Challoner Catholic College

Exam Disability Policy

Introduction

This policy was created by the school's Learning Support Coordinator (Caroline Milne) who has a Certificate of Competence in Educational Testing (Level A) and a Certificate of Psychometric Testing, Assessment & Access Arrangements in consultation with the school's Exams Officer (Lorraine Houldcroft-Flint) and the Special Educational Needs Coordinator (Eileen Breen).

This policy has been updated by the SENCO, Rachel Wheeler, who has a Postgraduate Diploma in Specific Learning Difficulties (Dyslexia), equivalent to level 7, with AMBDA status, in consultation with the school's Exam's Officer (Lorraine Houldcroft-Flint) and the Assistant Principal (Lucy Choudhury).

This policy aims to ensure that Bishop Challoner, as an examinations centre, meets its obligations under the Equality Act 2010 to make 'reasonable adjustments' so that candidates with disabilities are able to access examinations whilst protecting the integrity of those assessments. Accessibility refers to access to and from the exam room as well as the examination itself.

In order to meet these obligations, Bishop Challoner complies with the guidance and regulations pertaining to Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments which is published annually by the Joint Council for Qualifications on behalf of the awarding bodies.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies relating to the conduct of examinations at Bishop Challoner:

- Procedure for the emergency evacuation of the examination room.
- Examinations Policy.
- Internal Appeals Procedure.
- Policy covering the management of GCSE, BTEC and GCE controlled assessments, including risk management and staff responsibilities.
- Policy covering the management of Non-Examination Assessments (NEA), including risk management and staff responsibilities.
- Exam Access Policy.
- Exam Access Word Processor Policy.

Definition of disability

You are disabled under the Equality Act 2010 if you have a physical or mental impairment that has a 'substantial' and 'long-term' negative effect on your ability to do normal daily activities.

The Equality Act 2010 definition of disability is usually considered cumulatively in terms of:

- identifying a physical or mental impairment;
- looking into adverse effects and assessing which are substantial;
- considering if substantial adverse effects are long term;
- judging the impact of long term adverse effects on normal day to day activities.

Factors that might reasonably be expected to have a substantial adverse effect include:

- persistent and significant difficulty in reading and understanding written material where this is in the person's native language, for example because of a mental impairment, a learning difficulty, or a sensory or multi-sensory impairment;
- persistent distractibility or difficulty concentrating;
- difficulty understanding or following simple verbal instructions;
- physical impairment – for example., difficulty operating a computer because of physical restrictions in using a keyboard.

Reasonable adjustments

Whether or not an adjustment will be considered reasonable will depend on a number of factors which include, but are not limited to:

- the needs of the disabled candidate;
- the effectiveness of the adjustment;
- the cost of the adjustment; and
- the likely impact of the adjustment upon the candidate and other candidates.

Procedures (for additional information, please refer to the Exam Access Policy)

- The SENCo, fully supported by teaching staff and members of the senior leadership team, will have overall responsibility for the access arrangements process.
- The SENCo will, where appropriate, work with specialist advisory teachers and medical professionals to determine appropriate access arrangements for disabled students.
- The Examinations Officer should be notified of any students requiring adjustments due to a disability, temporary injury, or singular health issue.
- A list of students with access arrangements will be made available to teaching staff in a folder on the shared area. They will also be regularly emailed (password protected) to staff as a user friendly list, and the individual pupil tiles on Class Charts will also detail students' exam access arrangements.
- The Examinations Officer will be responsible for providing details of students with access arrangements to examination invigilators.
- Risk assessments will be carried out when planning examination arrangements for disabled students.
- According to their needs and as far as reasonably practicable, disabled students will be accommodated in exam rooms which are fully accessible to them.
- Specialised equipment will be provided for examinations as agreed previously.
- Toileting requirements will be taken into consideration when planning examination arrangements for disabled students.
- Invigilators will either receive group training, including disability issues, or will work alongside an experienced invigilator.
- Invigilators will be briefed concerning communication difficulties or other.
- Arrangements will be made with invigilators for students who may be required to take medication during an examination.
- Any complaints made by candidates with disabilities should be directed in the first instance to the Examinations Office.
- Recruitment of invigilators will follow normal school policy with regards to disabled applicants.