



EXAMINATIONS DISABILITY POLICY

Policy Owner	Bridge Short Stay School
Policy Written/Last reviewed on	March 2022
Approved by Management Committee	
Next Review Date	March 2023

Contents

Purpose of the policy	3
The Equality Act 2010 definition of disability	3
Identifying the Need for access arrangements	4
Requesting access arrangements	5
Implementing access arrangements and the conduct of exams	6
External assessments	6
Internal assessments	7
Internal exams	8
Facilitating access – examples	8
Appendices	

Purpose of the policy

This document is provided as an exams-specific supplement to the *centre-wide accessibility policy* which details how the centre

*“recognises its duties towards disabled 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.”*

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

[Quote taken directly from chapter 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

The Equality Act 2010 definition of disability

Statutory guidance on the Equality Act 2010 definition of disability has been produced by The Office for Disability Issues (within the Department for Work and Pensions) to help better understand this definition.

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/570382/Equality_Act_2010-disability_definition.pdf

This policy will be reviewed annually to ensure ways of working in the centre are accurately reflected and that exams and assessments are conducted to current JCQ (and awarding body) regulations, instructions and guidance.

The Head of Centre is responsible for the annual review and any required update of this policy.

The Management Committee is responsible for the approval and sign-off of this policy.

This policy will be communicated to all relevant centre staff.

This policy will be available on the school’s website.

Relevant staff will be provided with a copy of the policy for their files and training through appropriate meetings will be given, where necessary.

Identifying the need for access arrangements

Roles and responsibilities

Head of centre (HOC) will

- Be familiar with the entire contents, refer to and direct relevant centre staff to the annually updated JCQ publications including GR and AA
- Ensure an appropriately qualified assessor(s) is appointed and that evidence of the qualification(s) of the person(s) appointed is held on file.

Senior Management Team (SLT) will

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

Special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) will

- Have access to the services of an assessor of candidates with learning difficulties who will be an appropriately qualified access arrangements assessor/psychologist/specialist assessor).
- Have full knowledge and understanding of the contents, refer to and direct relevant centre staff to the annually updated JCQ publication AA
- Ensure the quality of the access arrangements process within the centre
- Ensure staff roles, responsibilities and processes in identifying, requesting and implementing access arrangements are clearly defined and documented.
- Ensure facilitators supporting candidates are appropriately trained and understand the rules of the particular access arrangement(s)
- Ensures the assessment process is administered in accordance with the regulations
- Lead on the access arrangements process to facilitate access for candidates
- Liaise with the EO to ensure that invigilators are made aware of the Equality Act 2010 and are trained in disability issues
- Ensure that all assessments carried out and arrangements put in place comply with JCQ and awarding body regulations and guidance
- Ensure arrangements put in place for exams/assessments reflect a candidate's normal way of working within the centre
- Ensure the need for access arrangements for a candidate will be considered on a subject by subject basis
- Present when requested by a JCQ Centre Inspector, evidence of their qualification
- Work 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
- Conduct appropriate assessments to identify the need(s) of a candidate
- Provides appropriate evidence to confirm the need(s) of a candidate
- Complete appropriate documentation as required by the regulations of JCQ and the awarding body

Teaching staff will

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

Requesting access arrangements

Roles and Responsibilities

The SENCo will

- Determine 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

The EO will

- Be familiar with the entire contents of the annually updated JCQ publication GR and be aware of information contained in AA where this may be relevant to the EO role.
- Follows guidance in AA Chapter 8 to process approval applications for access arrangements for GCSE qualifications.
- Apply for approval where this is required, through Access arrangements online, or through the awarding body where qualifications sit outside the scope of AAO. The EO will only make approvals online in the presence of the SENCo.
- Ensure appropriate and required evidence is held on file to confirm validation responses in AAO including the completion of JCQ Form 8, where required, and a body of evidence to substantiate the candidate's normal way of working within 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.
- 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).
- Ensure 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).
- Ensure that where approval is required that this is applied for by the awarding body deadline
- Maintains a file for each candidate 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 GCSE qualifications (where approval is required), a print out of the AAO approval and a signed data protection notice (which provides candidate consent to their personal details being shared)
- Present the files when requested by a JCQ Centre Inspector.
- Liaise with teaching staff regarding any appropriate modified paper requirements for candidates.
- Liaise with the SENCo to ensure AAO approval is in place for early opening of papers where this may be required 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 (AAO for GCE and GCSE; *JCQ Form 7* or *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.

Implementing access arrangements and the conduct of exams

Roles & 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).

The HOC will

- Support 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

The SENCo will

- Ensure 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)

The EO will

- Be familiar with and follow the *Checklist for heads of centre and examination officers – The Equality Act 2010 and conduct of examinations* provided in the current ICE (page 44)
- Ensure invigilators are briefed prior to each exam session of the arrangements in place for a disabled candidate in their exam room
- Check 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)
- Make 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) 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 exam
- Understand that where permitted/approved, secure exam question paper packets may need to be opened early where preparation is required by the Teaching Assistant (Oral Language Modifier, Live Speaker, Sign Language Interpreter only)
- Ensures that the facilitator only has access to the papers 60 minutes prior to the published start time of the exam
- 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
- Print pre-populated cover sheets from AAO where this is required for GCSE qualifications
- Have 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
- Liaise with the SENCo where a Teaching Assistant/Invigilator 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.
- 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.

- 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.
- 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.

Other relevant centre staff – (Teaching Assistants/Invigilators/Site Staff) will

- Support the SENCo and the EO to ensure appropriate arrangements, adjustments and adaptations are in place to facilitate access for disabled candidates to exams.
- Ensure 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.
- Ensure that any arrangements put in place do not unfairly disadvantage or advantage disabled candidates.
- Liaise with the exams EO regarding facilitation and invigilation of access arrangement candidates in exams.
- Ensure cover sheets, where these are required by the arrangement are completed as required
- Liaise with the SENCo and EO regarding the facilitation and invigilation of access arrangement candidates
- Be responsible for **IT or other specialist equipment** that may need to be provided or adapted for a candidate
- Be responsible for **rooms and non-specialist equipment** (chairs, tables, clocks etc.) used for exams that may need to be adapted for a candidate

SLT will

- Be responsible for the centre's **emergency evacuation procedure** 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.

<p>Emergency evacuation procedure See Appendix 1</p>

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, page 3*]

The SENCo will

- Liaise with teaching staff to implement appropriate access arrangements for candidates
- Ensure candidates are aware of the access arrangements that are in place for their assessments

The Teaching staff will

- Support the SENCo in implementing appropriate access arrangements for candidates

The EO will

- Ensure centre-delegated and awarding body approved arrangements are in place prior to a candidate taking his/her first formal supervised assessment

- Ensure teaching assistants/invigilators supporting candidates are appropriately trained and understand the rules of the particular access arrangement(s)
- Ensure cover sheets are completed
- Liaise with the teacher where a teaching assistant/invigilator may be required to support a candidate requiring an emergency (temporary) access arrangement at the time of his/her formal supervised 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.

The SENCo will

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

Teaching staff will

- Support the SENCo in implementing appropriate access arrangements for candidates

The EO will

- 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.

Site staff will

- Be responsible for **rooms and non-specialist equipment** (chairs, tables, clocks etc.) used for exams that may need to be adapted for a candidate

SLT will

- Be 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

Facilitating access

The following examples confirm 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

Candidates Needs	Arrangements explored	Centre actions
<i>medical condition(s) which prevents the candidate from taking exams in the centre</i>	<i>Alternative site for the conduct of examinations Supervised rest breaks</i>	<i>SENCo gathers evidence to support the need for the candidate to take exams at home/hospital/transfer to another centre SENCo provides written statement for file to confirm the need Approval confirmed by HOC; AAO approval for both arrangements not required SLT discussion with candidate to confirm the arrangements should be put in place EO provides candidate with exam timetable and JCQ information for candidates SENCo agrees with candidate that prior to each exam will call to confirm fitness to take exam EO allocates invigilator(s) to candidate's timetable; confirms time of collection of exam papers and materials Invigilator monitors candidate's condition for each exam and records any issues on incident log Invigilator records rest breaks (time and duration) on incident log and confirms set time given for exam Invigilator briefs EO after each exam on how candidate's performance in exam may have been affected by his/her condition EO discusses with SENCo 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 HOC informs candidate that special consideration has been requested</i>
<i>Persistent and significant difficulties in accessing written text</i>	<i>Reader/computer reader 25% Extra time Separate invigilation within the centre Rest breaks Scribe</i>	<i>Confirms candidate is disabled within the meaning of the Equality Act 2010 Papers checked for those testing reading Computer reader/reader sourced for use in papers(or sections of papers) testing reading OR up to 50% extra time awarded Form 8, signed and dated, with Sections A, B and C completed; kept on file with body of supporting evidence, printed approval from AAO and signed data protection notice EO/Senco work with the Specialist Assessor to make sure all necessary tests have been taken Teachers to be made aware that it must be the candidates normal way of working</i>
<i>Significant difficulty in concentrating</i>	<i>Prompter Separate invigilation within the centre Rest breaks</i>	<i>Gathers evidence to support substantial and long term adverse impairment Confirms with candidate how and when they will be prompted Briefs invigilator/TA to monitor candidate and the method of prompting (go over to the candidate to bring his /her attention back to the paper - confirms requirement for separate room)</i>
<i>A wheelchair user</i>	<i>Desk/Chair Rooms Facilities</i>	<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</i>

	<p><i>Seating arrangements</i> <i>Practical assistant</i> <i>Rest breaks</i></p>	<p><i>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>Make all staff aware of emergency evacuation procedures for candidates in wheelchairs; also inform staff if having difficulties evacuating the building to make their way to a safe point which is situated so emergency services know where they are</i> <i>Practical assistant cover sheet printed from AAO; to be completed by facilitator and securely attached to candidate's work where this may be applicable to the assessment</i></p>
--	--	--

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Emergency Evacuation Procedure

Emergency evacuation procedure for exams

The invigilator **must** take the following action in an emergency such as a fire alarm or bomb alert

- Stop the candidates from writing
- Collect the attendance register (**in order to ensure all candidates are present**)
- Evacuate the examinations room in line with the instructions given by the appropriate authority
- Advise candidates to leave all question papers and scripts in the examination room.
- Candidates should leave the room in silence
- Make sure the candidates are supervised as closely as possible while they are out of the examination room to make sure there is no discussion about the examination.
- Make a note of the time of the interruption and how long it lasted
- Allow the candidates the full working time set for the examination
- If there are only a few candidates, consider taking the candidates (with question papers and scripts) to another place to finish the examination
- Make a full report of the incident and of the action taken to the relevant awarding body