



Disability policy

Exam access arrangements

TOA063

This policy will be reviewed annually to ensure compliance with current regulations.

Policy updated:	March 2020
Updated by:	Katherine Radcliffe (SENCo)
Approved by:	Interim Academy Board 18 March 2020
Next review by:	April 2021

Key staff

The following key staff are primarily responsible for ensuring and overseeing that this policy is implemented in line with regulations.

Head of Centre: Nora Ward (Head teacher)

SENCo: Katherine Radcliffe

Exams officer: Shannon West

SEND governor: Paul James

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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

This policy links directly with three other policies; SEND Special Educational Needs and Disabilities with reference to Access Arrangements, the Allocation and Use of Word Processors policy and the TOA Accessibility Plan. (Note these will be hyperlinked when updated and approved.)

The Equality Act 2010 definition of disability

A definition is provided on page 4 of the current 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](#).

Identifying the need for access arrangements

Roles and responsibilities

The Head of Centre, Nora Ward,

- Is familiar with the entire contents, refers to and directs relevant centre staff to the annually updated JCQ publications including [GR](#) and [AA](#).

Senior leader & SENCo Katherine Radcliffe

- ▶ Is familiar with the entire contents of the annually updated JCQ publications including [GR](#) and [AA](#)
- ▶ Ensures a policy demonstrating the centre's compliance with relevant legislation is in place
- Has full knowledge and understanding of the contents, refers to and directs relevant centre staff to the annually updated JCQ publication [AA](#);
- Ensures an 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;
- Ensures staff roles, responsibilities and processes in identifying, requesting and implementing access arrangements for candidates (including private candidates) are clearly defined and documented;
- Provides a policy on the allocation and use of word processors in exams and assessments;
- Leads on the access arrangements process to facilitate access for candidates;
- Defines and documents roles, responsibilities and processes in identifying, requesting and implementing access arrangements;
- Ensures the qualified assessor(s) has access to the assessment objectives for the relevant specification(s) a candidate is undertaking;
- 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 will be 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;
- Completes appropriate documentation as required by the regulations of JCQ and the awarding body.

Teaching staff

- Inform the SENCo of any support that might be needed by a candidate;
- Support the SENCo in determining the need for and implementing access arrangements;
- 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 will be considered on a subject by subject basis;
- Provide information to evidence the normal way of working of a candidate;

Support staff (Intervention Managers and Teaching Assistants)

- Provide comments/observations to support the SENCo in *painting a holistic picture of need confirming normal way of working* for a candidate;
- Support the SENCo in determining the need for and implementing access arrangements;
- Provide information to evidence the normal way of working of 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 current JCQ publication [AA₂](#);
- Provides information to evidence the normal way of working of a candidate;
- Supports the SENCo in determining the need for and implementing access arrangements;
- 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.

Requesting access arrangements

Roles and responsibilities

Special educational needs coordinator (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;
- Follows guidance in [AA](#) Section 8 to process approval applications for access arrangements for those qualifications listed on page 2 of [AA](#);
- 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;

- 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 those qualifications listed on page 2 of [AA](#) (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);
- Presents the files when requested by a JCQ Centre Inspector;
- Liaises with teaching staff regarding any appropriate modified paper requirements for candidates;
- SENCO may choose to delegate roles to the Assistant SENCO, the SEND admin and data manager or another member of the SEND team as appropriate but retains responsibility for them.

The Exams Officer

- 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;
- 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 as listed on page 2 of [AA](#), 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;
- 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);
- 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);
- Ensures that where approval is required that this is applied for by the awarding body deadline;
- 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 (for example enlarge to A3 or copy to single-sided print);

- Following the appropriate process (AAO for those qualifications listed on page 74 of [AA](#); *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 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.

Special educational needs coordinator (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);
- Is familiar with the *Checklist for heads of centre and examination officers – The Equality Act 2010 and conduct of examinations* provided in the current [ICE](#) (page 44);
- 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;
- Ensures that any arrangements put in place do not unfairly disadvantage or advantage disabled candidates;
- Liaises with the exams officer (EO) regarding facilitation and invigilation of access arrangement candidates in exams;
- Ensures the facilitator is known by or introduced to the candidate prior to exams;
- Ensures a facilitator acting as a prompter is aware of the appropriate way to prompt depending on the needs of the candidate;
- Liaises with the EO to ensure that invigilators are made aware of the Equality Act 2010 and are trained in disability issues;

- Appoints appropriate centre staff as facilitators to support candidates (practical assistant, prompter, Oral Language Modifier, reader, scribe or Communications Professional).
- Liaises with the EO where a facilitator may be required to support a candidate requiring an emergency (temporary) access arrangement at the time of exams.

The Exams Officer

- Is familiar with and follows the *Checklist for heads of centre and examination officers – The Equality Act 2010 and conduct of examinations* provided in the current ICE (page 44);
- 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;
- 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 exams;
- Supports the SENCo in ensuring that appropriate centre staff are appointed as facilitators to support candidates (practical assistant, prompter, Oral Language Modifier, reader, scribe or Communications Professional). The Exams officer will be responsible for ensuring that there are sufficient staff available to support the arrangements;
- Ensures facilitators supporting candidates are appropriately trained and understand the rules of the particular access arrangement(s);
- 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;
- 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 7 and 8;
- Ensures cover sheets, where these are required by the arrangement are completed as required by facilitator;s
- 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;

- 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 regarding the facilitation and invigilation of access arrangement candidates;
- Liaises with the SENCo regarding rooming of access arrangement candidates;
- Liaises with the SENCo to ensure that invigilators are made aware of the Equality Act 2010 and are trained in disability issues;
- 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;
- Ensures invigilators are briefed prior to each exam session of the arrangements in place for a disabled candidate in their exam room;
- 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);
- 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;
- 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, Communications Professional only);
- Ensures that the facilitator only has access to the papers 60 minutes prior to the published start time of the exam;
- 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;
- 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;
- 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 2 of [AA](#).

Teaching and Support 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.

Other relevant centre staff roles:

- Staff responsible for IT or other specialist equipment that may need to be provided or adapted for a candidate will liaise with EO and SENCo as required.
- Site Manager responsible for rooms and non-specialist equipment (chairs, tables, clocks etc.) used for exams that may need to be adapted for a candidate will liaise with the EO and SENCo as required.
- Senior leadership team (Sally Elliott) is 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.

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]

Special educational needs coordinator (SENCo)

- 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 candidates are aware of the access arrangements that are in place for their assessments;
- 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.

Exams Officer

- Ensures facilitators supporting candidates are appropriately trained and understand the rules of the particular access arrangement(s);
- Ensures cover sheets are completed as required by facilitators;
- 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.

Teaching staff

- Support the SENCo in implementing appropriate access arrangements for candidates;
- Ensures candidates are aware of the access arrangements that are in place for their assessments;
- 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 precursor to external assessments.

Special educational needs coordinator (SENCo)

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

Teaching staff

- Support the SENCo in implementing appropriate access arrangements for candidates.

Facilitating access

The following information confirms the centre's good practice in relation to the Equality Act 2010 and the conduct of examinations. (See TOA Accessibility Plan)

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 below 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. As a centre we can provide examples of good practice for each area.

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</p> <p>Supervised rest breaks</p>	<p><i>SENCo gathers evidence to support the need for the candidate to take exams at home</i></p> <p><i>Head of Year provides written statement for file to confirm the need</i></p> <p><i>Approval confirmed by SENCo; AAO approval for both arrangements not required</i></p> <p><i>Head of Year discussion with candidate to confirm the arrangements should be put in place</i></p> <p><i>EO submits appropriate 'Alternative site for the conduct of exams form'</i></p> <p><i>EO provides candidate with exam timetable and JCQ information for candidates</i></p> <p><i>Head of Year confirms with candidate the information is understood</i></p> <p><i>Head of Year agrees with candidate that prior to each exam will call to confirm fitness to take exam</i></p> <p><i>EO 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 EO after each exam on how candidate's performance in exam may have been affected by his/her condition</i></p> <p><i>EO discusses with Head of Year if candidate is eligible for special consideration (candidate present but disadvantaged)</i></p> <p><i>EO processes request(s) for special consideration where applicable; incident log(s) provides supporting evidence</i></p>

		<i>Head of Year 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</i>	<i>SENCo confirms candidate is disabled within the meaning of the Equality Act 2010 Papers checked for those testing reading Computer reader/examination reading pen sourced for use in papers (or sections of papers) testing reading OR up to 50% extra time awarded Original Form 8, signed by hand 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</i>
<i>Significant difficulty in concentrating due to diagnosed disability</i>	<i>Prompter Separate invigilation within the centre</i>	<i>Gathers evidence to support substantial and long term adverse impairment SENCo confirms with candidate how and when they will be prompted Briefs invigilator to monitor candidate and the method of prompting (eg call out his/her name to bring his attention back to the paper - confirms requirement for separate room)</i>
<i>A wheelchair user</i>	<i>Desk Rooms Facilities Seating arrangements Practical assistant</i>	<i>SENCo 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 exam 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 exam 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</i>