



Exams Disability Policy 2016-7

Lead Person:	SENCO
Governing Body Committee:	Admissions
Required by:	JCQ
Review:	November 2017

1. Purpose of the policy

This document is provided as an exams-specific supplement to the *centre-wide Accessibility/ Disability Policy 2016-2017* which details how the centre

“recognises 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”

[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

2. 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.

3. 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 General regulations for approved centres (GR) and Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments(AA)

Senior Leadership Team

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

Special educational needs coordinator (SENCo)

- Has full knowledge and understanding of the contents, refers to and directs relevant centre staff to the annually updated JCQ publication AA
- Ensures staff roles, responsibilities and processes in identifying, requesting and implementing access arrangements are clearly defined
- Ensures the assessment process is administered in accordance with the regulations
- Arranges appropriate assessments to identify the need(s) of a candidate
- Provides appropriate evidence to confirm the need(s) of a candidate
- Ensures that all assessments carried out and arrangements put in place, supported by the Exams Officer, comply with JCQ and awarding body regulations and guidance

Teaching staff

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

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 AA
- Completes appropriate documentation as required by the regulations of JCQ and the awarding body

Exams Officer

- Ensures arrangements put in place for exams/assessments reflect a candidate's *normal way of working* within the centre

- Completes appropriate documentation as required by the regulations of JCQ and the awarding body

4. 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
- Ensures appropriate and required evidence is collated and 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.
- Provides evidence so applications can be made by the awarding body deadline
- Presents the files when requested by a JCQ Centre Inspector

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
- Follows guidance in AA Chapter 8 to process approval applications for access arrangements for GCSE and GCE qualifications
- 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 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
- 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 for each candidate that will include:
 - completed JCQ/awarding body application forms and evidence forms
 - appropriate evidence provided by the SENCO to support the need for the arrangement where required
 - appropriate evidence provided by the SENCO to support normal way of working within the centre
 - in addition, for GCSE and GCE 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)

5. Implementing access arrangements and the conduct of exams

Roles and responsibilities

5.1 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)
- 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
- Ensures the candidate understands what will happen at exam time regarding arrangements
- 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

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 is adapted where this may be required for a disabled candidate to access it
- Ensures that invigilators are made aware of the Equality Act 2010 and are trained in disability issues
- Ensures appropriate seating arrangements and facilities 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 all the arrangements in place for a disabled candidate in their exam room
- 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

- 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
- With exam papers
 - 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 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
 - 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)
 - Ensures that the facilitator only has access to the papers one hour 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

Invigilators

- Are aware of the Equality Act 2010 and are trained in disability issues
- Ensure access arrangements as noted in the briefing and on the seating plan are fully implemented at the time of the exam
- Understand and implement specific evacuation procedures for disabled candidates
- Seek advice from the exams officer if any candidate is unsure of their access arrangements or does not have the right equipment or type of paper needed for the exam

IT Manager

- responsible for **IT or other specialist equipment** that may need to be provided or adapted for a candidate

Estates Manager

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

5.2 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.

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)

Teaching staff

- Support the SENCo in implementing appropriate access arrangements for candidates

Director of Studies

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

Exams Officer

- 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
- Liaise with the SENCo regarding assessment materials that may need to be modified for a candidate

5.3 Internal exams

These are exams or tests which are set and marked within the school normally as a pre-cursor to external assessments. Roles and responsibilities as far as they are required for internal exams are as detailed above in external assessments. Specifically

Special educational needs coordinator (SENCo)

- Informs exams officer of those candidates requiring access arrangements

Teaching staff

- Support the SENCo in implementing appropriate access arrangements for candidates
- Provide exam materials to the exams officer that may need to be modified for a candidate

Exams Officer

- Provide the SENCo and teaching staff with the internal exam timetable to ensure arrangements are put in place when required
- Ensures appropriate exam material is available for all candidates

LINKS: This policy does not exist in isolation and staff should follow the policy in conjunction with

- Accessibility/Disability Policy 2016-2017
- Word Processor Policy Exams 2016-17
- Exams Policy 2016-17
- Controlled Assessment Policy 2016-17
- Non Examination Assessment Policy 2016-17
- Exam Contingency Plan 2016-17