



SIR THOMAS RICH'S

Equalities Policy (Exams) (previously: Examinations and Assessments for Disabled Candidates Policy)

Part of the Examinations Suite of Policies

Date reviewed: February 2023

Responsibility: The School's Examinations Officer under the supervision of the Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCo) draws up and implements the Examinations and Assessments for Disabled Candidates Policy. The Governors' Curriculum and Evaluation Committee reviews the policy and monitors its implementation. This policy is reviewed annually.

This policy is part of the Examinations Suite of policies. The Examinations Suite of policies details the School's procedures relating to external examinations and the assessments related to these. For the School's general assessment policies, please refer to the Assessment Recording and Reporting Policy (school website: [About Us – Governors and Policies](#)).

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1. Purpose of the policy

This document is provided as an exams-specific supplement to the *Accessibility Plan* which details how the centre will

- recognise 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. 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; [†]or any legislation in a relevant jurisdiction other than England and Wales which has an equivalent purpose and effect

(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 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

2. The Equality Act 2010 definition of disability

A definition is provided on page 9 of the current JCQ publication *Adjustments for candidates with disabilities and learning difficulties* [Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments](#) 2021-2022

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 GR and AA
- Ensures staff roles, responsibilities and processes in identifying, requesting and implementing access arrangements for **all** candidates are clearly defined and documented
- Ensures the quality of the access arrangements process within the centre
- Ensures an appropriately qualified assessor(s) is appointed, evidence of the assessor's qualification(s) is obtained before he/she assesses candidates and that evidence of the qualification(s) of the person(s) appointed is held on file
- Ensures the assessment process is administered in accordance with the regulations and that the correct procedures are followed as in Chapter 7 of [AA](#)
- Ensures a policy demonstrating the centre's compliance with relevant legislation is in place
- Works with the person/persons appointed, on all matters relating to assessing candidates and the administration of the assessment process
- 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
- Presents when requested by a JCQ Centre Inspector, evidence of the assessor's qualification
- Completes appropriate documentation as required by the regulations of JCQ and the awarding body

Senior leaders

- 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 and documented
- 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 will be considered on a subject by subject basis
- Leads on the access arrangements process to facilitate access for candidates
- Works with the persons appointed, on all matters relating to assessing candidates and the administration of the assessment process

Assistant SENCo

- Has full knowledge and understanding of the contents of the annually updated JCQ publication AA
- Arranges appropriate assessments to identify the need(s) of a candidate
- Provides appropriate evidence to confirm the need(s) of a candidate
- Enables assessments to be carried out and arrangements to be put in place which comply with JCQ and awarding body regulations and guidance

- Enables arrangements to be put in place for exams/assessments which reflect a candidate's normal way of working within the centre
- Enables access arrangements for a candidate to be made on a subject by subject basis
- 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

Teaching staff

- Inform the SENCo/Assistant SENCO of any support that might be needed by a candidate
- Support the SENCo/Assistant 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 AA

4. Requesting access arrangements

Roles and responsibilities

Special educational needs coordinator (SENCo)

- Is familiar with the entire contents of the annually updated JCQ publication GR and of information contained in AA
- 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 Chapter 8 to process approval applications for access arrangements for those GCSE and GCE 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
- 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 the completion of JCQ Form 8 (*Application for access arrangements – Profile of learning difficulties*) where required and/or centre based evidence including concise file note(s) on centre headed paper, signed and dated, and a body of evidence to substantiate the candidate's normal way of working within the centre (Form 8 must only be used for candidates with learning difficulties or where a Language Modifier is required.)
- Ensures where form 8 is required to be completed, the original form is signed (a handwritten, electronic or typed signature is acceptable) and dated as required **prior** to approval being sought and that the original 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 GCSE and GCE qualifications 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 (hard copy or electronic) 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 covered by AAO (where approval is required), a printout/PDF of the AAO approval and a signed candidate personal data consent form (which provides candidate consent to their personal details being shared)
- 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 EO and teaching staff regarding any appropriate modified paper requirements for candidates

Assistant SENCo

- Is familiar with the entire contents of the annually updated JCQ publication GR and of information contained in AA
- 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)
- If the SENCo is unavailable, presents the files/e-folders of access arrangements candidates when requested by a JCQ Centre Inspector and addresses any queries/questions raised

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
- 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)
- Liaises with the SENCo/Assistant 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 (copy on coloured paper, enlarge to A3 or copy to single sided print)
- Orders published modified papers by the awarding body's deadline for the exam series, following the appropriate process (AAO for GCE and GCSE; or Form VQ/EA), where these may be required for a candidate

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

- Is familiar with The Equality Act 2010, conduct of examinations provided in the current ICE 2021-2022 and AA 2021-2022
- 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

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 Equality Act 2010, conduct of examinations provided in the current ICE 2021-2022 and AA 2021-2022
- 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 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
- Monitors, in internal tests/mock exams, the use of arrangements granted to a candidate and where a candidate has never made use of the arrangement, may consider withdrawing the arrangement, provided the candidate will not be placed at a substantial disadvantage
- Is aware of 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

Assistant SENCo

- 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
- Is familiar with The Equality Act 2010, conduct of examinations provided in the current ICE 2021-2022 and AA 2021-2022
- 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
- Monitors, in internal tests/mock exams, the use of arrangements granted to a candidate and where a candidate has never made use of the arrangement, may consider withdrawing the arrangement, provided the candidate will not be placed at a substantial disadvantage
- Liaises with the exams officer (EO) regarding facilitation and invigilation of access arrangement candidates in exams
- 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
- 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
- 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
- Is aware of 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

Exams officer

- Understands and follows instructions for *Invigilation arrangements for candidates with access arrangements* and *Access arrangements* in [ICE 2021-2022](#)
- 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 exam information (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
- 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
- Appoints appropriate centre staff as facilitators to support candidates (practical assistant, prompter, Oral Language Modifier, reader, scribe or Communication Professional) Ensures facilitators supporting candidates are appropriately trained and understand the rules of the particular access arrangement(s)
- Ensures where a person is appointed to facilitate an access arrangement, the person appointed is not normally the candidate's own subject teacher but where the candidate's own subject teacher has to be used, ensures a separate invigilator is always present
- Ensures where a person is appointed to facilitate an access arrangement, the person appointed is not a relative, friend, peer or private tutor of the candidate.
- 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
- Ensures cover sheets, where these are required by the arrangement are completed as required by facilitators
- 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/Assistant 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 candidates with access arrangements are identified on exam room seating plans
- 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, 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, 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 exam 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 for the exam 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 exam in order to prepare
- 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 GCSE and GCE qualifications
- 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
- Is aware of 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

Other relevant centre 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 (KH, GSA, SK, site team)
- Ensure exam information (JCQ information for candidates documents etc.) is adapted where this may be required for a disabled candidate to access it (KH, HoDs)
- Liaise with the exams officer (EO) regarding facilitation and invigilation of access arrangement candidates in exams (SK, GSA, NB)
- Appoint appropriate centre staff as facilitators to support candidates (practical assistant, prompter, Oral Language Modifier, reader, scribe or Sign Language Interpreter) (SK)
- Ensure the facilitator is known by or introduced to the candidate prior to exams (SK)
- Liaise with the EO to ensure that invigilators are made aware of the Equality Act 2010 and are trained in disability issues (SK)
- Ensure cover sheets, where these are required by the arrangement are completed as required by facilitators (KH, Invigilators)
- Liaise with the EO where a facilitator may be required to support a candidate requiring an emergency (temporary) access arrangement at the time of exams (HoYs, HoDs, Form Tutors)
- Liaise 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 (GSA, site team)
- 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) (SK)
- Provide or adapt IT or other specialist equipment that may be needed for a candidate (MPH, IMB)
- Set up rooms and non-specialist equipment (chairs, tables, clocks etc.) used for exams that may need to be adapted for a candidate (site team)

5.2 Internal assessments

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

Assistant SENCo

- Liaises with teaching staff to help 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 Head of Department/subject 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

Head of Department /Subject teacher

- Support the SENCo in implementing 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)
- Ensures cover sheets are completed as required by facilitators
- Provide the SENCo/Assistant SENCo with assessment schedules to ensure arrangements are put in place when required
- Liaise with the SENCo/Assistant 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 centre; normally a pre-cursor to external assessments.

Assistant SENCo

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

Assistant Timetabler

- Provide the Assistant SENCo with internal exam timetable to ensure arrangements are put in place when required

HoDs

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

6. 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 exams in the centre	Alternative site for the conduct of examinations Supervised rest breaks	<p><i>SENCo gathers evidence to support the need for the candidate to take exams at home</i></p> <p><i>Assistant SENCo 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>Assistant SENCo discussion with candidate to confirm the arrangements should be put in place</i></p> <p><i>EO submits 'Alternative site form' for timetabled written exams to awarding body/bodies online using CAP</i></p> <p><i>EO provides candidate with exam timetable and JCQ information for candidates</i></p> <p><i>Assistant SENCo confirms with candidate the information is understood</i></p> <p><i>Assistant SENCo agrees with candidate that prior to each exam they 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 Assistant SENCo 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> <p><i>EO informs candidate that special consideration has been requested</i></p>
Persistent and significant difficulties in accessing written text	Reader/ computer reader 25% Extra time Separate invigilation within the centre	<p><i>SENCo confirms candidate is disabled within the meaning of the Equality Act 2010</i></p> <p><i>Papers checked for those testing reading</i></p> <p><i>Computer reader sourced for use in papers (or sections of papers) testing reading OR up to 50% extra time awarded</i></p> <p><i>A short concise file note produced on centre headed paper, signed and dated kept on file, 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</i></p> <p><i>(25% Extra time - Form 8 completed as appropriate)</i></p> <p><i>Supporting evidence, AAO approval and signed candidate personal data consent form kept on file</i></p>

Significant difficulty in concentrating	Prompter Separate invigilation within the centre	<p><i>Assistant SENCo gathers evidence to support substantial and long term adverse impairment</i></p> <p><i>Prompter confirms with candidate how and when they will be prompted</i></p> <p><i>EO 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)</i></p>
A wheelchair user	Desk Rooms Facilities Seating arrangements Practical assistant	<p><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</i></p> <p><i>A suitable height desk is provided in the exam room</i></p> <p><i>EO allocates exam room on ground floor near adapted bathroom facilities</i></p> <p><i>Desks are spaced to allow wheelchair access</i></p> <p><i>Candidate is seated near the exam room door</i></p> <p><i>Assistant SENCo confirms arrangements in place to assist the candidate in case of emergency evacuation of the exam room</i></p> <p><i>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></p>