



## Equalities Policy (Exams) 2020-2021

### Purpose of the policy

This document is provided as an exams-specific supplement to the Equality policy which details how the Centre

*“recognises its duties towards disabled candidates, including private candidates, as defined under the terms of the Equality Act 2010. 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.  
for any legislation in a relevant jurisdiction other than England and Wales which has an equivalent purpose and effect”*

*JCQ's General Regulations for Approved Centres 2020-2021 (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

### 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 2020-2021 \(Definitions section\)](#).

This publication is further referred to in this policy as [AA](#).

### 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 the assessment process is administered in accordance with the regulations.
- Ensures a policy demonstrating the centre's compliance with relevant legislation is in place.

### Senior leaders

- Are familiar with the entire contents of the annually updated JCQ publications including [GR](#) and [AA](#).

### Special educational needs coordinator (SENDCo)

- Has full knowledge and understanding of the contents, refers to and directs relevant centre staff to the annually updated JCQ publication [AA](#).
- Ensures the quality of the access arrangements process within the centre.
- Ensures staff roles, responsibilities and processes in identifying, requesting and implementing access arrangements are clearly defined and documented.
- Ensures appropriately qualified assessor(s) is appointed and that evidence of the qualification(s) of the person(s) appointed is held on file.
- 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 (*Access arrangements policy*).
- If not the appropriately qualified assessor, 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.
- 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.
- Provide information to evidence the normal way of working of a candidate.
- 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.

### Teaching staff

- Inform the SENDCo of any support that might be needed by a candidate.
- Support the SENDCo in determining the need for and implementing access arrangements.

Support staff (for example LSAs, Teaching Assistants)

- \* (where appropriate) Provide comments/observations to support the SENDCo to 'paint a holistic picture of need', confirming normal way of working for 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](#).

Use of Word Processors – This Policy can be found on the website as well as in Teacherworks and a hard copy retained by the Exams Office.

## Requesting access arrangements

## Roles and responsibilities

### Special Educational Needs & Disabilities Coordinator (SENDCo)

- 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](#)
- 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 appropriate and required evidence is held on file to confirm validation responses in AAO including (where required) the completion of JCQ Form 8 (*Application for access arrangements – Profile of learning difficulties*), 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 who are not subject to a current EHCP or Statement of Special Educational Needs or those requiring a Language Modifier.)
- Ensures where form 8 is required to be completed, the form is signed (a handwritten, electronic or typed signature is acceptable) and dated as required prior to approval being sought and that the 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 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 processed at the start of the course and at the latest by the awarding body deadline
  - Maintains a file/e-folder for each candidate (the required documentation for a candidate will either be all in hard copy within the candidate's file or all in electronic format within the candidate's e-folder) 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/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)
- If the SENDCo is unavailable, presents the files/e-folders of access arrangements candidates when requested by a JCQ Centre Inspector and addresses any queries/questions raised
- Liaises with teaching staff regarding any appropriate modified paper requirements for candidates
- Liaises with the SENDCo 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)
- Following the appropriate process (using AAO for those qualifications listed on page 74 of [AA](#); using *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

#### 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.
- Liaises with the SENDCo 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 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 SENDCo, 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 (SENDCo)

- 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).

- 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 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).
- 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.
- 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 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).
- Presents the files when requested by a JCQ Centre Inspector.
- Liaises with teaching staff regarding any appropriate modified paper requirements for candidates.
- 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.
- 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 EO to ensure that invigilators are made aware of the Equality Act 2010 and are trained in disability issues.
- 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 (JCQ information for candidates documents, individual exam timetable etc.) is adapted where this may be required for a disabled candidate to access it.
- Appoints appropriate centre staff as facilitators to support candidates (practical assistant, prompter, Language Modifier, reader, scribe or Sign Language Interpreter).
- Ensures facilitators supporting candidates are appropriately trained and understand the rules of the particular access arrangement(s).
- Ensures the facilitator is known by or introduced to the candidate prior to exams.
- Ensures where the candidate's own subject teacher will be used (in exceptional circumstances) as a facilitator, an invigilator will be present at all times
- Ensures where a facilitator is allocated to support a candidate under exam conditions that they will not be a relative, friend, peer or private tutor of the candidate
- Ensures a facilitator acting as a prompter will not normally be the candidate's own subject teacher and must not be a relative, friend or peer of the candidate (understanding that a private tutor cannot act a prompter for the candidate)
- Ensures cover sheets, where these are required by the arrangement are completed as required by facilitators.
- Liaises with the SENDCo 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 SENDCo 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 SENDCo regarding the facilitation and invigilation of access arrangement candidates.
- Liaises with the SENDCo regarding rooming of access arrangement candidates.
- Liaises with the SENDCo 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 and invigilators are made aware of the arrangements awarded and invigilators informed of those candidates with access arrangements are made aware of the access arrangement(s).
- 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, secure exam question paper packets may need to be opened early where preparation is required by the facilitator ( 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;
  - prints pre-populated cover sheets from AAO where this is required for particular arrangements
- 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 SENDCo 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.

### Other relevant centre staff

- Support the SENDCo and the exams officer to ensure appropriate arrangements, adjustments and adaptations are in place to facilitate access for disabled candidates to exams.
- 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.

### 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](#)]

### Special educational needs coordinator (SENDCo)

- 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 and ensures candidate has had appropriate opportunities to practise using the access arrangement(s) before his/her first examination.
- Ensures candidates are aware of the access arrangements that are in place for their assessments.

### Teaching staff

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

### Examinations 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.
- 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.
- Provide the SENDCo with assessment schedules to ensure arrangements are put in place when required.

Liaise with the SENDCo 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 (SENDCo)

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

### Teaching staff

- Support the SENDCo in implementing appropriate access arrangements for candidates.
- Provide exam materials that may need to be modified for a candidate.
- Provide the SENDCo with internal exam timetable to ensure arrangements are put in place when required.

### Use of Word Processors

This policy is located on the Teachers Work (v)drive as well as the website.

### 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>SENDCo gathers evidence to support the need for the candidate to take exams at home.</i></p> <p><i>Pastoral head provides written statement for file to confirm the need.</i></p> <p><i>Approval confirmed by SENDCo; AAO approval for both arrangements not required.</i></p> <p><i>Pastoral head 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 through CAP</i></p> <p><i>EO provides candidate with exam timetable and JCQ information for candidates.</i></p> <p><i>Pastoral head confirms with candidate the information is understood.</i></p>

		<p><i>Pastoral head 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 pastoral head 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>Pastoral head informs candidate that special consideration has been requested.</i></p>
Persistent and significant difficulties in accessing written text.	<p>Reader/computer reader.</p> <p>25% Extra time.</p> <p>Separate invigilation within the centre.</p>	<p><i>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/examination reading pen 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>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.</i></p> <p><i>Signed candidate personal data consent form kept on file.</i></p>
Significant difficulty in concentrating.	<p>Prompter.</p> <p>Separate invigilation within the centre.</p>	<p><i>Gathers evidence to support substantial and long-term adverse impairment.</i></p> <p><i>Confirms with candidate how and when they will be prompted.</i></p> <p><i>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.	<p>Desk</p> <p>Rooms</p> <p>Facilities</p> <p>Seating arrangements</p> <p>Practical assistant</p>	<p><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 tasks that will be performed.</i></p> <p><i>Provides height adjustable desk in exam room.</i></p> <p><i>Allocates exam room on ground floor near adapted bathroom facilities.</i></p>

		<p><i>Spaces desks to allow wheelchair access.</i></p> <p><i>Seats candidate near exam room door.</i></p> <p><i>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>
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