

# Equalities Policy (Exams)

## 2021/22

This policy is reviewed annually to ensure compliance with current regulations

Approved/reviewed by	
Mr A. Shaw	
Date of next review	

## Key staff involved in the policy

<b>Role</b>	<b>Name(s)</b>
ALS lead/SENCo	<b>Mrs L. Findlay</b>
Senior leader(s)	<b>Mr S. Peace</b> <b>Mr A. Shaw</b> <b>Miss D. Sullivan</b>
Head of centre	<b>Mr G. Langston-Jones</b>
Assessor(s)	<b>Mrs J. Byrne</b>
Access arrangement facilitator(s)	<b>Mrs R. Bentley</b> <b>Mrs M. Bradbury</b> <b>Mrs R. Chilver</b> <b>Mr L. Clarke</b> <b>Mrs R. Forrester</b> <b>Miss T. Gibson</b> <b>Miss L. Harrison</b> <b>Mrs S. McGreggor</b> <b>Mrs J. Millard</b> <b>Mrs C Sharp</b>

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## Purpose of the policy

This document is provided as an exams-specific supplement to the centre-wide equalities/disability/accessibility policy/plan which details how the centre will:

- recognise its duties towards disabled candidates, ensuring compliance with all aspects of the Equality Act 2010<sup>†</sup>, 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; <sup>†</sup>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

## The Equality Act 2010 definition of disability

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

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](#)

#### Senior leader(s)

- Are familiar with the entire contents of the annually updated JCQ publications including [GR](#) and [AA](#)
- Ensures an appropriately qualified assessor(s) is appointed, evidence of the assessor's qualification(s) is obtained before she assesses candidates and that evidence of the qualification(s) of the person(s) appointed is held on file
- Ensures a policy demonstrating the centre's compliance with relevant legislation is in place

#### Additional learning support (ALS) lead/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 the quality of the access arrangements process within the centre
- Ensures staff roles, responsibilities and processes in identifying, requesting and implementing access arrangements for all candidates are clearly defined and documented
- 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
- 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

- Provide information to evidence the normal way of working of a candidate
- Provides appropriate evidence to confirm the need(s) of a candidate

### Teaching staff

- Inform the ALS lead/SENCo of any support that might be needed by a candidate

### Support staff (Learning Support Assistants, Teaching Assistants)

- (where appropriate) Provide comments/observations to support the ALS lead/SENCo 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 JCQ publication [AA](#)
- Ensures the quality of the access arrangements process within the centre
- Ensures the assessment process is administered in accordance with the regulations and that the correct procedures are followed as in Chapter 7 of [AA](#)
- Support the SENCo in determining the need for and implementing access arrangements
- Ensures a statement is provided which details the criteria the centre uses to award and allocate word processors for exams
- Ensures arrangements put in place for exams/assessments reflect a candidate's *normal way of working* within the centre
- Conducts appropriate assessments to identify the need(s) of a candidate

### Use of word processors

Centres are allowed to provide a word processor with the spelling and grammar check/predictive text disabled to a candidate where it is their normal way of working within the centre, unless an awarding body's specification states otherwise.

The centre will not simply grant the use of a word processor to a candidate because he/she prefers to type rather than write or can work faster on a keyboard. A statement for inspection purposes will be available which details the criteria used to award the use of a word processor for examinations.

## Requesting access arrangements

### Roles and responsibilities

#### ALS lead/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 that where approval is required the application is processed on time and no later than the awarding body's published deadline
- 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 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
- Follows guidance in [AA](#) (chapter 8) to process approval applications for access arrangements for those qualifications included
- 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)
- 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)
- 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)
- Holds all supporting evidence and presents such evidence to a JCQ Centre Inspector upon request

### **Exams officer (EO)**

- 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 SENCo to ensure arrangements are in place for internal and external exams

## **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

#### **ALS lead/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)
- 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
- 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.
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#### **Exams officer**

- Understands and follows instructions for Invigilation arrangements for candidates with access arrangements and Access arrangements in [ICE 2021-2022](#)

- Ensures invigilators supervising access arrangement candidates are trained in their role and understand the invigilation arrangements required for access arrangement candidates and the role of any facilitator
- Liaises with SENCo to ensure invigilators are made aware of the Equality Act 2010 and are trained in disability issues
- Liaises with SENCo regarding rooming of access arrangement candidates
- Ensures a record of the content of training given to those facilitating an access arrangement for a candidate under examination conditions is kept and retained on file until the deadline for reviews of marking has passed or until any appeal, malpractice or other results enquiry has been completed, whichever is later
- 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 and made aware of the access arrangement(s) awarded
- Ensures invigilators are briefed prior to each exam session of the arrangements in place for a disabled candidate in their exam room
- Ensures cover sheets where these are required by the arrangement are completed as required by facilitators
- 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)
- 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

#### **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

#### **Internal assessments**

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

#### **ALS lead/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
- Ensure 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 a candidate has had appropriate opportunities to practise using the access arrangement(s) before his/her first examination
- 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
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#### **Teaching staff**

- Support the SENCo in implementing appropriate access arrangements for candidates
- Provide the SENCo with assessment schedules to ensure arrangements are put in place when required
- Liaise with the SENCo regarding assessment materials that may need to be modified for a candidate

## **Internal exams**

These are exams or tests which are set and marked within the centre; normally a pre-cursor to external assessments.

### **ALS lead/SENCo**

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

### **Exams Officer**

- Support the SENCo in implementing appropriate access arrangements for candidates
- Provide the SENCo with internal exam timetables to ensure arrangements are put in place when required

### **Teaching staff**

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

## **Nether Stowe School's adapted facilities**

- The school has a team of teaching assistants who support the curriculum needs of candidates
  - ICT packages available for individual use
  - Lift access to all areas of the upper school
  - Fully equipped toilets with ramps and rails
- Support of the Local Authority for advice and additional resources

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