



# Disability policy (exams)

2023/24

This policy is reviewed annually to ensure compliance with current regulations

**Approved/reviewed by**

Richard Thornton and Hannah  
Crew

**Date of next review** 13/02/2025

## Key staff involved in the policy

<b>Role</b>	<b>Name(s)</b>
SENCo	<b>Richard Thornton</b>
SENCo line manager (Senior Leader)	<b>Gurpreet Basra</b>
Head of centre	<b>Neil Warner</b>
Assessor(s)	<b>Richard Thornton</b>
Access Arrangement coordinator (s)	<b>Hannah Crew</b>
Exams Officer	<b>Donna Bentham</b>

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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<sup>†</sup>. 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 2022-2023](#)]

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 2022-2023](#)

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 staff roles, responsibilities and processes in identifying, requesting and implementing access arrangements for candidates (including private candidates) are clearly defined and documented

#### Senior leaders

- ▶ Are familiar with the entire contents of the annually updated JCQ publications including [GR](#) and [AA](#)
- ▶ Ensures the quality of the access arrangements process within the centre

- ▶ Ensures the qualified assessor(s) has access to the assessment objectives for the relevant specification(s) a candidate is undertaking
- ▶ Provides a policy on the use of word processors in exams and assessments

### **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 assessment process is administered in accordance with the regulations
- ▶ Ensures arrangements put in place for exams/assessments reflect a candidate's *normal way of working* within the centre
- ▶ Ensure a statement is provided which details the criteria the centre uses to award and allocate word processors for exams
- ▶ Ensures the need for access arrangements for a candidate will be considered on a subject-by-subject basis
- ▶ Ensures that all assessments carried out and arrangements put in place comply with JCQ and awarding body regulations and guidance
- ▶ Has full knowledge and understanding of the contents, refers to and directs relevant centre staff to the annually updated JCQ publication [AA](#)
- ▶ Ensures the qualified assessor(s) has access to the assessment objectives for the relevant specification(s) a candidate is undertaking
- ▶ Provides a policy on the use of word processors in exams and assessments
- ▶ Conducts appropriate assessments to identify the need(s) of a candidate
- ▶ Provides appropriate evidence to confirm the need(s) of a candidate

### **Access Arrangement coordinator**

- ▶ Ensures an 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
- ▶ Support the SENCo in determining the need for and implementing access arrangements
- ▶ Has full knowledge and understanding of the contents, refers to and directs relevant centre staff to the annually updated JCQ publication [AA](#)
- ▶ Ensures arrangements put in place for exams/assessments reflect a candidate's *normal way of working* within the centre
- ▶ Defines and documents roles, responsibilities and processes in identifying, requesting and implementing access arrangements (*Access arrangements policy*)
- ▶ 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 the need for access arrangements for a candidate will be considered on a subject-by-subject basis
- ▶ Ensures that all assessments carried out and arrangements put in place comply with JCQ and awarding body regulations and guidance
- ▶ Completes appropriate documentation as required by the regulations of JCQ and the awarding body

- ▶ Presents when requested by a JCQ Centre Inspector, evidence of the assessor's qualification
- ▶ Provides a policy on the use of word processors in exams and assessments

### **Exam Officer**

- ▶ Ensures a policy demonstrating the centre's compliance with relevant legislation is in place
- ▶ Ensures that all assessments carried out and arrangements put in place comply with JCQ and awarding body regulations and guidance
- ▶ Has full knowledge and understanding of the contents, refers to and directs relevant centre staff to the annually updated JCQ publication [AA](#)
- ▶ Presents when requested by a JCQ Centre Inspector, evidence of the assessor's qualification

### **Teaching staff**

- ▶ Inform the SENCo of any support that might be needed by a candidate
- ▶ Ensures arrangements put in place for exams/assessments reflect a candidate's *normal way of working* within the centre
- ▶ Provide information to evidence the normal way of working of a candidate

### **Support staff** (for example, Learning Support Assistants, Teaching Assistants and Communication Support Workers)

- ▶ (where appropriate) Provide comments/observations to support the SENCo in *painting a holistic picture of need* confirming *normal way of working* for a candidate
- ▶ 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](#)

### **Use of word processors**

Word Processor Policy is kept with the other exams policies in the Data and Exams Office. There is also an electronic version of the School server.

[[AA](#) 5.8]

## 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 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
- ▶ 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 teaching staff regarding any appropriate modified paper requirements for candidates

#### Access Arrangement coordinator (AACo)

- ▶ Follows guidance in [AA](#) Section 8 to process approval applications for access arrangements for those qualifications listed on page 5 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) 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 original form is signed by hand and dated as required **prior** to approval being sought and that the original form is provided for processing and inspection purposes 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 5 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 5 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)
- ▶ Liaises with teaching staff regarding any appropriate modified paper requirements for candidates
- ▶ 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 (copy on coloured paper, enlarge to A3 or copy to single sided print)

### **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 SENCo and AACo regarding any appropriate modified paper requirements for candidates
- ▶ 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 (copy on coloured paper, enlarge to A3 or copy to single sided print)



# 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
- ▶ 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 3)
- ▶ Liaises with the EO to ensure that invigilators are made aware of the Equality Act 2010 and are trained in disability issues

### **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 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
- ▶ Ensures facilitators supporting candidates are appropriately trained and understand the rules of the particular access arrangement(s)
- ▶ 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

### **Access Arrangement coordinator (AACo)**

- ▶ 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 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
- ▶ Appoints appropriate centre staff as facilitators to support candidates (practical assistant, prompter, reader or scribe)
- ▶ Ensures a facilitator acting as a prompter is aware of the appropriate way to prompt depending on the needs of the candidate
- ▶ 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 facilitators
- ▶ 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
- ▶ 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
- ▶ 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
- ▶ 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 5 of [AA](#)
- ▶ 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
- ▶ 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

### **Exams officer**

- ▶ Understands and follows instructions for Invigilation arrangements for candidates with access arrangements and Access arrangements in ICE 2023-2024

### **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
- ▶ 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 AACo 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 could include:**

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

### **Access Arrangement coordinator (AACo)**

- ▶ 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
- ▶ 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

## Teaching staff

- ▶ Support the SENCo in implementing appropriate access arrangements for candidate
- ▶ Provide the SENCo and AACo with assessment schedules to ensure arrangements are put in place when required
- ▶ Liaise with the SENCo and AACo 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

## Exams officer

- ▶ Provide the SENCo and AACo with internal exam timetable 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

## 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	<i>AACo gathers evidence to support the need for the candidate to take exams at home</i> <i>SENCo provides written statement for file to confirm the need</i> <i>Approval confirmed by SENCo and AACo; AAO approval for both arrangements not required</i> <i>SENCo and AACo discussion with candidate to confirm the arrangements should be put in place</i> <i>SENCo or AACo to complete the statement within form 9.</i> <i>EO provides candidate with exam timetable and JCQ information for candidates</i>

		<p><i>SENCo confirms with candidate the information is understood</i></p> <p><i>EO and AACo 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 and SENCo 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 and 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>Pastoral head or SENCo 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>Rest Break</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>(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/processing	<p>Prompter</p> <p>Separate invigilation within the centre</p> <p>Rest Break</p> <p>25% Extra time</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> <p><i>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></p>
A wheelchair user	<p>Desk at appropriate height</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>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></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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