EQUALITIES POLICY (Exams)

Effective from 1 September 2026

This policy is reviewed annually to ensure compliance with current regulations and reflects centre practice.

Key staff involved in the policy

Role	Name(s)
SENCo (or equivalent role)	**Ruth Chaplin**
Senior leader(s)	**Matt Yates**
Head of centre	**Ross Doodson**
Assessor(s)	**Ruth Chaplin**

Contents

Key staff involved in the policy 2
Purpose of the policy 4
Implementing access arrangements and the conduct of exams 4
The Equality Act 2010 definition of disability 4
Identifying the need for access arrangements 4
  Roles and responsibilities 4
  Use of word processors 5
Requesting access arrangements 5
  Roles and responsibilities 5
Implementing access arrangements and the conduct of exams 6
  Roles and responsibilities 6
    External assessments 6
    Internal assessments 7
    Internal exams/assessments 7
Facilitating access - examples 9

Purpose of the policy

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

- recognise its duties towards disabled candidates, including private 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, to submit applications for reasonable adjustments through the access arrangements process and to make reasonable adjustments to the services 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

(JCQ's **General Regulations for Approved Centres**, 5.4)
This document 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 in the current JCQ document (Adjustments for candidates with disabilities and learning difficulties) **Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments** (**Definitions** section)

This document is further referred to in this policy as AARA

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 current JCQ documents including GR and AARA

Senior leader(s)

- Are familiar with the entire contents of current JCQ documents including GR and AARA

Special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) or equivalent role

- Has full knowledge and understanding of the contents, refers to and directs relevant centre staff to the current JCQ document AARA

Teaching staff

- (where appropriate) Inform the SENCo (or equivalent role) of any concerns, observations or feedback about a candidate or any support that might be needed by a candidate

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

- (where appropriate) Provide comments and observations to support the SENCo (or equivalent role) 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 teacher assessor)

- Has detailed understanding of the JCQ document AARA
- Ensures the quality of the access arrangements/reasonable adjustments 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 AARA
- Leads on the access arrangements process to facilitate access for candidates
- 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
- Defines and documents roles, responsibilities and processes in identifying, requesting and implementing access arrangements
- 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 is 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 manager/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

Use of word processors

BROA_AllStaff>Policies – OAT & Brownhills>Exams Policies

Requesting access arrangements

Roles and responsibilities

SENCo or equivalent role

- 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
- To comply with the UK GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018, ensures relevant candidates **are** informed that an application for access arrangements will be processed using *Access arrangements online*

Exams manager/officer

- Is familiar with the entire contents of the current JCQ document GR and is aware of information contained in AARA where this may be relevant to their role
- Follows guidance in AARA (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 may sit outside the scope of AAO
- Ensures that were approval is required the application is processed on time and no later than the awarding body's published deadline
- Holds all supporting evidence and presents such evidence to a JCQ Centre Inspector upon request
- 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 (where required) the completion of relevant JCQ forms, such as Form 8 (Application for access arrangements – Profile of learning difficulties), Form 9 (Profile of need), Form 8RF, etc. supplemented by written statements, where required, etc.
- Ensures the names of all other assessors, who are assessing candidates studying qualifications covered by AAO 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 file/e-folder for each candidate (the required documentation for a candidate will be in hard copy within the candidate's file/each of the required documents held electronically 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 covered by AAO (where approval is required), a printout/PDF of the AAO approval
- Presents the files/e-folders when requested by a JCQ Centre Inspector and addresses any queries/questions raised
- 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
- 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 download a PDF copy of the standard question paper or to open a question paper packet in the secure room within 90 minutes of the awarding body's 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)
- As may be applicable in relation to the use of coloured paper, explores alternative ways of working such as the use of a coloured overlay or the candidate wearing coloured glasses / the provision of a single colour, such as buff or grey
- Following the appropriate process, 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 current JCQ document Instructions for conducting examinations (ICE).

Head of centre

- Supports the SENCo, the exams manager/officer and other relevant centre staff in ensuring appropriate arrangements, adjustments and adaptations are in place to facilitate access for disabled candidates to exams

SENCo (or equivalent role)

- 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)

Exams manager/officer

- Understands and follows instructions for Invigilation arrangements for candidates with access arrangements and Access arrangements in the current ICE ~~2025-2026~~

Other relevant centre staff

- Support the SENCo and the exams manager/officer to ensure appropriate arrangements, adjustments and adaptations are in place to facilitate access for disabled candidates to 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
- Estates/site staff responsible for **rooms and non-specialist equipment** (chairs, tables, clocks, etc.) used for exams that may need to be 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 moderated/standardised by the centre and externally moderated by the awarding body.

However, 'NEA' is not limited to internal assessment as externally marked and/or externally set practical examinations taken at different times across centres are also classified as 'NEA'.

SENCo or equivalent role

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

Teaching staff

- Support the SENCo in implementing appropriate access arrangements for candidates
- Ensures candidates are aware of the access arrangements that are in place for their assessments
- Ensures a candidate has had appropriate opportunities to practise using the access arrangement(s) before their first examination
- 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/assessments

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

SENCo or equivalent role

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

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	*SENCo gathers evidence to support the need for the candidate to take exams at home and for SRB* *Approval confirmed by SENCo; AAO approval for both arrangements not required* *SENCo discussion with candidate to confirm the arrangements which should be put in place* *Exams officer/manager submits 'Alternative site form' for timetabled written exams to awarding body/bodies online using CAP* *An on-line submission must only be made for timetabled written examinations in the following qualifications…* *Exams officer/manager provides candidate with exam timetable and JCQ information for candidates* *SENCo confirms with candidate the information is understood* *Pastoral head agrees with candidate that prior to each exam will call to confirm fitness to take exam* *Exams officer/manager allocates invigilator(s) to candidate's timetable; confirms time of collection of exam papers and materials* *Invigilator monitors candidate's condition for each exam and records any issues on incident log* *Invigilator records supervised rest breaks (time and duration) on incident log and confirms full time given for exam* *Invigilator briefs Exams officer/manager after each exam on how candidate's performance in exam may have been affected by his/her condition* *Exams officer/manager discusses with pastoral head if candidate is eligible for special consideration (candidate present but disadvantaged)* *Exams officer/manager processes request(s) for special consideration where applicable; incident log(s) provides supporting evidence, supported by appropriate evidence signed by a member of the senior leadership team (Evidence retained until after the publication of results)* *Pastoral head informs candidate that special consideration has been requested*

Persistent and significant difficulties in accessing written text	Reader/computer reader 25% Extra time Alternative rooming arrangements	*Confirms candidate is disabled within the meaning of the Equality Act 2010* *Papers checked for those testing reading* *Computer reader/examination reading pen sourced for use in papers (or sections of papers) testing reading OR up to 50% extra time awarded* *Candidate informed that an application for access arrangements will be processed using Access arrangements online* *AAO application for approval processed* *Supporting evidence and AAO approval kept on file*
Significant difficulty in concentrating	Prompter Alternative rooming arrangements	*Gathers evidence to support substantial and long term adverse impairment* *Confirms with candidate how and when they will be prompted* *Briefs invigilator to monitor candidate and the method of prompting (call out their name to bring their attention back to the paper) - confirms requirement for alternative room*
A wheelchair user	Desk Rooms Facilities Seating arrangements Practical assistant	*Candidate informed that an application for access arrangements will be processed using Access arrangements online* *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* *Supporting evidence and AAO approval kept on file* *Spaces desks to allow wheelchair access* *Seats candidate near exam room door* *Confirms arrangements in place to assist the candidate in case of emergency evacuation of the exam room* *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*