

St Martin-in-the-Fields High School for Girls

A CHURCH OF ENGLAND ACADEMY
CO-ED SIXTH FORM



Disability Policy for Examinations

Disability Policy for Exams

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:

“Recognises its duties towards disabled candidates as defined under the terms of the Equality Act 2010†. 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](#)]

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](#)

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 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 a policy demonstrating the centre’s compliance with relevant legislation is in place
- Ensures an appropriately qualified assessor(s) is appointed and that evidence of the qualification(s) of the person(s) appointed is held on file

- Defines and documents roles, responsibilities and processes in identifying, requesting and implementing access arrangements

Senior Leaders

- Are familiar with the entire contents of the annually updated JCQ publications including [GR](#) and [AA](#)
- Support the SENDCo in determining the need for and implementing access arrangements

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 assessment process is administered in accordance with the regulations
- Leads on the access arrangements process to facilitate access for candidates
- 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
- Ensure 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
- 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
- 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

Assessor of Candidates with Learning Difficulties (if not the SENDCo)

- Has an appropriate qualification to assess the need for access arrangements
- Has a detailed understanding of the current JCQ publication [AA](#)
- Conducts appropriate assessments to identify the need(s) of a candidate

Requesting access arrangements

Roles and Responsibilities

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](#) Chapter 8 to process approval applications for access arrangements for GCSE and GCE qualifications
- Ensure 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

- 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)
- In conjunction with the EO ensure 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).
- In conjunction with the EO ensure that where approval is required that this is applied for by the awarding body deadline
- Liaises with teaching staff regarding any appropriate modified paper requirements for candidates.
- 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

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
- In conjunction with the SENDCO 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, the 'Access Arrangements Online (AAO)' or through the awarding body where qualifications sit outside the scope of AAO.
- Ensure 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
- 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)
- Ensure that where approval is required that this is applied for by the awarding body deadline
- Liaises with teaching staff regarding any appropriate modified paper requirements for candidates
- 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

Role 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
- 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 44)

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)
- Ensures that any arrangements put in place do not unfairly disadvantage or advantage disabled candidates
- Liaises with the 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
- Ensures facilitators supporting candidates are appropriately trained and understand the rules of the particular access arrangement(s)
- Ensure the facilitator is known by or introduced to the candidate prior 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
- Liaises with the EO to ensure exam information (JCQ information for candidates documents, individual exam timetable etc) is adapted where this may be required for disabled candidates to access it.

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](#)
- 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 (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 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 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 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 SEND 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 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 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 (Oral 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 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 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 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.
- Liaises with the Exams Officer (EO) regarding facilitation and invigilation of access arrangement candidates in exams.
- Ensures the facilitator is known by or introduced to the candidate prior to exams.
- 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.

- 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.

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.

SENDCo

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

Teaching staff

- Support the SENDCo 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 cover sheets are completed as required by facilitators.
- 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.

Exams 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.

Internal exams

These are exams or tests which are set and marked within the centre; normally a precursor to external assessments

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 the SENDCo with an internal exam timetable to ensure arrangements are put in place when required.

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 adaptations of standard equipment
- Adaptation of the physical environment for access purposes

This 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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → SENDCo gathers evidence to support the need for the candidate to take exams at home → Pastoral lead provides written statement for file to confirm the need → Approval confirmed by the SENDCo; AAO approval for both arrangements not required → Pastoral lead discussion with candidate to confirm the arrangements should be put in place → EO submits appropriate <i>'Alternative site for the conduct of exams form'</i> → EO provides candidate with exam timetable and JCQ information for candidates → Pastoral lead confirms with candidate the information is understood → Pastoral lead agrees with candidate that prior to each exam they will call to confirm fitness to take exam → EO 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 rest breaks (time and duration) on incident log and confirms set time given for exam → Invigilator briefs EO after each exam on how candidate's performance in exam may have been affected by his/her condition → EO discusses with pastoral head if candidate is eligible for special consideration (candidate present but disadvantaged) → EO processes request(s) for special consideration where applicable; incident log(s) provides supporting evidence → Pastoral lead informs candidate that special consideration has been requested
Persistent and significant difficulties in accessing written text	Reader/computer reader 25% Extra time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Confirms candidate is disabled within the meaning of the Equality Act 2010 → 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 → Papers checked for those testing reading → Computer reader sourced for use in papers (or sections of papers) testing reading OR up to 50% extra time awarded where human reader is the normal way of working within the centre. → Reader/Computer reader provided in line with normal way of working
Significant difficulty in concentrating	Prompter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → 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 his name to bring his attention back to the paper - confirms requirement for separate room)
A wheelchair user	Desk Rooms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Provides height adjustable desk in exam room → Allocates exam room on ground floor near adapted bathroom facilities → Spaces desks to allow wheelchair access → Seats candidate near to the exam room door

	Facilities Seating arrangements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Confirms arrangements in place to assist the candidate in case of emergency evacuation of the exam room → Applies for practical assistants to help candidates set up wheelchair and other equipment in a practical assessment; approval automatically fails so awarding body referral lists the tasks that will be performed. → 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.
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Information regarding warading and allocating word processors for exams

This information is provided to detail how the centre manages and administers the use of word processors (including laptops) in examinations and assessments.

Principles for using a word processor

The centre complies with AA chapter 4 *Adjustments for candidates with disabilities and learning difficulties* regulations and guidance as follows:

- Candidates with access to word processors are allowed to do so in order to remove barriers for disabled candidates which prevent them from being placed at a substantial disadvantage as a consequence of persistent and significant difficulties
- The use of word processors is only permitted whilst ensuring that the integrity of the assessment is maintained, at the same time as providing access to assessments for a disabled candidate
- The use of a word processor is not granted where it will compromise the assessment objectives of the specification in question
- Candidates may not require the use of a word processor in each specification. As subjects and their methods of assessments may vary, leading to different demands of our candidates, the need for the use of a word processor is considered on a subject-by-subject basis
- The use of a word processor is normally considered and agreed where appropriate at the start of the course providing the centre has firmly established a picture of need and normal way of working for a candidate
- Candidates are made aware when they will have the use of a word processor for timetabled examinations and non-examination assessments
- The use of a word processor for candidates is only granted if it reflects the support given to the candidate as their 'normal way of working', which is defined as support:
 - in the classroom (where appropriate); or
 - working in small groups for reading and/or writing; or
 - literacy support lessons; or
 - literacy intervention strategies; and/or
 - in internal school tests/examinations
 - mock examinations

The only exceptions to the above would be a temporary injury or impairment, or a diagnosis of a disability or manifestation of an impairment relating to an existing disability arising after the start of the course.

The use of a word processor

The centre complied with AA chapter 5 *Access arrangements available* as follows:

- Provides a word processor with the spelling and grammar check facility/predictive text disabled (switched off)
- Only grants the use of a word processor to a candidate where it is their normal way of working within the centre
- Only grants the use of a word processor to a candidate if it is appropriate to their needs (for example, the quality of language significantly improves as a result of using a word processor due to problems with planning and organisation when writing by hand)
(The above also extends to the use of electronic brailers and tablets)
- Provides access to word processors to candidates in non-examination assessment components as standard practice unless prohibited by the specification
- Allows candidates to use a word processor in an examination to type certain questions, i.e. those requiring extended writing, and hand write shorter answers
- Are also aware that examinations which have a significant amount of writing, as well as those that place a greater demand on the need to organise thought and plan extended answers, are those where candidates will frequently need to type. Examinations which require more simplistic answers are often easier to handwrite within the answer booklet. The candidate avoids the difficulty of visually tracking between the question paper and screen
- In all cases, ensures that a word processor cover sheet (Form 4) is completed and included with each candidate's typed script (according to the instructions issued by the individual awarding body)
- Does 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, or because he/she uses a laptop at home

Word processors and their programmes

The centre complied with ICE (*pg 39*) *Word processors* instructions by ensuring:

- word processors are used as a type-writer, not as a database, although standard formatting software is acceptable
- word processors have been cleared of any previously stored data, as must any portable storage medium used
- an unauthorised memory stick is not permitted for use by a candidate
- where required, candidates are provided with a memory stick, which has been cleared of any previously stored data, by a nominated member of centre staff
- word processors are in good working order at the time of the examination
- word processors are accommodated in such a way that other candidates are not disturbed and cannot read the screen
- where a candidate using a word processor is accommodated separately, a separate invigilator is used
- word processors are either connected to a printer so that a script can be printed off or have the facility to print from a portable storage medium
- documents are printed after the examination is over
- candidates are present to verify that the work printed is their own
- word processed scripts are inserted in/attached to any answer booklet which contains some of the answers (and according to instructions issued by the individual awarding body)
- word processors are used to produce scripts under secure conditions, and if they are not then the centre is aware that they may be refused by the awarding body
- word processors are not used to perform skills which are being assessed
- word processors are not connected to an intranet or any other means of communication.
- candidates are not given access to other applications such as a calculator (where prohibited in the examination), spreadsheets etc when using a word processor
- graphic packages or computer aided design software is not included on a word processor unless permission has been given to use these

- predictive text software or an automatic spelling and grammar check is disabled
- unless the candidate has been permitted a scribe or is using voice recognition technology (the script must have a completed scribe cover sheet included), or the awarding body's specification permits the use of automatic spell checking
- voice recognition technology is not included on word processors unless the candidate has permission to use a scribe or relevant software
- word processors are not used on the candidate's behalf by a third party unless the candidate has permission to use a scribe

The centre ensures that this good practice is following by using [ExamWritePad available from EduGeek](#)

Providing Laptops

The centre further complies with ICE (**pg 39**) instructions by ensuring:

- laptops are ALWAYS used and connected to the power source.
- candidates are instructed to include their centre number, candidate number and the unit/component code on each page. This is completed using the startup wizard in ExamWritePad
- once they have finished the examination and printed off their typed script;
- candidates are also supervised to ensure that they are solely performing this task and not re-reading their answers or amending their work in any way
- candidates are instructed to appropriately number each page
- candidates are instructed to use a minimum 12pt font and double spacing
- invigilators remind candidates to save their work at regular intervals
- where it is possible 'autosave' is set up on each laptop
- candidates are present at the end of the examination when their script is printed off so they can verify that the work printed is their own

Accommodating word processors in examinations

Candidates using word processors are internally accommodated in the following manner:

- Students using word processors will be seated in an alternative venue, such as a classroom set up for examinations
- Students using word processors will be seated at the back of the room so as not to disturb other candidates and so that other candidates cannot view their work.

Invigilation arrangements relating to the use of word processors include the following:

- Invigilators are made aware of pupils using word processors
- Invigilators remain vigilant during the examinations to ensure any issues that may occur with the word processors are sorted as soon as possible and the EO informed should they need to intervene.
- Invigilators are instructed to ensure the students' work is saved onto the USB stick provided by the examinations officer.

Other arrangements relating to the use of word processors include:

- The examinations officer will ensure the word processor is available for each pupil entitled to use one for each subject they wish to use it for.
- The word processor will be plugged in at all times and battery power not relied on
- The examinations officer will ensure they are present to escort the pupil from the exam hall to the secure office in order to print the work.
- The word processor cover sheet will be signed by the invigilator and completed and attached/put inside the answer booklet with the student's work

- The examinations officer will ensure the student's details appear on each page of their printed work and the pages numbered. The cover sheet will show how many pages in total were typed by the student.
- Students must understand that technology is not completely without issue. If there is a fault during the exam the time will be stopped, the issue will be resolved and the time will be re-started. The student will not have access to the exam paper whilst the problem is being solved.
- If the problem with the laptop becomes too disruptive, the exam officer may make the decision to apply for special consideration. It will be the examination board's decision whether or not to accept the application depending on circumstances.