JCoSS Disability (Exams) Policy

Last Review: **Autumn Term 2026**
Next Review: **By end of Autumn Term, 2027**
Committee: **Inclusion Committee**

Purpose of the Policy

This document is provided as an exams-specific supplement to the *JCoSS Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustment Policy* which details how the centre will

"recognise its duties towards disabled 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, through the access arrangements process submit applications for reasonable adjustments and make reasonable adjustments to the service the centre provides to disabled candidates…

†or 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 ~~14~~ 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 General Regulations (GR) and AA

Senior Leaders

- Are familiar with the entire contents of 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
- Defines and documents roles, responsibilities and processes in identifying, requesting and implementing access arrangements (*Access arrangements policy*)

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 an appropriately qualified assessor(s) is appointed and that evidence of the qualification(s) of the person(s) appointed is held on file
- Ensures the assessment process is administered in accordance with the regulations
- Ensures that all assessments carried out and arrangements put in place comply with JCQ and awarding body regulations and guidance

(Triage and Access Arrangements)

- Leads on the access arrangements process to facilitate access for candidates
- Works alongside the SENCo in determining the need for and implementing access arrangements
- Ensures the qualified assessor(s) has access to the assessment objectives for the relevant specification(s) a candidate is undertaking
- 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
- 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 SENCo, Assistant SENCo or Access Arrangements Co-ordinator of any support that might be needed by a candidate in accordance with the Centre's Access Arrangements Screening Process and the Access Arrangements Protocol for teachers.

Support Staff (for example, Learning Support Assistants)

- Provide comments/observations to support *painting a holistic picture of need* confirming *normal way of working* for a candidate in accordance with the Centre's Access Arrangements Screening Process.

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
- Ensures that all assessments carried out and arrangements put in place comply with JCQ and awarding body regulations and guidance
- Conducts appropriate assessments to identify the need(s) of a candidate

Examinations Officer

- Provides a policy on the use of word processors in exams and assessments
- Ensure a statement is provided which details the criteria the centre uses to award and allocate word processors for exams
- Ensures a policy demonstrating the centre's compliance with relevant legislation is in place

Use of Word Processors

The Centre's statement which details the criteria the centre uses to award and allocate word processors for exams is contained in the Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustment Policy

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 where Form 8 or Form 9 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

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

- 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
- 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)
- 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)
- 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
- Ensures the names of all other assessors, who are assessing candidates studying qualifications are entered into AAO to confirm their status including any professionals working outside the centre

SENCo, Assistant SENCo & Access Arrangements Co-ordinator

- 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, a printout 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
- Follows guidance in AA to process approval applications for access arrangements for those qualifications listed in the AA
- 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*) or JCQ Form 9 (*Application for access arrangements – Profile of need*), where required, and a body of evidence to substantiate the candidate's normal way of working within the centre

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

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)

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 exam information (JCQ information for candidate's documents, individual exam timetable etc.) is adapted where this may be required for a disabled candidate to access it
- Ensures a record of the training given to those facilitating an access arrangement for a candidate under examination conditions is kept and retained on file until the deadline for enquiries about results has passed or until any appeal, malpractice or other results enquiry has been completed, whichever is later
- Ensures a facilitator acting as a prompter will not normally be the candidate's subject teacher and must not be a friend, relative or peer of the candidate (understanding that a private tutor cannot act as a prompter for the candidate)
- 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 SENCo regarding the facilitation and invigilation of access arrangement candidates
- Liaises with the SENCo regarding rooming of access arrangement candidates
- Liaises with the SENCo 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 those candidates with access arrangements
- 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 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
- 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 60 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 in 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
- 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
- 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

Assistant SENCo & Access Arrangements Co-ordinator

- 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
- 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
- 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, Oral Language Modifier, reader, scribe or Sign Language Interpreter)
- Liaises with the EO to ensure that invigilators are made aware of the Equality Act 2010 and are trained in disability issues
- 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 12 and 13c
- Ensures facilitators supporting candidates are appropriately trained and understand the rules of the access arrangement(s)
- 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.

SENCo, Assistant SENCo & Access Arrangements Co-ordinator

- 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
- 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

Teaching Staff

- Support the SENCo in implementing appropriate access arrangements for candidates
- Ensures cover sheets are completed as required by facilitators

Internal Exams

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

SENCo, Assistant SENCo & Access Arrangements Co-ordinator

- Liaises with SEN staff to implement appropriate access arrangements for candidates where candidates require a "familiar face"
- Liaise with the Exams Officer to ensure invigilators are available to support students with needs that do not require SEN support.
- Ensures candidates are aware of the access arrangements that are in place for their exams

Exams Officer

- Provide the SENCo with 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 and should be read in conjunction with the centre's Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustment Policy.

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* *Pastoral head provides written statement for file to confirm the need* *Approval confirmed by SENCo; AAO approval for both arrangements not required* SENCo, Assistant SENCo or Access Arrangements Co-ordinator has *discussion with candidate to confirm the arrangements should be put in place* *EO submits appropriate 'Alternative site for the conduct of exams form'* *EO provides candidate with exam timetable and JCQ information for candidates* SENCo, Assistant SENCo or Access Arrangements Co-ordinator *(T&AA) confirms with candidate the information is understood* *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* *EO informs candidate that special consideration has been requested*
Persistent and significant difficulties in accessing written text	Reader/computer reader 25% Extra time Separate invigilation within the centre	*The procedure is followed in accordance with the Centre's Access Arrangements Screening Process (Appendix 2 of the Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments Policy) to assess if candidate is entitled to Exam Access Arrangements ("EAA") and what arrangements are put in place.*
Significant difficulty in concentrating	Prompter Separate invigilation within the centre	*The procedure is followed in accordance with the Centre's Access Arrangements Screening Process (Appendix 2 of the Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments Policy) to assess if candidate is entitled to EAA and what arrangements are put in place.*
A wheelchair user	Desk Rooms Facilities Seating arrangements Practical assistant	*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* *Allocates exam room on ground floor where possible or if not, then a room will be allocated where lift access is available* *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*