

St Joseph's College

## **DISABILITY POLICY (EXAMS)**

<b>Date of Latest Review:</b>	March 2017
<b>Next Review Date:</b>	March 2018
<b>Policy Available for Staff at:</b>	VLE
<b>Policy Available for Parents at:</b>	Main office
<b>Headteacher:</b>	Ms M Roberts

## **Purpose of the Policy**

This document is provided as an exams-specific supplement to the centre-wide Equalities & Accessibility Plan 2017 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.

†or any legislation in a relevant jurisdiction other than England and Wales which has an equivalent purpose and effect”

[chapter 5.4 of the current JCQ publication [General regulations for approved Centres \(GR\)](#)]

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

## **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 \(AA\)](#)

### **IDENTIFYING THE NEED FOR ACCESS ARRANGEMENTS**

#### **Roles and Responsibilities**

##### **Head of Centre**

- Is familiar with the contents, refers to and directs relevant Centre staff to the annually updated JCQ publications
- Supports the SENCo in identifying the need for access arrangements

##### **Senior Leaders**

- Members of SLT (specifically, DHT with responsibility for SEN; AHT with responsibility for exams) are familiar with the contents of the annually updated JCQ publications including [GR](#) and [AA](#)
- Support the SENCo in determining the need for and implementing access arrangements

## **Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCo) & Assistant SENCo**

- Have full knowledge and understanding of the contents, refer to and direct relevant Centre staff to the annually updated JCQ publication AA
- The SENCo takes the lead on identifying the need for access arrangements, in collaboration with the Assistant SENCo.
- Ensures the quality of the access arrangements process within the Centre
- Ensures a 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
- 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 & that there is a history of need within the Centre
- 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
- 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

## **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

## **Pastoral & Teaching Staff**

- Inform the SENCo of any support that might be needed by a candidate
- Provide information to evidence the normal way of working of a candidate

## **Specialist Assessor of Candidates with Learning Difficulties**

(The College has its own Specialist Assessor)

- Has detailed understanding of the current JCQ publication AA
- Works alongside the SENCo/Assistant SENCo in conducting the appropriate assessments following the identification of need.

## **REQUESTING ACCESS ARRANGEMENTS**

### **Roles and Responsibilities**

#### **Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCo) & Assistant 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
- 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, 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 the completion of JCQ Form 8, where required, and a body of evidence to substantiate the candidate's normal way of working/history of need 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
- 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 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, 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
- Liaises with teaching staff regarding any appropriate modified paper requirements for candidates

#### **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 teaching staff regarding any appropriate modified paper requirements for candidates
- Liaises with the SENCo 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**

### **Roles and Responsibilities - For 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

#### **Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (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
- 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
- Ensures a facilitator acting as a prompter is aware of the appropriate way to prompt depending on the needs of the candidate
- 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

#### **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 (page 44)
- 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
- 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 cover sheets, where these are required by the arrangement are completed as required by facilitators
- 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

- Liaises with the SENCo to ensure 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
- Liaises with the SENCo regarding the facilitation and invigilation of access arrangement candidates
- Liaises with the SENCo regarding rooming of access arrangement candidates
- 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 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

### **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
- 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 (see separate policy)

## **Roles and Responsibilities - For 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, page 3]

**In cases of internal assessment:**

**The same process used for external assessments would be applied for internal assessments as detailed above.**

## Internal Exams

For internal exams:

**The same process used for external assessments would be applied for internal exams, as detailed above. These arrangements are implemented for the school's entrance exam and in all internal assessments and exams from KS-KS5.**

## 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
<p>A medical condition which prevents the candidate from taking exams in the Centre.</p> <p>An example of this arrangement within the centre applies to a candidate, with a medical condition, who sat the entrance exam (Summer 2016).</p>	<p>Alternative site (the family home) for the conduct of the entrance exam</p> <p>Supervised rest breaks allowed if felt to be needed.</p>	<p>SENCo &amp; Centre staff liaise with parents to identify the need for the candidate to take the entrance exam at home</p> <p>Head of the Centre determines that sitting the entrance exam at home for this pupil is an appropriate arrangement, taking the needs of the pupil into account.</p> <p>Approval confirmed by SENCo</p> <p>SENCo &amp; EO arrange for appropriate supervision within the home, while the entrance exam is completed.</p> <p>The arrangements are shared with parents so that the test is conducted in an appropriate way and the candidate is not put at a disadvantage or advantage.</p> <p>Invigilator monitors candidate's condition for the exam.</p> <p>Allowance of a rest between the different parts of the test was allowed.</p>



<p>Persistent and significant difficulties in accessing written text</p> <p>(This way of working has been used for a number of pupils within the Centre)</p>	<p>Reader/computer reader</p> <p>25% Extra time</p> <p>Separate invigilation within the Centre</p>	<p>The SENCO confirms that the candidate is disabled within the meaning of the Equality Act 2010</p> <p>Papers checked for those testing reading</p> <p>Access arrangement can be evidenced as the candidate's normal way of working within the Centre.</p> <p>(Up to 50% extra time may be considered for the parts of the exams testing reading for certain students)</p> <p>Relevant sections of form 8 are completed</p> <p>Arrangements made with the specialist assessor to assess the pupils formally, in advance of external exams</p> <p>Form 8, signed 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</p> <p>Pupils continue to practise the arrangement as part of their normal way of working</p>
<p>Significant difficulty in concentrating</p> <p>(A prompter is used for a student with ASD/Asperger Syndrome who struggles to maintain concentration during exams)</p>	<p>Prompter</p> <p>Use of a laptop and extra time of up to 25%</p> <p>Separate invigilation within the Centre</p>	<p>Gathers evidence, based on feedback from internal exams and assessments, to support substantial and long term adverse impairment</p> <p>Confirms with candidate how and when they will be prompted</p> <p>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)</p> <p>Consideration of the environment where sensory stimuli might impact on concentration</p> <p>Liaise with EO about rooming of exams for this pupil</p> <p>Give the pupil advanced notice of assessments and exams and talk through the arrangements in place</p>
<p>A wheelchair user</p> <p>(This applies to a student in the 6<sup>th</sup> form)</p>	<p>Accessible desk</p> <p>Rooms/position in the room/evacuation from the room</p> <p>Facilities</p> <p>Seating arrangements</p> <p>Timing of entry to the exams room</p>	<p>Provides height adjustable desk in exam room</p> <p>Allocates exam room on ground floor near adapted bathroom facilities</p> <p>Spaces desks to allow wheelchair access/place for wheelchair to be stored for the duration of the exam</p> <p>Seats candidate near exam room door</p> <p>Confirms arrangements in place to assist the candidate in case of emergency evacuation of the exam room</p> <p>Invigilators aware of the student's needs</p>