

Disability Policy (Exams)

2020/21

This policy is reviewed annually to ensure compliance with current regulations

Approved/reviewed by	
	
Mr G McClarey – Head of Centre	
Date of next review	November 2021

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The college aims to develop the potential of all its students. Students who have special needs including physical and mental impairment are most welcome, and include those who require consideration in respect of intellectual, sensory, physical or emotional aspects of their development	3
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Purpose of the policy

The college aims to develop the potential of all its students. Students who have special needs including physical and mental impairment are most welcome, and include those who require consideration in respect of intellectual, sensory, physical or emotional aspects of their development

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 Equality Act 2010.

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

The Equality Act 2010 uses a broad definition of "disability". A person has a disability if he or she has a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse on his or her ability to carry out normal day to day activities.

Physical or mental impairments can include sensory impairments (such as those affecting sight and hearing) and learning difficulties. The definition also covers certain medical conditions when they have long term and substantial effect on students' everyday lives.

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' and 'Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments'.
- ▶ 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 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 'General Regulations' and 'Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments'
- ▶ Support the SENCo in determining the need for and implementing access arrangements

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 'Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments'
- ▶ Ensures the assessment process is administered in accordance with the regulations
- ▶ Leads on the access arrangements process to facilitate access for candidates
- ▶ 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
- ▶ 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
- ▶ 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 of any support that might be needed by a candidate
- ▶ Provide comments/observations to support the SENCo in *painting a holistic picture of need* confirming *normal way of working* for 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 (e.g. Teaching Assistants)

- ▶ Provide comments/observations to support the SENCo in *painting a holistic picture of need* confirming *normal way of working* for 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

An assessor of candidates with learning difficulties will be an appropriately qualified access arrangements assessor/psychologist/specialist assessor, who:-

- ▶ Has detailed understanding of the current JCQ publication 'Access Arrangements & Reasonable Adjustments
- ▶ Conducts appropriate assessments to identify the need(s) of a candidate

Use of word processors

The 'normal way of working' for exam candidates, as directed by the head of centre, is that candidates handwrite their exams. An exception to this is where a candidate may have an approved access arrangement in place, for example the use of a scribe/speech recognition technology.

There are also exceptions where a candidate may be awarded the use of a word processor in exams where he/she has a firmly established need, it reflects the candidate's normal way of working and by not being awarded a word processor would be at a substantial disadvantage to other candidates.

Blessed Edward Oldcorne Catholic College has a policy for the provision of word processors for exams which is available from the College Exam Office.

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
- ▶ Follows guidance in JCQ Access Arrangements publication to process approval applications for access arrangements for GCSE qualifications
- ▶ Ensures appropriate and required evidence is held on file to confirm validation responses in Access Arrangements Online (AAO) including the completion of the JCQ Form 8, where required, and a body of evidence to substantiate the candidate's normal way of working within the centre
- ▶ Maintains a file for each candidate that will include:
 - Completed JCQ/awarding body application forms and evidence
 - 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 qualifications (where approval is required), a print out the AAO approval and a signed data protection notice (which provides candidate consent to their personal details being shared)
- ▶ 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 Exams Officer 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)
- ▶ In conjunction with the Exams Officer ensures 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

Exams officer

- ▶ Is familiar with the entire contents of the annually updated JCQ publication 'General Regulations' and is aware of information contained in 'Access Arrangements & Reasonable Adjustments' where this may be relevant to the EO role
- ▶ In conjunction with the SENCo follows guidance in JCQ Access Arrangements publication to process approval applications for access arrangements for GCSE qualifications
- ▶ Applies for approval where this is required, through AAO or through the awarding body where qualifications sit outside the scope of AAO (e.g. BTEC qualifications)
- ▶ Confirms by ticking the confirmation box prior to submitting applications 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)
- ▶ Ensures that where approval is required that this is applied for by the awarding body deadline

- ▶ Presents the files when requested by a JCQ Inspector
- ▶ 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 (e.g. copy on coloured paper)
- ▶ Following the appropriate process (AAO for GCSE, PAAO for BTEC; JCQ 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

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 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
- ▶ Liaises with Exams Officer regarding facilitation and invigilation of access arrangement candidates in exams
- ▶ Liaises with other relevant staff regarding the provision of appropriate rooming and equipment that may be required to facilitate access for disabled candidates for exams
- ▶ Ensure facilitators supporting candidates are appropriately trained and understand the rules of the particular 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 the exams
- ▶ Liaises with EO 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

- ▶ Responsible for any emergency evacuation arrangements that may need to be in place for a candidate with a disability who may need assistance when an exam room is evacuated

Exams officer

- ▶ 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 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 for exams.
- ▶ Appoints appropriate centre staff as facilitators to support candidates
- ▶ Ensures facilitators supporting candidates are appropriately trained and understand the rules of the particular access arrangement(s)
- ▶ Ensures cover sheets are produced, where these are required by the arrangement, are and 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 for exams
- ▶ Liaises with the SENCo regarding the facilitation and invigilation of access arrangement candidates
- ▶ Liaises with 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
- ▶ Checks in advance of dated exams/assessments that modified paper orders have arrived (and will contact the awarding body to ensure that papers are available when required)
- ▶ Makes modifications that are permitted by a centre (e.g. question paper copied onto coloured paper) that may be required and, where approved, opens exam question paper packet in the secure room no earlier than permitted, as stated in the Instructions for Conducting Exams publication
- ▶ Processes approval through AAO or PAAO for where emergency (temporary) access arrangements are required, and deal with requirements as they arise at the time of exams in terms of rooming, invigilation, and access arrangement facilitator

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

Teaching 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

- ▶ 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 and SENCo regarding facilitation and invigilation of access arrangement candidates in exams
- ▶ Liaises with the Exams Officer and SENCo 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

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

ICT Technicians

- ▶ Responsible for IT or other specialist equipment that may need to be provided or adapted for a candidate

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.

Special educational needs coordinator (SENCo)

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

Teaching staff

- ▶ Support the SENCo 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 SENCo with assessment schedules to ensure arrangements are put in place when required
- ▶ Liaise with SENCo 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 pre-cursor to external assessments.

Special educational needs coordinator (SENCo)

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

Teaching staff

- ▶ Support the SENCo in implementing appropriate access arrangements for candidates
- ▶ 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.

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	<p><i>SENCo gathers evidence to support the need for the candidate to take exams at home</i></p> <p><i>Written statement provided for file to confirm the need</i></p> <p><i>Approval confirmed by SENCo; AAO approval for both arrangements not required</i></p> <p><i>Discussion with candidate to confirm the arrangements should be put in place</i></p> <p><i>EO submits appropriate 'Alternative site for the conduct of exams form'</i></p> <p><i>EO provides candidate with exam timetable and JCQ information for candidates</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 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 Head of Year/SLT 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>EO informs candidate that special consideration has been requested</i></p>
Persistent and significant difficulties in accessing written text	Reader/computer reader 25% Extra time Separate invigilation within the centre	<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>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>
Significant difficulty in concentrating	Prompter Separate invigilation within	<p><i>Gathers evidence to support substantial and long term adverse impairment</i></p>

	the centre	<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>
A wheelchair user	<p>Desk</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>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>
Anxiety (not solely related to exams)	<p>Separate invigilation within the centre</p> <p>Supervised Rest breaks</p>	<p><i>Written statement, from CaMHS; medical professional; Head of Year; requested for file to confirm the need for alternative rooming, AAO approval for arrangement not required</i></p> <p><i>Confirms with candidate room/seating arrangements/prior to exam</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 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 Head of Year/SLT 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>EO informs candidate that special consideration has been requested</i></p>