



The
Thomas Hardye School

Disability policy (exams)

2017/18

This policy is reviewed annually to ensure compliance with current regulations

Approved/reviewed by

Date of next review

Key staff involved in the policy

Role	Name(s)
SENCo	Mrs M Orchard
SENCo line manager (Senior Leader)	Mrs K Chittendon
Head of centre	Mr M Foley
Assessor(s)	Mrs M Orchard, Mrs R Killoch
Access arrangement facilitator(s)	TA's/Invigilators

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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

“recognise its duties towards disabled candidates as defined under the terms of the Equality Act 2010⁷. 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/Senior Leader

- ▶ 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](#).

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](#).
- ▶ 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.

Teaching staff

- ▶ Inform the SENCo of any support that might be needed by a candidate
- ▶ Ensures the qualified assessor(s) has access to the assessment objectives for the relevant specification(s) a candidate is undertaking

Support staff (Teaching Assistants)

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

Assessor of candidates with learning difficulties

(An assessor of candidates with learning difficulties will be an appropriately qualified access arrangements assessor/psychologist/specialist assessor)

- ▶ Has detailed understanding of the current JCQ publication Access Arrangements
- ▶ Ensures staff roles, responsibilities and processes in identifying, requesting and implementing access arrangements are clearly defined and documented for candidates
- ▶ Support the SENCo in determining the need for and implementing access arrangements
- ▶ Ensures arrangements put in place for exams/assessments reflect a candidate's *normal way of working* within the centre
- ▶ Conducts appropriate assessments to identify the need(s) of a candidate
- ▶ Provides appropriate evidence to confirm the need(s) of a candidate

SEN Manager

- ▶ 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
- ▶ 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
- ▶ Ensures a statement is provided which details the criteria the centre uses to award and allocate word processors for exams
- ▶ Provides a policy on the use of word processors in exams and assessments
- ▶ Completes appropriate documentation as required by the regulations of JCQ and the awarding body
- ▶ Works alongside the Exams Manager with regards to access arrangements/exams related matters.

Exams Manager

- ▶ Presents when requested by a JCQ Centre Inspector, evidence of the assessor's qualification
- ▶ Works alongside the SEN Manager with regards to access arrangements/exams related matters.

Support staff (Teaching Assistants)

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

Assessor of candidates with learning difficulties

(An assessor of candidates with learning difficulties will be an appropriately qualified access arrangements assessor/psychologist/specialist assessor)

- ▶ Has detailed understanding of the current JCQ publication [AA](#)

Use of word processors

See Appendix A

“It is strongly recommended that a centre has a policy on the use of word processors which it can articulate to parents/carers. Principally, that a word processor cannot simply be granted to a candidate because he/she now wants to type rather than write or can work faster on a keyboard, or because he/she uses a laptop at home.

The use of a word processor must reflect the candidate’s normal way of working within the centre and be appropriate to the candidate’s needs...

A member of the centre’s senior leadership team must produce a statement for inspection purposes which details the criteria the centre uses to award and allocate word processors for examinations.”

[AA 5.8]

Requesting access arrangements

Roles and responsibilities

Special Educational Needs Manager

- ▶ 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 [Access Arrangements](#) Section 8 to process approval applications for access arrangements for those qualifications listed on page 2 of AA
- ▶ 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 (*Application for access arrangements – Profile of learning difficulties*), where required, and a body of evidence to substantiate the candidate’s normal way of working within the centre
- ▶ Ensures where form 8 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
- ▶ Ensures the names of all other assessors, who are assessing candidates studying qualifications as listed on page 2 of [AA](#), are entered into AAO to confirm their status including any professionals working outside 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)
- ▶ Liaise with the Exams Manager to 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)
- ▶ 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 those qualifications listed on page 2 of AA, (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 the Exams Manager 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)

Exams Manager

- ▶ Is familiar with the entire contents of the annually updated JCQ publication [General Regulations](#) and is aware of information contained in [Access Arrangements where this may be relevant to the Exams Manager role](#)
- ▶ Following the appropriate process (AAO for those qualifications listed on page 74 of AA), 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 Manager

- ▶ 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)
- ▶ 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)
- ▶ 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 the Exams Manager regarding facilitation and invigilation of access arrangement candidates in 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 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 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
- ▶ Liaises with the Exams Manager 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](#) 7 and 8
- ▶ Ensures cover sheets, where these are required by the arrangement are completed as required by facilitators
- ▶ Liaises with the Exams Manager 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
- ▶ Ensures invigilators are briefed prior to each exam session of the arrangements in place for a disabled candidate in their exam room
- ▶ 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)
- ▶ 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
- ▶ 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

Exams Manager

- ▶ 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)
- ▶ 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)
- ▶ 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
- ▶ Ensures cover sheets, where these are required by the arrangement are completed as required by facilitators
- ▶ Liaises with the SEN Manager 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
- ▶ 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
- ▶ 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
- ▶ 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
- ▶ 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
- ▶ On occasions the Exams Manager and the SEN Manager may have to liaise with, for example, the IT specialists, the site team or medical officer.

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. Please refer to the Emergency Evacuation Procedures Policy.

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*]

Special Educational Needs Manager

- ▶ 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 candidates are aware of the access arrangements that are in place for their assessments
- ▶ 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

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 Manager

- ▶ Liaises with the Exams Manager to implement appropriate access arrangements for candidates

Teaching staff

- ▶ Provide exam materials that may need to be modified for a candidate

Senior Leadership Team

- ▶ Provide the SENCo with internal exam timetable to ensure arrangements are put in place when required

APPENDIX A THE USE OF A WORD PROCESSOR FOR EXAMINATIONS

Principles for using a word processor

The Thomas Hardy School complies with the JCQ Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments regulations as follows:

Centres are allowed to provide a word processor with the spelling and grammar check facility/predictive text disabled (switched off) to a student where this is their normal way of working within the centre and appropriate to their needs.

Although this list is not exhaustive, reasons a student would benefit from a word processor include:

- A learning difficulty which has a substantial and long term adverse effect on the ability to write legibly;
- A medical condition;
- A physical disability;
- A sensory impairment;
- Planning and organisation problems when writing by hand;
- Poor handwriting

The use of a word processor will not be granted to a student because he/she prefers to type, works faster using a keyboard or because they use a laptop/computer at home.

The use of a word processor is agreed/processed at the start of the course. The Thomas Hardy School is only able to allow Word Processors as an access arrangement when this has been recommended by an appropriate Specialist Assessor referred by teaching staff. In addition to the assessment, we must have sufficient evidence that the arrangement represents the student's normal way of working, and is appropriate to their needs. We therefore collect evidence for students who have access arrangements to ensure subject teachers fully support the need for the arrangement.

Access to word processors is provided to students in controlled assessments or coursework components as standard practice unless prohibited by the specification.

Students may not require the use of a word processor in each specification. Subjects and their methods of assessments vary which leads to different demands on students. The need for the use of a word processor is considered on a subject-by-subject basis.

The Centre is 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 students will frequently need to type. Examinations which require more simplistic answers are often easier to handwrite within the answer booklet.

The use of a word processor

- In all cases, the Centre will ensure that a Word Processor cover sheet (Form 4) is completed and attached to each student's typed script.
- For Functional Skills English (Reading and Writing components), the use of a word processor with the spellcheck facility switched on is permitted for all students.
- students are reminded that their centre number, student number and the unit/component code must appear on each page as a header or footer.
- students using Notepad or Wordpad software (which do not allow for the insertion of a header or footer) are instructed to handwrite their details as a header or footer once they have finished the examination and printed off their typed script; students 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.
- each page is appropriately numbered.
- students are instructed to use a minimum 12pt font and double spacing.
- Students are responsible for frequently saving their working during the exam.
- word processors are accommodated in such a way that other students are not disturbed and cannot read the screen.
- word processors are not used to perform skills which are being assessed.
- where a student using a word processor is accommodated separately, a separate invigilator is used.
- documents are printed after the examination has finished.
- word processors are not used on the student's behalf by a third party unless the student has permission to use a scribe.
- Where permission has been given for a student to use a word processor, this must be used for all exams (with the exception of Maths and Science) or this permission will be removed.

Word processors and their software

- word processors have been cleared of any previously stored data, as must any portable storage medium.
- an unauthorised memory stick is not permitted for use by a student.
- where required, students 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 exam.
- 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.
- word processors are not connected to an intranet or any other means of communication.
- students are not given access to other applications such as a calculator (where prohibited in the examination), spreadsheets etc when using a word processor.

- predictive text software or an automatic spelling and grammar check is disabled unless the student has been permitted a scribe or is using voice recognition technology (the script must have a completed scribe cover sheet attached), or the awarding body's specification permits the use of automatic spell checking.
- voice recognition technology is not included on word processors unless the student has permission to use a scribe or relevant software.
- Every effort is made to ensure that students cannot access spellcheck and the internet during examinations. However, if any student is found trying to remove these setting, this will be interpreted by the Centre as malpractice and will be reported to the appropriate Awarding Body.