

Maplewell Hall School



Exams Disability Policy

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1. 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 students 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 students.

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

[Quote taken directly from chapter 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 students, 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

2. The Equality Act 2010 definition of disability

The Equality Act 2010 definition of disability Generally, impairments have to meet the statutory requirements set out in section 6 and Schedule 1 to the Equality Act 2010 and associated regulations. The Equality Act 2010 definition of disability is usually considered cumulatively in terms of:

- Identifying a physical or mental impairment;
- Looking into adverse effects and assessing which are substantial;
- Considering if substantial adverse effects are long term;
- Judging the impact of long term adverse effects on normal day to day activities.

Statutory guidance on the Equality Act 2010 definition of disability has been produced by the Office for Disability Issues (within the Department for Work and Pensions) to help better understand and apply this definition - <http://odi.dwp.gov.uk/docs/wor/new/ea-guide.pdf>

The clear starting point in the statutory guidance is that disability means 'limitations going beyond the normal differences in ability which may exist among people'.

- 'Substantial' means 'more than minor or trivial'. Substantial adverse effects can be determined by looking at the effects on a person with the impairment, comparing those to a person without the impairment, to judge if the difference between the two is more than minor or trivial.
- 'Long term' means the impairment has existed for at least 12 months, or is likely to do so.
- 'Normal day to day activities' could be determined by reference to the illustrative, non-exhaustive list of factors in pages 47 to 51 of the statutory guidance relating to the Equality Act 2010. (Study and education related activities are included in the meaning of 'day to day' activities.)

The guidance from the Office for Disability Issues referred to above illustrates the factors which might reasonably be regarded as having a substantial adverse effect on normal day to day activities. Factors that might reasonably be expected not to have a substantial adverse effect are also provided.

Factors that might reasonably be expected to have a substantial adverse effect include:

- Persistent and significant difficulty in reading and understanding written material where this is
- In the person's native language, for example because of a mental impairment, a learning
- Difficulty or a sensory or multi-sensory impairment;
- Persistent distractibility or difficulty concentrating;
- Difficulty understanding or following simple verbal instructions;
- Physical impairment – for example, difficulty operating a computer because of physical
- Restrictions in using a keyboard.

Factors that might reasonably be expected not to have a substantial adverse effect include:

- Minor problems with writing or spelling;
- Inability to read very small or indistinct print without the aid of a magnifying glass;
- Inability to converse orally in a language which is not the speaker's native spoken language

This definition is provided on page 4 of the current JCQ publication Adjustments for students with disabilities and learning difficulties [Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments](#)

This publication is further referred to in this policy as [AA](#).

3. 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 an appropriately qualified assessor(s) is appointed and that evidence of the qualification(s) of the person(s) appointed is held on file

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 are clearly defined and documented

Additional & Exceptional Needs co-ordinator

- 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
- Ensures a policy demonstrating the centre's compliance with relevant legislation is in place
- Defines and documents roles, responsibilities and processes in identifying, requesting and implementing access arrangements (*Access arrangements policy*)
- 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 student's *normal way of working* within the centre
- Ensures the need for access arrangements for a student will be considered on a subject by subject basis
- 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 students taking internal and external exams/assessments
- Provide information to evidence the normal way of working of a student
- Conducts appropriate assessments to identify the need(s) of a student
- Provides appropriate evidence to confirm the need(s) of a student
- Completes appropriate documentation as required by the regulations of JCQ and the awarding body
- Leads on the access arrangements process to facilitate access for students

Teaching staff

- Inform the Additional & Exceptional needs co-coordinator of any support that might be needed by a student
- Support the Additional & Exceptional needs co-coordinator in determining the need for and implementing access arrangements

4. Requesting access arrangements

Roles and responsibilities

Additional & Exceptional needs co-coordinator

- Determines if the arrangements identified for a student require prior approval from the awarding body before the arrangements are put in place or if approval is centre-delegated
- Ensures the quality of the access arrangements process within the centre
- 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 student'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
- 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 student does meet the criteria for the arrangement(s)
- Ensures that arrangements, and approval where required, are in place before a student 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 student 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 student 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 students

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
- Presents when requested by a JCQ Centre Inspector, evidence of the assessor's qualification
- Ensures a policy demonstrating the centre's compliance with relevant legislation is in place
- Liaises with the Additional & Exceptional needs co-coordinator 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 student

5. 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 Additional & Exceptional needs co-coordinator, the exams officer and other relevant centre staff in ensuring appropriate arrangements, adjustments and adaptations are in place to facilitate access for disabled students to exams

Additional & Exceptional needs co-coordinator

- Ensures appropriate arrangements, adjustments and adaptations are in place to facilitate access for students 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 student is involved in any decisions about arrangements, adjustments and/or adaptations that may be put in place for him/her and ensures the student understands what will happen at exam time
- Ensures that any arrangements put in place do not unfairly disadvantage or advantage disabled students
- Liaises with the exams officer (EO) regarding facilitation and invigilation of access arrangement students in exams
- Appoints appropriate centre staff as facilitators to support students (practical assistant, prompter, Oral Language Modifier, reader, scribe or Sign Language Interpreter)

- Ensures facilitators supporting students are appropriately trained and understand the rules of the particular access arrangement(s)
- Ensures the facilitator is known by or introduced to the student prior to exams
- Ensures a facilitator acting as a prompter is aware of the appropriate way to prompt depending on the needs of the student
- Liaises with the EO to ensure that invigilators are made aware of the Equality Act 2010 and are trained in disability issues
- Ensures cover sheets, where these are required by the arrangement are completed as required by facilitators
- Liaises with the EO where a facilitator may be required to support a student 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 student's documents, individual exam timetable etc.) is adapted where this may be required for a disabled student 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
- Liaises with other relevant centre staff regarding the provision of appropriate rooming and equipment that may be required to facilitate access for disabled students to exams
- Ensures facilitators supporting students are appropriately trained and understand the rules of the particular access arrangement(s)
- Ensures a facilitator acting as a prompter is aware of the appropriate way to prompt depending on the needs of the student
- EO to ensure that invigilators are made aware of the Equality Act 2010 and are trained in disability issues
- Ensures cover sheets, where these are required by the arrangement are completed as required by facilitators
- Liaises with the Additional & Exceptional needs co-coordinator and other relevant centre staff to ensure appropriate arrangements, adjustments and adaptations are in place to facilitate access for disabled students to exams
- Liaises with the Additional & Exceptional needs co-coordinator to ensure exam information (JCQ information for student's documents, individual exam timetable etc.) is adapted where this may be required for a disabled student to access it students
- Liaises with the Additional & Exceptional needs co-coordinator regarding rooming of access arrangement students

- Liaises with the Additional & Exceptional needs co-coordinator 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 student to facilitate access to his/her exams
- Ensures invigilators are briefed prior to each exam session of the arrangements in place for a disabled student 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) 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 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 students' 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 Additional & Exceptional needs co-coordinator where a facilitator may be required to support a student 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 – will be appointed for emergency evacuation procedures

- **Is familiar with the** arrangements that may need to be in place for a student with a disability who may need assistance when an exam room is evacuated

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](#)]

Additional & Exceptional needs co-coordinator

- Liaises with teaching staff to implement appropriate access arrangements for students
- Ensures centre-delegated and awarding body approved arrangements are in place prior to a student taking his/her first formal supervised assessment
- Ensures students are aware of the access arrangements that are in place for their assessments
- Ensures facilitators supporting students 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 student requiring an emergency (temporary) access arrangement at the time of his/her formal supervised assessment

Teaching staff

- Support the Additional & Exceptional needs co-coordinator in implementing appropriate access arrangements for students
- Provide the Additional & Exceptional needs co-coordinator with assessment schedules to ensure arrangements are put in place when required
- Liaise with the Additional & Exceptional needs co-coordinator regarding assessment materials that may need to be modified for a student

Internal/Mock exams

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

Additional & Exceptional needs co-coordinator

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

Teaching staff

- Support the Additional & Exceptional needs co-coordinator in implementing appropriate access arrangements for students

Exams Officer

- Provide exam materials that may need to be modified for a student
- Provide the Additional & Exceptional needs co-coordinator with internal exam timetable to ensure arrangements are put in place when required

6. 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 student by student 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 student and the actions considered/taken by the centre for the purposes of facilitating access.

Example of student need(s)	Arrangements explored	Centre actions
A medical condition which prevents the student from taking exams in the centre	Alternative site for the conduct of examinations Supervised rest breaks	<p><i>Additional & Exceptional needs co-coordinator gathers evidence to support the need for the student to take exams at home</i></p> <p><i>Assistant head provides written statement for file to confirm the need</i></p> <p><i>Approval confirmed by Additional & Exceptional needs co-coordinator; AAO approval for both arrangements not required</i></p> <p><i>Assistant head discussion with student to confirm the arrangements should be put in place</i></p> <p><i>EO provides student with exam timetable and JCQ information for students</i></p> <p><i>Assistant head confirms with student the information is understood</i></p> <p><i>Assistant head agrees with student that prior to each exam will call to confirm fitness to take exam</i></p> <p><i>EO allocates invigilator(s) to student's timetable; confirms time of collection of exam papers and materials</i></p>

		<p><i>Invigilator monitors student'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 student's performance in exam may have been affected by his/her condition</i></p> <p><i>EO discusses with pastoral head if student is eligible for special consideration (student 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>Assistant head informs student that special consideration has been requested</i></p>
Persistent and significant difficulties in accessing written text	<p>Reader/computer reader</p> <p>25% Extra time</p> <p>Separate invigilation within the centre</p>	<p><i>Confirms student 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 sourced for use in papers(or sections of papers) testing reading OR up to 50% extra time awarded</i></p> <p><i>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</i></p>
Significant difficulty in concentrating	<p>Prompter</p> <p>Separate invigilation within the centre</p>	<p><i>Gathers evidence to support substantial and long term adverse impairment</i></p> <p><i>Confirms with student how and when they will be prompted</i></p> <p><i>Briefs invigilator to monitor student and the method of prompting (call out his name to bring his attention back to the paper - confirms requirement for separate room)</i></p> <p><i>Ensure the room is distraction and noise free</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 student 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 student near exam room door</i></p>

		<p><i>Confirms arrangements in place to assist the student 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 securely attached to student's work where this may be applicable to the assessment</i></p>
Visually Impaired Student	<p>Desk</p> <p>Rooms</p> <p>Facilities</p> <p>Seating arrangements</p> <p>Modified paper</p> <p>Extra-Time</p> <p>Supervised rest breaks</p>	<p><i>Requests input from the VI service to ensure the desk is suitable for the student. Ensures that the room is suitable for the VI needs of student.</i></p> <p><i>Provide student with facilities that they are aware of</i></p> <p><i>Print to the appropriate size and on appropriate paper as directed by the VI service</i></p> <p><i>Confirms access arrangements with Additional & Exceptional needs co-coordinator</i></p> <p><i>Provide student with directed rests as recorded by the VI teacher</i></p>
A medical condition which could affect student during the exam/assessment	<p>Alternative site for the conduct of examinations</p> <p>Supervised rest breaks</p>	<p><i>Additional & Exceptional needs co-coordinator gathers evidence to support the need for the student</i></p> <p><i>Assistant head discussion with student to confirm the arrangements should be put in place</i></p> <p><i>EO provides student with exam timetable and JCQ information for students</i></p> <p><i>Assistant head confirms with student the information is understood</i></p> <p><i>Assistant head agrees with student that prior to each exam will call to confirm fitness to take exam</i></p> <p><i>EO allocates invigilator(s) to student's timetable; confirms time of collection of exam papers and materials</i></p> <p><i>Invigilator monitors student'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 student's performance in exam may have been affected by his/her condition</i></p> <p><i>EO discusses with Assistant head if student is eligible for special consideration (student 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>Assistant head informs student that special consideration has been requested</i></p> <p><i>Pupil medication slots are arranged around exams when appropriate, or will bring medication to a suitable close location to ensure the administration is provided swiftly</i></p> <p><i>If an emergency situation arises than the EO will discuss this in conjunction with the contingency plan</i></p>
Hearing Impairment	<p>Prompter</p> <p>Separate invigilation within the centre</p>	<p><i>Gathers evidence to support substantial and long term adverse impairment</i></p> <p><i>Confirms with student how and when they will be prompted</i></p> <p><i>Briefs invigilator to monitor student and the method of prompting (call out his name to bring his attention back to the paper - confirms requirement for separate room)</i></p> <p><i>Ensures the room is distraction and noise free</i></p>