



# Bristol Hospital Education Service

Disability Policy (Exams)  
2017/18

## Contents

### Purpose of the Policy

### The Equality Act 2010 - Definition of Disability I

- Identifying the Need for Access Arrangements  
Roles and Responsibilities
- Requesting Access Arrangements  
Roles and Responsibilities
- Implementing Access Arrangements and the Conduct of Exams  
Roles and Responsibilities
- External assessments
- Internal assessments
- Internal exams
- Facilitating Access - examples

## **Purpose of the Policy**

This document is provided as an exams-specific supplement to both the school *Accessibility Policy* and *SEN/Learning Support Policy*, both of which can be viewed on the school website. They detail how the school

*“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”*

[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 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*. (A copy of p4 of this publication is attached at the end of this policy)

This publication is further referred to in this policy as AA.

## **Identifying the Need for Access Arrangements**

### **Roles and Responsibilities**

#### **Head of Centre**

- Is familiar with the entire contents, refers to and directs relevant centre staff to the annually updated JCQ publications including GR and AA

#### **Senior Leadership Team**

- Are familiar with the entire contents of the annually updated JCQ publications including GR and AA

#### **Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCo)**

- Has full knowledge and understanding of the contents of AA, and refers to and directs relevant centre staff to this annually updated JCQ publication
- 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 that appropriately qualified assessors are appointed and that evidence of the qualifications of the assessors appointed is held on file. This evidence is held by the Exam's Officer and a copy is held by the SENCo. The school currently has two qualified assessors, including the SENCo.*
- Ensures the assessment process is administered in accordance with the regulations
- Leads on the access arrangements process to facilitate access for candidates
- Defines and documents roles, responsibilities and processes in identifying, requesting and implementing access arrangements (SEN/Learning Support Policy)
- Is responsible for 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 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

#### Exams Officer

- Ensures a policy demonstrating the centre's compliance with relevant legislation is in place
- Completes appropriate documentation as required by the regulations of JCQ and the awarding body

#### Teaching staff

- Are involved with the identification of students who are clearly having difficulties accessing the curriculum, through their own departmental assessment procedures
- Are responsible for supporting students with SEN in their learning within a classroom setting
- Support the SENCo in determining the need for and implementing access arrangements Assessors of candidates with learning difficulties
- Have detailed understanding of the current JCQ publication AA . (The school assessors of candidates with learning difficulties are qualified access arrangements specialists assessors)

#### Assessors of candidates with learning difficulties

- Have detailed understanding of the current JCQ publication AA . (The school assessors of candidates with learning difficulties are qualified access arrangements specialist assessors).

# 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 AA Chapter 8 to process approval applications for access arrangements
- 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 within the centre
- Ensures that arrangements, and approval where required, are in place before a candidate takes his 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 (A Level) 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 and exams officer regarding any appropriate modified paper requirements for candidates
- Maintains an up to date list of all pupils within the school who are working with Access Arrangements Exams officer

### Exams Officer

- Is familiar with the entire contents of the annually updated JCQ publication GR and is aware of information contained in AA which may be relevant to the EO role
- Liaises with the SENCo to ensure AAO approval is in place for early opening of papers where this may be required i.e. when the centre is permitted to modify a timetabled written component exam paper (e.g. 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, when they are required for a candidate
- Works from the up to date list of pupils with SEN and liaises closely with SENCo to ensure the correct examination arrangements are in place for each of these pupils
- Responsible for updating the SIMS Examiner module with correct Access Arrangements information prior to the start of the examination series
- Applies for approval when required, in conjunction with the SENCo, via Access arrangements online (AAO), or through the awarding body if qualifications sit outside the scope of AAO
- Confirms by ticking the 'Confirmation' box prior to submitting the application for approval that the 'malpractice consequence statement' has been read and accepted
- Makes an awarding body referral through AAO, in conjunction with the SENCo, should the initial application for approval not be approved by AAO, but where the centre believe that the candidate does meet the criteria for the arrangement

# 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).

### Senior Leadership Team

- Support the SENCo, the exams officer and other relevant centre staff, including the Caretaker, in ensuring appropriate arrangements, adjustments and adaptations are in place to facilitate access for disabled candidates to exams
- Are 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). A copy is attached at the end of this policy
- Appoint appropriate centre staff as facilitators to support candidates (e.g. to act as a practical assistant, prompter, Oral Language Modifier, reader, scribe or Sign Language Interpreter)
- Are 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.

### 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)
- 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). **A copy is attached to this policy**
- 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
- Ensures the facilitator (e.g. reader, scribe etc.) 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 EO to ensure that invigilators are made aware of the Equality Act 2010 and are trained in disability issues
- Liaises with the EO if a facilitator is required to support a candidate who needs 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). **A copy is attached to this policy**
- Liaises with Deputy Head / Performance Director / Facilities Co-ordinator / Head of IT / Cover Manager/ SENCo regarding the provision of appropriate rooming and equipment that may be required to facilitate access for disabled candidates to exams
- 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 a facilitator acting as a prompter is aware of the appropriate way to prompt depending on the needs of the candidate
- Ensures cover sheets, where these are required by the arrangement are completed as required by facilitators
- Liaises with the SENCo 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 and ensures that exam information (JCQ information for candidates documents, individual exam timetable etc.) is adapted where this may be necessary for a disabled candidate to access it
- Liaises with the SENCo regarding any needs for the facilitation and invigilation of access arrangement candidates
- Liaises with the SENCo regarding any rooming needs for access arrangement candidates
- Liaises with the SENCo to ensure that invigilators are made aware of the Equality Act 2010 and are trained in disability issues
- Ensures 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 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 contacts the awarding body to ensure that papers are available when required)
- Makes any required modifications that are permitted to be done 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 if a candidate is approved the use of a computer reader) 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 if 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 if 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 Head of Year, and informs the SENCo, when 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 if qualifications sit outside the scope of AAO

#### **Senior Invigilators**

- Are 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). A copy is attached to this policy.

#### **Caretaker**

- 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

### **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 Coordinator (SENCo)**

- Liaises with teaching staff and EO to implement appropriate access arrangements for candidates
- 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)
- Liaise with the exams officer regarding assessment materials that may need to be modified for a candidate

### **Exams Officer**

- Ensures centre-delegated and awarding body approved arrangements are in place prior to a candidate taking his/her first formal supervised assessment
- Liaises with the Head of Year 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
- Ensures cover sheets are completed as required by facilitators

### **Teaching staff**

- Support the SENCo in implementing appropriate access arrangements for candidates
- Provide the SENCo with assessment schedules to ensure arrangements are put in place when required

### **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

### **Heads of Year**

- Provide exam materials to the School Office in order that they can be modified for a candidate
- 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>SENCo gathers evidence to support the need for the candidate to take exams at home</p> <p><i>Teachers</i> provide written statement for file to confirm the need</p> <p>Approval confirmed by SENCo; AAO approval for both arrangements not required</p> <p><i>SENCo/Teacher</i> has discussion with candidate to confirm the arrangements should be put in place EO submits appropriate 'Alternative site for the conduct of exams form'</p> <p>EO provides candidate with exam timetable and JCQ information for candidates</p> <p><i>SENCo/Teacher</i> confirms with candidate the information is understood</p> <p><i>Exam Officer</i> allocates invigilator(s) to candidate's timetable; confirms time of collection of exam papers and materials.</p> <p><i>Invigilator</i> monitors candidate's condition for each exam and records any issues on incident log</p> <p><i>Invigilator</i> records rest breaks (time and duration) on incident log and confirms set time given for exam</p> <p><i>Invigilator</i> briefs EO after each exam on how candidate's performance in exam may have been affected by his/her condition.</p> <p>After a formal review process which will involve <i>SENCo/Teacher</i>, a decision is made as to whether candidate should be entered for special consideration.</p> <p>EO processes request(s) for special consideration where applicable; incident log(s) provides supporting evidence</p>

		SENCo informs candidate and parents that special consideration has been requested
Persistent and significant difficulties in accessing written text	Reader/computer reader 25% Extra time Separate invigilation within the centre	SENCo confirms candidate is disabled within the meaning of the Equality Act 2010  Papers checked for those testing reading  Computer reader sourced for use in papers (or sections of papers) testing reading OR up to 50% extra time awarded  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
Significant difficulty in concentrating	Prompter Separate invigilation within the centre	SENCo gathers evidence to support substantial and long term adverse impairment SENCo confirms with candidate how and when they will be prompted SENCo / EO briefs invigilator to monitor candidate and the method of prompting (call out his name to bring his attention back to the paper - confirms whether there is a requirement for separate room)
A wheelchair user	Desk Rooms Facilities Seating arrangements Practical assistant	SENCo 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  Provides height adjustable desk in exam room  EO allocates exam room near adapted bathroom facilities (all main exam venues)  EO spaces desks to allow wheelchair access EO seats candidate near exam room door EO confirms arrangements in place to assist the candidate in case of emergency evacuation of the exam room EO prints 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  Candidate breaks wrist (writing hand) a week before exams begin: Separate Room Scribe SENCo & EO apply for a temporary access arrangement for the use of a scribe via AAO. EO ensures medical evidence from GP/Consultant is provided by family before the first exam takes place EO earmark separate room for candidate's exams EO prints scribe cover sheet printed from AAO; to be completed by facilitator and inserted inside the candidate's work where applicable

## 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.

## Checklist for heads of centre and examination officers – The Equality Act 2010 and conduct of examinations:

The following checklist, which is not an exhaustive one, has been produced as a good practice guide for centres.

<b>A Training invigilators</b>	
1	Ensure that invigilators are made aware of the Equality Act 2010 and are trained in disability issues.
2	As part of the training process make sure that invigilators are aware of policies and procedures relating to emergency evacuation and medication, especially where they relate to candidates with a disability.
3	Ensure that invigilators are aware of alternative means of communication, especially in the exam room when conveying information to disabled candidates.
<b>B Information for candidates</b>	
1	Ensure that information supplied to candidates with a disability, such as JCQ <i>Information for candidates</i> documents, are suitably sized and adapted.
<b>C Seating arrangements</b>	
1	Make sure that there are chairs available outside the examination room(s) to enable those with a disability or those candidates who experience extreme stress or anxiety, to sit and rest before they enter the examination.
2	Ensure that there is sufficient space between desks and chairs to enable a candidate (or an invigilator) who uses a wheelchair to enter and leave the room without difficulty.
3	If you know that a candidate may become unwell during the examination due to the nature of their disability, try to ensure that you seat them close to the exits to make them feel more comfortable and to limit any disruption to others within the examination room.
4	Ensure that the seating is both appropriate and comfortable for those who may have a disability which affects sitting and posture.
<b>D Candidates requiring access arrangements</b>	
1	Where a candidate has been granted the use of an Oral Language Modifier, a reader or a scribe, ensure that those individuals who will be acting as an Oral Language Modifier, a reader or a scribe are introduced to the candidate prior to the examination(s) taking place. This is particularly important for those candidates with autism, who will find it difficult to relate to someone who is a stranger.
2	Where a candidate has been granted supervised rest breaks, try to ensure that the rest areas are suitably comfortable as well as maintaining the security of the examination. Supervised rest breaks will apply to those candidates who suffer from fatigue, hyperactivity, obsessive compulsive disorders or long term health conditions.
3	Where a candidate has been granted the use of a prompter, it is important that the person appointed to act as a prompter is aware of disability etiquette, particularly when touching the candidate's desk as a means of a prompt, or tapping the candidate's arm or shoulder. This will apply to those candidates with autism who may have difficulty with time.
4	For on-screen tests, ensure that hardware and software have been adapted for those candidates with a sensory or multi-sensory impairment.
<b>E Emergency evacuation procedures</b>	
1	Invigilators and all other centre staff involved in conducting examinations <b>must</b> be aware of the emergency evacuation procedures in place for those candidates with a disability who may need assistance in leaving the building.
2	When evacuation and emergency procedures are being explained to candidates, attention should be given to those candidates with a disability, for whom such procedures may be different.

The policy will be reviewed in November 2018

Signed MA Date \_\_\_\_\_

Chair of the Management Committee

Signed [Signature] Date 1/5/18

Executive Head teacher