

Disability Policy

Vision: Grow - Flourish - Succeed

Mission: Together we inspire creative, mindful learners who value diversity, support one another and strive for success.

1. Introduction

This document is provided as an exams-specific supplement to the centre-wide accessibility policy/plan which details how the centre:

“recognizes 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](#)]

2. Purpose of policy

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.

3. People involved

Head of Centre

Assistant Head Teacher - Inclusion

Head of Inclusion Secondary/ Primary

Executive and Senior Leadership Team – Executive Principal/CEO/Vice-President Education, Associate Principal, Vice Principal, Manager School Operations, Head of Secondary School, Senior Deputy Head of Secondary School, Deputy Heads of Secondary School, Head of Primary School, Senior Deputy Head of Primary School, Deputy Heads of Primary School, Assistant Principals

Senior Examinations Officer

Examinations Officer



Teaching Staff – All Secondary teaching staff involved in candidate preparation for the examinations

Other relevant centre staff – IT team, Operations team

4. 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](#).

The definition is following:

'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 - [Equality Act \(2010\)](#)

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.'

5. 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;
- Ensures a policy demonstrating the centre's compliance with relevant legislation is in place;
- Ensures the quality of the access arrangements process within the centre.

Assistant Head Teacher- Inclusion, Head of Inclusion Secondary

- Has full knowledge and understanding of the contents, refers to and directs relevant centre staff to the annually updated JCQ publication AA.
- Ensures staff roles, responsibilities and processes in identifying, requesting and implementing access arrangements are clearly defined and documented;
- Ensures the assessment process is administered in accordance with the regulations;
- Support the Head of Inclusion Secondary in determining the need for and implementing access arrangements;
- 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;
- If not the appropriately qualified assessor, works with the person/persons appointed, on all matters relating to assessing candidates and the administration of the assessment process;
- Ensures that all assessments carried out and arrangements put in place comply with CIE, 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 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;
- Conducts appropriate assessments to identify the need(s) of a candidate;
- Provides appropriate evidence to confirm the need(s) of a candidate;
- Completes appropriate documentation as required by the regulations of JCQ and the awarding body.



Teaching staff

- Inform Assistant Head Teacher – Inclusion, Head of Inclusion Secondary of any support that might be needed by a candidate;
- Provide information to evidence the normal way of working of a candidate in lessons.
- **Requesting Access Arrangements**

Roles and responsibilities

Assistant Head Teacher - Inclusion /Head of Inclusion Secondary

- Determines if the arrangements identified for a candidate required prior to 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 for access arrangements applications for IGCSE and AS/A Level qualifications.
- Applies for approval where this is required by completing in and submitting an appropriate form to the awarding body;
- Ensures appropriate and required evidence is held on file to confirm validation responses, 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/her first exam or assessment (which is externally assessed or internally assessed/externally moderated);
- Ensures that where approval is required that this is applied for by the awarding body deadline;
- Maintains a file for each candidate that will include:
 - completed JCQ and 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 IGCSE and AS/A Level qualifications (where approval is required), a print out of the approval and a signed data protection notice (which provides candidate consent to their personal details being shared);
- Presents the files when requested by Inspector;
- Liaises with teaching staff regarding any appropriate modified paper requirements for candidates;
- Following the appropriate process (Oxford International AQA Form 1 or Form 8; orders published modified papers, by the awarding body's deadline for the exam series, where these may be required for a candidate.

Examinations Officer

- Is familiar with the entire contents of the annually updated JCQ publication GR and is aware of information contained in AA where this may be relevant to the EO role;
- Liaises with Assistant Head Teacher- Inclusion /Head of Inclusion Secondary to ensure AA 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).



6. 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 Assistant Head Teacher – Inclusion/Head of Inclusion Secondary, 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;
- 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).

Executive and Senior Leadership team

- Executive and senior leadership team members 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.

Assistant Head Teacher – Inclusion/Head of Inclusion Secondary

- 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 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 EO regarding facilitation and invigilation of access arrangement candidates in exams;
- 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 where a facilitator may be required to support a candidate requiring an emergency (temporary) access arrangement at the time of exams;
- Where required for emergency (temporary) access arrangements, applies for approval by completing in and submitting an appropriate form to the awarding body.

Examinations Officer

- Is familiar with and follows the Checklist for heads of centre and examination officers – The Equality Act 2010 and conduct of examinations;
- Ensures exam information (Information/Notification for candidates' documents, individual exam timetable etc.) is adapted where this may be required for a disabled candidate to access it;



- Liaises with other relevant centre staff regarding the provision of appropriate rooming and equipment that may be required to facilitate access for disabled candidates to exams;
- Appoints appropriate centre staff as facilitators to support candidates (practical assistant, prompter, Oral Language Modifier, reader, scribe or Sign Language Interpreter);
- Ensures facilitators supporting candidates are appropriately trained and understand the rules of the particular access arrangement(s) – With help from Head of Inclusion Secondary during training;
- 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 Head of Inclusion Secondary 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 Head of Inclusion Secondary regarding the facilitation and invigilation of access arrangement candidates;
- Liaises with the Head of Inclusion Secondary regarding rooming of access arrangement candidates;
- Liaises with the Head of Inclusion Secondary 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 candidate to facilitate access to his/her exams;
- Ensures invigilators are briefed prior to each exam session of the arrangements in place for a disabled candidate in their exam room;
- Checks in advance of dated exams/assessments that modified paper orders have arrived (and if not will contact the awarding body to ensure that papers are available when required);
- Makes modifications that are permitted by the centre (a question paper copied onto coloured paper, an A4 to A3 enlarged paper or a paper printed on single sheets or where a question paper may need to be scanned into PDF format where a candidate is approved the use of a computer reader) that may be required and, where approved, opens the exam question paper packet in the secure room no earlier than 90 minutes prior to the published start time of the exam;
- Understands that where permitted/approved, secure exam question paper packets may need to be opened early where preparation is required by the facilitator (Oral Language Modifier, Live Speaker, Sign Language Interpreter only);
- Ensures that the facilitator only has access to the papers one hour prior to the published start time of the exam;
- Provides cover sheets prior to the start of an exam where required for particular access arrangements and ensures that these have been fully completed before candidates' scripts are dispatched to examiners/markers;
- 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 Inclusion Secondary where a facilitator may be required to support a candidate requiring an emergency (temporary) access arrangement at the time of exams.

Other relevant centre staff

- Support the Head of Inclusion Secondary and the EO to ensure appropriate arrangements, adjustments and adaptations are in place to facilitate access for disabled candidates to exams;
- Staff responsible for **IT or other specialist equipment** that may need to be provided or adapted for a candidate;



- Estates/site staff responsible for **rooms and non-specialist equipment** (chairs, tables, clocks etc.) used for exams that may need to be adapted for a candidate.

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.

Assistant Head Teacher- Inclusion/Head of Inclusion Secondary

- 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 Head of Inclusion Secondary in implementing appropriate access arrangements for candidates;
- Provide the Head of Inclusion Secondary with assessment schedules to ensure arrangements are put in place when required;
- Liaise with the Head of Inclusion Secondary regarding assessment materials that may need to be modified for a candidate;
- Ensures cover sheets are completed as required by facilitators.

Internal exams

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

Assistant Head teacher – Inclusion / Head of Inclusion Secondary

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

Teaching staff

- Support the Head of Inclusion Secondary in implementing appropriate access arrangements for candidates;
- Provide exam materials that may need to be modified for a candidate;

Provide the Head of Inclusion Secondary with an internal exam timetable to ensure arrangements are put in place when required.



7. Facilitating Access – Examples

The following information confirms the centre's good practice in relation to the Equality Act 2010 and the conduct of examinations.

On a candidate by candidate basis, consideration is given to:

- adapting assessment arrangements;
- adapting assessment materials;
- the provision of specialist equipment or adaptation of standard equipment;
- adaptation of the physical environment for access purposes.



The table provides example arrangements, adjustments and adaptations that are considered to meet the need(s) of a candidate and the actions considered/taken by the centre for the purposes of facilitating access.

Example of candidate need(s)	Arrangements explored	Centre actions
<p>A medical condition which prevents the candidate from taking exams in the centre</p>	<p>Alternative site for the conduct of examinations</p> <p>Supervised rest breaks</p>	<p>Head of Inclusion Secondary gathers evidence to support the need for the candidate to take exams at home;</p> <p>Assistant Head Teacher-Inclusion provides written statement for file to confirm the need;</p> <p>Approval confirmed by Head of Inclusion Secondary;</p> <p>Assistant Head Teacher- Inclusion discussion with candidate to confirm the arrangements should be put in place;</p> <p>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>Assistant Head Teacher- Inclusion confirms with candidate the information is understood;</p> <p>Assistant Head Teacher- Inclusion agrees with candidate that prior to each exam will call to confirm fitness to take exam;</p> <p>EO allocates invigilator(s) to candidate's timetable; confirms time of collection of exam papers and materials;</p> <p>Invigilator monitors candidate's condition for each exam and records any issues on incident log;</p> <p>Invigilator records rest breaks (time and duration) on incident log and confirms set time given for exam;</p> <p>Invigilator briefs EO after each exam on how candidate's performance in exam may have been affected by his/her condition;</p> <p>EO discusses with line manager if candidate is eligible for special consideration (candidate present but disadvantaged);</p> <p>EO processes request(s) for special consideration where applicable; incident log(s) provides supporting evidence;</p> <p>EO informs candidate that special consideration has been requested.</p>



<p>Persistent and significant difficulties in accessing written text</p>	<p>Reader/computer reader 25% Extra time Separate invigilation within the centre</p>	<p>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 25% extra time awarded; JCQ- Form 8, signed and dated, kept on file with body of supporting evidence, printed approval from A short concise file note produced on centre headed paper, signed and dated kept on file, confirming the nature of the candidate's impairment and that the use of a computer reader and/or a reader reflects his/her normal and current way of working within the centre (25% Extra time - Form 8 completed as appropriate) Supporting evidence, AAO approval and signed candidate personal data consent form kept on file.</p>
<p>Significant difficulty in concentrating</p>	<p>Prompter Separate invigilation within the centre</p>	<p>Gathers evidence to support substantial and long term adverse impairment; Confirms with candidate how and when they will be prompted; Briefs invigilator to monitor candidate and the method of prompting (call out his name to bring his attention back to the paper - confirms requirement for separate room).</p>
<p>A wheelchair user</p>	<p>Desk Rooms Facilities Seating arrangements Practical assistant</p>	<p>Applies for practical assistant to help candidate set up wheelchair and other equipment in a practical assessment; Detailed information must be provided listing the tasks which the practical assistant will perform; Provides height adjustable desk in exam room; Allocates exam room on ground floor near adapted bathroom facilities; Spaces desks to allow wheelchair access; Seats candidate near exam room door; Confirms arrangements in place to assist the candidate in case of emergency evacuation of the exam room;</p>

6. Monitoring and review

This policy has been discussed and agreed by the GEMS Founders School teaching staff and leadership teams for implementation.



Signed [Signature]
Senior Examinations Officer

Date 04/09/2023

Signed [Signature]
Assistant Head Teacher – Inclusion

Date 04/09/2023

Signed [Signature]
Head of Secondary/ Head of Centre

Date 04/09/2023

Signed [Signature]
Vice Principal

Date 04/09/2023

Signed [Signature]
Associate Principal

Date 04/09/2023

Signed [Signature]
Executive Principal/CEO
Senior Vice President- Education

Date 04/09/2023

Policy review date: September 2024

