



Equality (Exams) Policy

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Signed:

Chair of Governors

Dated: 05.10.2023

Signed:

Principal

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Key staff involved in the policy

Role	Name(s)
SENCo	Sailesh Roopnarain
SENCo line manager (Senior Leader)	Will Atkinson
Head of centre	Francis Galbraith
Assessor(s)	Marisa Sedgwick
Exams Officer	Jodi Henderson

Purpose of the policy

This document is provided as an exams-specific supplement to the *Goldington Academy Equality Policy* which details how the centre will:

“recognise its duties towards disabled candidates, including private candidates, as defined under the terms of the Equality Act 2010†. This must include a duty to explore and provide access to suitable courses, through the access arrangements process 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”

JCQ’s General Regulations for Approved Centres (section 5.4)

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 of disability can be found in the current JCQ publication *Adjustments for candidates with disabilities and learning difficulties* [Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments 2023-2024](#) (Definitions section) 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](#)
- Ensures staff roles, responsibilities and processes in identifying, requesting and implementing access arrangements for candidates (including private candidates) are clearly defined and documented
- Ensures a policy demonstrating the centre’s compliance with relevant legislation is in place
- The head of centre must ensure that the SENCo has sufficient time to both manage the access arrangements process within the centre and familiarise him/herself with the JCQ publication *Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments*.

Senior leaders

- Are familiar with the entire contents of the annually updated JCQ publications including [GR](#) and [AA](#)
- Ensures the quality of the access arrangements process within the centre
- Ensures an appropriately qualified assessor(s) is appointed, evidence of the assessor's qualification(s) is obtained before he/she assesses candidates and that evidence of the qualification(s) of the person(s) appointed is held on file
- Ensures the assessment process is administered in accordance with the regulations and that the correct procedures are followed as per Chapter 7 of [AA](#)
- Presents when requested by a JCQ Centre Inspector, evidence of the assessor's qualification
- Support the SENCo in determining the need for and implementing access arrangements
- Ensures that all assessments carried out and arrangements put in place comply with JCQ and awarding body regulations and guidance

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 [AA](#)
- Leads on the access arrangements process to facilitate access for candidates
- 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 is be considered on a subject by subject basis
- Provide information to evidence the normal way of working of a candidate
- Provides appropriate evidence to confirm the need(s) of a candidate
- Ensure a statement is provided which details the criteria the centre uses to award and allocate word processors for exams
- Ensures the quality of the access arrangements process within the centre
- Ensures an appropriately qualified assessor(s) is appointed, evidence of the assessor's qualification(s) is obtained before he/she assesses candidates and that evidence of the qualification(s) of the person(s) appointed is held on file
- Presents when requested by a JCQ Centre Inspector, evidence of the assessor's qualification
- Ensures the assessment process is administered in accordance with the regulations and that the correct procedures are followed as in Chapter 7 of [AA](#)
- Ensures that the access arrangements/reasonable adjustments approved allow the candidate to access the assessment, but do not result in the candidate gaining an unfair advantage
- Ensures the qualified assessor(s) has access to the assessment objectives for the relevant specification(s) a candidate is undertaking
- 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
- Completes appropriate documentation as required by the regulations of JCQ and the awarding body
- Reviews the word processor policy, specific to the centre, which details the criteria the centre uses to award and allocate word processors for examinations and assessments

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
- Provide information to evidence the normal way of working of a candidate

Support staff (for example, Learning Support Assistants and Teaching Assistants)

- Provide information to evidence the normal way of working of a candidate

Assessor of candidates with learning difficulties

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

- Has detailed understanding of the current JCQ publication [AA](#)
- 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
- Completes appropriate documentation as required by the regulations of JCQ and the awarding body

Examination Officer

- Defines and documents roles, responsibilities and processes in identifying, requesting and implementing access arrangements (*Access arrangements policy*)
- In conjunction with the SENCo, produces and reviews a word processor policy, specific to the centre, which details the criteria the centre uses to award and allocate word processors for examinations and assessments
- Supports the SENCo during the application on Access Arrangements Online (AAO)
- Has a process in place to deal with emergency access arrangements as they arise at the time of exams
- Ensures the quality of the access arrangements process within the centre
- Ensures a policy demonstrating the centre's compliance with relevant legislation is in place

Use of word processors

Goldington Academy has a Word Processing policy in place which can be found on the school website. The Head of Centre statement from that policy is below.

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

Awarding word processors

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

Exceptions might include where a candidate has, for example:

- a learning difficulty which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to write legibly
- a medical condition
- a physical disability
- a sensory impairment
- planning and organisational problems when writing by hand
- poor handwriting of a standard that would impair marking
- a mental health condition

Allocating word processors

Appropriate exam-compliant word processors will be **allocated** by the IT department in liaison with the SENCo and the exams officer. In exceptional circumstances where the number of appropriate word processors may be insufficient for the cohort of candidates approved to use them in an exam session, the cohort will be split into two groups. One group will sit the exam earlier than or later than the published start time. The security of the exam will be maintained at all times and candidates will be supervised in line with section 2.11 of the JCQ Instructions for Conducting Exams ([ICE](#)).

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](#) Section 8 to process approval applications for access arrangements for those qualifications listed on page 5 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 that where approval is required the application is processed on time and no later than the awarding body's published deadline
- Ensures that the full supporting evidence is in place before an online application is processed
- Reviews the evidence before an online application is processed, ensuring that the candidate does meet the published criteria for the respective arrangement
- Ensures appropriate and required evidence is held on file to confirm validation responses in AAO including (where required) relevant JCQ forms, such as Form 8 (*Application for access arrangements – Profile of learning difficulties*), Form 9 (Profile of need), Form 8RF, Form BD25, etc. supplemented by written statements, where required
- Holds all supporting evidence and presents such evidence to a JCQ Centre Inspector upon request
- Ensures where JCQ forms are required to be completed, signed (a handwritten, electronic or typed signature is permissible) and dated as required **prior** to approval being sought and that the form is provided for processing and inspection purposes (This may be a hard copy paper version or an electronic version)

- Ensures the names of all other assessors, who are assessing candidates studying qualifications as listed on page 5 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 not meet the criteria for the arrangement(s)
- 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)
- 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 covered by AAO (where approval is required), a printout/PDF of the AAO approval, a signed candidate personal data consent form (which provides candidate consent to their personal details being shared) (see [JCQ Data Protection Notice Form](#))
 - ▶ where applicable, 'Data protection confirmation by the examinations officer or SENCo' acknowledged before an application is processed online
- Presents the files/e-folders when requested by a JCQ Centre Inspector and addresses any queries/questions raised
- Liaises with teaching staff regarding any appropriate modified paper requirements for candidates

Exams officer

- Is familiar with the entire contents of the annually updated JCQ publication [GR](#) and is aware of information contained in [AA](#) where this may be relevant to the EO role
- Ensures that where approval is required that this is applied for by the awarding body deadline
- Ensures that the agreed adjustment has been put in place before the candidate's first examination, e.g. internal tests and mock examinations
- Liaises with the SENCo to ensure arrangements are in place to either order a non-interactive electronic (PDF) question paper from CCEA, ~~OGR~~ and WJEC (or to download a PDF copy of the standard question paper where provided by AQA, **OCR** and Pearson) or to open a question paper packet in the secure room within 90 minutes of the awarding body's 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)
- Following the appropriate process (using AAO for those qualifications included in the tool; using *Form VQ/EA*), orders published modified papers, by the awarding body's deadline for the exam series, where these may be required for a candidate
- If the SENCo is unavailable, presents the files/e-folders of access arrangements candidates when requested by a JCQ Centre Inspector and addresses any queries/questions raised along with a member of the SLT

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
- 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](#)

Special educational needs coordinator (SENCo)

- Understands and follows instructions for *Invigilation arrangements for candidates with access arrangements* and *Access arrangements* in [ICE 2023-2024](#)
- Is familiar with the instructions for *Invigilation arrangements for candidates with access arrangements* and *Access arrangements* in [ICE 2023-2024](#)
- 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
- Monitors internal tests/mock exams, the use of arrangements granted to a candidate and where a candidate has never made use of the arrangement, may consider withdrawing the arrangement, provided the candidate will not be placed at a substantial disadvantage
- Liaises with the exams officer (EO) regarding facilitation and invigilation of access arrangement candidates in exams
- Appoints appropriate centre staff as facilitators to support candidates (practical assistant, prompter, Language Modifier, reader, scribe or Communication Professional)
- 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

- 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

Exams officer

- Understands and follows instructions for *Invigilation arrangements for candidates with access arrangements* and *Access arrangements* in [ICE 2023-2024](#)
- Is familiar with the instructions for *Invigilation arrangements for candidates with access arrangements* and *Access arrangements* in [ICE 2023-2024](#)
- 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
- 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
- Ensures invigilators supervising access arrangement candidates are trained in their role and understand the invigilation arrangements required for access arrangement candidates and the role of any facilitator
- Ensures a record of the content of training given to those facilitating an access arrangement for a candidate under examination conditions is kept and retained on file until the deadline for reviews of marking has passed or until any appeal, malpractice or other results enquiry has been completed, whichever is later
- Ensures where the candidate's own subject teacher will be used (in exceptional circumstances) as a facilitator, an invigilator will be present at all times
- Ensures where a facilitator is allocated to support a candidate under exam conditions that they will not be a relative, friend, peer or private tutor 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 to ensure exam information (JCQ information for candidates documents, individual exam timetable etc.) is adapted where this may be required for a disabled candidate to access it
- Liaises with the SENCo regarding the facilitation and invigilation of access arrangement candidates
- Liaises with the SENCo regarding rooming of 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 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 candidates with access arrangements are identified on exam room seating plans and invigilators are made aware of the arrangements awarded and invigilators informed of those candidates with access arrangements and made aware of the access arrangement(s) awarded
- 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 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 awarding body's published start time of the exam
- Understands that where permitted/approved, secure exam question paper packets may need to be opened early so the facilitator (Language Modifier, Live Speaker, Communication Professional only) may have access to the question paper 60 minutes prior to the awarding body's published starting time for the exam in order to prepare
- 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
 - prints pre-populated cover sheets from AAO where this is required for particular arrangements
- 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 SENCo 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 through AAO or through the awarding body where qualifications sit outside the scope of AAO
- Appoints appropriate centre staff as facilitators to support candidates (practical assistant, prompter, Language Modifier, reader, scribe or Communication Professional)

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
- Includes staff responsible for IT or other specialist equipment that may need to be provided or adapted for a candidate
- Includes 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
- Includes 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
- Includes support staff and learning support staff who may need to support the EO and SENCo in the facilitation of access arrangements

Internal assessments

These are non-examination assessments (NEA) which are normally set by a centre/awarding body, marked and internally moderated by the centre and externally 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]

Special educational needs coordinator (SENCo)

- 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 a candidate has had appropriate opportunities to practise using the access arrangement(s) before his/her first examination
- 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
- Provide the SENCo and EO with assessment schedules to ensure arrangements are put in place when required
- Liaise with the SENCo regarding assessment materials that may need to be modified for a candidate

Exams Officer

- 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.

Special educational needs coordinator (SENCo)

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

Teaching staff

- Support the SENCo in implementing appropriate access arrangements for candidates
- Provide exam materials that may need to be modified for a candidate

Exams Officer

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

Facilitating access - examples

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

On a candidate by candidate basis, consideration is given to

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

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

Example of candidate need(s)	Arrangements explored	Centre actions
A medical condition which prevents the candidate from taking exams in the centre	Alternative site for the conduct of examinations Supervised rest breaks	<p><i>SENCo gathers evidence to support the need for the candidate to take exams at home or an agreed, impartial alternative venue</i></p> <p><i>Pastoral head provides written statement for file to confirm the need</i></p> <p><i>Approval confirmed by SENCo; AAO approval for both arrangements not required</i></p> <p><i>Pastoral head discussion with candidate to confirm the arrangements should be put in place</i></p> <p><i>EO submits appropriate "Alternative site form" for timetabled written exams to awarding body/bodies online through CAP</i></p> <p><i>EO provides candidate with exam timetable and JCQ information for candidates</i></p> <p><i>Pastoral head confirms with candidate the information is understood</i></p> <p><i>Pastoral head agrees with candidate that prior to each exam will call to confirm fitness to take exam</i></p> <p><i>EO allocates invigilator(s) to candidate's timetable; confirms time of collection of exam papers and materials</i></p> <p><i>Invigilator monitors candidate's condition for each exam and records any issues on incident log (see JCQ Incident Log)</i></p> <p><i>Invigilator records supervised rest breaks (time and duration) on incident log and confirms full time given for exam</i></p> <p><i>Invigilator briefs EO after each exam on how candidate's performance in exam may have been affected by his/her condition</i></p> <p><i>EO discusses with pastoral head if candidate is eligible for special consideration (candidate present but disadvantaged)</i></p> <p><i>EO processes request(s) for special consideration where applicable; incident log(s) provides supporting evidence, supported by appropriate evidence signed by a member of the senior leadership team (Evidence retained until after the publication of results)</i></p> <p><i>Pastoral head informs candidate that special consideration has been requested</i></p>
Persistent and significant difficulties in accessing written text	Reader/computer reader 25% Extra time	<p><i>Confirms candidate is disabled within the meaning of the Equality Act 2010</i></p> <p><i>Papers are checked to highlight those testing reading (human reader is not allowed)</i></p>

	Alternative rooming arrangements	<p><i>Computer reader/examination reading pen sourced for use in papers (or sections of papers) testing reading OR up to 50% extra time awarded</i></p> <p><i>SENCo produces a statement, 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 and completes appropriate form/documentation for evidence of need</i></p> <p><i>AAO application for approval processed</i></p> <p><i>Supporting evidence, AAO approval and signed candidate personal data consent form and completed Data protection confirmation by the SENCo form kept on file</i></p>
Significant difficulty in concentrating	<p>Prompter</p> <p>Alternative rooming arrangements</p>	<p><i>Gathers evidence to support substantial and long term adverse impairment</i></p> <p><i>Confirms with candidate how and when they will be prompted</i></p> <p><i>Briefs invigilator to monitor candidate and the method of prompting (call out his name to bring his attention back to the paper - confirms requirement for separate room)</i></p>
A wheelchair user	<p>Desk</p> <p>Rooms</p> <p>Facilities</p> <p>Seating arrangements</p> <p>Practical assistant</p>	<p><i>Applies for practical assistant to help candidate set up wheelchair and other equipment in a practical assessment; When applying for Access Arrangement Online (AAO) approval will automatically fail so the awarding body referral will list the tasks that can be performed</i></p> <p><i>Provides height adjustable desk in exam room</i></p> <p><i>Allocates exam room on ground floor near adapted bathroom facilities</i></p> <p><i>Spaces desks to allow wheelchair access</i></p> <p><i>Seats candidate near exam room door</i></p> <p><i>Confirms arrangements in place to assist the candidate in case of emergency evacuation of the exam room</i></p> <p><i>Practical assistant cover sheet printed from AAO; to be completed by facilitator and inserted inside the candidate's work where this may be applicable to the assessment</i></p>