



Castle Donington College

Equalities Policy (Exams specific)

Date agreed by the Full Governing Board

December 2020

Date for review

December 2021

Signed by Chair of Governors

Policies are reviewed annually using the Exams Office model policies to ensure compliance with current regulations; changes may need to be made after the adoption of this policy and prior to the review date

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Purpose of the Policy

This document is provided as an exams-specific supplement to the equalities/disability/accessibility policy which details how the College 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; [†]or any legislation in a relevant jurisdiction other than England and Wales which has an equivalent purpose and effect

*JCQ General Regulations for Approved Centres 2020-21 (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 is provided on page 4 of the JCQ publication *Adjustments for candidates with disabilities and learning difficulties* Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments 2019-2020.

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](#)

SLT

- 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, refers to and directs relevant centre staff to the annually updated JCQ publication [AA](#)
- SENCo together with subject teachers will start to build a picture of need
- Any access arrangements must be the student’s normal way of working

Teaching staff

- Inform the SENCo of any support that might be needed by a candidate

Support staff (for example, Learning Support Assistants)

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

Assessor of candidates with learning difficulties

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

- Has detailed understanding of the JCQ publication [AA](#)
- The College 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
- 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

Use of word processors

The word processor policy and statement can be found on the College website. It is also included as an appendix in the Exams Policy

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
- Ensures appropriate and required evidence is held on file to confirm validation responses in AAO including (where required) the completion of JCQ Form 8 (Application for access arrangements – Profile of learning difficulties), and/or centre based evidence including concise file note(s) on centre headed paper, signed and dated, and a body of evidence to substantiate the candidate's normal way of working within the centre (Form 8 must only be used for candidates with learning difficulties who are not subject to a current EHCP or Statement of Special Educational Needs or those requiring a Language Modifier.)
- Ensures where form 8 is required to be completed, the form is signed (a handwritten, electronic or typed signature is acceptable) and dated as required prior to approval being sought and that the form is provided for processing and inspection purposes
- Applies for access arrangements via the JCQ AAO tool, this can be done jointly with the EO
- Presents the files/e-folders when requested by a JCQ Centre Inspector and addresses any queries/questions raised (In the event of an IT failure at the time of an inspection is able to access the required documentation in an alternative format, e.g. a memory stick or hard copy)
- In the absence of the SENCo, these are presented by a member of SLT or the EO.

Examination 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

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 Examination Officer and other relevant centre staff in ensuring appropriate arrangements, adjustments and adaptations are in place to facilitate access for disabled candidates to exams
- Liaises with the EO and SENCo and 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

Special educational needs coordinator (SENCo)

- In liaison with EO, 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)
- Informs Heads of Departments of students with access arrangements granted during the course in examinations
- Ensures candidate is involved in decisions about arrangements, adjustments and/or adaptations that may be put in place for them 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
- Monitors, in 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 EO to ensure that invigilators are made aware of the Equality Act 2010 and are trained in disability issues

Examination Officer

- Understands and follows instructions for *Invigilation arrangements for candidates with access arrangements* and *Access arrangements* in [ICE 2020-21](#)
- Arranges invigilation and rooming for students with approved arrangements
- 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, where 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 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 the facilitator is known by or introduced to the candidate prior to exams

- Ensures a facilitator acting as a prompter will not normally be the candidate's own subject teacher and must not be a relative, friend or peer of the candidate (understanding that a private tutor cannot act as a prompter for the candidate)
- Ensures a facilitator acting as a prompter is aware of the appropriate way to prompt depending on the needs of the candidate
- 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 appropriate seating arrangements are in place where different arrangements may need to be made for a candidate to facilitate access to their exam
- 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
- Makes modifications that are permitted by the centre 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
- 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 and liaises with the SENCo in this event
- Where required for emergency (temporary) access arrangements, applies for approval through AAO

Network Manager

- Support the SENCo and the Examination Officer to ensure IT or other specialised equipment for arrangements, adjustments and adaptations are in place to facilitate access for disabled candidates to exams

Premises Officer

- Liaise with EO to ensure rooms and non-specialist equipment used for exam 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 moderated by the centre and externally moderated by the awarding body.

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 their first formal supervised assessment
- Ensures candidates are aware of the access arrangements that are in place for their assessments

Teaching staff

- Support the SENCo in implementing appropriate access arrangements for candidates

- Ensures a candidate has had appropriate opportunities to practise using the access arrangement(s) before their first examination

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

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 below 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</i></p> <p><i>HoY in consultation with VP 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>HoY in consultation with VP discussion with candidate to confirm the arrangements should be put in place</i></p> <p><i>EO submits 'Alternative site form' for timetabled written exams to awarding body/bodies online through CAP</i></p> <p><i>An on-line submission must only be made for timetabled written examinations in the following qualifications...</i></p> <p><i>EO provides candidate with exam timetable and JCQ information for candidates</i></p> <p><i>HoY in consultation with VP confirms with candidate the information is understood</i></p> <p><i>HoY in consultation with VP agrees with candidate that prior to each exam candidate 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</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 candidate's performance in exam may have been affected by his/her condition</i></p> <p><i>EO discusses with Assistant Principal 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</i></p> <p><i>EO informs candidate that special consideration has been requested</i></p>
Persistent and significant difficulties in accessing written text	Reader 25% Extra time Separate invigilation within the centre	<p><i>SENCO confirms candidate is disabled within the meaning of the Equality Act 2010</i></p> <p><i>SENCO checks papers for those testing reading</i></p> <p><i>SENCO produces a short concise file note on centre headed paper, signed and dated kept on file, confirming the nature of the candidate's impairment and that the use of a reader reflects his/her normal and current way of working within the centre</i></p> <p><i>(25% Extra time - Form 8 completed as appropriate)</i></p> <p><i>Supporting evidence, AAO approval and signed candidate personal data consent form kept on file</i></p>
Significant difficulty in concentrating	Prompter Separate invigilation within the centre	<p><i>SENCO gathers evidence to support substantial and long term adverse impairment</i></p> <p><i>SENCO confirms with candidate how and when they will be prompted</i></p> <p><i>EO 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	Desk Rooms Facilities Seating arrangements Practical assistant	<p><i>EO 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</i></p> <p><i>EO provides height adjustable desk in exam room and liaises with Premises Officer</i></p> <p><i>EO allocates exam room on ground floor near adapted bathroom facilities</i></p> <p><i>EO spaces desks to allow wheelchair access</i></p> <p><i>EO seats candidate near exam room door</i></p> <p><i>EO 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>

Appendix 1

Criteria used by Castle Donington College to award and allocate word processors for examinations

A member of the centre's senior leadership team must produce a statement for inspection purposes which details the criteria the centre uses to award and allocate word processors for examinations."
[AA 5.8]

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.

The use of word processors

There are also exceptions where a candidate may be awarded/allocated 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.

Needs 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

The only exception to the above where the use of a word processor may be considered for a candidate would be:

- ▶ on a temporary basis as a consequence of a temporary injury at the time of the assessment;
- ▶ where a subject within the curriculum is delivered electronically and the centre provides word processors to all candidates.

Arrangements for the use of word processors at the time of assessment

Appropriate, exam-compliant word processors, will be provided by the Network Manager in liaison with the SENCo and the Examination 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 awarding body's published start time. The security of the exam will be maintained at all times and candidates will be supervised in line with section 7 of ICE.

Statement produced by: **Mrs Julie Sheppard, Principal**

Statement date: October 2020