



Exam Disability Policy

Policy agreed by Head of Centre (Exams) on:	Spring 2024
Ratified by Local Advisory Board on:	Spring 2024
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Allocated Group / Person to Review:	LAB can delegate to committee or individual member or HT
Signed by Chair:	
Signed by Headteacher:	



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Purpose of the Policy

This document is provided as an exams-specific supplement which details how the Centre will:

“Recognise 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...

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

*(Quote taken directly from section 5.4 of the 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 examinations 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 examinations.
- 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*.

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

Identifying the Need for Access Arrangements

Roles and Responsibilities

Head of Centre (Exams)

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

- 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.
- Ensures appropriately qualified assessor(s) are appointed, that evidence of the assessor's qualification(s) is obtained before candidates are assessed, and that this evidence is held on file.

Senior Leaders

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

Access Arrangements Assessor

- Leads on the access arrangements process to facilitate access for candidates.
- Has detailed understanding of the current JCQ publication AA.
- Conducts appropriate assessments to identify the needs of a candidate.
- Ensures the assessment process is administered in accordance with the regulations and that the correct procedures are followed, as set out in Chapter 7 of AA.
- Provides appropriate evidence to confirm the needs of a candidate.
- Completes appropriate documentation as required by JCQ and awarding body regulations.

Examinations Officer

- Is familiar with the entire contents of the annually updated JCQ publications, including GR and AA.
- Ensures the assessment process is administered in accordance with regulations and that correct procedures are followed, as set out in Chapter 7 of AA.
- Ensures a statement is provided which details the criteria the Centre uses to award the use of word processors for examinations.
- Ensures arrangements put in place for examinations and assessments reflect a candidate's normal way of working within the Centre.

Teaching Staff

- Inform the Head of Centre of any support that may be needed by a candidate.
- Support the Access Arrangements Assessor in determining the need for, and implementation of, access arrangements.

Support Staff

- Provide comments and observations to support the Head of Centre in developing a holistic picture of need and confirming a candidate's normal way of working.
- Support candidates with their access arrangements during examinations.

Use of Word Processors

References to AA relate to JCQ Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments, and ICE to JCQ Instructions for Conducting Examinations.

Principles for Using a Word Processor

Candidates with access to word processors at BAPA are allowed to do so in order to remove barriers for disabled candidates that prevent them from being placed at a substantial disadvantage as a consequence of persistent and significant difficulties.

The use of word processors at BAPA is only permitted where the integrity of the assessment is maintained, while also providing access to assessment for a disabled candidate.

The use of a word processor at BAPA is not granted where it would compromise the assessment objectives of the specification in question.

Candidates at BAPA may not require the use of a word processor in each specification. As subjects and their methods of assessment may vary, leading to different demands on candidates, the need for a word processor is considered on a subject-by-subject basis.

The use of a word processor at BAPA is agreed and processed at the start of the course. Candidates are subsequently made aware that they will be able to use a word processor for examinations and controlled assessments or coursework.

The use of a word processor at BAPA is only granted if it reflects the support given to the candidate as their 'normal way of working', which is defined as support in the classroom, or working in small groups for reading and/or writing, or literacy support lessons, or literacy intervention strategies, and/or in internal school tests and mock examinations.

The Use of a Word Processor

BAPA provides a word processor with spelling and grammar check and predictive text facilities disabled.

BAPA only grants the use of a word processor to a candidate where it reflects their normal way of working within the centre.

BAPA only grants the use of a word processor to a candidate where it is appropriate to their individual needs.

BAPA provides access to word processors to candidates for controlled assessments or coursework components as standard practice, unless prohibited by the specification. BAPA allows candidates to use a word processor in an examination to type certain questions (for example, those requiring extended writing) and handwrite shorter answers.

BAPA is also aware that examinations which contain a significant amount of writing, and those that place greater demand on the organisation of thoughts and planning of extended responses, are those where candidates will more frequently need to type. Examinations requiring more straightforward responses are often easier to handwrite within the answer booklet, allowing candidates to avoid the difficulty of visually tracking between the question paper and screen.

In all cases, BAPA ensures that a word processor cover sheet is completed and attached to each candidate's typed script.

Word Processors and Their Programmes

At BAPA, word processors are used as typewriters, not as databases, although standard formatting software is permitted.

At BAPA, word processors are cleared of any previously stored data, as must any portable storage medium used. Unauthorised memory sticks are not permitted. Where required, candidates are provided with a memory stick by a nominated member of centre staff, which has been cleared of any previously stored data.

At BAPA, word processors are accommodated so that other candidates are not disturbed and cannot read the screen.

At BAPA, where a candidate using a word processor is accommodated separately, a separate invigilator is used.

At BAPA, word processors are either connected to a printer so that scripts can be printed or have the facility to print from a portable storage medium.

At BAPA, documents are printed after the examination has finished.

At BAPA, candidates granted the use of a word processor are present at the end of the examination when their script is printed so that they can verify the work printed is their own.

Accommodating Word Processors in Examinations

The use of word processors is internally accommodated at BAPA in the following ways:

- In a dedicated classroom.
- Invigilation arrangements relating to the use of word processors at BAPA ensure invigilators are trained to supervise candidates using word processors in examinations.

Requesting Access Arrangements

Roles and Responsibilities

Head of Centre (Exams)

- 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 Access Arrangements Online (AAO), including the completion of JCQ Form 8 (Application for Access Arrangements – Profile of Learning Difficulties), where required, and a body of evidence to substantiate the candidate's normal way of working within the Centre.
- Ensures that, where Form 8 is required to be completed, the original form is signed (electronic signatures are permissible) and dated as required prior to approval being sought, and that the original form is provided for processing and inspection purposes.

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 Examinations Officer role.
- Works with the Head of Centre to apply for approval where this is required through Access Arrangements Online (AAO), or through the awarding body where qualifications fall outside the scope of AAO.
- Ensures the names of all other assessors who are assessing candidates studying qualifications are entered into AAO to confirm their status, including any professionals working outside the Centre.
- Ensures the arrangements, and approval where required, are in place before a candidate takes his or her first examination or assessment (whether externally assessed, or internally assessed and externally moderated).
- Ensures that, where approval is required, applications are submitted by the awarding body deadline.
- Maintains a hard copy file for each candidate, which will include:
 - Completed JCQ or awarding body application forms and evidence forms.
 - Appropriate evidence to support the need for the arrangements, where required.
 - Appropriate evidence to support the candidate's normal way of working within the Centre.
 - In addition, for those qualifications listed on page 2/92 of AA (where approval is required), a printout of the AAO approval and a signed data protection notice, which provides candidate consent for their personal details to be shared.
- Presents files when requested by a JCQ Centre Inspector and addresses any queries or questions raised.
- Following the appropriate process (AAO for qualifications listed on page 74 of AA: Form VQ/EA), orders published modified papers by the awarding body's deadline for the examination series, where these are required for a candidate.

Implementing Access Arrangements and the Conduct of Exams

Roles and Responsibilities

External Assessments

These are assessments which are normally set and marked or examined by an awarding body and which must be conducted according to awarding body instructions and/or the JCQ publication *Instructions for Conducting Examinations (ICE)*.

Head of Centre (Exams)

- Supports the Access Arrangements Assessor, 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.
- 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 exam information (JCQ *Information for Candidates* documents, individual exam timetables, etc.) is adapted where this may be required for a disabled candidate to access it.
- Ensures that prior to any arrangements being put in place, checks are made that arrangements do not impact on any assessment criteria or competence standards being tested.
- Liaises with the Exams Office regarding facilitation and invigilation for access arrangement candidates in exams.
- Ensures the facilitator is known to, or introduced to, the candidate prior to exams.
- Ensures the facilitator acting as a prompter is aware of the appropriate way to prompt, depending on the needs of the candidate.

Exams Officer

- Understands and follows instructions for invigilation arrangements for candidates with access arrangements and access arrangements in ICE.
- Monitors, in internal tests and 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 would not be placed at a substantial disadvantage.
- Liaises with other relevant Centre staff regarding the provision of appropriate rooming and equipment required to facilitate access for disabled candidates to exams.
- Is involved in the appointment of appropriate Centre staff as facilitators to support candidates (practical assistant, prompter, oral language modifier, reader, scribe or communication professional).
- Is involved in ensuring 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 under examination conditions is kept and retained on file until the deadline for reviews of marking has passed or until any appeal, malpractice issue or other results enquiry has been completed, whichever is later.
- Provides cover sheets prior to the start of an exam where required for particular access arrangements and ensures these are fully completed before candidates' scripts are dispatched to examiners or markers.
- Prints pre-populated cover sheets from AAO where required for qualifications listed on page 2/92 of AA.
- Has a process in place to deal with emergency (temporary) access arrangements as they arise at the time of exams, including rooming and invigilation.
- Where required for emergency (temporary) access arrangements, applies for approval through AAO or through the awarding body where qualifications sit outside the scope of AAO.

Other Relevant Centre Staff

- Support the Head of Centre (Exams), Access Arrangements Assessor and 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 or awarding body, marked and internally moderated by the Centre, and externally moderated by the awarding body.

Head of Centre (Exams)

- Liaises with teaching staff to implement appropriate access arrangements for candidates.
- Ensures candidates are aware of the access arrangements in place for their assessments.

Teaching Staff

- Support the implementation of appropriate access arrangements for candidates.

Exams Officer

- Ensures facilitators supporting candidates are appropriately trained and understand the rules of the access arrangement(s).
- Ensures cover sheets are completed as required by facilitators.
- Liaises with the Head of Centre regarding assessment materials that may need to be modified for a candidate.