Exams Disability policy

2017/18

This policy is reviewed annually to ensure compliance with current regulations

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| **Approved/reviewed by** |
| Judith Grant  |
| **Date of next review** | Oct 2018 |

Key staff involved in the exams policy

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Role** | **Name(s)** |
| Head of centre | **Matthew Grant** |
| Exams officer line manager (Senior Leader) | **Julie McCann** |
| Exams officer | **Sue O’Brien** |
| Special Assessor/Inclusion Manager | **Judith Grant: Inclusion Manager and Specialist Assessor****Talia Gifford: Specialist Assessor** |
| SMT member(s) | **Julie McCann, George Contos, Matthew Grant** |

**Approved/reviewed by**

**Purpose of the policy**

This document is provided as an exams-specific supplement to the *centre-wide Special Education Needs and Disabilities Policy* which details how the centre

*“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*

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

Refer to Priestley College ‘*Access Arrangements Policy’*

**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 the quality of the access arrangements process within the centre

**Senior leaders**

Are familiar with the entire contents of the annually updated JCQ publications including GR and AA Support the Specialist Assessor/Inclusion Manager in determining the need for and implementing access arrangements

**Specialist Assessor/Inclusion Manager/Examinations Officers**

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 a appropriately qualified assessor(s) is appointed 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

Ensures a policy demonstrating the centre’s compliance with relevant legislation is in place

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 (*Access arrangements policy*)

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

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

**Exams Officers (EO)**

* Ensures a policy demonstrating the centre’s compliance with relevant legislation is in place
* Refers any candidate or staff requests for access arrangements to the Specialist Assessor/Inclusion Manager
* Completes appropriate documentation as required by the regulations of JCQ and the awarding body
* Works with teaching staff, relevant support staff, the Specialist Assessor and the Inclusion Manager 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
* Presents when requested by a JCQ Centre Inspector, evidence of the assessor’s qualification

**Teaching staff**

Inform the Specialist Assessor/Inclusion Manager of any support that might be needed by a candidate

Support the Specialist Assessor/Inclusion Manager in determining the need for and implementing access arrangements

Provide information to evidence the normal way of working of a candidate

Provides appropriate evidence to confirm the need(s) of a candidate

**Specialist 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 current JCQ publication AA

Accurately completes the relevant sections of JCQ Form 8 and any other relevant and appropriate documentation required for compliance

**Requesting access arrangements**

**Roles and responsibilities**

**Specialist Assessor/Inclusion Manager**

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 to process approval applications for access arrangements for GCSE and GCE qualifications

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 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

* 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 meet the criteria for the arrangement(s)

With the Examinations Officers, 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

With the Exams Officer, 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 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

**Exams Officers**

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 EM role

Presents the files when requested by a JCQ Centre Inspector

With the Specialist Assessor/Inclusion Manager, 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)

With the Specialist Assessor/Inclusion Manager, 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 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)

Liaises with teaching staff regarding any appropriate modified paper requirements for

candidates

Ensures that AAO 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)

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, where these may be 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/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 Specialist Assessor/Inclusion Manager the Exams Officers 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 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)

**Special Assessor/Inclusion Manager**

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

Liaises with the EM to ensure that invigilators are made aware of the Equality Act 2010 and are trained in disability issues

**Exams Officers**

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)

Liaises with the Specialist Assessor/Inclusion Manager and other relevant centre staff to ensure appropriate arrangements, adjustments and adaptations are in place to facilitate access for disabled candidates to exams

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

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 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 invigilators 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)

Ensures a facilitator acting as a prompter is aware of the appropriate way to prompt depending on the needs of the candidate

Facilitates request when there is a requirement to support a candidate requiring an emergency (temporary) access arrangement at the time of exams

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

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 90 minutes prior to the published start time of the exam

Ensures up to date access arrangement details are available to all teaching staff

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

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 GCSE and GCE

Qualifications

* Liaises where necessary and appropriate with relevant Exam Body Officers to determine accurate and effective provision

**Other relevant centre staff**

Support the Specialist Assessor/Inclusion Manager and the Exams Officers to ensure appropriate arrangements, adjustments and adaptations are in place to facilitate access for disabled candidates to exams

**Invigilators**

Follow training provided to them with regard to regulations covering assistance provided to

students requiring access arrangements

Ensure all appropriate paperwork (including coversheets) is completed appropriately

**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 Assessor/Inclusion Manager**

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

**Exams Officers**

Ensures up to date access arrangement details are available to all teaching staff

Ensures candidates are aware of the access arrangements that are in place for their

assessments

Ensures cover sheets are completed as required by facilitators

Liaises with appropriate staff 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 Specialist Assessor/Inclusion Manager in implementing appropriate access arrangements for candidates

Provide the Exams Officers with assessment schedules to ensure arrangements are put in place when required

Liaise with the EO regarding assessment materials that may need to be modified for a

Candidate

**Internal Mock Exams**

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

**Special Assessor/Inclusion Manager**

Liaises with EO to implement appropriate access arrangements for candidates

**Examinations Officers**

Provide the teaching staff with internal exam timetable, requesting relevant modified papers

from teaching staff as appropriate

**Teaching staff**

Support the Specialist Assessor/Inclusion Manager in implementing appropriate access arrangements for candidate

Provide exam materials to EO that have been appropriately modified for a candidate

**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 purpose of facilitating access.

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| --- | --- |
| Scribe  | Physical disability, a medical condition, a sensory impairment, a mental health condition or a learning difficulty which has a long term and substantial adverse effect on the candidates writing.  writing speed is too slow to be able to complete the exam in the allotted time  writing is illegible and candidate cannot use ICT  |
| Reader  | An impairment which has a substantial and long term adverse effect on his/her ability to read.  A standardised score of below 84 in a test delivered by Specialist Teacher (100 is the average)  |
| Word-Processor  | A physical disability, a medical condition, a sensory impairment, a mental health condition or a learning difficulty which has a long term and substantial adverse effect on the candidates writing, where it is illegible and may hamper their ability to be understood or their writing speed is too slow to be able to complete the exam in the allotted time. This is also determined on a subject by subject requirement. |
| Extra- Time  | Where a learner’s ability to process information/read and/or write is significantly slower than average.  |
| Rest Breaks  | Where a learner has a medical condition, a physical disability, a learning difficulty, a sensory impairment or a mental health condition which prevents them from concentrating for long periods of time. This is now the recommended option from the exam boards before considering extra time.  |
| Separate Room  | Where a learner has a medical condition, a physical disability, a learning difficulty, a sensory impairment or a mental health condition which prevents them from sitting the exam in the main hall. If they have extra time allocated to them, they may require a separate room so when other learners exit their exams, this does not distract learners. They may also be entitled to a separate room if they are easily distracted or may distract other learners due to their condition.  |
| Bi-lingual Dictionaries  | For learners who have English as an Additional Language, a bi-lingual dictionary will be available for the candidate to use. This does not entitle them to extra-time. *The dictionary cannot be used in examination where English is being tested i.e. English GCSE.* *Refer to current guidelines in AA* |
| Prompt  | Where a learner has a medical condition, a physical disability, a learning difficulty, a sensory impairment or a mental health condition which prevents them from concentrating for long periods of time.  |
| Other Access Arrangements  | For a few learners with significant specific needs, such as physical impairments or sensory based needs there are other access arrangements personalised according to need, such as Sign Language Interpreter’s. *To receive these AA’s candidates must be disabled within the meaning of the Equalities Act and at a substantial disadvantage.*  |

**Example of actions**

Temporary arrangements

Temporary arrangements may be required by candidates suffering from illness or injury. In general, candidates with leg injuries are accommodated in the main rooms near the doors for easy access and exit. Candidates with an illness or injury that has a direct impact on their ability to access the examination should obtain a letter from a GP, consultant or other professional giving brief outline of their condition and the access arrangements that are deemed to be necessary. For example, a right – handed candidate whose right arm is broken may need a scribe and some extra time, as it is not their normal way of working and dictating to a scribe may be difficult for them. A candidate with a painful back condition may require supervised rest breaks in order to stand and move around.

In all cases where an access arrangement or a reasonable adjustment is needed, the College is entitled to expect reasonable notice to carry out its responsibilities. Where a need for access arrangements has been identified before an examination session, the Head of Centre, Examination Officer Inclusion Manager/Access Arrangements Assessor or equivalent should be provided with medical evidence in reasonable time. For example:

* A candidate who suffers panic attacks in test or exam situations should obtain a note from their GP well before the start of formal examination.
* In an emergency, a scribe can be provided with 24-hour notice. It may not be possible to provide a scribe if the request is made without notice.

Temporary arrangements last for one examination session. If the condition persists another letter may be required for next session.