



# Blessed George Napier RC School

## Equalities Policy (Exams)

2025/26

This policy is reviewed annually to ensure compliance with current regulations

Approved/reviewed by	
Date of next review	October 2026

## Purpose of the policy

This document is provided as an exams-specific supplement to the *centre-wide equalities and/or disability accessibility policy/plan* which details how the centre will:

*“recognise its duties towards disabled candidates, ensuring compliance with all aspects of the Equality Act 2010† particularly Section 20 (7). This must include a duty to explore and provide access to suitable courses to submit applications for reasonable adjustments through the access arrangements process and to make reasonable adjustments to the services the centre provides to disabled candidates. Where the centre is under a duty to make a reasonable adjustment, the centre must not charge a disabled candidate any additional fee in relation to the adjustment or aid; for any legislation in a relevant jurisdiction other than England and Wales which has an equivalent purpose and effect”*

[JCQ 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 is provided in the current JCQ document (*Adjustments for candidates with disabilities and learning difficulties*) [Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments](#) 2025-2026 (Definitions Section)

*This publication is further referred to in this policy as [AARA](#).*

## Roles and responsibilities

### Head of Centre

- Is familiar with the entire contents, refers to and directs relevant centre staff to the annually updated JCQ documents including
  - [General regulations for approved centres](#)
  - [Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments](#)
- 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
- Ensures an appropriately qualified assessor is appointed, evidence of the assessor’s qualification(s) is obtained before they assess candidates and that evidence of the qualification of the person appointed is held on file

### Senior leaders

- Are familiar with the entire contents of the annually updated JCQ documents including
  - [General regulations for approved centres](#)
  - [Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments](#)
- Ensures the quality of the access arrangements process within the centre

- Ensures staff roles, responsibilities and processes in identifying, requesting and implementing access arrangements for candidates are clearly defined and documented
- 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 a policy demonstrating the centre's compliance with relevant legislation is in place
- Support the SENCo in determining the need for and implementing access arrangements
- If the SENCo is unavailable presents the files/e-folders when requested by a JCQ Centre Inspector and addresses any queries/questions raised.

### **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 document

#### [Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments](#)

- To comply with the UK GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018, ensures relevant candidates **are** informed that an application for access arrangements will be processed using *Access arrangements online*
- Is familiar with the instructions for Invigilation arrangements for candidates with access arrangements and Access arrangements in [ICE 2025-2026](#)
- Follows guidance in [AARA](#) (chapter 8) to process approval applications for access arrangements for those qualifications included
- 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.
- Holds all supporting evidence and presents such evidence to a JCQ Inspector upon request
- Presents the files/e-folders when requested by a JCQ Centre Inspector and addresses any queries/questions raised
- Ensures that the agreed adjustment has been put in place before the candidate's first examination/mock examination.
- Ensure that where JCQ forms is required to be completed, forms are signed and dated as required prior to approval being sought and that the form is provided for processing and inspection purposes (This may be hard copy paper version or an electronic version)
- Leads on the access arrangements process to facilitate access for candidates
- 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
- Defines and documents roles, responsibilities and processes in identifying, requesting and implementing access arrangements (*Access arrangements policy*)
- Produces and annually reviews and updates 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 .
- 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 the qualified assessor(s) has access to the assessment objectives for the relevant specification(s) a candidate is undertaking
- 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
- Provide information to evidence the normal way of working of a candidate
- Conducts appropriate assessments to identify the need(s) of a candidate
- Provides appropriate evidence to confirm the need(s) of a candidate

- 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 the qualified assessor(s) has access to the assessment objectives for the relevant specification(s) a candidate is undertaking
- Maintains a file/e-folder for each candidate (the required documentation for a candidate will be in hard copy within the candidate's file/each of the required documents held electronically within the candidate's e-folder) 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
- 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 Sign Language 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 a person is appointed to facilitate an access arrangement, the person appointed is not normally the candidate's own subject teacher, Learning Support Assistant or teaching assistant. Where the candidate's own subject teacher, Learning Support Assistant or teaching assistant has to be used, a separate invigilator is always present
- Ensure that where a person is appointed to facilitate an access arrangement, the person appointed is not a relative, friend peer or private tutor of the candidate.
- 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 where a facilitator may be required to support a candidate requiring an emergency (temporary) access arrangement at the time of exams
- 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 a candidate has had appropriate opportunities to practise using the access arrangement(s) before his/her first examination
- Ensures candidates are aware of the access arrangements that are in place for their assessments
- 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
- Ensures cover sheets are completed as required by facilitators
- Liaises with the teacher where a facilitator may be required to support a candidate requiring an emergency (temporary) access arrangement at the time of their formal supervised assessment

### **Assessor of candidates with learning difficulties**

- Has detailed understanding of the current JCQ publication

- [Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments](#)
- Is an appropriately qualified assessor/psychologist/specialist assessor. Head of centre to check qualifications and provide proof to JCQ inspector. (Copies of the assessor's qualification can be found in the Learning Base and with the student records in the Exams Office).
- 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
- Ensures that all assessments carried out and arrangements put in place comply with JCQ and awarding body regulations and guidance
- Presents when requested by a JCQ Centre Inspector, evidence of the assessor's qualification
- Works with the person/persons appointed, on all matters relating to assessing candidates and the administration of the assessment process
- 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
- Ensures appropriate and required evidence is held on file to confirm validation responses in AAO including (where required) the completion of relevant JCQ forms, such as Form 8 (*Application for access arrangements – Profile of learning difficulties*), Form 9 (*Profile of need*), Form 8RF, etc. supplemented by written statements, where required, etc

### **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
- To liaise with the assessor to complete the online applications for access arrangements.
- Ensures that where approval is required the application is processed on time and no later than the awarding body's published deadline.
- Ensures the names of all other assessors, who are assessing candidates studying qualifications covered by AAO are entered into AAO to confirm their status
- 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)
- Ensures that prior to any arrangements being put in place that 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
- 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

- 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 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
- Understands and follows instructions for *Invigilation arrangements for candidates with access arrangements* and *Access arrangements* in [ICE 2025 - 2026](#)
- Ensures candidates with access arrangements are identified on exam room seating plans and invigilators are informed of those candidates with access arrangements and made aware of the access arrangement(s) awarded
- 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)
- Liaises with the SENCo to ensure arrangements are in place to either order a non-interactive electronic (PDF) question Paper (or to download a PDF copy of the standard question paper) or to open a question paper packet in the secure room within 90 minutes of the 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 a single sided print).
- Liaises with teaching staff regarding any appropriate modified paper requirements for candidates
- As may be applicable in relation to the use of coloured paper, explores alternative ways of working such as the use of a coloured overlay or the candidate wearing coloured glasses / the provision of a single colour, such as buff or grey
- Follows the appropriate process to order modified papers by the awarding body's deadline for the exam series, where these might be required for a candidate
- Understands that where permitted/approved, secure exam question paper packets may need to be opened early in the secure room to facilitate the following:-
  - Language Modifier may have access to the question paper 60 minutes prior to the awarding body's published start time in order to prepare
  - The Sign Language Professional may have access to the question paper 60 minutes prior to the awarding body's published start time in order to prepare
  - Live Speaker may have access to the transcript of the Listening examination 60 minutes prior to the start of the awarding body's published start time for the exam in order to prepare
- Ensures that the facilitator only has access to the papers 60 minutes prior to the published start time of the exam
- Liaises with the SENCo regarding the facilitation and invigilation of access arrangement candidates
- 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
- 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
- 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
- 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

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

### Teaching staff

- Inform the SENCo of any concerns, observations or feedback about a candidate or any support that might be needed by a candidate
- Gathers evidence of need and normal way of working
- Ensures that all assessments carried out and arrangements put in place comply with JCQ and awarding body regulations and guidance
- Support the SENCo in implementing appropriate access arrangements for candidates
- Provide exam materials that may need to be modified for a candidate
- Provide the SENCo 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

### Support staff (i.e. Learning support assistants, support workers)

- To facilitate access arrangements in exams and be aware of the contents of the JCQ publication [Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments](#) and where this may be relevant to the facilitator's role
- Provide comments and observations to support the SENCo to *paint a holistic picture of need* confirming *normal way of working for a candidate*.
- Be available for annual training when acting as facilitators for access arrangements in exams.

### 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
- 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 (see whole school evacuation policy for individual needs)
- 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

## 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 and for SRB</i></p> <p><i>Pastoral team/outside agencies 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 team 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 using CAP</i></p> <p><i>EO provides candidate with exam timetable and JCQ information for candidates</i></p> <p><i>Pastoral team 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</i></p> <p><i>Invigilator records supervised 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 pastoral team 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 team 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 checked for those testing reading</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>Candidate informed that an application for access arrangements will be processed using Access arrangements online</i></p> <p><i>AAO application for approval processed</i></p> <p><i>Supporting evidence, AAO approval, kept on file</i></p>
Significant difficulty in concentrating	Prompter Alternative rooming arrangements	<p><i>Gathers evidence to support substantial and long-term adverse impairment.</i></p> <p><i>Candidate informed that an application for access arrangements will be processed using Access arrangements online</i></p> <p><i>AAO application for approval processed</i></p> <p><i>Supporting evidence and AAO approval, kept on file</i></p> <p><i>Confirms with candidate how and when they will be prompted</i></p> <p><i>Briefs invigilator/TA to monitor candidate and the method of prompting (call out his name to bring his attention back to the paper - confirms requirement for alternative room)</i></p>
A wheelchair user	Desk Rooms Facilities Seating arrangements Practical assistant	<p><i>Candidate informed that an application for access arrangements will be processed using Access arrangements online</i></p> <p><i>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>Supporting evidence and AAO approval, kept on file</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 securely attached to candidate's work where this may be applicable to the assessment</i></p>