



# **Equality Policy (Exams)**

September 2024

(To be reviewed August 2025)

## Safeguarding Statement

SupaJam is a post-16 specialist provider, specialising in Music, Maths, English and Life Skills. All staff, volunteers and partners are committed to safeguarding the welfare of every person within SupaJam. Our mission is to help young people to engage and achieve within a safe and inclusive environment.

## Key staff involved in the policy

Role	Name(s)
SENCO	<b>Kier Williams and Charlotte Francis Finch</b>
SENCO line manager (Senior leader) Director of SEND.	<b>Richard Dwyer</b>
Head of centre	<b>Becca Walker or Rachel Streatfeild (maternity cover)</b>
Assessor(s)	<b>Kier Williams</b>
Access arrangement facilitator(s)	<b>Natalie Coppins</b>
Exams Manager	<b>Natalie Coppins</b>

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## Purpose of the policy

This document is provided as an exams-specific supplement to the centre-wide equality and diversity Policy which details how the centre will 'recognise its duties towards disabled candidates, including private 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, through the access arrangements process, submit applications for reasonable adjustments, and make reasonable adjustments to the service 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; or 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 current JCQ publication [General Regulations for Approved Centres 2022-2023](#)

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 9 of the current JCQ publication *Adjustments for candidates with disabilities and learning difficulties* [https://www.jcq.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/AA\\_regs\\_21-22\\_FINAL.pdf](https://www.jcq.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/AA_regs_21-22_FINAL.pdf) 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 the quality of the access arrangements process within the centre
- Ensures an appropriately qualified assessor(s) is appointed and that evidence of the qualification(s) of the person(s) appointed is held on file

#### Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCo)/ Additional Learning Support (ALS)

(For the purpose of this policy, all references to 'SENCo' and 'Specialist Assessor' responsibilities will be covered by Keir Williams and Richard Dwyer.)

- Has detailed understanding of the current JCQ publication AA
- Has full knowledge and understanding of the contents, refers to and directs relevant centre staff to the annually updated JCQ publication AA
- 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 (including private 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 per Chapter 7 of AA
- Ensures a policy demonstrating the centre's compliance with relevant legislation is in place
- Support in determining the need for and implementing access arrangements
- Ensure a statement is provided which details the criteria the centre uses to award and allocate word processors for exams
- 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
- Provides a policy on the use of word processors in exams and assessments
- 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 is 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
- Provides 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
- Completes appropriate documentation as required by the regulations of JCQ and the awarding body

### **Teaching staff**

- Inform the SENCo of any support that might be needed by a candidate
- Complete normal ways of working forms when directed by SENCo

### **Support staff** (Learning Support Practitioners)

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

### **Use of word processors**

SupaJam education In Music And Media's Word Processing Policy is available to view on the colleges website and is also kept in policy and procedure files on the drive.

### **Requesting access arrangements**

### **Roles and responsibilities**

### **Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCo)/ Additional Learning Support (ALS)**

- 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 (chapter 8) to process approval applications for access arrangements for those qualifications included [https://www.jcq.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/AA\\_regs\\_21-22\\_FINAL.pdf](https://www.jcq.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/AA_regs_21-22_FINAL.pdf)

- 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 (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 (this may be a hard copy paper version or an electronic version)
- 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 where approval is required that this is processed at the start of the course and at the latest by the awarding body deadline
- Maintains a file/e-folder for each candidate (the required documentation for a candidate will either be all in hard copy within the candidate's file or all electronic format 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 print out/PDF of the AAO approval and a signed candidate personal data consent form (which provides candidate consent to their personal details being shared)
- 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 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)
- Liaises with the SENCo and Director of SEND to ensure arrangements are in place to either order a non interactive electronic (PDF) question paper or to open question paper packets 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

### **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

## Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCo) /Additional Learning Support (ALS)

- 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 any arrangements put in place do not unfairly disadvantage or advantage disabled candidates
- Liaises with the EO regarding facilitation and invigilation of access arrangement candidates in exams
- Appoints appropriate centre staff 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 record of the training given to those facilitating an access arrangement for a candidate under examination conditions is kept and retained on file until the deadline for enquiries about results has passed or until any appeal, malpractice or other results enquiry has been completed, whichever is later
- Ensures where a facilitator is allocated to support a candidate under exam conditions that they will not be a relative, friend or 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
- 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

- 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)
- 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 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 disadvantaged candidates

- 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
- 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 a record of the training given to those facilitating an access arrangement for a candidate under examination conditions is kept and retained on file until the deadline for enquiries about results has passed or until any appeal, malpractice or other results enquiry has been completed, whichever is later
- Ensures invigilators supervising access arrangement candidates are trained in their role and understand the invigilation arrangements required for access arrangement candidates as detailed in [ICE 7](#) and 8
- 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 for which candidates
- 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 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 where preparation is required by the facilitator (Language Modifier, Live Speaker, Sign Language Interpreter only)
- 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 ready 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

#### **Other relevant centre staff (IT department, Facilities department)**

- 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



## **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)/Additional Learning Support (ALS)**

- 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 practice using the access arrangement(s) before their 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

### **Heads of Department & Teaching staff**

- Support the Specialist Assessor in implementing 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 cover sheets are completed as required by facilitators
- 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

## **Internal exams**

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

### **Specialist Assessor**

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

### **Teaching staff**

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

### **Exams Manager/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
<p>Persistent and significant difficulties in accessing written text</p>	<p>Reader/computer reader 25% Extra time Separate invigilation within the centre</p>	<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> <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>A short concise file note produced on centre headed paper, signed and dated kept on file, 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</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 Invigilation in a smaller room	<i>Gathers evidence to support substantial and long term adverse impairment</i> <i>Confirms with candidate how and when they will be prompted</i> <i>Briefs invigilator to monitor candidate and the method of prompting specific to individual need and as outlined in the ICE</i>
A wheelchair user	Desk Rooms Facilities Seating arrangements Practical assistant Supervised Rest Breaks	<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> <i>Provides height adjustable desk in exam room</i> <i>Allocates exam room on ground floor near adapted bathroom facilities</i> <i>Spaces desks to allow wheelchair access</i> <i>Seats candidate near exam room door</i> <i>Confirms arrangements in place to assist the candidate in case of emergency evacuation of the exam room</i> <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>
Student prone to anxiety attacks	Invigilation in a smaller room Supervised rest breaks Close to an exit Familiar member of staff	<i>Ensures invigilators are aware of specific issues</i> <i>Invigilator records rest breaks (time and duration) on incident log and confirms set time given for exam</i> <i>Invigilator to call for assistance/first aider if necessary</i>
Student has illness/panic attack before exam starts	Move to a smaller/separate room	<i>Calms student before the exam starts</i> <i>Call for First Aider if necessary</i> <i>Apply for special consideration if necessary</i>
Hearing impaired students	Invigilation in a smaller room Access arrangements dependant on need (reader, British sign language specialist)	<i>Seats candidate in a quiet room where possible</i> <i>If a sign language interpreter is required, a separate room and invigilator will be organised</i>
Visually impaired students	Access arrangements dependant on need	<i>Use of coloured overlays/magnifiers as necessary</i> <i>Ensure rooms are well lit</i>