ST CUTHBERT'S
CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL

Equalities Policy (Examinations)

for the Academic Year 2025 – 2026

Approved by:	Local Governing Committee	**Approved on:**	
Review date:		**Revision approved:**	
Version No:	1	**Originator(s):**	JCQ Policy

1. 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, submit applications for reasonable adjustments through the access arrangements process and to 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

(JCQ's **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

2. Key Staff involved in this policy

Role	Name(s)
ALS lead/SENCo	Richard Collinson
Senior leader(s)	Rachael Gundlach, David Swindells, Juliana Blackie, Karl Stuart, Jenni Westwood, Matt Turner, Michael Donnelly and Paul Burrows
Head of centre	Daniel P. Murray
Assessor(s)	Christine Regan
Access arrangement facilitator(s)	Richard Collinson and Karen Lawson

3. The Equality Act 2010 definition of disability

A definition is provided in the 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

4. Identifying the need for access arrangements

4.1 Roles and responsibilities

(a) Head of centre

- Is familiar with the entire contents, refers to and directs relevant centre staff to the annually updated JCQ document including GR and AARA
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(b) Senior leader(s)

- Are familiar with the entire contents of the annually updated JCQ documents including GR and AA

(c) Exams Officer

- Presents when requested by a JCQ Centre Inspector, evidence of the assessor's qualification.

(d) **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 AARA

(e) Teaching staff

- (Where appropriate) Inform the SENCo of any concerns, observations or feedback about a candidate or any support that might be needed by a candidate.

(f) **Support staff** (for example, Learning Support Assistants, Teaching Assistants and Communication Support Workers)

- (Where appropriate) Provide comments and observations to support the SENCo to 'paint a holistic picture of need', confirming normal way of working for a candidate
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(g) Assessor of candidates with learning difficulties

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

- Has detailed understanding of the JCQ publication AA

4.2 Use of word processors

The Word Processor Policy which details the criteria the centre uses to award and allocate word processors for exams will be places on SharePoint for all to view.

5. Requesting access arrangements

5.1 Roles and responsibilities

(a) **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.
- 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*
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(b) Exams officer (EO)

- Is familiar with the entire contents of the annually updated JCQ publication GR and is aware of information contained in AARA where this may be relevant to the EO role

6. Implementing access arrangements and the conduct of exams

6.1 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).

(a) 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.

(b) **SENCo**

- 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)
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(c) Exams officer

- Understands and follows instructions for Invigilation arrangements for candidates with access arrangements and Access arrangements in ICE 2025-2026
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(d) 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.

Internal assessments

These are non-examination assessments (NEA) which are normally set by a centre/awarding body, marked, and internally moderated/standardised by the centre and externally moderated by the awarding body.

However, 'NEA' is not limited to internal assessment as externally marked and/or externally set practical examinations taken at different times across centres are also classified as 'NEA'.

(a) **SENCo**

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

(b) Teaching staff

- Support the SENCo in implementing appropriate access arrangements for candidates.

Internal exams

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

(a) **SENCo**

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

(b) Teaching staff

- Support the SENCo in implementing appropriate access arrangements for candidates.

7. 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	SENCo gathers evidence to support the need for the candidate to take exams at home. Pastoral head provides written statement for file to confirm the need. Approval confirmed by SENCo; AAO approval for both arrangements not required. Pastoral head discussion with candidate to confirm the arrangements should be put in place. EO submits 'Alternative site form' for timetabled written exams to awarding body/bodies online using CAP. An on-line submission must only be made for timetabled written examinations in the following qualifications… EO provides candidate with exam timetable and JCQ information for candidates. Pastoral head confirms with candidate the information is understood. Pastoral head agrees with candidate that prior to each exam will call to confirm fitness to take exam. EO allocates invigilator(s) to candidate's timetable; confirms time of collection of exam papers and materials. Invigilator monitors candidate's condition for each exam and records any issues on incident log. Invigilator records rest breaks (time and duration) on incident log and confirms set time given for exam. Invigilator briefs EO after each exam on how candidate's performance in exam may have been affected by his/her condition. EO discusses with pastoral head if candidate is eligible for special consideration (candidate present but disadvantaged) EO processes request(s) for special consideration where applicable; incident log(s) provides supporting evidence. Pastoral head informs candidate that special consideration has been requested

Persistent and significant difficulties in accessing written text	Reader/computer reader 25% Extra time Separate invigilation within the centre	Confirms candidate is disabled within the meaning of the Equality Act 2010 Papers checked for those testing reading. Computer reader/examination reading pen sourced for use in papers (or sections of papers) testing reading OR up to 50% extra time awarded. Candidate informed that an application for access arrangements will be processed using Access arrangements online AAO application for approval processed Supporting evidence and AAO approval, kept on file
Significant difficulty in concentrating	Prompter Separate invigilation within the centre	Gathers evidence to support substantial and long term adverse impairment Candidate informed that an application for access arrangements will be processed using Access arrangements online AAO application for approval processed Supporting evidence and AAO approval kept on file Confirms with candidate how and when they will be prompted 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 alternative room)
A wheelchair user	Desk Rooms Facilities Seating arrangements Practical assistant	Candidate informed that an application for access arrangements will be processed using Access arrangements online 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 Supporting evidence and AAO approval kept on file Provides height adjustable desk in exam room Allocates exam room on ground floor near adapted bathroom facilities Spaces desks to allow wheelchair access Seats candidate near exam room door Confirms arrangements in place to assist the candidate in case of emergency evacuation of the exam room 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