Fair Ways Schools

Swanwick Fort Wallington & GLADE

Accessibility and Equality Policy

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Fair Ways Vision, Mission and Values

Our vision
To build a community that changes lives, makes a difference to society and leaves a legacy greater than us and our contributions.

Our mission
To grow a compassionate, resilient, and trauma-informed community, that embraces learning, so that we improve the lives and outcomes of individuals.

Our values
Our values form the heart of the work we do, defined by Fair Ways people, for Fair Ways people. These are the values by which we operate, by which we are governed, and to which we are held accountable.

We therefore expect every individual within the organisation to *play their part*:

P ROFESSIONAL	A CCEPTING	R EFLECTIVE	T RANSPARENT
· We do what we say we will. · We approach challenges with optimism and enthusiasm. · We don't judge, we notice. · We put the needs of the service before our own personal gains.	· We don't give up on people. · We value all individuals and are willing to challenge them. · We embrace each other's differences as much as our similarities. · We accept responsibility for our actions.	· We give feedback, we invite feedback, we listen to feedback. · We look inward before we look outward. · We learn as much from our mistakes as from our successes. · We listen to each other, learn from each other and grow together.	· We are always willing to explain why. · We have the courage to be open and honest. · We earn trust through our transparency. · We live by our values even when no-one is watching.

1 Purpose of the Policy

1.1 This document is provided as an exams-specific supplement to the Fair Ways Education Accessibility and Equality Policy (ref: SC27) which details how the centre:

"Recognise their 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; 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." [Section 5.4c of the current JCQ publication General Regulations for Approved Centres: https://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/general-regulations/].

1.2 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.

2 The Equality Act 2010 - Definition of Disability

2.1 A person is disabled under section 6 of the Equality Act 2010 if they have a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. The centre will apply this definition alongside the current JCQ publication *Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments: Adjustments for candidates with disabilities and learning difficulties*, updated March 2026 and continuing to apply during the 2026/27 academic year.

3 Identifying the Need for Access Arrangements - Roles & Responsibilities

3.1 Head of Centre

- Is familiar with the entire contents, refers to and directs relevant centre staff to the annually updated JCQ publications including General Regulations and Access Arrangements.
- Ensures the quality of the access arrangements process within the centre.
- Ensures staff roles, responsibilities and processes in identifying, requesting and implementing access arrangements are clearly defined and documented.
- Ensures a policy demonstrating the centre's compliance with relevant legislation is in place.
- Ensures an appropriately qualified assessor(s) is appointed and that evidence of the qualification(s) of the person(s) appointed is held on file.
- Defines and documents roles, responsibilities and processes in identifying, requesting and implementing access arrangements (Access Arrangements Policy).

3.2 Senior Leaders

- Are familiar with the entire contents of the annually updated JCQ publications including General Regulations and Access Arrangements.
- Support the exams officer in determining the need for and implementing access arrangements.

3.3 Exams Officer/Curriculum Manager

- Has full knowledge and understanding of the contents, refers to and directs relevant centre staff to the annually updated JCQ publication Access Arrangements.
- Ensures the assessment process is administered in accordance with the regulations.
- Leads on the access arrangements process to facilitate access for candidates.
- 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 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.
- 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.

3.4 Teaching Staff

- Inform the Exams Officer/CM of any support that might be needed by a candidate.
- Ensures arrangements put in place for exams/assessments reflect a candidate's normal way of working within the centre.
- Provide information to evidence the normal way of working of a candidate.

4 Requesting Access Arrangements - Roles and Responsibilities

4.1 Teaching Staff / Curriculum Manager

- Determines in conjunction with the Exams Officer 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 GCSE and GCE qualifications.
- Ensures appropriate and required evidence is held on file to support applications made through Access Arrangements Online (AAO). Where Form 9 is required, Part 1 must be fully completed before the assessment and must record the candidate's current difficulties, teacher feedback and evidence of the candidate's normal way of working; a skeleton Part 1 is not acceptable.
- For applications for 25% extra time processed from 1 September 2025 (other than GCSE resits), retains samples of relevant internal tests or mock examinations showing use of the extra time, together with comments and observations from teaching staff explaining why it is needed and how it is used.

- 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).
- In conjunction with the Exams Officer 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).
- In conjunction with the Exams Officer ensures that where approval is required that this is applied for by the awarding body deadline.
- Liaises with teaching staff regarding any appropriate modified paper requirements for candidates.

4.2 **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.
- In conjunction with the teaching staff follows guidance in AA Chapter 8 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.
- 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.
- Maintains a file for each candidate that will include:

  a. Completed JCQ/awarding body application forms and evidence forms.
  b. Appropriate evidence to support the need for the arrangement where required.
  c. Appropriate evidence to support normal way of working within the centre. Exam Accessibility Policy.

i. For GCSE and GCE qualifications where approval is required, a printout of the AAO approval. Candidates must be informed that their access-arrangements application will be processed through AAO in accordance with the UK GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018; a signed candidate personal-data consent form and separate data-protection confirmation form are no longer required by JCQ.

- Presents the files when requested by a JCQ Centre Inspector.
- Liaises with teaching staff regarding any appropriate modified paper requirements for candidates.
- Ensures 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.

5 Implementing Access Arrangements and the Conduct of Exams for External Assessments - 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).

5.1 Head of Centre

- Supports 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.
- Is familiar with the Checklist for Heads of Centre and Examination Officers – The Equality Act 2010 and Conduct of Examinations provided in the current ICE (page 44).

5.2 Senior Leadership Team (SLT)

- 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.

5.3 **Teaching Staff / Curriculum 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 that any arrangements put in place do not unfairly disadvantage or advantage disabled candidates.
- Liaises with the Exams Officer (EO) regarding facilitation and invigilation of access arrangement candidates in exams.
- 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 facilitators supporting candidates are appropriately trained and understand the rules of the particular access arrangement(s).
- Ensures the facilitator is known by or introduced to the candidate prior to exams.
- 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.
- Liaises with the EO to ensure exam information (JCQ information for candidate's documents, individual exam timetable etc.) is adapted where this may be required for a disabled candidate to access it .

5.4 **Exams Officer/Curriculum Manager**

- 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 candidate's 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 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 the facilitator is known by or introduced to the candidate prior to exams.
- Ensures a facilitator acting as a prompter is aware of the appropriate way to prompt depending on the needs of the candidate.
- Ensures cover sheets, where these are required by the arrangement are completed as required by facilitators.
- Ensure appropriate arrangements, adjustments and adaptations are in place to facilitate access for disabled candidates to 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.
- 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.

- 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, and Sign Language Interpreter only).
- Ensures that the facilitator only has access to the papers one hour 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.
- 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.
- Coordinates 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.

5.5 **Teaching Staff**

- Supports the Exams Officer to ensure appropriate arrangements, adjustments and adaptations are in place to facilitate access for disabled candidates to exams.
- 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 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 the Exams Officer (EO) regarding facilitation and invigilation of access arrangement candidates in exams.
- Ensures the facilitator is known by or introduced to the candidate prior to exams.
    - Liaises with the Exam Officer where a facilitator may be required to support a candidate requiring an emergency (temporary) access arrangement at the time of exams.
- Ensure appropriate arrangements, adjustments and adaptations are in place to facilitate access for disabled candidates to exams.
- Appoints appropriate centre staff as facilitators to support candidates (practical assistant, prompter, Oral Language Modifier, reader, scribe or Sign Language Interpreter).
- Ensures appropriate arrangements, adjustments and adaptations are in place to facilitate access for disabled candidates to exams.

5.6 **Maintenance**

- Responsible for rooms and non-specialist equipment (chairs, tables, clocks etc.) used for exams that may need to be adapted for a candidate.

5.7 **I.T. Department**

- Responsible for IT or other specialist equipment that may need to be provided or adapted for a candidate

6 Implementing Access Arrangements and the Conduct of NEA for Internal Assessments - Roles and Responsibilities

Internal assessment- 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]

6.1 Teaching Staff

- Implements 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 cover sheets are completed as required by facilitators.
- Arranges an assessment schedule to ensure arrangements are put in place when required.
- Determine the assessment materials that may need to be modified for a candidate.

6.2 Exams Officer

- Ensures facilitators supporting candidates are appropriately trained and understand the rules of the particular access arrangement(s).
- 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 his/her formal supervised assessment

7 Implementing Access Arrangements and the Conduct of Exams & Tests for Internal Assessments - Roles & responsibilities

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

7.1 **Teaching Staff**

- Implement appropriate access arrangements for candidates.

7.3 **Exams Officer**

- Provide exam materials that may need to be modified for a candidate
- Provide an internal exam timetable to ensure arrangements are put in place when required.

8 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.

Refer table on next page

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.	- Teaching Staff 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 Curriculum Manager; AAO approval for both arrangements not required. - Pastoral head discussion with candidate to confirm the arrangements should be put in place. - EO submits appropriate 'Alternative site for the conduct of exams form'. - 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 sourced for use in papers (or sections of papers) testing reading OR up to 50% extra time awarded. - Form 8, signed and dated, with all required sections completed; kept on file with the body of supporting evidence and printed approval from AAO. The candidate is informed that the application will be processed through AAO in accordance with the UK GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018.

Significant difficulty in concentrating.	Prompter. Separate invigilation within the centre.	- Gathers evidence to support substantial and long term adverse impairment. 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 separate room).
A wheelchair user.	Desk. Rooms. Facilities. Seating arrangements. Practical assistant	- 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. 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.

9 Associated Documentation & Legislation

- Equality Act 2010, including sections 6, 20 and 85 and the duty to make reasonable adjustments
  https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/contents
- Data Protection Act 2018 and UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR)
- JCQ *General Regulations for Approved Centres*, effective from 1 September 2026
- JCQ *Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments: Adjustments for candidates with disabilities and learning difficulties*, updated March 2026 and continuing to apply during 2026/27
- Current JCQ *Instructions for Conducting Examinations* and *Instructions for Conducting Non-Examination Assessments*
- Ofqual specifications on reasonable adjustments for general qualifications under section 96 of the Equality Act 2010