

EXAMS DISABILITY POLICY

Date of last review	18 March 2025
Review cycle	Annual
Policy due for review and approval by Local Governing Body	March 2026

Mission Statement

The Saffron Valley Collegiate seeks to provide a personalised educational experience that identifies and responds to the circumstances and needs of each individual child or young person. In doing so it enables them to progress academically and become successful learners through the re-engagement of the young person with education.

EQUALITIES STATEMENT:

All who work at the Saffron Valley Collegiate are committed to the celebration of diversity, and the challenging of disadvantage and discrimination, in all of its forms.

These values are explicit to the ethos of the Saffron Valley Collegiate and implicit in all policies and practices.

Purpose of the policy

This document is provided as an exams-specific supplement to the centre-wide accessibility policy/plan which details how the centre.

“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 2024-2025]

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 is provided on page 49 of the current JCQ publication *Adjustments for candidates with disabilities and learning difficulties Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments 2024-2025*.

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 that all assessments carried out and arrangements put in place comply with JCQ and awarding body regulations and guidance
- 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 an appropriately qualified assessor(s) is appointed and that evidence of the qualification(s) of the person(s) appointed is held on file
- Ensures a policy demonstrating the centre's compliance with relevant legislation is in place
- Supports the SENCo in determining the need for and implementing access arrangements
- Ensures a statement is provided which details the criteria the centre uses to award and allocate word processors for exams
- Defines and documents roles, responsibilities and processes in identifying, requesting and implementing access arrangements

Senior Leaders:

- Have knowledge and understanding of the contents, refers to and directs relevant centre staff to the annually updated JCQ publications including GR and AA

Teaching Staff:

- Inform the Assistant Head of Provision 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
- Conducts appropriate assessments to identify the need(s) of a candidate
- Provides appropriate evidence to confirm the need(s) of a candidate

Support Staff (for example, Learning Support Assistants and Teaching Assistants):

- Provide comments/observations to support Teachers and the SENCo in painting a holistic picture of need confirming normal way of working for a candidate.

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
- Conduct appropriate assessments to identify the need(s) of a candidate
- Ensures the assessment process is administered in accordance with the regulations

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 publication AA
- Leads on the access arrangements process to facilitate access for candidates
- Provides a policy on the use of word processors in exams 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
- Ensures that all assessments carried out and arrangements put in place comply with JCQ and awarding body regulations and guidance.

The SENCo and Assistant Head of Provision:

- If the SENCo is not the appropriately qualified assessor, works with the person/s 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
- Ensure arrangements put in place for exams/assessments reflect a candidate's *normal way of working* within the centre
- Ensure the need for access arrangements for a candidate is considered on a subject-by-subject basis
- Present, when requested by a JCQ Centre Inspector, evidence of the assessor's qualification
- Works with teaching staff, relevant support staff and the Exams Officer (EO) to ensure centre-delegated and awarding body approved access arrangements are put in place for candidates taking internal and external exams/assessments
- Provide information to evidence the normal way of working of a candidate
- Provide appropriate evidence to confirm the need(s) of a candidate
- Complete appropriate documentation as required by the regulations of JCQ and the awarding body.

Use of word processors

The Centre's *Word Processor Policy* on the use of word processors in examinations and assessments is available on the Saffron Valley Collegiate (SVC) Website Please see Appendix 1 for the SVC's criteria for the use of a word processor.

Requesting access arrangements

Roles and responsibilities

Examinations 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.

The 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.
- Follows guidance in AA Sections 5 and 8 to process approval applications for access arrangements for those qualifications listed on page 2 of AA
- 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 (*Application for access arrangements – Profile of learning difficulties*) or Form 9, where required, and a body of evidence to substantiate the candidate's normal way of working within the centre
- Ensures where forms 8 or 9 are required to be completed, the original 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
- Ensures the names of all other assessors, who are assessing candidates studying qualifications as listed on page 2 of AA, are entered into AAO to confirm their status including any professionals working outside 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)

The Assistant Head of Provision:

- Ensures that arrangements, and approval where required, are in place before a candidate takes their first exam or assessment (which is externally assessed or internally assessed/externally moderated)

The SENCo and the Assistant Head of Provision:

- Ensure that where approval is required that this is applied for by the awarding body deadline
- Following the appropriate process (AAO for those qualifications listed on page 74-93 of AA;), order published modified papers, by the awarding body's deadline for the exam series, where these may be required for a candidate
- 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 in 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 listed in AA (where approval is required), a printout/pdf of the AAO approval and a signed candidate personal data consent (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 raised (in the event of an IT failure at the time of the inspection is able to gain access to the required documentation in an alternative format, e.g. a memory stick or hardcopy).

The Assistant Head of Provision:

- Liaises with teaching staff regarding any appropriate modified paper requirements for candidates
- Liaises with the SENCo 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 paper (copy on coloured paper, enlarge to A3 or copy to single sided print)

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).

The 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.

The 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)
- 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
- Liaises with the EO to ensure that invigilators are made aware of the Equality Act 2010 and are trained in disability issues
- Ensures that any arrangements put in place do not unfairly disadvantage or advantage disabled candidates
- 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

The Assistant Head of Provision:

- 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' 2024-2025
- 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
- Liaises with the Exams Officer 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 Communication Professional)
- 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 a facilitator acting as a prompter is aware of the appropriate way to prompt depending on the needs of the candidate
- Ensures the facilitator is known by or introduced to the candidate prior to exams
- Ensures facilitators supporting candidates are appropriately trained and understand the rules of the particular access arrangement(s)
- Ensures where the candidate's own subject teacher will be used as a facilitator (in exceptional circumstances), an invigilator will be present at all times
- 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 and 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 cover sheets, where these are required by the arrangement, are completed as required by facilitators
- 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

A Member of the Senior Leadership Team:

- Will be 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.

The 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
- 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 2024-2025
- 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
- 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

Other relevant centre staff:

- Teaching staff, support staff and members of the senior leadership team must 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
- 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
- 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 2024 - 2025
- Ensures cover sheets, where these are required by the arrangement are completed as required by facilitators
- 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 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 and Assistant Head of Provision 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 and Assistant Head of Provision regarding the facilitation and invigilation of access arrangement candidates
- Liaises with the SENCo and Assistant Head of Provision regarding rooming of access arrangement candidates
- Liaises with the SENCo and Assistant Head of Provision 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 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 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 published start time of the exam
- Understands that where permitted/approved, secure exam question paper packets may need to be opened early so the facilitator (Language Modifier, Communication Professional, Live Speaker **only**) may have access to the question paper 60 minutes prior to the awarding body's published starting 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
- 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
- Liaises with the SENCo or Assistant Head of Provision where a facilitator may be required to support a candidate requiring an emergency (temporary) access arrangement at the time of exams.

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.

The regulators' definition of an examination is very narrow. In effect, any type of assessment that **is not:**

- Set by an awarding body
- Designed to be taken simultaneously by all relevant candidates at a time determined by the awarding body; and
- Taken under conditions specified by the awarding body (including conditions relating to the supervision of candidates during the assessment and the duration of the assessment) *is classified as non-examination assessment (NEA).*

“‘NEA’ therefore includes, but is not limited to, internal assessment. Externally marked and/or externally set practical examinations taken at different times across centres are classified as ‘NEA’.”

[Quote taken from the Foreword of the JCQ publication
Instructions for conducting non-examination assessments 2024-2025]

The Special educational needs coordinator (SENCo):

- Liaises with the Assistant Head of Provision 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

The Assistant Head of Provision:

- Ensures candidates are aware of the access arrangements that are in place for their assessments
- 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
- Provide the SENCo with assessment schedules to ensure arrangements are put in place when required

Teaching Staff:

Responsibilities might include some of the examples listed below (this list is by no means exhaustive); the same responsibility could be assigned to more than one role.

- Ensures cover sheets are completed as required by facilitators
- 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
- 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.

Special educational needs coordinator (SENCo):/Assistant SENCo

- Liaise with teaching staff and the Assistant Head of Provision to implement appropriate access arrangements for candidates

The Assistant Head of Provision:

- Liaises with teaching staff to collate evidence to support the implementation appropriate access arrangements for candidates
- Provide the SENCo with internal exam timetable to ensure arrangements are put in place when required
- Provide exam materials that may need to be modified. for a candidate

Teaching and Support Staff

- Support the SENCo in implementing appropriate access arrangements for candidates

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SENCo/Assistant Head of Provision gathers evidence to support the need for the candidate to take exams at home • SENCo/Assistant Head of Provision completes Form 9 to confirm Supervised Rest Breaks required • Approval confirmed by SENCo; AAO approval for both arrangements not required. • Assistant Head of Provision 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 • Assistant Head of Provision confirms with candidate the information is understood • Assistant Head of Provision agrees with candidate that prior to each exam will check 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 if appropriate
Persistent and significant difficulties in accessing written text	Reader/ computer reader 25% Extra time Separate invigilation within the centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SENCO confirms candidate is disabled within the meaning of the Equality Act 2010 • Assistant Head of Provision checks Papers 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 • Form 9 completed, signed and dated kept on file, conforming the nature of the candidate's impairment and that the use of a computer reader and/or reader reflects their normal and current way of working within the centre • (25% Extra Time-Form 8 completed as appropriate) • Supporting evidence, AAO approval, and signed candidate personal data consent form kept on file.

Significant difficulty in concentrating	Prompter Separate invigilation within the centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assistant Head of Provision and SENCo gather evidence to support substantial and long-term adverse impairment • The need for a Prompter/Separate invigilation will be confirmed by the SENCo • Assistant Head of Provision 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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SENCo 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 • Assistant Head of Provision 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 • Exams Officer ensures 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.

Appendix 1

The criteria Saffron Valley Collegiate uses to award and allocate word processors for examinations

The 'normal way of working' for exam candidates, as directed by the Head of Centre, is that candidates handwrite their exams. An exception to this is where a candidate may have an approved access arrangement in place, for example the use of a scribe/speech recognition technology.

Awarding word processors

There are also exceptions where a candidate may be **awarded** the use of a word processor in exams where he/she has a firmly established need, it reflects the candidate's normal way of working and by not being awarded a word processor would be at a substantial disadvantage to other candidates.

Exceptions might include where a candidate has, for example:

- a learning difficulty which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to write legibly
- a medical condition
- a physical disability
- a sensory impairment
- planning and organisational problems when writing by hand
- poor handwriting.

Allocating word processors

Appropriate exam-compliant word processors will be **allocated** by the IT department in liaison with the SENCo, Exams Officer or Assistant Head of Provision where appropriate. The security of the exam will be maintained at all times and candidates will be supervised in line with ICE regulations 2024-2025.

Further details may be found in the Saffron Valley Collegiate *Word Processor Policy*.