



St Ives School

Equalities (Exams) Policy

2025-26

School Name: St Ives School

Consultation: This policy has been written in line with DfE legislation and is reviewed annually to ensure compliance with current regulations

Dissemination: Staff Shared Drive and Website

Review date: November 2026

Person responsible for Implementation and Monitoring: Exams Officer/SENDCO/Headteacher

Links to other relevant policies: JCQ Policies, Examinations Policy, Access Arrangements Policy, Word Processor Policy, Equalities Policy

Key staff involved in the policy

Role	Name(s)
SENDCo	Rebecca Hickson
SENDCo line manager	Simon Horner
Head of centre	Simon Horner
Assessor(s)	Tracey Foster

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this policy is to explain the roles, responsibilities and procedures to be adopted to ensure the appropriate administration of access arrangements for candidates with disabilities within St Ives School. It is the responsibility of everyone involved in the Centre's assessment processes to read, understand and implement this policy. St Ives School is committed to actively promoting equality of opportunity across all aspects of provision.

This document is provided as an exams-specific supplement to the centre-wide accessibility/disability policy/plan 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, 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's General Regulations for Approved Centres 2021-2022 \(section 5.4\)](#)

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 is provided in the JCQ document *Adjustments for candidates with disabilities and learning difficulties Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments*

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 documents including [GR](#) and [AA](#)

- In Liaison with the SENDCo, 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 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 a policy demonstrating the centre's compliance with relevant legislation is in place

Senior leaders

- Are familiar with the entire contents of the annually updated JCQ documents including [GR](#) and [AA](#)

Special educational needs coordinator (SENDCo)

- Leads on the access arrangements process to facilitate access for candidates
- Has full knowledge and understanding of the contents, refers to and directs relevant centre staff to the annually updated JCQ document [AA](#)
- Determines need for access arrangements and provides appropriate evidence to confirm the need(s) of a candidate
- Requests evidence of the normal way of working of a candidate from teaching/classroom staff and keeps on file for inspection
- Ensures arrangements put in place for exams/assessments reflect a candidate's *normal way of working* within the centre
- 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
- 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
- Ensures the need for access arrangements for a candidate is considered on a subject by subject basis
- Completes appropriate documentation as required by the regulations of JCQ and the awarding body
- Ensures an appropriately qualified assessor is appointed, evidence of the assessor's qualification is obtained before he/she assesses candidates and that evidence of the qualification of the person appointed is held on file
- 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
- Ensures the qualified assessor(s) has access to the assessment objectives for the relevant specification(s) a candidate is undertaking
- Ensures the assessment process is administered in accordance with the regulations and that the correct procedures are followed as per Chapter 7 of [AA](#)
- Produces and annually reviews 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

Teaching staff

- Inform the SENDCo of any concerns, observations or feedback about a candidate or any support that might be needed by a candidate
- Provide information to evidence the normal way of working of candidates to the SENDCO

Support staff (Learning Support Assistants)

- Provide comments/observations to support the SENDCo in painting a holistic picture of need confirming normal way of working for a candidate (where appropriate)

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](#)
- Conducts appropriate assessments to identify the need(s) of a candidate
- Support the SENDCo in determining the need for and implementing access arrangements
- Ensures the assessment process is administered in accordance with the regulations
- Completes appropriate documentation as required by the regulations of JCQ and the awarding body

Examinations Officer

- Works with teaching staff, relevant support staff and the SENDCO to ensure centre-delegated and awarding body approved access arrangements are put in place for candidates taking internal and external exams and assessments
- 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

Use of word processors

More details can be found in the Word Processor Policy, but in summary:

In order to qualify to use a laptop in exams, a student should meet one or more of the following criteria:

- A learning disability which has a substantial and long term adverse effect on the student's ability to write legibly
- A medical condition
- A physical disability or temporary injury to their writing hand
- A sensory impairment
- Planning and organisational problems when writing by hand
- Poor handwriting that would be illegible to an unfamiliar eye
- Other condition evidenced by the SENDCO

In all cases, use of a word processor must reflect a candidate's normal way of working within the centre. Laptops will be provided by the school and must not have any access to the internet, internal network, shared folders or any other unauthorised software.

Requesting access arrangements

Roles and responsibilities

Special educational needs coordinator (SENDCo)

- 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
- Follows guidance in AA Section 8 to process approval applications for access arrangements for those qualifications included
- 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.
- 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
- Liaises with Assessor of Candidates with Learning Difficulties to ensure all candidates are tested that may require an access arrangement within an appropriate time window of the deadline
- 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
- Liaises with the exam officer 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)
- Ensures where JCQ forms are required to be completed, forms are signed (an electronic signature is permissible) and dated as required **prior** to approval being sought and that the original form is provided for processing and inspection purposes (This may be a hard copy paper version or an electronic version).
- 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 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 Centre Inspector upon request
- Maintains a file for each candidate 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
- Presents the files when requested by a JCQ Centre Inspector and addresses any queries/questions raised

Exams officer

- Alongside SENDCo, liaises with teaching staff regarding any appropriate modified paper requirements for candidates
- Following the appropriate process orders published modified papers, by the awarding body's deadline for the exam series, where these may be required for a candidate
- Liaises with the SENDCo 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)
- If the SENDCo is unavailable, presents the files/e-folders of access arrangements candidates when requested by a JCQ Centre Inspector and addresses any queries/questions raised
- 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 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 as listed on page 2/92 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 not meet the criteria for the arrangement(s)

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 SENDCo, 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

Exams officer

- Understands and follows instructions for Invigilation arrangements for candidates with access arrangements and Access arrangements in [ICE 2025-2026](#)
- Liaises with the SENDCo and other relevant centre staff to ensure appropriate arrangements, adjustments and adaptations are in place to facilitate access for disabled candidates to exam
- 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 site team staff regarding the provision of appropriate rooming and equipment that may be required to facilitate access for disabled candidates to exams
- 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 SENDCo 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
- Liaises with the SENDCo regarding the facilitation, invigilation and rooming of access arrangement candidates
- 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 and invigilators informed of those candidates with access arrangements and made aware of the access arrangement(s) awarded
- Ensures facilitators supporting candidates are appropriately trained and understand the rules of the particular access arrangement(s) and are made aware of the Equality Act 2010 and are trained in disability issues
- 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, and that the facilitator should not be a relative, friend, subject teacher/tutor or peer of the candidate
- Ensures invigilators are briefed prior to each exam session of the arrangements in place for a disabled candidate in their exam room
- 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
- 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
- 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 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 so the facilitator (Oral Language Modifier, Live Speaker, Sign Language Professional **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
- 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 those qualifications listed on page 2 of [AA](#)

Special educational needs coordinator (SENDCo)

- 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 temp 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 them 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
- Appoints appropriate centre staff as facilitators to support candidates who require a practical assistant, Oral Language Modifier, or Sign Language Professional
- Ensures facilitators supporting such candidates are appropriately trained and understand the rules of the particular access arrangement(s)
- 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 a facilitator acting as a prompter is aware of the appropriate way to prompt depending on the needs of the candidate

Other relevant centre staff

- All staff support the SENDCo and the exams officer to ensure appropriate arrangements, adjustments and adaptations are in place to facilitate access for disabled candidates to exams
- Senior/pastoral staff ensure that 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 are appropriate

- TPAT IT Support will be responsible for ensuring word processors/laptops are updated and set up in accordance to JCQ guidelines
- Site Team will ensure specialist equipment/furniture is allocated to correct exam rooms where it is required to support disabled candidates

Non-Examination Assessments and Internal Exams

Non-examination assessments (NEA) are normally set by a centre/awarding body, marked and internally moderated by the centre and externally moderated by the awarding body. ‘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’.

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

Special educational needs coordinator (SENDCo)

- 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 their 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 practise using the access arrangement(s) before their first examination

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 their formal supervised assessment
- Provide the SENDCo with assessment schedules to ensure arrangements are put in place when required
- Liaise with the SENDCo/Teaching staff regarding assessment materials that may need to be modified for a candidate

Teaching staff

- Support the SENDCo and Exams Officer 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 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. 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 inserted inside the candidate's work where this may be applicable to the assessment</i></p>
Significant difficulty in concentrating	Prompter Alternative rooming arrangements	<p><i>Gathers evidence to support substantial and long term adverse impairment, supporting evidence kept on file</i></p> <p><i>Confirms with candidate how and when they will be prompted</i></p> <p><i>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)</i></p>
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>SENDCo gathers evidence to support the need for the candidate to take exams at home and for SRB</i></p> <p><i>Pastoral head provides written statement for file to confirm the need</i></p> <p><i>Approval confirmed by SENDCo; AAO approval for both arrangements not required</i></p>

		<p><i>Pastoral head discussion with candidate to confirm the arrangements should be put in place</i></p> <p><i>EO submits 'Alternative site form' for timetabled written exams to awarding body/bodies online through CAP</i></p> <p><i>EO provides candidate with exam timetable and JCQ information for candidates</i></p> <p><i>Pastoral head 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 full 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 head 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</i></p> <p><i>Pastoral head informs candidate that special consideration has been requested</i></p>
Persistent and significant difficulties in accessing written text	Reader/ computer reader 25% Extra time Alternative rooming arrangements	<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>SENCo produces a statement, 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 and completes appropriate section of form 8</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>
Handwriting difficulty – very slow or illegible writing	Word Processor	<i>Teacher nominates candidate for laptop and provides evidence of need – samples of handwritten work to SENDCO</i>

		<p><i>SENDCO checks whether candidate meets criteria of word processor policy and if so, recommends use of Laptop in classroom to establish normal way of working</i></p> <p><i>Exams Officer provides school issue laptop with internet disabled for all internal and external examinations and assessments</i></p>
Handwriting difficulty due to injury at time of examination	Word Processor/Scribe	<p><i>Candidates condition is reported to the Exams Officer</i></p> <p><i>Exams Officer assesses whether candidate can use a word processor or if a scribe is needed.</i></p> <p><i>If scribe needed, EO processes application on AAO and obtains signed data protection notice from candidate. Both are held on file by SENDCO</i></p> <p><i>EO sources trained LSA/Invigilator to work with candidate as scribe and moves candidate to small room</i></p>