



Policies

Exams Disability Policy 2026-2029

Next review date: April 2029



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Purpose of the policy

This document is provided as an examinations-specific supplement to the centre-wide disability/accessibility policy/plan which details how Holmes Chapel Comprehensive School and Sixth Form College (known in this policy as HCCS) will:

Recognise its duties towards disabled candidates as defined under the terms of the Equality Act 2010. This includes a duty to explore and provide access to suitable courses, submit applications for reasonable adjustments and make reasonable adjustments to the service the centre provides to disabled candidates.

[Section 5.4 of the JCQ publication General Regulations for Approved Centres 2025-2026], referred to in this policy as GR.

This policy details how the centre facilitates access to examinations 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 examinations
- good practice in relation to the Equality Act 2010

The Equality Act 2010 and the definition of disability

A definition is provided on page 4 of the JCQ publication *Adjustments for candidates with disabilities and learning difficulties* Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments 2025-2026, 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.

Senior leaders

Are familiar with the entire contents of the annually updated JCQ publications including GR and AA.

Special educational needs and Disability coordinator (SENDCo)

Has full knowledge and understanding of the contents and refers to and directs relevant centre staff to the annually updated JCQ publication AA.

Teaching staff

Individually inform the SENDCo of any support that might be needed by a candidate as required.

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

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

Assessor of candidates with learning difficulties

Has a detailed and comprehensive knowledge and understanding of the JCQ publication AA.

Requesting access arrangements (roles and responsibilities)

Special educational needs and disabilities coordinator

(SENDCo)

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

Examinations manager

Is familiar with the entire contents of the annually updated JCQ publication GR and is aware of information contained in AA where this is relevant to their role.

Implementing examination access arrangements (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 Examinations Manager and other relevant centre staff in ensuring appropriate arrangements, adjustments and adaptations are in place to facilitate access for disabled candidates to exams.

Special educational needs and disability 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.

Exams manager

Understands and follows instructions for *Invigilation arrangements for candidates with access arrangements* and *Access arrangements* in ICE.

Other relevant centre staff

Support the SENDCo and the Examinations Manager to ensure appropriate arrangements, adjustments and adaptations are in place to facilitate access for disabled candidates to exams.

Internal assessments

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

Special educational needs and disability coordinator (SENDCo)

Liaises with teaching staff to implement appropriate access arrangements for candidates

Teaching staff

Support the SENDCo in implementing appropriate access arrangements for candidates

Internal examinations

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

Special educational needs and disability coordinator (SENDCo)

Liaises with teaching staff to implement appropriate access arrangements for candidates

Teaching 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"> • the SENDCo gathers evidence to support the need for the candidate to take exams at home • the pastoral head provides a written statement for file to confirm the need • approval confirmed by the SENDCo, NB AAO approval for both arrangements is not required • the pastoral head has a discussion with the candidate to confirm the arrangements should be put in place • the Examinations Manager submits an 'Alternative site form' for timetabled written exams to awarding body/bodies online through CAP • the Examinations Manager provides a candidate examination timetable and the JCQ information for candidates • the pastoral head confirms with the candidate the information is understood

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the pastoral head agrees with candidate that prior to each examination they will call to confirm their fitness to take the examination • the Examinations Manager allocates invigilator/s to the candidate's timetable and confirms the time of collection of examination papers and materials • the invigilator monitors the candidate's condition for each examination and records any issues on an incident log • the invigilator records rest breaks (time and duration) on an incident log and confirms the set time given for examination • the invigilator briefs the Examinations Manager after each examination on how the candidate's performance in examination may have been affected by his/her condition • The Examinations Manager discusses with the pastoral head if the candidate is eligible for special consideration (candidate present but disadvantaged) • The Examinations Manager processes the request for special consideration where applicable using the incident log as supporting evidence • the pastoral head informs the candidate that special consideration has been requested
<p>Persistent and significant difficulties in accessing written text</p>	<p>Reader, computer reader 25% or 50% extra time Separate invigilation within the centre</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the SENDCo confirms the candidate is disabled within the meaning of the Equality Act 2010 • an examination reading pen is sourced for use in the papers (or sections of papers) or up to 50% extra time awarded • a short concise file note produced on centre headed paper, signed and dated kept on file, confirming the nature of the candidate's impairment and that the use of a computer reader and/or a reader reflects his/her normal and current way of working within the centre (25% extra time - Form 8 completed as appropriate) • supporting evidence, AAO approval and signed candidate personal data consent form kept on file
<p>Significant difficulty in concentrating</p>	<p>Prompter Separate invigilation within the centre</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the SENDCo gathers evidence to support substantial and long term adverse impairment • the SENDCo confirms with candidate how and when they will be prompted • the SENDCo briefs the invigilator to monitor the candidate and the method of prompting (e.g. call out his name to bring his attention back to the paper or confirms requirement for separate room)

A wheelchair user	Desk Rooms Facilities Seating arrangements Practical assistant	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• the SENDCo applies for a practical assistant to help the candidate set up their wheelchair and other equipment in a practical assessment• the SENDCo provides a height adjustable desk in examination room• The Examinations Manager allocates an examination room on the ground floor near adapted bathroom facilities• the Examinations Manager spaces the desks to allow wheelchair access• the Examinations Manager seats the candidate near the examination room door• the Examinations Manager confirms that arrangements are in place to assist the candidate in case of an emergency evacuation of the examination room• the practical assistant cover sheet printed from AAO is completed by facilitator and inserted inside the candidate's work where this may be applicable to the assessment
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