# Loreto Grammar School

# Equalities Policy (Examinations)

2026/2027

This policy is reviewed annually to ensure compliance with current regulations

| Approved/reviewed by | |
|---|---|
| Mrs Stokes | |
| Date of next review | October 2027 |

## Key staff involved in the policy

| Role | Name(s) |
|---|---|
| SENCo | **Mrs Brooks** |
| Senior leader(s) | **Mrs Stokes, Mrs Walker** |
| Head of centre | **Mrs Beever** |
| Exams officer | **Mrs Caulkin** |
| Access arrangement facilitator(s) | **Mrs Brooks, Mrs Stokes** |

## Contents


Key staff involved in the policy ..... 2
Purpose of the policy ..... 4
Implementing access arrangements and the conduct of exams ..... 4
The Equality Act 2010 definition of disability ..... 4
Identifying the need for access arrangements ..... 4
Roles and responsibilities ..... 4
Use of word processors ..... 6
Requesting access arrangements ..... 6
Roles and responsibilities ..... 6
Implementing access arrangements and the conduct of exams ..... 7
Roles and responsibilities ..... 7
External assessments ..... 7
Internal assessments ..... 10
Internal exams/assessments ..... 11

## Purpose of the policy

This document is provided as an exams-specific supplement to the centre-wide equalities and/or disability/accessibility policy/plan which details how the centre will:

- recognise its duties towards disabled candidates, 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 .

  †*or any legislation in a relevant jurisdiction other than England and Wales which has an equivalent purpose and effect*

  (JCQ's **General Regulations for Approved Centres**, 5.4)

This document 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** (Definitions section)

This document is further referred to in this policy as **AARA**

## 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 current JCQ documents including GR and AARA

### Senior leaders

- Are familiar with the entire contents of current JCQ documents including GR and AARA
- Ensures the quality of the access arrangements/ reasonable adjustments process within the centre
- Ensures staff roles, responsibilities and processes in identifying, requesting and implementing access arrangements for **all** candidates are clearly defined and documented

- Ensures an appropriately qualified assessor(s) is appointed, evidence of the assessor's qualification(s) is obtained before they assess candidates and that evidence of the qualification(s) of the person(s) appointed is held on file
- Ensures the assessment process is administered in accordance with the regulations and that the correct procedures are followed as in Chapter 7 of AARA
- 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
- Defines and documents roles, responsibilities and processes in identifying, requesting and implementing access arrangements
- Produces and annually reviews and updates 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
- 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

**SENCo**

- Has full knowledge and understanding of the contents, refers to and directs relevant centre staff to the annually updated JCQ document AARA
- Leads on the access arrangements process to facilitate access for candidates
- 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 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
- 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 is 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 information to evidence the normal way of working of a candidate
- Completes appropriate documentation as required by the regulations of JCQ and the awarding body

**Teaching staff**

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

**Support staff**

- (where appropriate) Provide comments and observations to support the SENCo to 'paint a holistic picture of need', confirming normal way of working for a candidate

### Assessor of candidates with learning difficulties

An assessor of candidates with learning difficulties will be an appropriately qualified access arrangements assessor/psychologist/specialist teacher assessor who has detailed understanding of the JCQ document AARA.

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

### Use of word processors

Loreto Grammar School's Word Processor Policy can be found on the school website under the examinations policies tab

## Requesting access arrangements

### Roles and responsibilities

**SENCo**

- Determines if the arrangements identified for a candidate require prior approval from the awarding body before the arrangements are put in place or if approval is centre delegated
- To comply with the UK GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018, ensures relevant candidates **are** informed that an application for access arrangements will be processed using *Access arrangements online*
- Follows guidance in AARA (chapter 8) to process approval applications for access arrangements for those qualifications included
- Applies for approval where this is required, through *Access arrangements online* (AAO), or through the awarding body where qualifications may 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 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
- 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
- Holds all supporting evidence and presents such evidence to a JCQ Centre Inspector upon request
- Ensures that the agreed adjustment has been put in place before the candidate's first examination, e.g. internal tests and mock examinations
- 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.
- Ensures where JCQ forms are required to be completed, forms are signed (an electronic or typed signature is permissible) and dated as required **prior** to approval being sought and that the form is provided for processing and inspection purposes (This may be a hard copy paper version or an electronic version)

- Ensures the names of all other assessors, who are assessing candidates studying qualifications covered by AAO are entered into AAO to confirm their status
- 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)
- Maintains a file/e-folder for each candidate (the required documentation for a candidate will be in hard copy within the candidate's file/each of the required documents held electronically 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 covered by AAO (where approval is required), a printout/PDF of the AAO approval
- Presents the files/e-folders when requested by a JCQ Centre Inspector and addresses any queries/questions raised

**Exams officer**

- Is familiar with the entire contents of the current JCQ document GR and is aware of information contained in AARA where this may be relevant to their role
- If the SENCo is unavailable, presents the files/e-folders of access arrangements candidates when requested by a JCQ Centre Inspector and addresses any queries/questions raised
- 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 download a PDF copy of the standard question paper) or to open a question paper packet in the secure room within 90 minutes of the awarding body's 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)
- 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

## 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 document Instructions for conducting examinations (ICE).

**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

**Senior leaders**

- Senior staff responsible for the centre's **emergency evacuation procedures** will ensure that suitable arrangements are in place for a candidate with a disability who may need assistance when an exam room is evacuated

**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)
- Is familiar with the instructions for 'Invigilation arrangements for candidates with access arrangements' and 'Access arrangements' in ICE
- 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 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
- 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
- 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
- Liaises with the exams officer regarding facilitation and invigilation of access arrangement candidates in exams
- Liaises with the exams officer where a facilitator may be required to support a candidate requiring an emergency (temporary) access arrangement at the time of exams

**Exams officer**

- Understands and follows instructions for Invigilation arrangements for candidates with access arrangements and Access arrangements in the current ICE
- 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, Language Modifier, reader, scribe or Communication Professional)
- Ensures facilitators supporting candidates are appropriately trained and understand the rules of the particular access arrangement(s)
- Ensures a record of the content of training given to those facilitating an access arrangement for a candidate under examination conditions is kept and retained on file until the deadline for reviews of marking has passed or until any appeal, malpractice or other results enquiry has been completed, whichever is later
- 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 where a person is appointed to facilitate an access arrangement, the person appointed is not a relative, friend, peer or private tutor of the candidate
- Ensures a facilitator acting as a prompter is aware of the appropriate way to prompt depending on the needs of the candidate
- 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
- Ensures cover sheets, where these are required by the arrangement are completed as required by facilitators
- 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 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 regarding the facilitation and invigilation of access arrangement candidates
- Liaises with the SENCo regarding rooming of access arrangement candidates
- Liaises with the SENCo 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 candidates with access arrangements are identified on exam room seating plans and invigilators are informed of those candidates with access arrangements and made aware of the access arrangement(s) awarded
- 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 awarding body's published start time of the exam
- Understands that where permitted/approved, a secure question paper packet may need to be opened early in the secure room to facilitate the following:
    - a Language Modifier may have access to the question paper 60 minutes prior to the awarding body's published start time for the exam in order to prepare
    - the Sign Language Professional may have access to the question paper 60 minutes prior to the awarding body's published start time for the exam in order to prepare
    - a Live Speaker may have access to the transcript of the Listening examination 60 minutes prior to the awarding body's published start 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 particular arrangements
- 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 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 any qualifications sit outside the scope of AAO

**Other relevant centre staff**

- Senior staff to 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
- Senior staff 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
- Staff responsible for IT will ensure that this equipment is provided, tested and working proficiently prior to the examination starting
- Site staff will ensure that rooms and non-specialist equipment (chairs, tables, clocks etc.) used for exams will be set up as per the candidate's needs

**Internal assessments**

These are non-examination assessments (NEA) which are normally set by a centre/awarding body, marked and internally moderated/standardised by the centre and externally moderated by the awarding body. However, 'NEA' is not limited to internal assessment as externally marked and/or externally set practical examinations taken at different times across centres are also classified as 'NEA'.

**SENCo**

- 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 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

**Teaching staff**

- Support the SENCo in implementing appropriate access arrangements for candidates
- Ensures a candidate has had appropriate opportunities to practise using the access arrangement(s) before their first examination
- 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/assessments**

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

**Senior Leader (Mrs Stokes)**

- Provides the SENCo with internal exam timetable to ensure arrangements are put in place when required

**SENCo**

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

**Teaching staff**

- Support the SENCo in implementing appropriate access arrangements for candidates
- Provide exam materials that may need to be modified for a candidate