

College Group Policy

Exam Access Arrangements

Manager Responsible: Director of Campus - MS

Version Number: 1.0

Approval Date:	30 Jul 2025
Approved by:	Senior Management Team
Minute number:	
Ratified by:	Not required
Minute number:	
Review Date:	31 st August 2026
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Intended Audience: <i>(Check appropriate box)</i>			
Staff:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Governors:	<input type="checkbox"/>
Students:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	External:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

AMENDMENT SUMMARY

<u>Version</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Remarks</u>
1.0	5/3/2025	Initial Publication

Age, Disability, Gender & Race Equality Statement

Age, Disability, Gender and Race Equality Impact Measures will be set and monitored through analysis of all data related to potential suspected or actual abuse of this policy.

A copy of the Equality Impact Assessment Initial Screening Form is attached as an Annex to this document

1. Context and Terms

- 1.1 Access Arrangements allow learners with additional learning needs, disabilities or temporary injuries to access assessments and demonstrate their skills, knowledge and understanding without changing the demands of the assessment. For example, readers, scribes and Braille question papers. In this way Awarding Bodies will comply with the duty of the Equality Act 2010 to make 'reasonable adjustments'.
- 1.2 The Equality Act 2010 requires an Awarding Body to make reasonable adjustments where a disabled person would be at a substantial disadvantage in undertaking an assessment. A reasonable adjustment for a particular person may be unique to that individual and may not be included in the list of available Access Arrangements.
- 1.3 How reasonable the adjustment is will depend on a number of factors including the specific needs of the individual learner. An adjustment may not be considered reasonable if it involves unreasonable costs, timeframes or affects the security or integrity of the assessment. There is no duty on the Awarding Bodies to make any adjustment to the assessment objectives being tested in an assessment.
- 1.4 Special Consideration is a post examination adjustment to a candidate's mark or grade to reflect temporary injury, illness or other indisposition at the time of the examination/assessment.
- 1.5 In this policy the term "The SEND Team" means the SENCO who is responsible for co-ordinating access arrangements and any other staff working for or on their behalf in supporting with the process. For the purposes of this policy, this could include a suitably qualified external Assessor.
- 1.6 In this policy the term "The Exams Team" means the Exams Manager and any other staff working for or on their behalf in supporting with the process.
- 1.7 The college follows and applies the guidance and regulations of The Joint Council For Qualifications. According to these regulations Normal Way of Working is stated in 4.2.5 of the regulations as:

4.2.5 The arrangement(s) put in place must reflect the support given to the candidate in the centre†, for example:
in the classroom (where appropriate);
working in small groups for reading and/or writing;
support lessons;
intervention strategies;
in internal tests/examinations;
mock examinations.

This is commonly referred to as 'Normal Way of Working'. For candidates with learning difficulties, this is typically the background information recorded within Part 1 of Form 8 by the SENCo or the assessor working within the centre. "

2. Identification of Requirements

- 2.1 Chelmsford College will ensure that all students have equal access to examinations and are neither advantaged nor disadvantaged over their peers by any long term, substantial SEND or additional learning needs. This activity is facilitated by applying the rules for Access Arrangements as set out in the most recent Joint Council for Qualifications Regulations^[1] (JCQ Regs). The College will abide by the JCQ regulations, so that there is parity in how access arrangements are awarded throughout a student's secondary schooling and into further education.
- 2.2 Teaching staff are expected to support in the identification and evidencing of a learner's needs for adjustments through observation within their normal day to day teaching practice and in reviewing mock and other internal assessments.
- 2.3 The College will ensure that every learner has an opportunity to request adjustments at the point of enrolment.
- 2.4 It is the responsibility of the learner to highlight needs at the beginning of a programme of study and to update their tutor to any changing needs as soon as possible. Schools and other previous settings do not send evidence of previous arrangements to colleges. The learner is responsible for providing any evidence of previous access arrangements to the college if they wish this to be taken into consideration. Previous arrangements alone do not constitute sufficient evidence for arrangements to be granted. Where learners complete a programme of study in one subject and undertake a further programme of study in a different subject in a new academic year, they must notify The SEND Team and The Exams Team at enrolment so that their requirements can be reviewed.

3. Assessment and application for approval

The process for gathering information, making assessments and applying for the granting of Exam Access Arrangements takes place over a period of time which is summarised below. A detailed chronology of activity and deadlines for the current academic year is given at Annex A.

3.1 Enrolment

- a. During enrolment learners will be asked if they require special adjustments for exams and to identify the type of adjustments that may be needed. Learners will be asked to complete a Data Consent form and Privacy Notice, which enables the college to apply for exam arrangements on-line should an assessment of needs confirm a request is appropriate. Learners who wish to be considered for exam arrangements will be provided with a copy of this policy together with further information and advice.

Learners who do not require adjustments will be asked to sign to confirm they do not wish to be assessed.

^[1] https://www.jcq.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/11/JCQ-AARA-24-25_FINAL_accessible.pdf

3.2 Evidence Gathering

- a. The SEND Team will notify Progress Tutors, Work Based Tutors, Apprentice Skills Coaches, the Maths and English Team and any other relevant staff of those learners who have requested an arrangement;
- b. Learners may need to supply medical evidence to support their eligibility and will be required to provide this to the SEND Team within a few weeks of enrolment (please see Annex A for 2025/26 key dates and deadlines). Information about what constitutes acceptable evidence will be provided to learners at enrolment and it will be the responsibility of the learner to obtain and submit the correct medical evidence to support their request by the deadline. Once received, the SEND Team will upload this evidence to college systems.

3.3 Processing of requests and Assessment.

- a. Tutors and maths and English teachers will evidence their learners' Normal Way of Working and submit the evidence The SEND Team for processing.
- b. The SEND Team will review and match evidence for centre granted arrangements and determine which learners will require further assessment by a Level 7 qualified assessor. Learners may fall into both categories and could require either of the above.
- c. The Assessor may be internal or external to the college. Where an assessor is external to the college, appropriate checks will be made as to suitability and qualifications as required by JCQ. Certificates and other appropriate information will be held by the college and will be available for inspection purposes.
- d. Where a learner is identified by a tutor as requiring special arrangements due to an emerging need, and therefore the learner has not requested these arrangements at enrolment, the tutor should discuss this with the learner. The tutor should also discuss the needs with The SEND Team and submit Normal Way of Working evidence. It is expected that tutors will get to know their learners well and review any emerging needs with their learners early in the first term. Therefore, requests will not be accepted after the end of November.
- e. The SEND Team will contact the learner to obtain a signed copy of the Data Protection and Privacy Notice and agreement to proceed to process the request.
- f. The SEND Team will review arrangements for any learner with an EHCP as required by the JCQ regulations and SEND Code of Practice.
- g. The SEND Team will complete any required JCQ paperwork prior to assessments taking place. Assessments will be prioritised in an order determined by the date of a learner's exam(s).

4. Arrangements for Mock Exams and Internal Assessments

- 4.1 It is unlikely that all checks, evidence and assessment will be processed in time for some internal assessments and mock exams. Tutors will be expected to plan for this and facilitate arrangements based on the learner's request at enrolment. This will ensure no learner is disadvantaged in internal assessment, but it will also help staff to compile the Normal Way of Working evidence required and help build the required history and profile of needs required by JCQ.

5. Application for Exam Access Arrangements.

- 5.1 Following the assessment process, The SEND Team will complete the appropriate forms (F8, F9 and SENCO files notes). This information will be shared with the Exams Team who will make the appropriate applications to exam boards and update college systems with the arrangements granted.

6 Impact of poor attendance

- 6.1 Where a learner has poor attendance this may impact the ability of the tutor to gather the Normal Way of Working evidence in class and subsequently the college may be unable to apply for exam arrangements.
- 6.2 Learners who do not attend any booked assessments will be offered a second opportunity to attend. If a learner does not attend a second appointment, their request for arrangements will be forfeited. In exceptional circumstances, learners may be offered further opportunities for assessment, but these will be considered on an individual basis and will be subject to JCQ deadlines and the availability of an assessor to carry out assessment. In these circumstances learners will be required to provide evidence of a valid reason for non-attendance to the two previous appointments, such as medical certificates.

7. Learners who do not use their granted arrangements

Learners who are granted arrangements but are recorded by invigilators as not using them on two separate and concurrent occasions, will forfeit the arrangements in that academic year. A request to be assessed again can be made in the following academic year and The SEND Team and The Exams Team will review this request and the suitability of any arrangements that are being requested.

8 Emergency Access Arrangements and Special Consideration

Where a learner may be suffering from a condition or injury which could not have been foreseen and which may impair their ability to access their exams (for example, a broken wrist or sudden sight or hearing impairment) the college will make every effort to put appropriate arrangements in place in line with JCQ guidance. Learners should communicate any such needs to The SEND Team or The Exam Team as soon as possible before their exam takes place.

9 Private SEND Assessments as Evidence for Arrangements

Learners may have privately commissioned an assessment/diagnosis of SEND needs (for example, a Dyslexia assessment). This privately obtained diagnosis may include recommendations about exam arrangements. These reports can be submitted to the college as evidence of a SEND need. However, they cannot be

used to determine what arrangements the college will apply in exams. Only recommendations made by the qualified assessor appointed by the college, or recommendations by The SEND Team in applying the JCQ Regs for centre-granted adjustments, will be used to determine a learner's arrangements.

ANNEX A

Academic Year 2025/26 – Detailed Dates for Exam Access Arrangements

	Phase	Dates for 2025/26
1	Learner request for assessment	Enrolment Period August 2025
2	Deadline for submission of Medical Evidence.	19 th September 2025
3	Deadline for Tutor Evidence and Tutor requests for Assessment.	3 rd October 2025

Deadlines 1 and 2 above apply to all learners enrolling for our September start courses. On all other programmes, including apprenticeships and January or other in-year starts, learners will be required to request arrangements and submit medical evidence within three weeks of their enrolment. Tutors will be required to submit Normal Way of Working evidence within 8 weeks of enrolment. If the first external exam occurs before week 8, tutors will be required to submit Normal Way of Working evidence 4 weeks before the exam.

Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) Initial Screening Form

Name of the Policy, Procedure, Practice or Proposal being screened:

Provide a brief description of its purpose:

Are there controls in place to monitor the uniform application of this practice? (if no please explain below)

Yes	No
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Does the policy or process have the potential to affect a particular group disproportionately in either a positive or negative way? Please provide comments with supporting evidence:

If you have identified a medium or high equality impact please complete the following, otherwise leave blank. Add additional comment below the questions as necessary.

Are there any other policies or practices that need to be assessed alongside this screening?

Yes	No
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Should the policy or practice proceed to a full Equality Impact Assessment?

Yes	No
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If the answer to the above question is no, please give the reasons for this decision:

If a full impact assessment is required, please give the date by which it will be completed

(Note – If you have assessed a negative impact as high, you must seek advice and conduct a full EIA on a high priority basis)

Declaration:

We are satisfied that an initial screening has been carried out and a full Equality Impact Assessment [is / is not] required at this time.

(If a full EIA is required, a template form is available within the EIA Guidance Notes which must be read before completing a full EIA).

Manager:

Signature:

Date:

Countersigned

Signature:

Date: