

College Group Policy

Exam Access Arrangements

Manager Responsible: Director of Campus - MS

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Staff:	☒	Governors:	☐
Students:	☒	External:	☒



Chelmsford College

**Dovedale
Nursery**



AMENDMENT SUMMARY

<u>Version</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Remarks</u>
1.0	5/3/2025	Initial Publication
1.1	10/9/25	AIM Awarding Body Requirements Guidance for complaints/appeals
1.2	16/7/26	Access Arrangements for short courses 2.3
		Evidence of timed assessments 2.2 and 3.3
		Deadline for queries/complaints 10
		Update to dates in Annex A

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 **and providing evidence of timed assessments where required.**
- 2.3 The College will ensure that every learner has an opportunity to request adjustments at the point of enrolment, **with the exception short courses of less than 3 months duration where the college would have insufficient time to gather the required evidence to satisfy JCQ regulations.**
- 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 2026/27 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, carry out timed assessments and submit the evidence The SEND Team for processing within the specified deadlines.
- 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 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 paperwork. 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 centregranted adjustments, will be used to determine a learner's arrangements.

10 Complaints and Appeals

If a learner has a complaint about Access Arrangements or Special Considerations they should send this to The SEND Team using the mailbox SENDSupport@chelmsford.ac.uk clearly setting out their concern or complaint.

It is the responsibility of the learner to check that any request made has been completed and to confirm the arrangements that have been granted. Any queries or complaints must be sent to the SEND Team by 26th February 2026. No further requests, complaints or queries can be dealt with (other than those outlined in Paragraph 8 or Annex A relating to apprentices).

ANNEX A

Academic Year 2026/27 – Detailed Dates for Exam Access Arrangements

□

Assessor visit 1 - apprentices only 5th October 2026	NWW, evidence and timed assessments due 18th Sept
Assessor visit 2 - full time programmes 16-20th November 2026 Wave 1	NWW, evidence and timed assessments due 28th October
Assessor Visit 3 - 14-16th December 2026 Wave 2	As above unless apprentice or mid-year starts.*
Assessor Visit 4 - 8 and 9 February 2027	As above unless apprentice or mid-year starts.*
Deadline for queries and requests. No further staff and student queries relating to access arrangements to be sent to SEND Team unless emergency concession required (ie broken leg/wrist etc). Does not apply to apprentices.	29th February 2027
End of process	31st March 2027
Assessor Visit apprentices only 5 - 10th May	NWW, evidence, timed assessments due 23rd May

*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 inyear starts, learners will be required to request arrangements and submit medical evidence within three weeks of their enrolment unless otherwise specified. 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)

Name and Job Title of staff member completing the assessment	Tracy Fielder, Cross College SENCO/Manager
Name of the policy, practice, or service being assessed	Exam Access Arrangements Policy
What are the main objectives or aims of the policy, practice or service?	To inform and guide learners, staff and parents/carers.
On whom could this policy, practice or service impact?	Learners, parents/carers and staff
Date EIA Assessment completed	16/7/26

Consider the following questions in terms of on whom the policy, practice, or service could potentially have an impact. Detail the impact assessment in Table below, areas you have considered mitigations to reduce any potential negative impact and review period.

Could the policy, practice, or service:

- a. Prevent the promotion of equality of opportunity or good relations between different groups of people?
- b. Create barriers to allocation of pay fairly & equitably or new staff obtaining employment because of a protected characteristic?
- c. Affect the usage of the strategy in practice?
- d. Result in someone with a protected characteristic being disproportionately advantaged or disadvantaged?
- e. Make it more or less likely that someone with a protected characteristic will be at risk of harassment or victimisation?

Characteristic	Potential Impact	Evidence to demonstrate this impact or state " <i>None Identified</i> "	Mitigations to reduce potential Impact
Marriage / Civil Partnership		None identified	
Pregnant Worker or Maternity		None identified	
Race / Ethnicity		None identified	
Religion / Belief		None identified	
Sex		None identified	
Sexual Orientation		None identified	

Any Other Areas of Consideration

Characteristic	Potential Impact	Evidence to demonstrate this impact	Mitigations to reduce potential Impact

Generic Controls

The College has generic controls in place to monitor the uniform application of this strategy in practice through:

- a) The SEND Team and Exams Team in completion of processes relating to Exam Access Arrangements and the application of JCQ regulations.