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Ethos Academy Trust

Equalities Policy

2025 - 2026

1	Summary	This policy documents how Ethos College facilitates exams for candidates with access arrangements in relation to the Equality Act 2010			
2	Responsible person	Head of Centre / SENDCo			
3	Accountable ELT member	Mel Kilner			
4	Applies to	Ethos College			
5	Trustees and/or individuals who have overseen development of this policy	N/A			
6	Headteachers/Service Heads who were consulted and have given approval (if applicable)	Mel Kilner			
8	Ratifying committee(s) and date of final approval	Head Teacher			
9	Version Number	1.6			
10	Available on	Every	Y/N	Trust Website Academy Website Staff Portal	Y/N Y/N Y/N
11	Related documents (if applicable)				
12	Disseminated to	Entire College			
13	Date of implementation (when shared)				
14	Date of next formal review	November 2026			
15	Consulted with Recognised Trade Unions	N/A			

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Date	Version	Action	Summary of changes
19/09/23	1.4	No Changes	
17/10/24	1.5	No Changes	
24/11/25	1.6	Minor Changes	Staff and links

1. Purpose of the policy

This document is provided as an exams-specific supplement to the Ethos Academy Trust Accessibility Plan which details how the centre

“recognises its duties towards disabled candidates, including private candidates, as defined under the terms of the Equality Act 2010†. This must include a duty to explore and provide access to suitable courses, to submit applications for reasonable adjustments through the access arrangements process and to make reasonable adjustments to the services the centre provides to disabled candidates for any legislation in a relevant jurisdiction other than England and Wales which has an equivalent purpose and effect”

[Quote taken directly from section 5.4 of the current JCQ publication *General regulations for approved centres*

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

2. The Equality Act 2010 definition of disability

A definition is provided on page 14 of the JCQ publication *Adjustments for candidates with disabilities and learning difficulties Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments 2025-2026* (Definitions section).

This publication is further referred to in this policy as [AA](#).

3. Identifying the need for access arrangements

3.1 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
- ▶ Ensures an appropriately qualified assessor(s) is appointed, evidence of the assessor's qualification(s) is obtained before he/she/they assesses candidates and that evidence of the qualification(s) of the person(s) appointed is held on file

Head of Centre / SLT

- ▶ Are familiar with the entire contents of the annually updated JCQ publications including GR and AA
- ▶ Ensures the quality of the access arrangements process within the centre
- ▶ Ensures staff roles, responsibilities and processes in identifying, requesting and implementing access arrangements are clearly defined and documented
- ▶ Ensures the assessment process is administered in accordance with the regulations and that the correct procedures are followed as per Chapter 8 of AA
- ▶ Ensures a policy demonstrating the centre's compliance with relevant legislation is in place
- ▶ Supports the SENDCo in determining the need for and implementing access arrangements
- ▶ Ensures a statement is provided which details the criteria the centre uses to award and allocate word processors for exams (copy kept in the Exams Policy file)
- ▶ Provides a policy on the use of word processors in exams and assessments (copy kept in the Exams Policy file)
- ▶ Ensures the SENDCo 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

SENDCo

- ▶ Has full knowledge and understanding of the contents, refers to and directs relevant centre staff to the annually updated JCQ publication AA
- ▶ Attends annual mandatory training.
- ▶ Leads on the access arrangements process to facilitate access for candidates
- ▶ Defines and documents roles, responsibilities and processes in identifying, requesting and implementing access arrangements (Access arrangements policy)
- ▶ 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
- ▶ 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
- ▶ Provide information to evidence the normal way of working of a candidate
- ▶ Conducts appropriate assessments to identify the need(s) of a candidate
- ▶ Provides appropriate evidence to confirm the need(s) of a candidate

- ▶ Completes appropriate documentation as required by the regulations of JCQ and the awarding body

Teachers / Support Staff

- ▶ Inform the SENDCo of any support that might be needed by a candidate
- ▶ Provide comments/observations to support the SENDCo to “paint a holistic picture of need” confirming normal way of working for a candidate

Exams Officer (EO)

- ▶ Presents when requested by a JCQ Centre Inspector, evidence of the assessor’s qualification

3.2 Use of word processors

The use of a word processor in exams and assessments is an available access arrangement. Ethos College complies with [AA](#) “Adjustments for candidates with disabilities and learning difficulties” and (chapter 5.8) “Word processor - when awarding and allocating a candidate the use of a word processor in his/her/their exams”. The Word Processor policy and statement is kept on file by the Exams Officer.

“The centre will provide a word processor (e.g. computer, laptop or tablet), with the spelling and grammar check and predictive text switched off, to a candidate where it is their normal way of working within the centre, unless an awarding body’s specification says otherwise. For example, where the curriculum is delivered electronically and the centre provides word processors to all candidates. This also includes an electronic brail.” [ICE 14.20]

A member of the centre’s senior leadership team must produce 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. This policy must be available for inspection [[AA](#) 5.8]

4. Requesting access arrangements

4.1 Roles and responsibilities

SLT

- ▶ If the SENDCo is unavailable, a member of SLT presents the files/e-folders of access arrangements candidates when requested by a JCQ Centre Inspector and addresses any queries/questions raised

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
- ▶ Follows guidance in AA Section 8 to process approval applications for access arrangements for included qualifications
- ▶ 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 appropriate and required evidence is held on file to confirm validation responses in AAO including (where required) the completion of JCQ Form 8 (Application for access arrangements – Profile of learning difficulties), and/or centre based evidence including concise file note(s) on centre headed paper, signed and dated, and a body of evidence to substantiate the candidate's normal way of working within the centre (Form 8 must only be used for candidates with learning difficulties who are not subject to a current EHCP or Statement of Special Educational Needs or those requiring a Language Modifier)
- ▶ Ensures where form 8 is required to be completed, the form is signed (a handwritten, electronic or typed signature is acceptable) 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 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 meet the criteria for the arrangement(s)
- ▶ Ensures that arrangements, and approval where required, are in place before a candidate takes his/her/their first exam or assessment (which is externally assessed or internally assessed/externally moderated)
- ▶ Ensures that where approval is required that this is processed at the start of the course and at the latest by the awarding body deadline
- ▶ Maintains a file/e-folder for each candidate (the required documentation for a candidate will either be all in hard copy within the candidate's file or all in electronic format 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 included qualifications (where approval is required), a printout/PDF of the AAO approval and a signed candidate personal data consent form (which provides candidate consent to their personal details being shared)

- ▶ 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 annually updated JCQ publication GR and is aware of information contained in AA where this may be relevant to the EO role
- ▶ Following the appropriate process (using AAO for those qualifications included in the tool; using JCQ VQ/EA), 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)

SENDCo & Exams Officer

- ▶ Ensure that arrangements, and approval where required, are in place before a candidate takes his/her/their first exam or assessment (which is externally assessed or internally assessed/externally moderated)
- ▶ Liaise with teaching staff regarding any appropriate modified paper requirements for candidates

5. Implementing access arrangements and the conduct of exams

5.1 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).

5.1.1 Roles and Responsibilities

SLT

- ▶ 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
- ▶ Liaises with the SENDCo and EO to ensure that invigilators are made aware of the Equality Act 2010 and are trained in disability issues

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 temporary emergency arrangement is required at the time of an exam)
- ▶ 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
- ▶ Trains appropriate centre staff as facilitators to support candidates (practical assistant, prompter, Language Modifier, reader, scribe or Communication Professional) and ensures that they understand the rules of the particular access arrangement(s)
- ▶ Ensures a facilitator acting as a prompter is aware of the appropriate way to prompt depending on the needs of the candidate
- ▶ Liaises with the EO 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

Exams Officer

- ▶ Understands and follows instructions for Invigilation arrangements for candidates with access arrangements and Access arrangements in ICE 2022-2023
- ▶ Ensures exam information (JCQ information for candidate's documents, individual exam timetable etc.) is adapted where this may be required for a disabled candidate to access it
- ▶ 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
- ▶ 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
- ▶ Prints pre-populated cover sheets from AAO where this is required for particular arrangements
- ▶ Ensures that cover sheets have been fully completed by invigilators before candidates' scripts are dispatched to examiners/markers
- ▶ Liaises with the SENDCo to ensure exam information (JCQ information for candidate's documents, individual exam timetable etc.) is adapted where this may be required for a disabled candidate to access it
- ▶ Liaises with the SENDCo regarding the facilitation and invigilation of access arrangement candidates

- ▶ Liaises with the SENDCo regarding rooming of access arrangement candidates
- ▶ Liaises with the SENDCo 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/their exams
- ▶ Ensures candidates with access arrangements are identified on exam room seating plans
- ▶ Ensures invigilators are made aware of candidates with access arrangements and the arrangements 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, secure exam question paper packets may need to be opened early so the facilitator (Language Modifier, Live Speaker, Communication 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
- ▶ 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
- ▶ Ensures that invigilators are aware of 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
- ▶ 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 exams
- ▶ Ensures a facilitator acting as a prompter will not normally be the candidate's own subject teacher and must not be a relative, friend or peer of the candidate (understanding that a private tutor cannot act as a prompter for the candidate)
- ▶ Ensures where the candidate's own subject teacher will be used (in exceptional circumstances) as a facilitator, an invigilator will be present at all times
- ▶ Ensures where a facilitator is allocated to support a candidate under exam conditions that they will not be a relative, friend, peer or private tutor of the candidate

SENDCo/Exams Officer

- ▶ Ensure a candidate is involved in any decisions about arrangements, adjustments and/or adaptations that may be put in place for him/her and ensures the candidate understands what will happen at exam time
- ▶ 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 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
- ▶ 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
- ▶ Will make all necessary arrangements where IT or other specialist equipment/furniture may need to be provided or adapted for a candidate

Invigilators/ (Support Staff)

- ▶ Are familiar with the instructions for Invigilation arrangements for candidates with access arrangements and Access arrangements in ICE 2025-2026
- ▶ Are aware of 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

5.2 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.

“Externally marked and/or externally set practical examinations taken at different times across centres are classified as ‘NEA’.”

[Quote taken from the JCQ publication *Instructions for conducting non-examination assessments* – Foreword]

5.2.1 Roles and responsibilities

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 his/her/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)

- ▶ Liaises with the teacher and Exams Officer where a facilitator may be required to support a candidate requiring an emergency (temporary) access arrangement at the time of his/her/their formal supervised assessment

Teaching Staff

- ▶ Support the SENDCo in implementing appropriate access arrangements for candidates
- ▶ Provide the SENDCo with assessment schedules to ensure arrangements are put in place when required
- ▶ Ensure a candidate has had appropriate opportunities to practise using the access arrangement(s) before his/her/their first examination

Exams Officer

- ▶ Ensures cover sheets are completed as required by facilitators

Teaching Staff / Exams Officer

- ▶ Liaise with the SENDCo regarding assessment materials that may need to be modified for a candidate

5.3. Internal exams

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

5.3.1 Roles and responsibilities

SENDCo

- ▶ Liaises with the EO to implement appropriate access arrangements for candidates

Exams Officer

- ▶ Supports the SENDCo in implementing appropriate access arrangements for candidates
- ▶ Provides exam materials that may need to be modified for a candidate
- ▶ Provides the SENDCo with internal exam timetable to ensure arrangements are put in place when required

- ▶ Creates seating plans which clearly show any access arrangements that are in place
- ▶ Monitors use of access arrangements in order to provide feedback to the SENDCo

6. 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 on the following page 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 needs	Possible arrangements	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"> • SENDCo gathers evidence to support the need for the candidate to take exams at home • Teacher provides written statement for file to confirm the need • Approval confirmed by SENDCo; AAO approval for both arrangements not required • SENDCo discussion with candidate to confirm the arrangements that will be put in place • EO submits 'Alternative site form' for timetabled written exams to awarding body/bodies online through CAP • EO provides candidate with exam timetable and JCQ information for candidates • SENDCo confirms with candidate that the information is understood • Teacher agrees with candidate that they will call prior to each exam to confirm fitness to take exam • EO allocates invigilator(s) to candidate's timetable; confirms time of collection of exam papers and materials • Invigilator monitors candidate's condition for each exam and records any issues on incident log • Invigilator records rest breaks (time and duration) on SRB sheet and confirms set time given for exam • Invigilator briefs EO after each exam on how candidate's performance in exam may have been affected by his/her/their condition • EO discusses with SENDCo if candidate is eligible for special consideration (candidate present but disadvantaged) • EO processes request(s) for special consideration where applicable; incident log(s) and SRB sheets provide supporting evidence • EO informs candidate that special consideration has been requested
Persistent and significant difficulties in accessing written text	Reader/computer reader 25% Extra time Coloured paper Separate invigilation within the centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SENDCo confirms candidate is disabled within the meaning of the Equality Act 2010 • SENDCo/EO check for papers testing reading • SENDCo/EO source computer reader/examination reading pen for use in papers (or sections of papers) testing reading OR up to 50% extra time awarded • SENDCo – Form 8, signed and dated, with Sections 1, 2 and 3 completed; kept on file with body of supporting evidence, printed approval from AAO and signed candidate personal data consent form • EO timetables a separate room and invigilator • EO provides exam papers on the relevant coloured paper
Significant difficulty in concentrating	Prompter Separate invigilation within the centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SENDCo gathers evidence to support substantial and long term adverse impairment • SENDCo confirms with candidate how and when they will be prompted • SENDCo briefs invigilator to monitor candidate and the method of prompting • EO timetables a separate room and invigilator (if necessary)
A wheelchair user	Desk Rooms Facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SENDCo 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 • EO provides height adjustable desk in exam room

	Seating arrangements Practical assistant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EO allocates exam room nearest to adapted bathroom facilities • EO spaces desks to allow wheelchair access • EO seats candidate near exam room door • SLT/SENDCo confirm arrangements in place to assist the candidate in case of emergency evacuation of the exam room • EO prints practical assistant cover sheet from AAO; to be completed by facilitator and inserted inside the candidate's work where this may be applicable to the assessment
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