



EXAMINATION SUPPORT POLICY

Process Area	Student Services
Reference Number	STS/021
Directorate	Client Services

Issue No	Date	Details	Author	Approved
001	Aug 2018	First issue	RS	Governing Body
002	Feb 2020	Minor changes	RS	Governing Body
003	Jan 2023	Reviewed with minor changes	RS	Governing Body

If requested, the College will make the policy available in alternative formats to accommodate visual impairments. The policy can also be downloaded from the College website and made available in alternative languages upon request.

1. POLICY STATEMENT

This Examination Support Policy sets out the arrangements for students who are entitled to support during their exams as a result of their learning difficulty and/or disability. The College strives to provide equal access, where reasonable, to the full range of College facilities and services and to treat all students with respect and dignity.

This policy is aligned to the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) regulations in respect of identifying the need for, requesting and implementing access arrangements. JCQ recognise that the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA) applies within Northern Ireland.

The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA) requires an awarding body to make reasonable adjustments where a candidate, who is disabled within the meaning of the Act, would be at a substantial disadvantage in comparison to someone who is not disabled. The awarding body is required to take reasonable steps to overcome that disadvantage.

Access arrangements are pre-examination adjustments for candidates based on both evidence of need and normal way of working. Access arrangements facilitate participation from individuals with disabilities who would otherwise have difficulty in demonstrating their knowledge and skill. SRC aims to ensure all students have equal access to examinations and are neither advantaged nor disadvantaged over their peers.

Access Arrangements fall into two distinct categories: some arrangements are delegated to centres, others require prior JCQ awarding body approval. Access Arrangements allow candidates/learners with special educational needs, disabilities or temporary injuries to access the examination without changing the demands of the assessment. For example, readers, scribes and modified question papers. In this way Awarding Bodies will comply with the duty of the DDA to make 'reasonable adjustments'.

2. SCOPE

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Examination Support procedural note and the SRC Word processor policy and applies to staff, students and third party organisations providing services in conjunction with the College.

3. DEFINITIONS

Access Arrangements	Access arrangements are examination support arrangement which are agreed before an examination. They allow candidates with special educational needs, disabilities or temporary injuries to access the examination and show what they know and can do without changing the demands of the examination. The intention behind an access arrangement is to meet the particular needs of an individual candidate without affecting the integrity of the examination. Access arrangements are the principal way in which awarding bodies comply with the duty under the DDA to make 'reasonable adjustments.'
Normal Way of Working Form (NWW)	Normal Way of Working Form (NWW) is a College devised form to capture information from tutors on each student's normal way of working in the classroom setting.
JCQ Form 8	The application form for Access Arrangements (exams) with a profile of the students learning difficulties.

Access Arrangements Online (AAO) Form	Access arrangements online (AAO) allows centres to submit access arrangements applications and order modified papers quickly and efficiently.
Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ)	The Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) is a membership organisation comprising the seven largest providers of qualifications in the UK. The JCQ guides members on issues of examination administration and, when appropriate, qualification and wider education policy.
Learning Support Co-ordinator (LSC)	This is a cross College role which carries with it responsibility for providing support for Further Education, Discrete or Higher Education students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities or who need to access additional support in their learning.
Head of Centre	The Director of Curriculum of the College.

4. RESPONSIBILITIES

4.1 HEAD OF CENTRE

The Chief Executive or designated nominee from the Senior Management Team must ensure that a reasonable adjustment implemented by the centre on behalf of the learner is based on firm evidence of a barrier to examination and is in line with JCQ guidance. Failure to do so may result in advice or action for the centre through to the implementation of steps to manage centre malpractice. This could ultimately lead to the recall of certificates, removal of qualification approval or removal of centre approval.

4.2 LEARNING SUPPORT MANAGER & EXAMINATIONS MANAGER

The Learning Support Manager and the Examinations Manager have responsibility for the effective communication and implementation of the Examination Support Policy and Procedure and ensuring that all staff for which they have responsibility are aware of the College policy on Access Arrangements.

4.3 LEARNING SUPPORT CO-ORDINATOR (LSC)

LSC must:

- be familiar with, and comply with College policies and procedures relating to Access Arrangements;
- co-operate with requirements introduced to provide students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities access arrangement for examinations;
- lead on the access arrangements process within Southern Regional College;
- undertake any training or guidance provided on Access Arrangements.

4.4 CURRICULUM STAFF

Curriculum staff must:

- be familiar with, and comply with College policies and procedures relating to Access Arrangements;
- co-operate with requirements introduced to provide students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities access arrangement for examinations;
- be responsible for identifying students needing exam access through continuous classroom observations and liaise with the relevant Learning Support Co-ordinator;
- provide evidence of a student's normal way of working when required;

- ensure that students with exam access arrangements will have these arrangements in class tests, mock exams and examinations;
- undertake any training or guidance provided on access arrangements.

4.5 EXAMINATIONS STAFF

Examination staff must:

- be familiar with, and comply with College policies and procedures relating to Access Arrangements;
- be responsible for processing the application and information provided by the LSC and forward the approval outcome to all relevant staff;
- co-ordinate the provision and staffing of each access arrangement on the day of examination;
- undertake any training or guidance provided on Access Arrangements.

4.6 STUDENTS

All students are required to inform College staff at the beginning of the academic year if they have been previously awarded access arrangements to ensure these arrangements are considered in Southern Regional College. Students may be requested by the Learning Support Co-ordinator to obtain documentary evidence of their access arrangements from their previous educational setting. An important principle is that just because a student received exam access arrangements in the past it does not necessarily follow that they will continue to receive exam access arrangements as their needs may have changed.

5. DISTRIBUTION

SRC Website
SRC SharePoint/ Intranet
All Clients

6. RELATED DOCUMENTS

- JCQ Adjustments for candidates with disabilities and learning difficulties: Access arrangements and reasonable adjustments
- JCQ General and Vocational Qualifications: Suspected Malpractice in Examinations and Assessments
- JCQ Access Arrangements Online Notice to Centres: Access Arrangements Online
- SRC Examination Support Procedure
- SRC Learning Support Policy & Procedure
- SRC Word Processor Policy (Exams)
- DfE ASF Circular
- SENDO Special Educational Needs and Disability (NI) Order 2005
- SRC Student Charter
- Disability Discrimination Act (1995)

7. REVIEW

This policy will be monitored annually and reviewed every three years.