

ST THOMAS À BECKET CATHOLIC COLLEGE

Disability Discrimination Act Policy in Relation to Exams

Introduction

Facilities exist for pupils with disabilities to access the curriculum and all relevant areas of the College. The College recognises its responsibility to provide equal access to education for all pupils irrespective of disability and confirms its commitment to ensure that no pupil will be treated less favourably as a result of disability.

Definition of disability

A person has a disability if he or she has a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

St Thomas à Becket accessibility plan

The physical environment will be reviewed for the purpose of increasing the extent to which disabled pupils are able to take advantage of education and associated services.

Treatment of Students

The College is committed to the fair and equitable treatment of all pupils regardless of disability. Furthermore the College is committed to make all “reasonable adjustments” to meet the needs of disabled pupils in all aspects of College life.

Ensuring that the examination/examination centre is accessible

The Building

As stated above, facilities exist for pupils with disabilities to access the curriculum and all relevant areas of the College.

- In all cases, examination rooms will be used on the ground floor of the College, these are all located near emergency exits.
- A private room can be arranged for an examination, where appropriate, with the Exams Officer checking that the environment is suitable for the candidate. For example, that there is enough room for a wheelchair and its supports.
- Provision will be made, where appropriate, to ensure that those who need to take medication during the course of an examination, can do so in privacy and as quickly as possible.
- Examination rooms will be arranged, where possible, close to an accessible toilet.

- The College is committed to make all “reasonable adjustments” to meet the needs of disabled pupils, where necessary. For an exam, this may mean choosing a room that ensures that the candidate feels most comfortable or arranging specific lighting or tactile surfaces, etc.
- The College will ensure that both disabled candidates and staff are aware of the emergency evacuation procedures to ensure that disabled candidates can be safely evacuated from the building whatever their disability or impairment.

Seating

- Candidates will be seated close to the exit in the examination room to make them feel more comfortable and to limit disruption for others.
- There will be sufficient space between desks and chairs to enable a candidate (or invigilator) that uses a wheelchair to enter and leave the area without difficulty.
- Chairs will be made available, where necessary, outside examination rooms to enable those with mobility issues to sit and rest before they enter the examination.
- We will ensure that seating is appropriate and comfortable for those who may have a disability that affects seating and posture.

Signage

- We will ensure that all the signs for the examination and those provided by the JCQ are suitably sized and adapted to meet the needs of candidates with a disability.
- Sign content will be simple, short and easily understood. Text and lettering will be in a clear, uncomplicated and reasonably sized font.

Emergency Evacuation

- The Exams Officer and invigilators will know what procedures are in place for those with a disability, in particular, for those who may need assistance to leave a building. They will make sure that when evacuation and emergency procedures are being explained to candidates, attention is given to appropriate explanation for those with a disability whose arrangements may be different.
- Most ground floor exits are level and are accessible to wheelchair users.

Resources

- Where computers are being used for an examination, the College will ensure that hardware and software has been properly adapted and tested for those who may use them, such as people with a visual or aural impairment. The College

will also ensure that there are backups and alternatives in case support equipment ceases to function.

Improving the candidate experience

The Exams Officer will maintain a good, positive working relationship with the Special Educational Needs department to ensure that there are clear lines of communication.

Evidence to support applications for access arrangements will be obtained and recorded using key guidance provided by the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) booklet, Access Arrangements and Special Consideration, to ensure that appropriate arrangements and facilities are made available which meet the requirements of any candidate with a disability. This will ensure the consideration of a whole range of adjustments, which can be made to ensure that there is a level playing field for candidates with a disability. These adjustments may include:

- Modified test papers, for example enlarged print or Braille.
- Up to 25 percent extra time (or considerably more if a candidate's disability is of a profound and extensive nature).
- A reader or amanuensis. Ensuring that the candidate is placed with a member of staff that they are used to working with and feel comfortable with.
- Supervised rest breaks.
- Different coloured scripts.
- Use of a bilingual dictionary.
- A prompter.
- Use of a computer or other technology.
- Use of an individual room.

Exam results are made available to all pupils in the Main Hall, which is fully accessible to disabled pupils. A private accessible room can be arranged for a pupil where requested or deemed appropriate.