

Greater Manchester Education Trust

EXAMINATIONS POLICY

V1.0

Approval History

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Revision History

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CONTENTS

1. Introduction	4
2. Purpose of the Policy	4
3. Examination responsibilities.....	4
4. The statutory tests and qualifications offered.....	5
5. Examination seasons and timetables.....	6
6. Entries, entry details, late entries and retakes.....	6
7. Examination fees	7
8. The Disability Discrimination Act (DDA), special needs and access arrangements	7
9. Estimated grades.....	8
10. Managing invigilators and examination days	8
11. Candidates, clash candidates and special consideration.....	11
12. Coursework and appeals against internal assessments	12
13. Results, enquiries after results (EARs) and access to scripts (ATS)	13
14. Certificates.....	14
15. Expectations of GCSE Controlled Assessment.....	15

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Greater Manchester Education Trust (GMET) schools all strive to administer all examinations fairly and in accordance with JCQ regulations.

2.0 THE PURPOSE OF THE POLICY

- to achieve maximum impact on achievement within budget constraints
- to personalise decisions and advice over syllabus and entries, whilst being fair and consistent
- to ensure that the planning and management of exams is conducted efficiently and in the best interest of candidates
- to ensure the operation of an efficient exam system with clear guidelines for all relevant staff

It is the responsibility of everyone involved in the centre's examination processes to read, understand and implement this policy.

This examination policy will be checked annually to ensure compliance with all regulations and school policies.

This examination policy will be checked by the Executive and Senior Leadership Teams and the Examinations Officer at the academy.

3.0 EXAMINATION RESPONSIBILITIES

3.1 Head of Centre / Academy Headteacher

Overall responsibility for the school/college as an examination centre:

- advises on appeals and re-marks with the Examinations Officer
- is responsible, via the Examinations Officer, for reporting all suspicions or actual incidents of malpractice. Refer to the JCQ document '*Suspected malpractice in examinations and assessments*'
- makes the final decision over syllabus, entry tier and re-sits after discussion with SLT, HOFs, Learning Coaches/Form Tutors, parents/carers and students

3.2 Deputy Headteacher – Achievement, Curriculum and Data or equivalent

- responsible for day to day line management of Examinations Officer
- accountable for effective and efficient running of examination system
- agrees curriculum and syllabus choices with Heads of Faculty
- provides, in conjunction with the Data Team, whole school analysis for Academy Headteacher, Executive Headteacher, Governors and Trustees
- organises teaching and learning, curriculum and timetable for delivery of the syllabus
- external validation of courses followed at Key Stage 4 / Post-16
- ensures events are co-ordinated to inform students, teachers and parents of

- all regulations
- ensures that candidates and their parents are informed of and understand those aspects of the examination timetable that will affect them
- ensures dissemination of examination results and certificates to candidates
- ensures exam information, including the JCQ '*Information for Candidates – written exams*', the JCQ '*Privacy Notice*' and the school's Internal Appeals procedure, is posted on the school website and emailed to students/parents/carers as appropriate
- ensures that there is an examinations contingency plan in place

3.3 Examinations Officer

Responsible for managing the administration of public and internal examinations and for providing examination results:

- advises the Senior Leadership Team, subject teachers, Learning Coaches, and other relevant support staff on annual examination timetables, JCQ regulations and application procedures as set by the various examination boards
- oversees the production and distribution to staff, governors and candidates of an annual calendar for all examinations in which candidates will be involved and communicates regularly with staff concerning imminent deadlines and events
- administers access arrangements on day of examination and is responsible for working with the Head of the Inclusion Faculty/SENCO to ensure necessary applications for special consideration are completed in line with requirements using the JCQ '*Access arrangements and special considerations regulations and Guidance relating to candidates who are eligible for adjustments in examinations*'
- identifies and manages examination timetable clashes
- accounts for income and expenditures relating to all examination costs/charges
- arranges invigilation for external and some internal examinations
- ensures that regulations pertaining to invigilation are met by all invigilators and oversees any training required, including Child Protection/Safeguarding training
- submits candidates' coursework/controlled assessment marks, tracks dispatch and stores returned coursework and any other material required by the appropriate awarding bodies correctly and on schedule. Returns coursework/controlled assessment to HoF once period of 'Post Results' is over.
- ensures that student information boards are accurate and up to date
- disseminates any exam information and board updates to relevant staff
- processes all vocational providers and any other qualification registrations and submits results
- ensures the procedure to verify the identity of all candidates at the time of an examination or assessment is followed
- ensures secure storage concerning all aspects of examination scripts,

- controlled assessment, candidate data, certificates etc.
- ensures all exam materials are in plentiful supply
- ensures exam rooms are set up appropriately, liaising with site staff, including correct displays in accordance with JCQ regulations

In the absence of the Exams Officer, the SIMS and Data Lead Development Manager will ensure all aspects of the role are covered by the Data Team with support from the other Trust schools if needed.

3.4 Heads of Faculty

Responsible for managing and overseeing the exams process within the Faculty:

- liaise with the Deputy Headteacher, Achievement, Curriculum and Data or equivalent regarding any new courses by February half-term in the year before the courses begin to agree next steps. (The DHT will then inform the Exams Officer of agreed curriculum)
- ensure they are up-to-date with all the most recent changes to specifications and procedures in all of their Faculty's qualifications to be responsible for correct delivery and administration
- give guidance and have pastoral oversight of candidates who are unsure about examination entries or amendments to entries
- accountable for post-results procedures; producing an examination analysis of any examination results for the Headteacher
- ensure the accurate completion of coursework/controlled assessment mark sheets, declaration sheets and any other administration relevant to the internal components of their Faculty's courses
- ensure the accurate completion of entries and internally moderated marks (such as AQA, Edexcel Online etc.) and all other mark sheets and adherence to deadlines as set by the Examinations Officer
- ensure that all staff understand examination and controlled assessment requirements
- must ensure that all necessary staff sign that they have read and understood the requirements
- must ensure that all staff teach the agreed syllabus and all content is covered
- must ensure that exam board feedback is used to improve learning and teaching
- must choose appropriate exam board and syllabus to maximise achievement
- responsible for continually reviewing new exam accreditation
- must ensure that all teachers attend standardisation meetings and moderate their marks accordingly
- co-ordinate any special requirements with Head of Inclusion Faculty and Examinations Officer
- ensure candidates are entered for the correct tier, and any tier amendments are made in line with school deadlines.
- ensure all deadlines are adhered to

3.5 Teachers

- must teach agreed syllabus and ensure all the content is covered
- must take part in standardising and moderate their marks accordingly
- ensure candidate forms are signed and ensure all work is candidate's own and report any concerns to the Head of Faculty
- must notify of any possible access arrangements (as soon as possible after the start of the course) to Head of Faculty, Examinations Officer and the Head of Inclusion
- ensure students use Access Arrangements as normal practice
- must submit candidate names, entries and forecast grades to Examinations Officer by stated deadlines
- must ensure controlled assessment regulations for the course being taught are followed rigorously.

3.6 Head of Inclusion Faculty/SEND/CO

- responsible for managing the access arrangements and ensuring the file has the correct documentation including: Form 8s, bilingual forms, data protection forms and other necessary information as stated in the JCQ '*Access Arrangements, Reasonable Adjustments and Special Consideration*' document
- must identify and test candidates' requirements for access arrangements and inform/support Heads of Faculty/class teachers of how this affects classroom practice and internal assessments
- must provide additional support – with spelling, reading, mathematics, dyslexia or essential skills, hearing impairment, English for speakers of other languages, IT equipment – to help candidates achieve their course aims
- must liaise with Examinations Officer regarding access arrangement administration
- must arrange support such as reader/scribe for examinations
- support Heads of Faculty and class teachers with regard to Access Arrangements

3.7 Lead invigilator/invigilators

- responsible for the smooth running of examinations in their care, taking responsibility, in conjunction with SLT/Examinations Officer for the starting and finishing of examinations and adhering to the JCQ regulations for the conduct of examinations at all times
- must ensure that the procedure to verify the identity of all candidates at the time of an exam is followed
- must complete attendance checks at the start of the examination
- must distribute equipment
- must collect all examination papers in the correct order at the end of the examination and ensure their return to the Examinations Office
- must collect all other equipment at the end of the examination, such as calculators and pencil cases

3.8 Candidates

- should check timetables as soon as they get them and alert teachers to any problems
- should understand coursework/controlled assessment regulations and sign a declaration that authenticates the coursework/controlled assessment as their own work
- should be aware of the regulations set out by the JCQ in relation to onscreen tests, written examinations, controlled assessment and coursework as is relevant to the qualifications they are studying for

4.0 THE STATUTORY TESTS AND QUALIFICATIONS OFFERED

The statutory tests and qualifications offered at these centres are decided by the Heads of Faculty and the Senior Leadership Team.

The statutory tests and qualifications currently offered are GCSE, BTEC, Entry Level Certificate, OCR Cambridge Nationals, iGCSE and Technical Awards, V-Certs and A levels. These may include new qualifications as they are developed.

The subjects offered for these qualifications in any academic year may be found in the centre's published prospectus for that year. If there has been a change of syllabus from the previous year, the Examinations Office must be informed by the end of the summerterm in the previous year to the exam being taught.

4.1 Key Stage 4

All candidates will be entitled, and enabled, to achieve an entry for qualifications from an external awarding body.

4.2 At post-16

All candidates will be entitled, and enabled, to achieve an entry for qualifications from an external awarding body.

At academies who do not offer a post-16 provision, A Level qualification may be taken to provide students with the best level of challenge. Such entries will be agreed with the appropriate Deputy Headteacher.

5.0 EXAMINATION SEASONS AND TIMETABLES

5.1 Examination seasons

Pre-Public Examinations (PPEs) are published in the school calendar at the beginning of the school year. External examinations are scheduled as per the national examination timetables. All Pre-Public Examinations are conducted under external examinations conditions.

5.2 Timetables

The Examinations Officer will circulate examination timetables to relevant staff, students and parents/carers for both external and internal examinations once these are confirmed.

6.0 ENTRIES, ENTRY DETAILS, LATE ENTRIES AND RETAKES

6.1 Entries

The academy decides on the syllabus and the tier of entry for the students. Decisions about candidates' examination entries are made by the Heads of Faculty, the subject teachers, pastoral teams and SLT.

A candidate or parent/carer can request a subject entry, change of level or withdrawal; however, the final decision rests with the Academy Headteacher.

The centres accept external entries only if the student is currently studying at the academy or is a former student or current member of staff. These will be accepted on a case by case basis with the decision made by the Academy Headteacher.

6.2 Late entries

Entry deadlines are circulated to Heads of Faculty by the usual means of communication within the school.

Late entries are authorised by SLT, and processed by the Examinations Officer subject to budget considerations. Every effort must be made to avoid late entries.

7.0 EXAMINATION FEES

GCSE and vocational course entry examination fees are paid by the centre. A level entry examination fees are paid by the centre.

Late entry or amendment fees are normally paid by the centre but where circumstances dictate, candidates may be charged.

Candidates or faculties will not be charged for changes of tier, withdrawals made by the proper procedures or alterations arising from administrative processes, provided these are made within the time allowed by the awarding bodies.

Unless otherwise agreed students will pay to resit an examination.

Reimbursement may be sought from candidates who fail to sit an examination or meet the necessary coursework requirements. This fees reimbursement policy will be communicated in writing to candidates and parents/carers at the start of GCSE and post-16 courses.

Candidates must pay the fee for an enquiry about a result, should the centre not uphold the enquiry and the candidate insist on pursuing the enquiry.

(See also section 13: Enquiries after results [EARs])

8.0 THE DISABILITY DISCRIMINATION ACT (DDA), SPECIAL NEEDS AND ACCESS ARRANGEMENTS

8.1 DDA

The Disability Discrimination Act extends the application of the DDA to general qualifications. All examination centre staff must ensure that the access arrangements and special consideration regulations and guidance are consistent with the law.

8.2 Special needs

A candidate's special needs requirements are determined by the Head of Inclusion Faculty/SENCO and the Examinations Officer will advise on procedures.

The Head of Inclusion Faculty/SENCO will inform subject teachers and Examinations Officer of candidates with special educational needs who are embarking on a course leading to an examination, and the date of that examination. The Head of Inclusion Faculty/SENCO can then inform individual staff of any special arrangements that individual candidates may be granted during the course and in the examination.

8.3 Access arrangements

Making special arrangements for candidates to take examinations is the responsibility of the Head of Inclusion Faculty/SENCO and the Examinations Officer, ensuring arrangements are normal practice.

Submitting completed access arrangement applications to the awarding bodies is the responsibility of the Examination Officer, on receipt of a completed Form 8.

Rooming for access arrangement candidates will be arranged by the Examinations Officer. Invigilation for access arrangement candidates will be organised by the Examinations Officer.

Support such as a reader/scribe will be arranged by the Head of Inclusion Faculty/SENCO.

9.0 ESTIMATED GRADES

Heads of Faculty will ensure that subject leaders submit estimated grades to the Examinations Officer when requested.

10.0 MANAGING INVIGILATORS AND EXAMINATION DAYS

10.1 Managing invigilators

External invigilators will be used for examination supervision of all external examinations.

The recruitment of invigilators is the responsibility of the Examinations Officer, in conjunction with the HR Manager.

Securing the necessary Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) clearance for new invigilators is the responsibility of the Senior Finance and HR Manager.

DBS fees for securing such clearance are paid by the centre. Invigilators are timetabled and briefed by the Examinations Officer. Invigilators' rates of pay are set by the centre administration.

10.2 Examination days

The Examinations Officer will book all examination rooms after liaison with the cover supervisor and site staff and make the question papers, other examination stationery and materials available for the invigilator(s).

Facilities staff are responsible for setting up the allocated rooms under the guidance of the Examination Officer.

The lead invigilator or Examinations Officer will start all examinations in accordance with JCQ Guidelines.

SLT may be present at the start of the examination to assist with identification of candidates but must not advise on which questions are to be attempted. In practical examinations subject teachers may be on hand (outside the venue) in case of any technical difficulties. Examination papers must not be read by invigilators or removed from the examination room before the end of a session. Papers will be distributed to Heads of Faculty after the end of the examination session and once all examination papers have been packed and sent to the exam board.

Prior to examinations internal or external pupils will be issued with identity cards. On each card can be found, the pupils legal name, registration group, candidate number and their photograph.

ID Cards are checked as the register is taken, thus identity is ratified before the exam begins.

Any queries are reported immediately to the Lead Invigilator, in turn the Exams and Assessment Manager is notified. If further validation is required a member of SLT is contacted. The exam is not interrupted and will continue whilst the issue is resolved. All required paperwork will then be completed.

In extraordinary circumstances the Examinations Contingency Plan will be followed to ensure the integrity of the examination.

11.0 CANDIDATES, CLASH CANDIDATES AND SPECIAL CONSIDERATION

11.1 Candidates

All JCQ rules must be followed by candidates and copies of these are to be given to

candidates and published in the examination rooms and on the examination noticeboard.

The centre's published rules on acceptable dress and behaviour apply at all times.

Candidates' personal belongings remain their own responsibility and the centre accepts no liability for their loss or damage.

Disruptive candidates will be dealt with in accordance with JCQ guidelines.

Candidates may leave the examination room for a genuine purpose requiring an immediate return to the examination room, in which case a member of staff must accompany them and it is logged accordingly.

The academy will attempt to contact any candidate who is not present at the start of an examination and deal with them in accordance with JCQ guidelines.

Late candidates will be allowed to enter the examination room and be allowed, where possible, the full time to complete the exam. If a student is very late (more than 1 hour after the published start time of the exam), they may be allowed to enter but should be aware that we have to inform the examination board and their paper may not be marked.

11.2 Clash candidates

The Examinations Officer will be responsible as necessary for identifying clashes for candidates and initiating arrangements for keeping candidates apart and secure with pastoral staff.

11.3 Special consideration

Should a candidate be taken ill during the examination, it is the candidate's responsibility to alert the examination invigilator, who will inform the Examinations Officer.

Should a candidate be too ill to sit an examination, suffer bereavement or other trauma, it is the candidate's responsibility to alert the centre.

Any special consideration claim must be supported by appropriate evidence within five days of the examination, for example a letter from the candidate's doctor. The Examinations Officer will then forward a completed special consideration form to the relevant awarding body within seven days of the examination.

12.0 COURSEWORK/CONTROLLED ASSESSMENT AND APPEALS AGAINST INTERNAL ASSESSMENTS

12.1 Coursework/Controlled Assessment

Candidates who have to prepare portfolios should do so by the end of the course or dates defined by each subject. Subject teachers have a responsibility to ensure that

candidates know about the rules for JCQ which declare that candidates must do their work on their own without help. Candidates are also required to sign a declaration form that the work is their own. See JCQ General Regulations for Approved Centres (Appendices 1-3)

Heads of Faculty will ensure all coursework/controlled assessment is ready for dispatch at the correct time and the Examinations Officer will keep a record of what has been sent when and to whom.

Marks for all internally assessed work are inputted by the Heads of Faculty, notifying the Examinations Officer when this has been completed.

12.2 Appeals against internal assessments

The centre will publish a separate procedure on this subject, which is available from the examinations office.

The main points are:

- appeals will only be considered if they apply to the process leading to an assessment
- there is no appeal against the mark or grade awarded
- candidates may appeal if they feel their coursework has been assessed unfairly, inconsistently or not in accordance with the specification for the qualification
- the outcome to the appeals should be made in writing within five working days on receipt of the outcome to the Academy Headteacher (or other nominee) who will decide whether the process used conformed to the necessary requirements
- the Academy Headteacher's findings will be notified in writing, copied to the Examinations Officer and recorded for awarding body inspection.

13.0 RESULTS, ENQUIRIES AFTER RESULTS (EARS) AND ACCESS TO SCRIPTS

13.1 Results

Candidates will receive individual results slips on results days in person at the centre. Arrangements for the school to be open on results days are made by the Academy Headteacher.

If candidates need someone else to collect their results for any reason, they must have given their representative written permission that must be presented to the school on results day.

Candidates can request to receive results by e-mail on results day through communications with the Examinations Officer prior to results day.

Candidates may collect results after results day, but should contact the school before coming in to ensure someone will be able to help them.

The provision of staff on results days is the responsibility of the Academy Headteacher.

13.2 Enquiries after Results (EARs)

EARs may be requested by centre staff or candidates if there are reasonable grounds for believing there has been an error in marking. Candidates must agree to the EAR and sign a consent form requesting that the EAR be carried out.

If a result is queried, the Examinations Officer, teaching staff and Academy Headteacher will investigate the feasibility of asking for a re-mark at the centre's expense. Any remark must have the signed approval of the candidate.

When the centre does not uphold an EAR, a candidate may apply to have an enquiry carried out. If a candidate requires this against the advice of subject staff, they will be charged. (See section 7: Examination fees)

13.3 Access to Scripts (ATS)

After the release of results, candidates may ask subject staff to request the return of papers within three days for scrutiny of the results.

Centre staff may also request scripts for investigation or for teaching purposes. The consent of candidates must be obtained.

Once an original script has been returned, re-marks cannot be applied for.

13.4 Reviews of Marking

Academy Headteachers have discretion to make final decision over any review which falls outside these principles

GCSE

Reviews paid for by the academy

- English Language and Literature and maths only
- Students only at the boundary of 3-4 and 4-5
- No more than 3 marks away from the grade boundary in English
- No more than 3 marks away in maths
- Deputy Head for Achievement to identify students, discussion and sign off from Academy Headteacher
- Only one paper to be submitted at a time, subject to time constraints. Decision about which paper to be agreed by deputy head.

Reviews paid for by students

Students have the right to request and pay for reviews of marking. Examinations Officers can give advice about distance from grade boundaries. Students need strong advice about looking at total grade across all papers. They could go down if

one paper is remarked and fewer marks are awarded.

- Currently Examinations Officer accepts requests including consent, checks payments and offers advice at this stage. Wider concerns should be referred to Deputy Headteacher for achievement to discuss further with student and/or parents.
- Advise submitting one paper at a time and offer refund if further reviews are not needed.
- Students are advised to seek advice from subject leaders
- Examinations Officer to inform deputy headteacher for achievement of numbers of requests and any grade changes – fed into SISRA/information management platform

A level

Reviews paid by school

- No reviews of AS
- If a student's university place depends on the grade, it will be discussed with the student and Head of Post-16 provision

Reviews paid by student

- Currently the Examinations Officer accepts requests including consent, checks payments and offers advice at this stage. Wider concerns should be referred to the Head of Post-16 to discuss further with student and/or parents.
- Advise submitting one paper at a time and offer refund if further reviews are not needed.
- Students advised to seek advice from subject leaders
- Examinations Officer to inform Head of Post-16 for achievement of numbers of requests and any grade changes – fed into SISRA/information management platform

14.0 CERTIFICATES

Certificates may be presented in person at a certificate presentation event, posted (first class) or collected and signed for.

Certificates may be collected on behalf of a candidate by a third party, provided they have been authorised to do so in writing.

Certificates may be withheld from candidates who owe fees.

A transcript of results may be issued if a candidate agrees to pay the costs incurred. The centre retains certificates for three years. In line with policy from JCQ, they will be destroyed after that time.

15.0 EXPECTATIONS FOR GCSE CONTROLLED ASSESSMENT/VOCATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS / NON-EXAMINED ASSESSMENTS (NEAs)

Deputy Headteacher

- accountable for ensuring the secure storage and correct conduct of controlled assessments.
- ensure Heads of Faculty are clear about assessments and comply with the JCQ guidelines and awarding bodies' subject-specific instructions
- at the start of the academic year, begin coordinating with Heads of Faculty/subject to schedule controlled assessments. (It is advisable that controlled assessments be spread throughout the academic years of key stage 4)
- map overall resource management requirements for the year. As part of this resolve: clashes/ problems over the timing or operation of controlled assessments; issues arising from the need for particular facilities (rooms, IT networks, time out of school etc.)
- ensure that all staff involved have a calendar of events.
- create, publish and update an internal appeals policy for controlled assessments.

15.1 Heads of Faculty

- decide on the awarding body and specification for a particular GCSE
- standardise internally the marking of all teachers involved in assessing an internally assessed component
ensure that individual teachers understand their responsibilities with regard to controlled assessment. Ensure that confidential materials/tasks set by awarding bodies are available for relevant teaching staff in accordance with exam board requirements in sufficient time to allow appropriate preparation for the assessments and ensure that such materials are stored securely at all times
- ensure that individual teachers understand the requirements of the awarding body's specification and are familiar with the relevant teachers' notes, and any other subject specific instructions
- where appropriate, develop new assessment tasks or contextualise sample awarding body assessment tasks to meet local circumstances, in line with awarding body specifications and control requirements
- ensure all staff in the Faculty understand the general guidelines contained in the JCQ publication '*Instructions for conducting controlled assessments*'
- ensure that supervising teachers and their students sign authentication forms in line with examination board guidance; this may be required at the start of controlled assessment

15.2 Teaching Staff

- understand and comply with the general guidelines contained in the JCQ publication *'Instructions for conducting controlled assessments'*
- understand and comply with the awarding body specification for conducting controlled assessments, including any subject-specific instructions, teachers' notes or additional information on the awarding body's website
- supply to the Examinations Officer details of all unit codes for controlled assessments
- liaise with Head of Faculty/subject to ensure confidential materials/tasks set by awarding bodies are available in sufficient time to prepare for the assessment(s) and ensure that such materials are stored securely at all times
- supervise assessments (at the specified level of control). Undertake the tasks required under the regulations, only permitting assistance to students as the specification allows
- ensure that supervising teachers and their students sign authentication forms in line with the examination board guidance; this may be required at the start of controlled assessments
- mark internally assessed components using the mark schemes provided by the awarding body
- submit marks through the exams office to the awarding body when required, keeping a record of the marks awarded
- retain candidates' work securely in a locked cupboard between assessment sessions
(if more than one)
- post-completion, retain candidates' work securely in a locked cupboard until the closing date for enquiries about results. In the event that an enquiry is submitted, retain candidates work securely until the outcome of the enquiry and any subsequent appeal has been conveyed to the centre
- ask the Head of the Inclusion Faculty/SENCO for any assistance required for the administration and management of access arrangements

15.3 Examinations Office Staff

- enter students for individual units, whether assessed by controlled assessment, coursework external exam or on-screen test, before the deadline for final entries
- enter students' 'cash-in' codes for the terminal exam series
- where confidential materials are directly received by the Examinations Office, to be responsible for receipt, safe storage and safe transmission, whether in CD or hard copy format
- ensure Heads of Faculty input marks by deadlines
- on the few occasions where controlled assessment cannot be conducted in the classroom arrange suitable accommodation where controlled assessment can be carried out, at the direction of the Senior Leadership Team

15.4 Inclusion Faculty Support

- ensure access arrangements have been applied for
- work with teaching staff to ensure requirements for support staff are met