

Singing Awards Access Policy

From September 2026

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1. Introduction

1.1 We are committed to providing all candidates with the opportunity to excel in our examinations. This policy outlines our approach, including the arrangements that we can put in place, and how you can inform us of the best way to support your candidates.

1.2 Throughout this document, the following definitions apply:

- **Fair access:** This refers to the measure that we can put in place to support candidates with specific needs.
- **Reasonable adjustment:** This is a modification that we can make to parts of the exam in order to give your candidates fair access. We do not usually need to ask for supporting evidence for reasonable adjustments, because there are no changes to how and what we assess.
- **Specific needs:** This refers to any physical, sensory, cognitive or neurological disability, impairment, health condition, or difficulty.

- **Access arrangements:** This means making a change to how or what we assess. We ask for supporting evidence for access arrangement requests.
- **Supporting evidence:** This document confirms a candidate's entitlement to access arrangements and is usually written by a healthcare professional or teacher.

1.3 If you are unable to find the answer to your question in this policy, please email examsdesk@rscm.com

2. Overview of the Exam Process

2.1 Before booking an exam, you should:

- Read this guide as well as our fair access guidelines.
- Decide what access arrangements are needed based on your candidate's specific needs.

2.2 When you have decided what reasonable adjustments or access arrangements are most suitable for your candidate's needs, you should:

- Email supporting evidence to examsdesk@rscm.com where appropriate.
- Book your candidate's exam, selecting the relevant specific needs options (see **Section 6**).
- Email examsdesk@rscm.com any additional information about your candidate's requirements (see **Section 5**).

2.3 If there are any changes to your candidate's requirements after you have booked your exam, email examsdesk@rscm.com.

3. Reasonable Adjustments and Access Arrangements

3.1 It is important to note that we do not make concessions in marking. We assess all candidates equally using the same marking criteria.

3.2 For more details of reasonable adjustments and access arrangements, see our fair access guidelines.

3.3 Reasonable adjustments are changes we can make to remove/reduce barriers. Here are some examples that we do not need supporting evidence to implement:

- Large print tests where no additional time is required.
- Tests on coloured paper where no additional time is required (coloured paper to be supplied in advance by the representative).
- Use of coloured overlay (supplied by the candidate).

- Step-free access to the exam venue (this may mean taking the exam at an alternative location).
- Additional time for accessing the exam room.
- Modified/simplified language used by the examiner (except in the practical skills test, where the rubric cannot be altered).

3.4 Access arrangements are changes we can make to the assessments in order to support you. We may ask for supporting evidence when you book an exam with us. Here are some examples:

- Additional time for sight-reading preparation.
- Additional time for the whole exam (e.g. for candidates with Autism)
- Memory test in place of sight-reading.
- Presence of a chaperone.

4. Supporting Evidence

4.1 Supporting evidence is a document explaining your candidate's entitlement to access arrangements you have requested. We do not share this with examiners.

4.2 We may require supporting evidence when you request access arrangements for an exam.

4.3 You can send supporting evidence before you book your candidate's exam to confirm their entitlement to access arrangements.

4.4 If your candidate's requirements change, we may need more recent supporting evidence.

4.5 We do not usually require supporting evidence for reasonable adjustment requests.

4.6 Please email your candidate's supporting evidence to examsdesk@rscm.com. You will receive confirmation that we have received your documentation within 7 days.

4.7 We do not accept supporting evidence taken to the exam.

4.8 If you do not send supporting evidence, the examiner will offer the access arrangement that you have requested. Please note however, that we may not issue the exam result until we receive supporting evidence. If you do not provide appropriate supporting evidence, your candidate's exam result may no longer be valid.

4.9 We accept the following documents:

- A letter/email from a head teacher or SENCO.
- A letter/email from a disability officer at a higher education institution.
- A letter/email from a healthcare professional.
- A report from an educational psychologist.
- A certificate of visual impairment.

4.10 The supporting evidence must:

- Be dated.
- Represent your candidate's current access requirements.
- State the author's job title and contact details.
- Give the candidate's full name and date of birth.
- Confirm the candidate's diagnosis.
- Confirm the candidate's specific needs.
- Provide details of access arrangements and reasonable adjustments.
- Outline the candidate's usual way of working.

4.11 If you do not have access to appropriate supporting documentation, for example if the candidate has not received a formal diagnosis, please email examsdesk@rscm.com to discuss an alternative.

4.12 For information about the handling of sensitive data, see **Section 10**.

5. What is Shared with the Examiner

5.1 We provide examiners with general information about common neurological and physical disabilities and how these may impact candidates in an exam.

5.2 We do not share your candidate's supporting evidence with examiners.

5.3 Please fill in the relevant box in the examination booking form with details that you would like the examiner to be aware of. This is passed on to the examiner.

6. How to Request Reasonable Adjustments or Access Arrangements

6.1 When you book an exam, you will be asked via a drop-down menu if your candidate has specific needs. Once this has been selected, there are further questions relating to various ways that we can support them.

6.2 The option(s) that you select should reflect the candidate's usual way of working.

6.3 If you were unable to explain your candidate's needs in the space provided, please email examsdesk@rscm.com with your booking reference number and

include any further information, including the information you would like to be passed on to the examiner (see **Section 5**).

6.4 We do not transfer details of specific needs across exams. Therefore, we request that you select the correct access option each time you book an exam, even if you have requested the same options previously.

6.5 Once you have booked an exam, you will not be able to edit specific needs options. If you are booking on behalf of a candidate, please make sure you are aware of the candidate's specific needs before booking their exam.

7. Late Notice Requests and Making Changes to Access Arrangements

7.1 If you did not select a specific needs option when you booked the exam, or if your specific needs have changed, you have three options:

1. Get in touch with us, and where possible, we will try and accommodate late changes, but this is not guaranteed.
2. Continue without the access arrangement or reasonable adjustment, or
3. Cancel and rebook the exam for a different session, which incurs a deferral fee.

7.2 If your access requirements change between booking the exam, and taking the exam, please email examsdesk@rscm.com to discuss the most suitable option.

8. Special Consideration

8.1 If your candidate experiences an illness or injury which significantly affects their ability to access the exam after the entry has been submitted, please contact us to discuss what reasonable adjustments can be put in place. We may not be able to put appropriate arrangements in place at short notice.

8.2 If your candidate has a long-term disability, health condition, or illness, you should request access arrangements and reasonable adjustments in line with this policy.

9. Data Protection

9.1 We understand that the information that you provide is personal and sensitive.

9.2 We keep supporting evidence in a secure mailbox, with restricted access, and will destroy evidence after the appeals deadline has passed.

9.3 We keep confirmation of receipt of supporting evidence as well as brief details of your candidate's access arrangements and reasonable adjustments.

9.4 We share details of your candidate's access arrangements with the supervisor and examiner of your exam session, along with any additional information about your candidate's specific needs that is included in the relevant box in the booking form (see **Section 5**).

10. Feedback and Complaints

10.1 We hope that the support we can offer meets your candidate's needs. However, we recognise that there may be cases where we do not meet expectations.

10.2 If you have feedback or suggestions about this Access Policy or our Fair Access Guidelines, or any of the reasonable adjustments or access arrangements that we currently offer, please email examsdesk@rscm.com.

10.3 If you are unhappy with the reasonable adjustments or access arrangements that we suggest for your candidate's exam, you can appeal this by emailing examsdesk@rscm.com. Please include details and supporting evidence for your appeal. You should submit this within 14 days of receiving the decision and before the exam takes place.

10.4 If you feel that the reasonable adjustments or access arrangements were not delivered correctly during the exam, please submit an exam delivery concern by emailing examsdesk@rscm.com.

11. Further Information and Contact Details

11.1 If you have any further questions relating to our access policy, please contact:

Email: examsdesk@rscm.com.

Telephone: 01722 424848 ext 847