

Adjustments for candidates with disabilities and learning difficulties

Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments

This document covers the following qualifications:

AQA Applied General qualifications,
AQA Level 2 Certificate in Further Maths,
AQA Level 3 Certificate in Mathematical Studies,
BTEC Firsts, BTEC Nationals, BTEC Tech Awards, **BTEC Level 2 Technicals**
Cambridge Nationals, Cambridge Technicals,
City & Guilds Level 2 and Level 3 Technical qualifications,
ELC, FSMQ, **Functional Skills**, GCE, GCSE, OCR Level 3 Certificates,
T-Levels
Welsh Baccalaureate Qualification (WBQ),
WJEC Level 1 and Level 2 General qualifications,
WJEC Level 1 and Level 2 Vocational qualifications,
WJEC Level 1 and Level 2 Vocational Awards (Technical Awards),
WJEC Level 3 Applied qualifications

1 September 2024 to 31 August 2025

For the attention of SENCos, assessors and senior leaders within schools and colleges.

PRODUCED ON BEHALF OF:




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How to use this document

Tabs

On every page you will find tabs on the left-hand side. These will indicate which chapter of the document you are currently on, as well as enabling you to navigate between the chapters at a click.

 This home icon will also allow you to jump back to the contents, in case you need a quick reminder of what each chapter is about.

Clickable links

This document is full of helpful hyperlinks to allow you to find related content more easily. Any time you see a paragraph or chapter number directly referenced, you will be able to click on it to navigate to the page in question and find the information.

Internal document links (e.g. paragraph 4.4) will jump you to the specific text anchor at your current zoom level. **Please note:** the text anchor may sit at the top of your PDF viewer window once you follow the hyperlink. If you are fully zoomed out at page level and the text anchor sits on the same page as the hyperlink you clicked on, the page may appear not to move.

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Chapter summaries

Each chapter is supported by a helpful chapter summary, offering a bitesize breakdown of what is covered within each chapter. Points are supported by icons, which are then used again throughout the text to help you identify the key topics of the paragraphs.

Chapters are colour-coded for reference.

Zooming in

If the text is too small, you may zoom in on the content by pressing “Ctrl” and “+” together on your keyboard (or “CMD” and “+” if you are a Mac user) or by clicking on the “+” or “-” Zoom buttons in your PDF viewer (e.g. your browser). These buttons are often situated at the top of the PDF viewer, and may look something like this:



General

Changes made to the content of this document since the previous version (1 September 2023 to 31 August 2024) are **highlighted in yellow** for easy identification.

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Email: centresupport@jcq.org.uk
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Key changes for 2024–25

Before contacting the JCQ and/or an awarding body with a query about access arrangements/reasonable adjustments, the SENCo **must** ensure that this document or the relevant section of the JCQ document *Instructions for conducting examinations* has been checked. The answers to many queries will be found within these documents.

PAGE	CHAPTER	PARAGRAPH	SUMMARY OF CHANGE
8	Introduction		Further clarification given on the term 'SEnCo'.
8	Introduction		A head of centre must ensure the SENCo and the appointed assessor undertake regular CPD.
8	Introduction		The centre must make decisions on appropriate access arrangements for their candidates.
8	Introduction		Online applications must only be processed where they are supported by the centre and the candidate meets the published criteria for the arrangement(s) with the full supporting evidence in place.
12	Deadlines		BTEC Firsts, BTEC Level 2 Technicals, BTEC Nationals, BTEC Tech Awards, Functional Skills (AQA & Pearson specifications) and T-Levels (Pearson specifications) are now covered by <i>Access arrangements online</i> .
34	4	4.2.1	The centre must make decisions on appropriate access arrangements for their candidates.
40	5	5.1	Part 1 of Form 8 can now be used to confirm the need for supervised rest breaks for candidates with learning difficulties who also require 25% extra time and/or a scribe.
40		5.1	Specialist evidence is not required for supervised rest breaks.
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42		5.2.2	The requirements for rolling forward a Form 8 where a candidate progresses from GCSE to GCE qualifications (and other Level 3 qualifications).
47		5.2.3	Arrangements where a candidate has been referred to CAMHS or a local NHS Trust by their school or GP, is on the list to be screened and/or is likely to receive a formal diagnosis.
47		5.2.3	The SENCo must determine the arrangements for the candidate's examinations and not a specialist.

PAGE	CHAPTER	PARAGRAPH	SUMMARY OF CHANGE
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48		5.2.5	Clarification on the awarding of 25% extra time in a timed Art examination.
54		5.5.1	A computer reader/reader may be awarded to a candidate for whom English is an additional language.
55		5.5.5	Specialist evidence is not required for a computer reader/reader.
66		5.7.5	The SENCo must determine the arrangements for the candidate's examinations and not a specialist.
67		5.7.5	The requirements for rolling forward a Form 8 where a candidate progresses from GCSE to GCE qualifications (and other Level 3 qualifications).
67		5.7.5	Arrangements where a candidate with an existing Form 9 progresses from GCSE to GCE qualifications (and other Level 3 qualifications).
83		5.16	Additional centre delegated arrangements (non-electronic headphones and a timer on a candidate's desk).
86		5.18.2	Form BD25% has now been withdrawn. For applications processed from 1 September 2024 onwards only the approval sheet is required for inspection purposes.
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Introduction

IMPORTANCE OF THESE REGULATIONS

These regulations reflect a whole centre approach to access arrangements and reasonable adjustments. It is therefore the responsibility of the head of centre, members of the senior leadership team, the SENCo/assessor(s)[†] and where relevant the SEN Governor to familiarise themselves with the **entire** contents of this document.

The term 'SENCo' used throughout this document refers to the person appointed by the head of centre to coordinate the access arrangements process within the centre. **This would also include an Access Arrangements Coordinator (AAC), an Assistant SENCo or a Deputy SENCo.**

The head of centre **must** ensure that the SENCo has sufficient time to both manage the access arrangements process within the centre **and** familiarise themselves with the JCQ document *Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments*. **They must also ensure that the SENCo and the centre's appointed assessor undertake regular CPD such as attending an annual update course on these regulations.**

The SENCo, or an equivalent member of staff within a FE college, fully supported by teaching staff and members of the senior leadership team, **must** lead on the access arrangements/reasonable adjustments process within their centre.

Teaching staff and members of the senior leadership team **must** support the SENCo in identifying, determining and implementing appropriate and practicable access arrangements and reasonable adjustments.

A centre **must** make decisions on appropriate access arrangements for their candidates. Although professionals from other organisations may give advice, they **cannot** make the decision for the centre. They will not have a working knowledge of an individual candidate's needs and how their difficulties impact in the classroom and/or in timed assessments. It is the responsibility of the SENCo to make appropriate and informed decisions based on the JCQ regulations.

The SENCo **must** work with teaching staff, support staff (such as Learning Support Assistants and Teaching Assistants) and exams office personnel to ensure that approved access arrangements/reasonable adjustments are put in place for internal school tests, mock examinations and examinations.

Where appropriate, the SENCo will also need to work with specialist advisory teachers, educational psychologists and medical professionals.

The SENCo must work with the centre's appointed assessor to ensure a consistent, joined-up process. This will also allow the SENCo to discuss individual candidate cases with the assessor before making final decisions.

The SENCo **must** work with teaching staff to identify the most appropriate published format of modified papers (see [Chapter 6](#)) which will enable the candidate(s) to access their examinations.

These regulations **must** be used when processing applications using *Access arrangements online*.

Online applications **must** only be processed where they are supported by the centre and the candidate meets the published criteria for the arrangement(s) with the full supporting evidence in place.

Failure to comply with the regulations contained in this document has the potential to constitute malpractice which may impact on the candidate's result(s).

Examples of failure to comply include:








- putting in place access arrangements/adjustments that are **not** approved;
- failing to consider putting in place access arrangements (which may be a failure to comply with the duty to make reasonable adjustments);
- permitting access arrangements/adjustments within the centre which are **not** supported by appropriate evidence; or
- charging a fee for providing reasonable adjustments to disabled candidates.

Whilst this document addresses the duty upon awarding bodies to make reasonable adjustments and avoid unfavourable treatment towards disabled candidates, it cannot cover every scenario. Each case will turn on its own facts as to what is reasonable.

[†] An assessor is defined in [Chapter 7, paragraph 7.3.3](#).

Contact details

Before contacting the JCQ and/or an awarding body with a query about access arrangements/ reasonable adjustments, the SENCo **must** ensure that this document or the relevant section of the JCQ document *Instructions for conducting examinations* has been checked. The answers to many queries will be found within these documents.

<div><p>centresupport@jcq.org.uk</p><p>jcq.org.uk</p></div>	<div><p>Stag Hill House, Guildford, Surrey, GU2 7XJ</p><p>0800 197 7162</p><p>aqa.org.uk</p></div>
<div><p>Giltspur House, 5-6 Giltspur Street, London, EC1A 9DE</p><p>cityandguilds.com</p></div>	<div><p>29 Clarendon Road, Belfast, BT1 3BG</p><p>02890 261 200</p><p>ccea.org.uk</p></div>
<div><p>The Triangle Building, Shaftesbury Road, Cambridge, CB2 8EA</p><p>01223 553 998</p><p>ocr.org.uk</p></div>	<div><p>Special Requirements Team, Lowton House, Lowton Way, Hellaby Business Park, Rotherham, S66 8SS</p><p>0344 463 2535</p><p>qualifications.pearson.com</p></div>
<div><p>245 Western Avenue, Cardiff, CF5 2YX</p><p>specialrequirements@wjec.co.uk</p><p>02920 265 000</p><p>wjec.co.uk</p></div>	<div><p>†Queries to the JCQ must be submitted by email and not by telephone. All queries must be sent to centresupport@jcq.org.uk. The email address info@jcq.org.uk must not be used for access arrangements queries.</p></div>

Changes for the academic year 2024/25

Heads of centre, members of senior leadership teams, SENCos and assessors **must** familiarise themselves with the entire contents of this document.

Changes made to the content of this document since the previous version (1 September 2023 to 31 August 2024) are highlighted in yellow for easy identification and the principal changes have been listed on [page 6](#).

SENCos, and equivalent members of staff within FE colleges, are encouraged to access the interactive version of this document using the Centre Admin Portal (CAP). CAP is accessible via any of the awarding bodies' secure extranet sites.

The JCQ document *Instructions for conducting examinations*, referenced within this document, is also available in an interactive format.

Centres should note that any reference to 'JCQ' or 'Joint Council for Qualifications' within this document should be read as JCQ^{cic} or the Joint Council for Qualifications^{cic}.

DEADLINES FOR SUBMITTING APPLICATIONS FOR ACCESS ARRANGEMENTS/REASONABLE ADJUSTMENTS AND ORDERS FOR MODIFIED PAPERS USING ACCESS ARRANGEMENTS ONLINE

Access arrangements/reasonable adjustments may cover the entire course. Ideally, they should be applied for at the start of the course. *Access arrangements online* **must** be used to process applications for the following qualification types:

- AQA Applied General qualifications
- AQA Level 2 Certificate in Further Maths
- AQA Level 3 Certificate in Mathematical Studies
- BTEC Firsts
- BTEC Level 2 Technicals
- BTEC Nationals
- BTEC Tech Awards
- Cambridge Nationals
- Cambridge Technicals
- FSMQ
- Functional Skills (AQA and Pearson specifications)
- GCE (AS and A-level)
- GCSE
- OCR Level 3 Certificates
- T-Levels (Pearson specifications)
- Welsh Baccalaureate Qualification (WBQ)
- WJEC Level 1 and Level 2 General qualifications
- WJEC Level 1 and Level 2 Vocational qualifications
- WJEC Level 1 and Level 2 Vocational Awards (Technical Awards)
- WJEC Level 3 Applied qualifications.

Arrangements **must** be processed and approved **before** an examination or assessment, no later than the published deadline as below.

Exam series	Access arrangement	Final deadline
November 2024	Modified papers	20 September 2024
November 2024	All other access arrangements	1 November 2024
January 2025	Modified papers	4 October 2024
January 2025	All other access arrangements	21 October 2024
June 2025	Modified papers	31 January 2025
June 2025	All other access arrangements	21 March 2025

GCSE January 2025 examination series – GCSE specifications are **not** available to centres in England and Northern Ireland.

For those candidates who decide to re-sit GCSE units in June 2025, following the publication of January 2025 GCSE examination results, orders for modified papers **must** be received no later than 21 March 2025.

(For unitised GCSE qualifications in Northern Ireland in March 2025 please see CCEA's website for information.)

NB Candidates may not be able to have modified papers for their examinations if orders are not received by the published deadline.

Late applications and where an existing approved application will expire prior to or during the June 2025 examination series

Applications **must** be processed and approved **before** an examination or assessment, no later than the published deadline as above.

Late applications on account of a temporary injury or impairment, or a diagnosis of a disability or manifestation of an impairment relating to an existing disability arising after the published deadline are permissible. Centres **must** process applications as detailed in [Chapter 8, section 8.3](#) using *Access arrangements online* where required.

Any application processed after the published deadline may be subject to scrutiny. SENCos **must** ensure that the appropriate paperwork is on file and available for inspection.

Where an existing approved application will expire prior to or during the June 2025 examination series, and the candidate is studying at the same qualification level, it is permissible to process a new online application upon expiry and after 21 March 2025 **using the existing evidence**.

SENCos should refer to the JCQ document *Guidance regarding access arrangements/reasonable adjustments when a candidate changes centre* for more information on the evidence required when a candidate resits the same qualification or progresses from Level 2 to Level 3 qualifications whether within the same centre or a new centre.

The document can be found at:
<http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/access-arrangements-and-special-consideration>

Definitions

Access arrangements

Access arrangements are agreed **before** an assessment. They allow candidates with **specific needs**, such as special educational needs, disabilities or temporary injuries to access the assessment and show what they know and can do without changing the demands of the assessment. The intention behind an access arrangement is to meet the needs of an individual candidate without affecting the integrity of the assessment. Access arrangements are the principal way in which awarding bodies comply with the duty under the Equality Act 2010* to make 'reasonable adjustments'.

Reasonable adjustments

The Equality Act 2010* requires an awarding body to make reasonable adjustments where a candidate, who is disabled within the meaning of the Equality Act 2010, 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. An example would be a Braille paper which would be a reasonable adjustment for a vision impaired candidate who could read Braille. A reasonable adjustment may be unique to that individual and may not be included in the list of available access arrangements.

Whether an adjustment will be considered reasonable will depend on several factors which will include, but are not limited to:

- the needs of the disabled candidate;
- the effectiveness of the adjustment;
- the cost of the adjustment; **and**
- the likely impact of the adjustment upon the candidate and other candidates.

An adjustment **will not** be approved if it:

- involves unreasonable costs to the awarding body;
- involves unreasonable timeframes; **or**
- affects the security and integrity of the assessment.

This is because the adjustment is not ‘reasonable’.

The centre **must** ensure that approved adjustments can be delivered to candidates.

In most cases it will not be reasonable for adjustments to be made to assessment objectives within a qualification. To do so would likely undermine the effectiveness of the qualification in providing a reliable indication of the candidate’s knowledge, skills and understanding. There is no duty to make adjustments which the qualifications regulators have specified should not be made. As set out in [Chapter 2](#), there is no duty to make adjustments to competence standards within vocational qualifications.

(See [Chapter 3](#) for information on assessment objectives and [Chapter 1, sections 1.6](#) and [1.8](#) for the list of general qualifications covered by equality legislation in England, Wales and Northern Ireland.)

The responsibility of an awarding body is principally one of making reasonable adjustments for a candidate defined as disabled within the meaning of the Equality Act 2010.

*References to legislation in [Chapter 1](#) are to the Equality Act 2010. Separate legislation is in place for Northern Ireland (see [Chapter 1, section 1.8](#)). The definitions and procedures in this document relating to access arrangements and reasonable adjustments will also apply in Northern Ireland.

Evidence of need

The evidence of need will vary depending on the disability and the access arrangement(s) being applied for.

Access arrangements online will provide prompts as to the evidence required. However, please see the relevant section(s) of [Chapter 5](#) for full details as to what constitutes the core evidence/ evidence of need for each access arrangement. Failure to produce the appropriate evidence of need will lead to the application being rejected. Usually, further evidence of need will be required for a substantial impairment.

The evidence of need required for the following access arrangements, where a candidate has a substantial impairment, can be found in [Chapter 5](#):

- [section 5.2 - 25% extra time](#)
- [section 5.3 - extra time of up to 50% \(between 26% and 50% extra time\)](#)
- [section 5.7 - scribe/speech recognition technology](#).

THE EQUALITY ACT 2010 DEFINITION OF DISABILITY

Generally, impairments have to meet the statutory requirements set out in section 6 and Schedule 1 to the Equality Act 2010 and associated regulations.

The Equality Act 2010 definition of disability is usually considered cumulatively in terms of:

- identifying a physical or mental impairment;
- looking into adverse effects and assessing which are substantial;
- considering if substantial adverse effects are long term;
- judging the impact of long-term adverse effects on normal day-to-day activities.

Statutory guidance on the Equality Act 2010 definition of disability has been produced by the Office for Disability Issues (within the Department for Work and Pensions) to help better understand and apply this definition: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/570382/Equality_Act_2010-disability_definition.pdf

The clear starting point in the statutory guidance is that disability means ‘limitations going beyond the normal differences in ability which may exist among people’.

‘Substantial’ means ‘more than minor or trivial’. Substantial adverse effects can be determined by looking at the effects on a person with the impairment, comparing those to a person without the impairment, to judge if the difference between the two is more than minor or trivial.

‘Long term’ means the impairment has existed for at least 12 months or is likely to do so.

‘Normal day-to-day activities’ could be determined by reference to the illustrative, non-exhaustive list of factors on pages 47 to 51 of the statutory guidance relating to the Equality Act 2010. (Study and education related activities are included in the meaning of ‘day-to-day’ activities.)

The guidance from the Office for Disability Issues referred to above illustrates the factors which might reasonably be regarded as having a substantial adverse effect on normal day-to-day activities. Factors that might reasonably be expected not to have a substantial adverse effect are also provided.

Factors that might reasonably be expected to have a substantial adverse effect include:

- persistent and significant difficulty in reading and understanding written material where this is in the person’s native language, for example because of a mental impairment, a learning difficulty or a sensory or multi-sensory impairment;
- persistent distractibility or difficulty concentrating;
- difficulty understanding or following simple verbal instructions;
- physical impairment – for example, difficulty operating a computer because of physical restrictions in using a keyboard.

Factors that might reasonably be expected **not** to have a substantial adverse effect include:

- minor problems with writing or spelling;
- inability to read very small or indistinct print without the aid of a magnifying glass;
- inability to converse orally in a language which is not the speaker’s native spoken language;
- nervousness or low level anxiety about examinations.

General qualifications – information and guidance for centres

This chapter provides an overview of information and guidance on general qualifications for centres.

The awarding bodies have a duty not to discriminate against individuals in relation to conferring qualifications in respect of all protected characteristics set out in the Equality Act 2010. The chapter therefore specifically sets out the duty upon awarding bodies to make reasonable adjustments and avoid unfavourable treatment towards disabled candidates.

Within this chapter you will find out more about:

Awarding bodies – general qualifications
Duty to make a reasonable adjustment
Definition of disability
Definition of special educational needs
The power of the regulator
The qualifications covered by section 96 of the Equality Act 2010 in England and Wales
How centres can apply for reasonable adjustments for candidates defined as disabled under the terms of the Equality Act 2010
Arrangements in Northern Ireland

General qualifications – information and guidance for centres

The awarding bodies have a duty not to discriminate against individuals in relation to conferring qualifications in respect of all protected characteristics set out in the Equality Act 2010 (with the exception of the protected characteristics of marriage and civil partnership). They will take steps when developing specifications, identifying the assessment criteria and drafting question papers to ensure that the impact of each of these upon individuals with differing protected characteristics is minimised.

This chapter specifically sets out the duty upon awarding bodies to make reasonable adjustments and avoid unfavourable treatment towards disabled candidates.

1.1 AWARDING BODIES – GENERAL QUALIFICATIONS

Section 96 (1-6) of the Equality Act 2010 states that when assessing candidates and conferring general qualifications awarding bodies **must not** discriminate, harass or victimise and have a duty to make reasonable adjustments.

1.2 DUTY TO MAKE A REASONABLE ADJUSTMENT

The duty for an awarding body to make a reasonable adjustment will apply where assessment arrangements would put a disabled candidate at a **substantial disadvantage** in comparison to a candidate who is not disabled. In such circumstances, the awarding body is required to take reasonable steps to avoid that disadvantage. Awarding bodies **are not** required to make adjustments to the academic or other standard being applied when conducting an examination/assessment.

Where a centre is under a duty to make a reasonable adjustment, it **must not** charge a disabled candidate any additional fee in relation to the adjustment or aid.

1.3 DEFINITION OF DISABILITY

Section 6 of the Equality Act 2010 defines disability as a ‘physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on someone’s ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities’.

1.4 DEFINITION OF SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

A candidate has ‘special educational needs’ as defined in the *SEND code of practice: 0 to 25 years*.

Children have special educational needs if they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for them.

The Equality Act 2010 definition of disability includes substantial and long-term sensory impairments such as those affecting sight or hearing, mental health difficulties and long-term health conditions such as asthma, diabetes, epilepsy and cancer. Children and young people with such conditions do not necessarily have SEN, but there is a significant overlap between disabled children and young people and those with SEN.

1.5 THE POWER OF THE REGULATOR

Section 96 (7-8) states that the duty to make reasonable adjustments to general qualifications **does not** apply where the regulator specifies provisions, criteria or practices in relation to which the awarding body:

- is not subject to a duty to make reasonable adjustments;
- is subject to a duty to make reasonable adjustments, but in relation to which such adjustments, as the regulator specifies, should not be made.

It should be noted that the regulators' powers under section 96 of the Equality Act 2010 are 'negative' rather than 'permissive'. That is, section 96 allows the regulators to specify where awarding bodies **are not** under a duty to make reasonable adjustments, rather than saying precisely what adjustments should be made. For example, the regulators have specified that a reader **cannot** be used as a reasonable adjustment where a candidate's reading ability is being assessed.

1.6 WHICH QUALIFICATIONS ARE COVERED BY SECTION 96 OF THE EQUALITY ACT 2010 IN ENGLAND AND WALES?

- Advanced Extension Awards
- Entry Level Certificate qualifications
- Essential Skills (Wales)
- Free Standing Mathematics Qualifications
- General Certificate of Education (Advanced and Advanced Subsidiary levels)
- General Certificate of Secondary Education
- Project qualifications (Extended, Foundation and Higher Projects)
- Welsh Baccalaureate Qualification, Core Certificate.

1.7 HOW CAN CENTRES APPLY FOR REASONABLE ADJUSTMENTS FOR CANDIDATES DEFINED AS DISABLED UNDER THE TERMS OF THE EQUALITY ACT 2010?

Reasonable adjustments

A reasonable adjustment required by a candidate who is disabled within the meaning of the Equality Act 2010 will usually be an access arrangement for the assessment in question, as listed in [Chapters 5](#) and [6](#) of this document.

The arrangements set out in [Chapters 5](#) and [6](#) of this document are the most common ones that are put in place. They will be sufficient to enable candidates who experience **persistent and significant difficulties** (whether those are a result of a disability within the meaning of the Equality Act or otherwise) to access assessments.

Please see the examples below.

Examples of reasonable adjustments for disabled candidates

- A candidate with Dyslexia needs to use a word processor and requires 25% extra time. The use of a word processor is a reasonable adjustment since it is his normal means of producing written work within the centre and is appropriate to his needs.

The candidate has been assessed by the centre's appointed assessor using current nationally standardised tests. The assessment shows that the candidate has a **substantial and long-term impairment** as his working memory and speed of reading are in the below average range. The candidate has standardised scores of 79 and 81. Prior to the candidate being assessed, the SENCo completed Part 1 of Form 8. The application of 25% extra time is a reasonable adjustment and the SENCo processes an online application using *Access arrangements online*.

- A candidate with ADHD (Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder) has **persistent difficulty** concentrating and poor working memory. Supervised rest breaks and the use of a prompter, who may need to physically show her where on a page she had been working in order to re-start her work, would be reasonable adjustments.

- A candidate has ASD which is formally confirmed by a letter from a consultant paediatrician. He has **persistent and significant difficulties** with his handwriting which is poor but not illegible. He is unable to complete mock English Language, English Literature, Geography and Religious Studies papers within the time allowed. In other subjects he finishes the mock papers before the end of the test. The SENCo processes an online application for 25% extra time on account of his impairment which is having a **substantial and adverse effect** in those GCSE subjects with extended writing. Without the application of 25% extra time in those subjects the candidate would be at a **substantial disadvantage**.

- A candidate with a severe vision impairment requires 50% extra time to effectively access the modified enlarged papers ordered for her. In papers involving complex layout and diagrams she also requires the use of a practical assistant and a reader to work under her instruction to locate relevant information. The awarding bodies approve the use of a practical assistant, a reader and 50% extra time as the candidate has a **substantial and long-term impairment**.

- A candidate who is deaf uses BSL as his normal way of working within the centre. The candidate will be provided with modified language papers (where the paper has not been modified at source), a live speaker for pre-recorded components and a Communication Professional. These are reasonable adjustments for the candidate. The SENCo orders modified language papers, where available, using *Access arrangements online*.

- A candidate with profound Speech, Language and Communication Needs (SLCN) is allocated a reader. An online application for a reader is approved. The candidate has a **substantial and long-term impairment** and the use of a reader reflects her normal way of working within the centre. The candidate, in the light of her **substantial difficulties**, is presented with several prompt cards - "please repeat the instructions", "please read that again", "please read back my answers". The use of a reader and prompt cards (placed on the candidate's desk and open to scrutiny by a JCQ Centre Inspector) would be reasonable adjustments for this candidate.

The candidate also has **persistent and significant difficulty** with memory of spoken language and needs repetition. 25% extra time is required as the process of reading will be **substantially slower**. Without the application of 25% extra time the candidate would be at a **substantial disadvantage**. The SENCo decides to apply for 25% extra time and processes an online application.

- A candidate with total colour blindness will be sitting A-level Geography examinations. In timed internal school tests and mock examinations a member of staff has annotated the test papers with the names of the colours.

Due to the impact of his colour blindness the SENCo does not feel colour naming by the invigilator would be an appropriate adjustment. The constant raising of the candidate's hand to request an invigilator names colours for him would be very distracting for other candidates in the exam room. Additionally, the candidate would lose time working in this way.

The SENCo submits an online application for 'Other' using *Access arrangements online*. The online application is automatically not approved. The SENCo refers the application online to the relevant awarding body requesting an invigilator annotates the question paper with the names of the colours before the start of the examination.

The awarding body will consider the application in light of the candidate's needs and the requirement to maintain the integrity and security of the examination.



1.7.1 Identifying adjustments at the start of a course for a disabled candidate with very substantial and complex needs

It is possible that where a disabled candidate has very substantial and complex needs these may not be accommodated by the range of published arrangements. For example, a candidate with a brain injury who may need access to eye gaze technology or a candidate who cannot use a pen and must use a pencil due to sensory processing difficulties. The list of arrangements is not exhaustive.

Centres **must** discuss these cases with the relevant awarding body/bodies prior to processing an online application for 'Other'.

Whilst any proposed arrangement(s) should support a disabled candidate in being able to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of the subject, the qualification must remain a reliable indication of their knowledge, skills and understanding. In most cases, it would not be reasonable for adjustments to be made to subject content or the assessment objectives within a qualification. To do so would undermine the effectiveness of the qualification in providing a reliable indication of the candidate's knowledge, skills and understanding.

The awarding body/bodies will be able to advise the centre as to the evidence required to support an online application for 'Other'. More compelling evidence of need may be required to ensure that the candidate is not unfairly advantaged. If the centre cannot provide evidence, it may not be possible for the awarding body to approve the adjustment(s) being sought.

The requirement for evidence of need is important to maintain the rigour and standard of the examination system and to ensure that those receiving and using examination certificates can continue to have confidence in the awarding of qualification grades.

1.7.2 A significant change in a candidate's condition where previously approved arrangements may no longer be sufficient

A candidate who has very substantial and complex needs **must** be kept under review by their centre.

If the candidate's disability is now such that previously approved adjustments are no longer sufficient to meet their needs, i.e. difficulties over and above those that previously approved adjustments would have alleviated, the centre **must** contact the relevant awarding body/bodies to discuss further adjustments.

The awarding body/bodies will always explore additional reasonable adjustments with the centre to ensure that where possible the candidate will be able to sit their examinations. Any revised arrangements, such as additional reasonable adjustments, **must** be approved by the awarding body/bodies prior to the candidate's examinations.

1.7.3 Rare and exceptional circumstances where no other reasonable adjustments will allow a disabled candidate to sit their examinations

In rare and exceptional circumstances where the centre cannot identify additional reasonable adjustments which would allow the candidate to sit their examinations, the relevant awarding body/bodies **must** be contacted.

The awarding body/bodies will determine each case on an individual basis. They will want to understand the candidate's individual circumstances and wherever possible to put in place appropriate adjustments which will allow examinations to be sat. Only the awarding body/bodies will determine whether it is appropriate to consider alternative arrangements for the candidate.

An awarding body may be able to determine grades using suitable alternative assessment evidence. However, this will only be possible as a reasonable adjustment where a candidate is disabled within the meaning of the Equality Act 2010†. The centre **must** have medical evidence which confirms the candidate's disability.

For an awarding body to determine grades using alternative assessment evidence, the candidate **must** have undertaken a course of study which has allowed the demonstration of the knowledge, skills and understanding as required by the awarding body's specification. All suitable reasonable adjustments **must** have been considered and exhausted by the centre. There must be no other reasonable adjustments which would allow the candidate to sit their examinations.

The centre **must** have securely retained suitable alternative assessment evidence which is a sufficient representation of the requirements of the awarding body's specification **and** can be compared to the resulting national standard for the examination series to allow the awarding body to determine a grade. The centre will be required to confirm to the awarding body that the alternative assessment evidence submitted is the candidate's own unaided work. The awarding body will determine a grade that aligns with the national standard set for examinations and other formal assessments, and not the candidate's teacher.

†For centres in Northern Ireland the definition of disability is defined in:

The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (as amended) ("the 1995 Act")

The Special Educational Needs and Disability (Northern Ireland) Order 2005 ("the 2005 Order")

The Special Educational Needs and Disability (General Qualifications Bodies) (Relevant Qualifications, Reasonable Steps and Physical Features) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2008 ("the 2008 Order")

Case studies of disabled candidates being awarded a range of adjustments have been produced to help SENCos with exceptional cases. These may be found at:

<http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/access-arrangements-and-special-consideration>

1.8 ARRANGEMENTS IN NORTHERN IRELAND

Separate legislation is in place in Northern Ireland. However, the definitions and procedures in this document relating to access arrangements and reasonable adjustments will apply.

The definition of disability is defined in the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (as amended). The provisions that make discrimination in the arrangements for awarding general qualifications by awarding bodies unlawful are contained in Part 3, Chapter 3, of the Special Educational Needs and Disability (Northern Ireland) Order 2005 (SENDO 2005).

Current qualifications covered by SENDO 2005 are set out in the Schedule to The Special Educational Needs and Disability (General Qualifications Bodies) (Relevant Qualifications, Reasonable Steps and Physical Features) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2008 ('the 2008 Regulations'). These are as follows:

- Certificate of Personal Effectiveness (CoPE)
- Entry Level qualifications
- General Certificate of Education (Advanced and Advanced Subsidiary levels)
- General Certificate of Secondary Education
- Vocational qualifications.

Guidance issued by the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland (Draft Guide to Disability Discrimination Law that relates to General Qualifications Bodies) describes the duties placed on general qualification bodies that offer qualifications in Northern Ireland. Pages 6 to 7 of this guidance also detail the qualifications that the 2008 Regulations deem to be relevant to general qualifications.

A copy of the guidance can be found on the Equality Commission's website: equalityni.org/ECNI/media/ECNI/Publications/Employers%20and%20Service%20Providers/DraftguidetodiscrimlawGeneralQualificationsbodies2010.pdf?ext=.pdf



Tip: click on a chapter tab to jump to that chapter.

Vocational qualifications - information and guidance for centres

This chapter focuses on information and guidance on vocational qualifications.

The duty for an awarding body to make a reasonable adjustment will apply where an assessment arrangement would put a disabled person at a substantial disadvantage in comparison to someone who is not disabled.

In such circumstances, the awarding body is required to take reasonable steps to avoid that disadvantage.

For qualifications which are internally assessed, centres do not need to apply to the awarding body. However, centres must make reasonable adjustments that are in line with the awarding body's policies.

All reasonable adjustments made in relation to internal assessments must be recorded on Form VQ/IA and held on file within the centre for inspection by an awarding body.

Centres that wish to apply for a reasonable adjustment in a vocational qualification must make an application to the relevant awarding body no later than six weeks before the date of the assessment.

Overall, this chapter covers:

The qualifications covered
Awarding bodies – vocational qualifications
The duties of awarding bodies
Application of competence standards
Taking advice from the awarding body about competence standards
Recruiting learners with integrity
Guidance on reasonable adjustments
Reasonable adjustments with vocational qualifications
Applying reasonable adjustments to internal assessments
How centres can apply for reasonable adjustments for external assessments
Modified papers

Vocational qualifications - information and guidance for centres

2.1 WHICH QUALIFICATIONS ARE COVERED?

This chapter relates specifically to vocational qualifications as defined in section 54 of the Equality Act 2010.

2.2 AWARDING BODIES – VOCATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS

Section 53 of the Equality Act 2010 states that when assessing candidates and conferring vocational qualifications awarding bodies **must not** discriminate, harass or victimise and have a duty to make reasonable adjustments.

2.3 WHAT ARE THE DUTIES OF AWARDING BODIES?

The duty for an awarding body to make a reasonable adjustment will apply where an assessment arrangement would put a disabled person at a **substantial disadvantage** in comparison to someone who is not disabled. In such circumstances, the awarding body is required to take reasonable steps to avoid that disadvantage. Awarding bodies **are not** required to make adjustments to the academic or other standard being applied when conducting an examination/assessment.

2.4 APPLICATION OF COMPETENCE STANDARDS

Awarding bodies offering vocational qualifications are allowed to apply competence standards to a disabled person. (This equally applies to general qualifications.)

A competence standard is defined as an academic, medical or other standard applied for the purpose of determining whether or not a person has a particular level of competence or ability.

The application by an awarding body of a competence standard to a disabled person is not disability discrimination unless it is discrimination by virtue of section 19 of the Equality Act 2010 (re indirect discrimination).

2.5 TAKING ADVICE FROM THE AWARDING BODY ABOUT COMPETENCE STANDARDS

There are subject specific issues relating to vocational qualifications where the centre may need to seek advice from the awarding body issuing the qualification.

In many vocational qualifications a wide range of reasonable adjustments will be available. The arrangements listed in [Chapters 5](#) and [6](#) may be relevant for some candidates entering for vocational qualifications.

However, there are some important exceptions where the competence standards would be invalidated if an adjustment was made. Reasonable adjustments to vocational qualifications that carry a 'licence to practise' need to be carefully considered so as not to invalidate 'the licence'.

2.6 RECRUITING LEARNERS WITH INTEGRITY

It is vital that centres recruit with integrity with regard to vocational qualifications. Centres **must** ensure that learners have the correct information and advice on their selected qualification(s) and that the qualification(s) will meet their needs. The recruitment process **must** include the centre assessing each potential learner. The centre **must** make justifiable and professional judgements about the learner's potential to successfully complete the assessment and achieve the qualification. Such an assessment **must** identify, where appropriate, the support that will be made available to the learner to facilitate access to the qualification(s).

Where the recruitment process identifies that the learner may not be able to demonstrate attainment and thus gain achievement in all assessments for the selected qualification, this **must** be communicated clearly to the learner. A learner may still decide to proceed with a qualification and not be entered for all or some of the assessments.

Centres **must** ensure that learners are aware of:

- the range of options available, including any reasonable adjustments that may be necessary, to enable the demonstration of attainment across all the required assessments; **and**
- any restrictions on progression routes to the learner because of not achieving certain outcomes.

2.7 GUIDANCE ON REASONABLE ADJUSTMENTS

Awarding bodies aim to ensure open access to vocational qualifications for learners who are eligible for reasonable adjustments in assessments, without compromising the assessment of the skills, knowledge, understanding or competence being measured.

A reasonable adjustment is agreed at the pre-assessment planning stage and is any action that helps to reduce the effect of a disability or difficulty, which places the learner at a **substantial disadvantage**.

An adjustment **will not** be reasonable if it affects the reliability or validity of assessment outcomes, or it gives the learner an unfair (i.e. **not** reasonable) assessment advantage over other learners undertaking the same or similar assessments.

The head of centre/Principal/CEO (or designated nominee) **must** ensure that an adjustment implemented by the centre on behalf of the learner is based on firm evidence of a barrier to assessment and is in line with this 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.

2.8 REASONABLE ADJUSTMENTS WITHIN VOCATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS

Vocational qualifications accredit competence against qualification specifications and assessment criteria, and/or National Standards and an approved assessment strategy. Any reasonable adjustment **must** reflect the normal learning or working practice of a learner in a centre or working within the occupational area.

Learners may, however, use mechanical, electronic and other aids to demonstrate competence. The aids **must** either be generally commercially available, or available from specialist suppliers, and be feasible to use in the centre or on the employers' premises.

The following adaptations are examples of what may be considered as facilitating access if they **do not** impact on any competence standards being tested:

- adapting assessment materials;
- adaptation of the physical environment for access purposes;
- adaptation to equipment;
- assessment material in an enlarged format or Braille;
- assessment material on coloured paper or in audio format;
- British Sign Language (BSL);
- changing or adapting the assessment method;
- changing usual assessment arrangements;
- extra time, e.g. assignment extensions;
- modified language assessment material;
- practical assistant;
- prompter;
- providing assistance during an assessment;
- reader;
- scribe;
- use of assistive software/technology;
- use of CCTV, coloured overlays, low vision aids;
- use of a different assessment location;
- use of ICT/responses using electronic devices.

It is important to note that not all the adjustments (as above) will be reasonable, permissible or practical in some situations. The learner may not need, nor be allowed, the same adjustment for all assessments.

Learners should be fully involved in any decisions about adjustments/adaptations. This will ensure that individual needs can be met, whilst still bearing in mind the specified assessment criteria for a qualification.

As the needs and circumstances of each learner are different, centres **must** consider any request for a reasonable adjustment on a case-by-case basis. Evidence of need will be required.

2.9 APPLYING REASONABLE ADJUSTMENTS TO INTERNAL ASSESSMENTS

For qualifications which are internally assessed, centres **do not** need to apply to the awarding body. However, centres **must** make reasonable adjustments that are in line with the awarding body's policies.

All reasonable adjustments made in relation to internal assessments **must** be recorded on Form VQ/IA and held on file within the centre for inspection by an awarding body.

Form VQ/IA is available electronically at:
<http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/access-arrangements-and-special-consideration/forms>

Where the centre is unsure if the reasonable adjustment proposed is in line with this guidance, the relevant awarding body **must** be contacted for advice.

2.10 HOW CAN CENTRES APPLY FOR REASONABLE ADJUSTMENTS FOR EXTERNAL ASSESSMENTS?

Centres that wish to apply for a reasonable adjustment in a vocational qualification must make an application to the relevant awarding body **no later than six weeks before the date of the assessment**.

Each application will be considered individually. The response will relate primarily to the effect the requested adjustment might have on the competence and ability being tested in the qualification, as well as the reliability and validity of the assessment.

Some adjustments may not be considered reasonable if they:

- do not meet the published criteria;
- involve unreasonable costs to the awarding body;
- involve unreasonable timeframes; or
- affect the security and integrity of the qualification itself.

For example, Braille papers cannot be produced at short notice. Adjustments **must not** put in jeopardy the health and well-being of the candidate or any other person.

The centre **must** ensure that approved adjustments can be delivered to candidates.

2.11 MODIFIED PAPERS

To apply for Braille papers, modified enlarged papers, modified language papers or papers adapted for the purpose of using a recording, orders must be made **no later than ten weeks before the date of the assessment**.

Where it reflects the learner's normal way of working, centres may provide an A3 enlargement of non-secure materials without requesting the permission of the awarding body.

The language of non-secure materials **must not** be changed without the prior permission of the awarding body.

Secure question papers **must not** be opened early without the prior permission of the awarding body.



Candidates with disabilities and learning difficulties, and the application of assessment objectives

This chapter provides information on candidates with disabilities and learning difficulties.

It covers:

General qualifications

It is vital that centres recruit with integrity. Centres must ensure learners have the correct information and advice on their selected qualifications and that the qualifications will meet their needs.

Centres must assess each potential learner and make justifiable and professional judgements about the learner's potential to successfully complete and achieve the qualifications.

Assessment objectives and grade boundaries

In general qualifications, the candidate must demonstrate attainment in a number of assessment objectives.

Some types of disability may affect the candidate's ability to demonstrate one or more of the assessment objectives. An alternative route may be available in the specification and advice must be sought from the awarding body.

Candidates with disabilities and learning difficulties, and the application of assessment objectives

3.1 GENERAL QUALIFICATIONS

It is vital that centres recruit with integrity with regard to general qualifications. Centres **must** ensure that learners have in an accessible format the correct information and advice on their selected qualifications and that the qualifications will meet their needs.

The centre **must** assess each potential learner and make justifiable and professional judgements about the learner's potential to successfully complete and achieve the qualifications. Such an assessment **must** identify, where appropriate, the support that will be made available to the learner to facilitate access to the qualifications.

3.2 ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVES AND GRADE BOUNDARIES

- 3.21

In general qualifications, (see [Chapter 1, sections 1.6](#) and [1.8](#)) the candidate must demonstrate attainment in a number of assessment objectives.

The assessment objectives define the competencies being tested by the specification. These test knowledge, understanding, skills and their application. The assessment objectives are set out in the awarding bodies' specifications for each subject.

The marks gained when these skills are measured are multiplied by an aggregation factor to maintain the appropriate weightings.

The total mark is matched against the agreed number of marks (the grade boundary) required for each grade at which the qualification can be issued.
- 3.22

The academic standard or level which must be reached by each candidate to achieve a particular grade is identified by the grade boundary. The grade boundaries are applied equally to all candidates. To be awarded a grade, the candidate **must** be able to demonstrate the level of competence or ability against the assessment objectives.
- 3.23

Some types of disability may affect the candidate's ability to demonstrate one or more of the assessment objectives. An alternative route may be available in the specification and advice **must** be sought from the awarding body. In some cases, a disabled candidate may have to be exempted from a component (see [Chapter 5, section 5.17](#)) if that is the only adjustment available to enable them to overcome a **substantial disadvantage** in accessing the specification.

Sometimes, however, alternatives cannot be found because the impairment relates to a fundamental part of the assessment. As a result, the candidate may not score enough marks to justify entering for the qualification.

The centre may include a candidate on a course in the full knowledge that they may not be able to fulfil all the assessment requirements. The candidate and their parents/carers **must** be made fully aware of the extent to which it is advisable to enter the candidate for the qualification. It is not always possible to arrange equal access for a candidate whose impairment affects a competence which is being tested and who may be unable to demonstrate the assessment objectives.

Centres should take steps to ensure that their assessors (see [Chapter 7, section 7.3](#)) have access to the assessment objectives for the relevant specification(s).

- 3.24 The examples below show how adjustments can be made to enable candidates to gain access to qualifications and to demonstrate what they know and can do. The examples show cases where an adjustment will not be permitted and where it is not advisable to enter the candidate for the qualification (unless it is felt that the impairment will not affect a significant proportion of the qualification).
- 3.25 In most cases it will not be reasonable for adjustments to be made to assessment objectives within a qualification. To do so would likely undermine the effectiveness of the qualification in providing a reliable indication of the knowledge, skills and understanding of the candidate. There is no duty to make adjustments which the qualifications regulators have specified should not be made.

Examples of how assessment objectives would impact on the availability of access arrangements/reasonable adjustments

- A candidate with cerebral palsy enjoys her GCSE Design and Technology course but cannot use her hands. She cannot design or make any realisation independently, even with the aid of CAD/CAM. As this part of the assessment is a large proportion of the qualification, she decides not to enter for this subject. The assessment objectives are designing and making, so no adjustment can be made.
- A candidate with dyslexia wants to take GCSE English Language and GCSE Spanish but cannot read or write adequately. He cannot have an adjustment in the form of a reader in the Reading section of the GCSE English Language paper and the GCSE Spanish Reading paper but may use a computer reader. He cannot have a scribe for GCSE Spanish examinations unless he is able to dictate each foreign word letter by letter. It may be appropriate to enter the candidate for GCSE Spanish if, with extra time of up to 50%, or the use of a word processor with the spelling and grammar check switched off, he can access the examinations independently. He can however have a scribe in the Reading and Writing sections of the GCSE English Language paper. (Where a scribe is used in an examination assessing quality of written communication or spelling, punctuation and grammar, marks can only be awarded if the candidate can demonstrate that he/she has carried out the skills being assessed.)
- A candidate with no hands wishes to take GCE A level Fine Art. It is suggested that mouth or foot painting will be acceptable. The candidate cannot do either and wants another person to paint at her instruction. This is **not** permitted as the assessment includes the skill of painting.



Chapter 4 Summary

Managing the needs of candidates and principles for centres

Chapter 4 looks at managing the needs of candidates and the associated principles for centres.

The chapter includes:

Managing the needs of candidates with disabilities and learning difficulties

Some candidates with disabilities and learning difficulties are likely to have several needs. These may include:

- Cognition and learning needs
- Communication and interaction needs
- Sensory and physical needs
- Social, emotional and mental health needs

These candidates may require a range of adjustments as set out in [4.1.1](#) to [4.1.4](#) below.

Principles for centres

The purpose of an access arrangement/reasonable adjustment is to ensure, where possible, that barriers to assessment are removed for a disabled candidate preventing them from being placed at a substantial disadvantage due to persistent and significant difficulties.

The integrity of the assessment is maintained, whilst at the same time providing access to assessments for a disabled candidate.

Chapter 4

Managing the needs of candidates and principles for centres

4.1 MANAGING THE NEEDS OF CANDIDATES WITH DISABILITIES AND LEARNING DIFFICULTIES

Some candidates with disabilities and learning difficulties are likely to have several needs as set out in [paragraphs 4.1.1–4.1.4](#). They may require a range of adjustments. The examples given are therefore not exhaustive and are illustrative only.

(See [Chapters 5](#) and [6](#) for details of these arrangements.)

4.1.1 Cognition and learning needs†

E.g. Learning difficulties or specific learning difficulties (such as Dyscalculia and Dyslexia)

Candidates with cognition and learning needs may require, for example:

- supervised rest breaks
- extra time
- a computer reader or a reader
- read aloud or an examination reading pen
- a scribe
- a word processor
- a prompter
- a practical assistant
- coloured overlays
- coloured/enlarged papers
- modified language papers.

4.1.2 Communication and interaction needs†

E.g. Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD), Speech, Language and Communication Needs (SLCN)

Candidates with communication and interaction difficulties may require, for example:

- supervised rest breaks
- extra time
- a computer reader or a reader
- read aloud or an examination reading pen
- a scribe
- a word processor
- modified language papers.

†The candidate **must** have an impairment in their first language which has a **substantial and long-term adverse effect**. A candidate **does not** have a learning difficulty simply because their first language is not English, Irish or Welsh.

4.1.3 Sensory and physical needs

E.g. Deaf/and/or hard of hearing, Vision Impairment (VI), Multi-Sensory Impairment (MSI), Physical Disability (PD)

Candidates with sensory and physical needs may require, for example:

- supervised rest breaks
- extra time
- a computer reader or a reader
- read aloud or an examination reading pen
- a scribe
- a word processor
- a Language Modifier
- a live speaker
- a Communication Professional
- a practical assistant
- alternative rooming arrangements, e.g. a room for a smaller group of candidates with similar needs
- Braille papers, modified enlarged and/or modified language papers.

4.1.4 Social, emotional and mental health needs†

E.g. Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), Mental Health Conditions

Candidates with social, emotional and mental health needs may require, for example:

- supervised rest breaks
- extra time
- a computer reader or a reader
- read aloud or an examination reading pen
- a scribe
- a word processor
- a prompter
- alternative site arrangement
- alternative rooming arrangements, e.g. a room for a smaller group of candidates with similar needs.

†The candidate **must** have an impairment in their first language which has a **substantial and long-term adverse effect**. A candidate **does not** have a learning difficulty simply because their first language is not English, Irish or Welsh.

4.2 PRINCIPLES FOR CENTRES

- 4.2.1 The purpose of an access arrangement/reasonable adjustment is to ensure, where possible, that barriers to assessment are removed for a disabled candidate preventing them from being placed at a substantial disadvantage due to persistent and significant difficulties. The integrity of the assessment is maintained, whilst at the same time providing access to assessments for a disabled candidate.

The SENCo, or an equivalent member of staff within a FE college, **must** ensure that the proposed access arrangement/reasonable adjustment does not unfairly disadvantage or advantage the candidate.

A centre **must** make decisions on appropriate access arrangements for their candidates. Although professionals from other organisations may give advice, they **cannot** make the decision for the centre. They will not have a working knowledge of an individual candidate's needs and how their difficulties impact in the classroom and/or in timed assessments. It is the responsibility of the SENCo to make appropriate and informed decisions based on the JCQ regulations.

- 4.2.2 Although access arrangements/adjustments are intended to allow access to assessments, they cannot be granted where they will compromise the assessment objectives of the specification in question (see [Chapter 3](#)). For example, the use of a practical assistant **will not** normally be allowed when practical skills are being tested.

- 4.2.3 Candidates may not require the same access arrangements/reasonable adjustments in each specification. Subjects and their methods of assessments may vary, leading to different demands of the candidate. SENCos **must** consider the need for access arrangements/reasonable adjustments on a subject-by-subject basis. (See the second example below.)

Examples

- A GCE AS candidate will use a word processor in English Literature, History and Sociology papers but not in Further Mathematics papers. The use of a word processor in English Literature, History and Sociology AS papers is appropriate to his needs and reflects his normal way of working within the centre.
- A GCSE candidate is awarded 25% extra time in papers with extended writing – English Language, English Literature, Geography and History – because her impairment **substantially** impacts only upon her ability to compose continuous text. These difficulties are not so extensive in short answer French and Spanish papers, Science and Mathematics papers. Therefore 25% extra time is not awarded.
- A GCSE candidate is awarded 25% extra time in all papers because his impairment **substantially** impacts upon his reading, writing and processing skills.

- 4.2.4 Access arrangements/reasonable adjustments should be processed at the **start** of the course. Schools, for example, should be able to process applications at the start of or during the first year of a two-year GCSE course having firmly established a picture of need and normal way of working during Years 7 to 9.

However, in the event of a temporary injury or impairment, or a diagnosis of a disability or manifestation of an impairment relating to an existing disability arising after the start of the course, access arrangements/reasonable adjustments should be applied for as soon as is practicable. Centres **must** process applications as detailed in [Chapter 8, section 8.3](#) using *Access arrangements online* where required.

Arrangements **must** always be approved **before** an examination or assessment.

- 4.2.5 The arrangement(s) put in place **must** reflect the support given to the candidate in the centre†, for example:

- in the classroom (where appropriate);
- working in small groups for reading and/or writing;
- support lessons;
- intervention strategies;
- in internal tests/examinations;
- mock examinations.

This is commonly referred to as 'normal way of working'. For candidates with learning difficulties, this is typically the background information recorded within Part 1 of Form 8 by the SENCo or the assessor working within the centre.

SENCos and assessors **must** refer to [Chapter 7, paragraph 7.6.1](#) for information on how to confirm 'normal way of working'.

†The only exception to this is where an arrangement is put in place due to a temporary injury or impairment (see [section 8.3](#)).

- 4.2.6 As subjects vary, leading to different demands of the candidate, support may be needed in just one or two subjects; another candidate may need support in all their subjects. The key principle is that the SENCo, or the assessor working within the centre, can show a history of support and provision. The arrangement **is not** suddenly being granted to the candidate at the time of their examinations.



- 4.2.7 The SENCo and/or the assessor **must** work with teaching staff, support staff and exams office personnel to ensure that approved access arrangements are put in place for internal school tests, mock examinations and examinations.

The candidate **must** have had appropriate opportunities to practise using the access arrangement(s)/reasonable adjustment(s) before their first examination. This is particularly so where a computer reader, modified enlarged papers, a scribe, speech recognition technology or a word processor will be used in examinations.

- 4.2.8 If a candidate has never made use of the arrangement granted to them, e.g. 25% extra time or supervised rest breaks, then it **is not** their normal way of working. The SENCo may consider withdrawing the arrangement, provided the candidate **will not** be placed at a substantial disadvantage. (The SENCo would have monitored the use of the arrangement in internal school tests and mock examinations.)
- 4.2.9 Where non-examination assessment is marked by teachers, credit must only be given for skills demonstrated by the candidate working independently. Access arrangements/adjustments **must not** compromise assessment requirements.
- 4.2.10 Where a person is appointed to facilitate an access arrangement/reasonable adjustment, i.e.

- a Communication Professional
- a Language Modifier
- a practical assistant
- a prompter
- a reader
- a scribe

they are responsible to the exams officer and **must** be acceptable to the head of centre. The person appointed **must not normally** be the candidate's own subject teacher, Learning Support Assistant or teaching assistant. However, where the candidate's own subject teacher, Learning Support Assistant or teaching assistant is used, a separate invigilator **must always** be present. The person appointed **must not** be a relative, friend or peer of the candidate. A private tutor **cannot** facilitate an access arrangement.

The head of centre **must** ensure that the person appointed is a responsible adult, is thoroughly trained and fully understands the rules of the access arrangement(s)/reasonable adjustment(s), as detailed in this document.

It is not acceptable for a centre to use a current student to facilitate an access arrangement/reasonable adjustment.

- 4.2.11 **Failure to comply with the regulations contained in this document has the potential to constitute malpractice which may impact on the candidate's result(s).**

Examples of failure to comply include:

- putting in place access arrangements/adjustments that are **not** approved;
- failing to consider putting in place access arrangements (which may be a failure to comply with the duty to make reasonable adjustments);
- permitting access arrangements/adjustments within the centre which are **not** supported by appropriate evidence; or
- charging a fee for providing reasonable adjustments to a disabled candidate.

- 4.2.12 The JCQ and the awarding bodies can only enter into discussions over access arrangements/reasonable adjustments with the candidate's centre and **not** with parents/carers.

- 4.2.13 When an access arrangement/reasonable adjustment has been processed online and approved for GCSE and GCE qualifications, the evidence of need (where required) **must** be made available by the SENCo to a JCQ Centre Inspector upon request. An awarding body may also request evidence of need when considered necessary. This can either be in hard copy paper format or electronically.

Where the SENCo is storing documentation electronically they **must** create an e-folder for each individual candidate. The candidate's e-folder **must** hold each of the required documents for inspection.

All GCSE and GCE centres will be inspected by a JCQ Centre Inspector. The Inspector will expect to see appropriate documentation to substantiate an approved online application for an access arrangement/reasonable adjustment.

If a JCQ centre inspection reveals deficient performance by a centre in respect of its role in requesting and/or implementing access arrangements/reasonable adjustments, an awarding body will take decisive action. Ultimately, an awarding body might have to withdraw approval for a centre. This would be where a centre has clearly failed to comply with its obligations in respect of identifying the need for, requesting and implementing access arrangements/reasonable adjustments.

- 4.2.14 The documentation **must** be presented to the JCQ Centre Inspector by the SENCo.

If the SENCo is not available when the Inspector calls, the relevant member of the senior leadership team **must** meet with the Inspector and address any queries and any questions, they may raise.

Examples – evidence for inspection purposes

The evidence may be stored by the SENCo electronically or in hard copy paper format.

A GCSE candidate with autism, which has a **substantial and long-term adverse effect**, is awarded a reader and a scribe. The SENCo presents for inspection:

- Form 9 which is supplemented by a written statement from a Speech and Language Therapist; (The signed and dated Form 9, completed by the SENCo, is produced in line with these regulations.)
- the approval sheet from AAO;
- a signed candidate personal data consent form.

A GCE A-level candidate with specific learning difficulties is awarded 25% extra time. She has two low average standardised scores (85-89) relating to two different areas of speed of working. The SENCo presents for inspection:

- Form 8, with an electronic signature and dated, with Parts 1, 2 and 3 completed and evidence of the assessor's post-graduate qualification in individual specialist assessment at or equivalent to Level 7;
- an IEP; (The SENCo is required to provide samples of evidence **in addition to** Form 8.)
- approval from the awarding bodies;
- a signed candidate personal data consent form.

A GCSE candidate with a significant visual impairment which has a **substantial and long-term adverse effect** is awarded a computer reader. The SENCo presents for inspection:

- Form 9 as detailed in [paragraph 5.5.5](#);
- the approval sheet from AAO;
- a signed candidate personal data consent form.

Access arrangements and adjustments

This chapter details access arrangements and adjustments.

Access arrangements and adjustments must not be allowed to interfere with the integrity of the assessment or to give credit for skills, knowledge and understanding which cannot be demonstrated by the candidate.

Centres should bear in mind that they will have duties towards disabled candidates, including a duty to make reasonable adjustments to the service they provide to candidates.

The SENCo must undertake the necessary and appropriate steps to gather an appropriate picture of need and demonstrate normal way of working for a private candidate.

Throughout this chapter, you will find information about different access arrangements and adjustments, including:

Supervised rest breaks	25% extra time
Extra time of up to 50% (between 26% and 50% extra time)	
Extra time of over 50%	Computer reader/reader
Read aloud and/or the use of an examination reading pen	
Scribe/speech recognition technology	Word processor
Braille transcript	Prompter
Language Modifier	Live speaker for pre-recorded examination components
Communication Professional (for candidates using Sign Language)	
Practical assistant	Alternative site for conducting examinations
Other arrangements for candidates with disabilities	
Exemptions	Bilingual translation dictionary with 25% extra time
Access to a mobile phone for medical purposes	
Remote invigilation through the use of technology	
Timetable variation requiring overnight supervision for a candidate with a disability	
Timetable variation on the day of the exam for a candidate with a disability	
Listening to music/white noise due to a substantial impairment	

Access arrangements and adjustments

The access arrangements/reasonable adjustments listed within this chapter apply to the following qualifications:

- AQA Applied General qualifications
- AQA Level 2 Certificate in Further Maths
- AQA Level 3 Certificate in Mathematical Studies
- BTEC Firsts
- BTEC Level 2 Technicals
- BTEC Nationals
- BTEC Tech Awards
- Cambridge Nationals
- Cambridge Technicals
- City & Guilds Level 2 and Level 3 Technical qualifications
- Entry Level Certificate qualifications (ELC)
- Free Standing Mathematics Qualifications (FSMQ)
- Functional Skills
- GCE (AS and A-level)
- GCSE
- OCR Level 3 Certificates
- T-Levels
- Welsh Baccalaureate Qualification (WBQ)
- WJEC Essential Skills (Wales)
- WJEC Level 1 and Level 2 General qualifications
- WJEC Level 1 and Level 2 Vocational qualifications
- WJEC Level 1 and Level 2 Vocational Awards (Technical Awards)
- WJEC Level 3 Applied qualifications

(where permitted by the specification).

The principle will be the same across all qualification types: access arrangements and adjustments **must not** be allowed to interfere with the integrity of the assessment or to give credit for skills, knowledge and understanding which cannot be demonstrated by the candidate.

Centres should bear in mind that they will have duties towards disabled candidates, including a duty to make reasonable adjustments to the service they provide to candidates. Where the centre is under a duty to make a reasonable adjustment, it **must not** charge a disabled candidate any additional fee in relation to the adjustment or aid.

The SENCo **must** undertake the necessary and appropriate steps to gather an appropriate picture of need and demonstrate normal way of working for a private candidate. This includes distance learners and home educated students. The centre, where required, **must** lead on the assessment process. The candidate **must** be assessed by the centre's appointed assessor. In some instances, depending on their needs, the candidate may have to be assessed away from the centre, for example at home. The centre **must** comply with the obligation to identify the need for, request and implement access arrangements/reasonable adjustments.

For those centres who accept entries from private candidates, the SENCo must also refer to the JCQ document *An overview of the access arrangements and reasonable adjustments process for centres accepting private candidates*:
<http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/access-arrangements-and-special-consideration>

NB

Where reference is made to an assessment 'no earlier than the start of Year 9', for candidates in Northern Ireland this would be Year 10.

In Wales a **current** Individual Development Plan (IDP) which confirms the candidate's disability has the same status as a **current** Education, Health and Care Plan (England) or a **current** Statement of special educational needs (Northern Ireland).

Where reference is made to 'standardised scores', these are standard scores which use a mean of 100 and a standard deviation of 15.

5.1 SUPERVISED REST BREAKS*

*There **is not** a requirement to process an application for supervised rest breaks using *Access arrangements online*. However, for GCSE and GCE AS and A-level qualifications the SENCo **must** complete the statement within either Part 1 of Form 8 or Part 1 of Form 9, confirming the need for supervised rest breaks.

Part 1 of Form 8 will be used to confirm the need for supervised rest breaks for those candidates with learning difficulties who also require 25% extra time and/or a scribe.

The SENCo **must** confirm the nature of the candidate's impairment and that supervised rest breaks reflect their normal way of working within the centre. A JCQ Centre Inspector may ask to see the completed Form 8 or Form 9 supporting the awarding of supervised rest breaks.

Specialist evidence is not required for inspection purposes.

Where a candidate has an impairment other than a learning difficulty, the SENCo should have explored and trialled the option of supervised rest breaks through timed internal tests and/or mock examinations before making an application for 25% extra time.

Some candidates may additionally require 25% extra time.

- 5.1.1 The SENCo is allowed to provide a supervised rest break to a candidate where it is their **normal way of working within the centre**.

The SENCo **must** be satisfied that:

- the candidate has an impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect, giving rise to persistent and significant difficulties (the candidate is disabled within the meaning of the Equality Act); and
- there is a genuine need for the arrangement.

Supervised rest breaks will be awarded on account of:

- cognition and learning needs;
- communication and interaction needs;
- a medical condition;
- sensory and physical needs;
- social, emotional and mental health needs.

In addition, the candidate's difficulties **must be established within the centre** and known to a Form Tutor, a Head of Year, the SENCo and/or a senior member of staff with pastoral responsibilities.

- 5.1.2 The timing of the examination should be paused and re-started when the candidate is ready to continue.

During the supervised rest break the candidate **must not** have access to the question paper/answer booklet. The purpose of a supervised rest break is for a break from the examination and **must not** be used as 'thinking time'.

If the candidate needs to leave the examination room, an invigilator **must** accompany the candidate.

A single supervised rest break should be no more than 30 minutes in duration. A supervised rest break will often be shorter than this. Candidates **cannot** be given as many supervised rest breaks as they like for as long as they like. A supervised rest break will not normally be required within the first 10 minutes of an examination but may be thereafter.

The **duration of the supervised rest break must** be determined by the SENCo based on their knowledge of the candidate's needs and the candidate's normal way of working when placed under timed conditions. It may be helpful to consider in advance of the examination(s) how many breaks a candidate might need and the approximate duration of the supervised rest break. This will allow sufficient staff to be available to facilitate the rest break.

- 5.1.3 There will be some constraints on timing if the candidate has more than one examination to take each day.

Where a candidate requires supervised rest breaks and extra time, the supervised rest break(s) may be taken at any point during the examination.

Centres must seek medical advice in cases of serious illness on whether the candidate is fit to take the examination.

5.2 25% EXTRA TIME

(Extra time **must not** be confused with supervised rest breaks – see [section 5.1](#).)

Where a candidate will be working with a scribe for the entire duration of the examination and requires 25% extra time, centres **must** refer to [paragraph 5.7.10](#).

5.2.1 Processing applications

For those qualifications listed within the [Deadlines section](#), an application for 25% extra time **must** be processed using *Access arrangements online*.

Where candidates have complex needs other than learning difficulties, please see [paragraph 5.2.3](#).

Extra time **will not** be allowed if a candidate's literacy difficulties are primarily caused by English, Irish or Welsh not being their first language.

5.2.2 Candidates with learning difficulties – core evidence required

To award 25% extra time the SENCo **must** determine the needs of the candidate based on one of the following:

- a **current** Education, Health and Care Plan (England), a **current** Statement of Special Educational Needs (Northern Ireland), or a **current** Individual Development Plan (Wales), which confirms the candidate's disability (**supplemented by the required centre-based evidence** – see [paragraph 5.2.3](#)); **or**
- a fully completed Form 8 with an assessment (Part 2 of Form 8) carried out **no earlier than the start of Year 9** by an assessor confirming a learning difficulty relating to secondary/further education. In certain circumstances Form 8 **must be supplemented by samples of evidence** - see below.

5.2.2.1 Substantial impairment

So as not to give an unfair advantage, Part 2 of Form 8 **must** confirm that the candidate has at least:

- two below average standardised scores of 84 or less; **or**
- one below average standardised score of 84 or less **and** one low average standardised score (85-89).

In either scenario, the two standardised scores **must** relate to two different areas of speed of working as below:

- speed of reading **and** speed of writing; **or**
- speed of reading **and** cognitive processing/fluency; **or**
- speed of writing **and** cognitive processing/fluency; **or**
- **two different areas** of cognitive processing/fluency which have a substantial and long-term adverse effect on speed of working.

An assessment of mathematical fluency **must** only be used as one of the two required measures for 25% extra time in Mathematics examinations. The mathematical fluency score **must be** below average. An assessment of mathematical fluency **can only** contribute to the evidence for 25% extra time in Mathematics examinations.

See [paragraphs 7.5.10](#) to [7.5.13](#) for further information on reading skills, writing skills and cognitive processing/fluency.

When to use a reading speed or writing speed score

Where a candidate reads for themselves, a measure of text reading speed can be used as one of the two required scores for 25% extra time. The result will be recorded within Part 2 of Form 8 under 'Evidence for 25% extra time, Reading speed'.

Where the candidate uses a computer reader, a reader or an examination reading pen, a measure of reading speed **cannot** be used as evidence for 25% extra time.

Where a candidate writes by hand, a measure of writing speed can be used as one of the two required scores for 25% extra time. The result will be recorded within Part 2 of Form 8 under 'Evidence for extra time, Writing speed'.

Where the candidate uses a scribe, speech recognition technology or a word processor, a measure of writing speed **cannot** be used as evidence for 25% extra time.

See [paragraphs 7.5.10](#) to [7.5.13](#) for further information on reading skills, writing skills and cognitive processing.

5.2.2.2 Exceptional circumstances

Where the assessment confirms that the candidate has at least two low average standardised scores (85-89) which relate to two different areas of speed of working, an online referral to an awarding body using *Access arrangements online* will be required.

5.2.2.3 Rare and very exceptional circumstances

Where the assessment confirms that the candidate has a cluster of scores (at least three, relating to three different areas of speed of working) just within the average range (90 to 94), an online referral to an awarding body using *Access arrangements online* will be required.

The candidate **must** have a diagnostic assessment report, from **no earlier than Year 9**, confirming a significant learning difficulty or disability which has a clear, measurable and substantial long-term adverse effect on performance and speed of working. This **must** have been undertaken by a HCPC registered psychologist or a specialist teacher assessor appointed by the head of centre.

Within Part 1 of Form 8, the SENCo **must** paint a picture of the candidate's normal way of working, clearly demonstrating the need for 25% extra time. The arrangement **must not** suddenly be granted to the candidate at the time of their examinations.

(A definition of normal way of working is provided within [paragraph 4.2.5](#).)

The SENCo **must** have completed at least a 'skeleton' Part 1 of Form 8 **before** the candidate is assessed. Once the assessment has been completed, and before processing an online application, the SENCo **must** ensure that Part 1 of Form 8 has been fully completed.

Education, Health and Care Plans, Statements of special educational needs or Individual Development Plans

Where a candidate has a **current** Education, Health and Care Plan (England), a **current** Statement of special educational needs (Northern Ireland), or a current Individual Development Plan (Wales), the SENCo **must** substantiate the documentation with a picture of need. This **must** be completed using Form 9. (Form 8 **is not** required and **must not** be used.)

Where a candidate with an existing Form 8 progresses from GCSE to GCE qualifications (and other Level 3 qualifications)

When a candidate **with an existing Form 8** progresses from GCSE to GCE AS and/or A-level qualifications a new online application for 25% extra time must be processed.

An assessment conducted **no earlier than the start of Year 9** (Part 2 of Form 8) recommending 25% extra time for GCSE examinations will be valid for GCE AS and A-level examinations.

A fully completed Form 8 (Parts 1, 2 and 3), signed and dated, may roll forward from GCSE to GCE qualifications where the candidate meets the **current** published criteria for 25% extra time, i.e. the 2024/25 JCQ regulations†. No further assessment is required.

However, so as not to give an unfair advantage, the SENCo or the assessor working with the centre **must** have available evidence, which clearly shows that 25% extra time is still needed for GCE AS and/or A-level examinations. (This updated centre-based evidence **must** be completed using Form 8RF and **must** specifically relate to GCE AS and/or A-level examinations).

The SENCo **must** detail:

- the candidate's current difficulties to show how they impact on teaching and learning and performance in examinations, summarising evidence of feedback from teachers and/or support staff;
- the support and adjustments that are in place for the candidate in the classroom, tests and examinations.

[†]The rolling forward of a Form 8 from GCSE to GCE AS and/or A-level qualifications can apply where the candidate remains within the same centre or moves to a different centre.

Where the candidate changes centre, the original or a PDF of a fully completed Form 8, together with evidence of the assessor's qualification, **must** be provided. SENCos **must** provide this evidence to assist their counterparts in FE and Sixth Form colleges.

The Form 8 should be perceived as a 'passport to access arrangements' which travels with the candidate.

The SENCo **must** thoroughly check the Form 8 **before** forwarding it to another centre, ensuring it has been fully completed, signed and dated.

The SENCo at the receiving centre **must not** use an incomplete Form 8. The Form 8 **must** be checked to ensure that all parts of the form have been completed and that it has been signed and dated.

The form **cannot** be amended retrospectively. Where an incomplete Form 8 has been provided, the candidate must be reassessed to determine the need for 25% extra time.

The SENCo, or an equivalent member of staff within a FE college, **must** ensure:

- that 25% extra time remains appropriate, practicable and reasonable;
- the candidate meets the **current** published criteria for 25% extra time, i.e. the 2024/25 JCQ regulations, **before** a new online application for 25% extra time is processed.

Evidence from an assessor – Part 2 of Form 8

Standard expected categories

The standard expected categories are where a candidate has:

- two below average standardised scores of 84 or less; **or**
- one below average standardised score of 84 or less **and** one low average standardised score (85-89)

which relate to two different areas of speed of working.

Rare and exceptional cases

For those rare and exceptional cases which fall outside the standard expected categories, as above, the amount of evidence of need will vary, and be greater, according to the candidate's standardised scores on tests relating to speeds of working.

A referral to the relevant awarding body using *Access arrangements online* will be required. An awarding body reserves the right to request, 'call-in' evidence from the centre and will expect to see a strong justification for 25% extra time.

Evidence requirements for 25% extra time

Part 1 of Form 8 (showing evidence of need and normal way of working)

+

Part 2 of Form 8 showing:

At least two scores of 84 or less relating to two different areas of speed of working;

or

one score of 84 or less **and** one score between 85-89 relating to two different areas of speed of working.

Samples of evidence **are not** required for inspection purposes.

Part 1 of Form 8 (showing evidence of need and normal way of working)

+

Part 2 of Form 8 showing:

Two or more scores between 85-89 relating to two different areas of speed of working.

+

Samples of evidence for inspection purposes

- a sample of internal school tests/mock exam papers across relevant subjects showing the application of extra time;

or

- an IEP/ILP referring to the need for extra time;

or

- comments and observations from teaching staff in relevant subjects as to why the candidate needs extra time and how he/she uses the extra time awarded.



Part 1 of Form 8

Evidence of normal way of working within the centre showing an extensive history of need and a clear, measurable and substantial long-term adverse effect on performance and speed of working.

+

Part 2 of Form 8 showing:

A cluster of standardised scores (at least three) relating to three different areas of speed of working just within the average range, 90 to 94.

+

Samples of evidence for inspection purposes

- a diagnostic assessment report, **from no earlier than Year 9**, confirming a significant learning difficulty or disability; (This must have been undertaken by a HCPC registered psychologist or a specialist teacher assessor.)

and

- a sample of internal school tests/mock exam papers across relevant subjects showing the application of extra time;

and

- an IEP/ILP referring to the need for extra time;

and

- comments and observations from teaching staff in relevant subjects as to why the candidate needs extra time and how he/she uses the extra time awarded.

As these cases are rare and very exceptional, centres may find the definition of disability within the Equality Act 2010 helpful.

HCPC registered psychologists and specialist teacher assessors are advised to consider in extreme and unusual cases, particularly where the candidate has complex learning needs, whether [paragraph 5.2.3](#) might apply.

Types of disability or access needs

- o **Communication and interaction needs** (ASD)
- o Sensory and/or physical needs (HI, MSI, PD, VI)
- o Social, emotional and mental health needs (e.g. ADHD)
- o Speech, Language and Communication Needs (SLCN)

Supervised rest breaks should always be considered before processing an online application for 25% extra time, since they may be more appropriate for candidates with an impairment other than a learning difficulty. (See [Chapter 5, section 5.1](#) for more detail.)

The SENCo should have explored and trialled the option of supervised rest breaks through timed internal tests and/or mock examinations before making an application for 25% extra time. The SENCo considers 25% extra time, and not supervised rest breaks, to be an appropriate access arrangement/reasonable adjustment.

Some candidates may additionally require supervised rest breaks.

5.2.3 Where a candidate has complex needs, i.e.

- communication and interaction needs; **or**
- a learning difficulty with a **current** EHCP (England), or a **current** Statement of special educational needs (Northern Ireland), or a **current** Individual Development Plan (Wales); **or**
- sensory and/or physical needs; **or**
- social, emotional and mental health needs;
- a medical condition formally diagnosed by a registered specialist;

which have a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his/her speed of working, appropriate evidence of need (as below) **must** be available at the centre for inspection. Form 8 **is not** required and **must not** be used. Standardised scores **are not** required.

Substantial impairment – evidence of need

So as not to give an unfair advantage, the SENCo **must** complete Form 9 to:

- ❖ detail the candidate's current difficulties to show how they impact on teaching and learning and performance in examinations, summarising evidence of feedback from teachers and/or support staff;
- ❖ confirm that 25% extra time is the candidate's normal way of working.

Form 9 will be supported by specialist evidence confirming the candidate's disability:

- a letter/report from CAMHS, a HCPC registered psychologist, a medical consultant[†], a psychiatrist, a Speech and Language Therapist (SaLT); **or**
- a letter/report from the Local Authority Specialist Service, Local Authority Sensory Impairment Service or Occupational Health Service[†]; **or**
- a **current** EHCP (England), or a **current** Statement of special educational needs (Northern Ireland), or a **current** Individual Development Plan (Wales) which confirms the candidate's learning difficulty, medical condition, physical disability, sensory or multi-sensory impairment.

Where the candidate has been referred to CAMHS or a local NHS Trust by their centre or GP, is on the list to be screened and/or is likely to receive a formal diagnosis, the SENCo may in exceptional circumstances use a CAMHS/NHS Trust referral confirmation/acceptance letter. This would be due to the length of CAMHS/NHS Trust waiting lists. However, the SENCo **must** produce a compelling picture of need within Part 1 of Form 9. There will be a greater reliance on centre based evidence such as comments and observations from teaching staff, support staff.

[†]For example, an Occupational Therapist specialising in Children and Young People Services, learning disability, mental health.

Specialist evidence must confirm that the candidate has a disability. However, the specialist is not required to recommend 25% extra time in their report. The specialist evidence may relate to any age provided it remains current. The SENCo may accept a medical diagnosis from an appropriate specialist working within either the NHS or a private practice.

Although a specialist, e.g. a medical consultant, may recommend specific access arrangements, it is the SENCo who **must** determine the arrangements for the candidate's examinations. It is the SENCo's professional judgement which is based on their knowledge of the candidate's disability, the candidate's normal way of working in timed assessments and comments and observations from teaching staff.

5.5 COMPUTER READER/READER

5.5.1 Processing applications

For those qualifications listed within the [Deadlines section](#), an application for a computer reader/reader **must** be processed using *Access arrangements online*. Appropriate evidence of need **must** be available at the centre for inspection (see [paragraph 5.5.5](#)).

A candidate for whom English is an additional language may use a computer reader/reader.

For a candidate with reading difficulties, a computer reader may allow them to demonstrate their attainment more effectively and independently than would be possible with a reader. However, a computer reader **must** be appropriate to the candidate's needs. There **must** be sufficient time and training to ensure the candidate can use a computer reader effectively.

A computer reader

5.5.2 Computer software which accurately reads out text, (including synthetic speech software stored on a memory stick) but **does not** decode or interpret the paper, may be used as computer reader.

It is the centre's responsibility to ensure that the computer used **does not** contain any software that the candidate can access and which might assist them with the examination.
Failure to do so may constitute malpractice.

A computer reader will be allowed in papers (or sections of papers) testing reading.

In cases where a computer reader is unable to recognise and thus read an individual word, a reader may read out the word to the candidate.

Where an application for a computer reader is approved, the centre is permitted to open the question paper packet **in the secure room** within 90 minutes of the awarding body's published starting time for the examination. This is specifically to scan the hard copy question paper into PDF format. **Any infringement has the potential to constitute malpractice.**

However, where an application for a computer reader is approved, it is strongly recommended that the centre uses a non-interactive electronic question paper (see [Chapter 6, section 6.7](#)).

A reader

5.5.3 A reader is a responsible adult who reads the instructions of the question paper and the questions to the candidate. This may involve reading the whole paper to the candidate or the candidate may request only some words to be read. (See the rules – the use of a reader within this section.)

5.5.4 A reader **is not** a Communication Professional, a practical assistant, a prompter or a scribe. The same person may act as a Communication Professional, a practical assistant, a prompter, a reader and/or a scribe if permission has been given for these arrangements (where necessary). The regulations for the use of each arrangement must be strictly adhered to.

Types of disability or access needs

- Cognition and learning needs (learning difficulties)
- Communication and interaction needs (ASD)
- English as an additional language
- Sensory and/or physical needs
- Social, emotional and mental health needs (e.g. ADHD)
- Speech, Language and Communication Needs (SLCN)

Evidence of need for all types of disability/access needs

5.5.5 The SENCo **must** produce a statement confirming the nature of the candidate's impairment and that the use of a computer reader and/or a reader reflects their **normal and current way of working within the centre**.

Types of disability or access needs	Evidence of need
Learning difficulties, where the candidate is not subject to an Education, Health and Care Plan, a Statement of Special Educational Needs (Northern Ireland) or an Individual Development Plan (Wales) and requires a computer reader/reader in addition to extra time and/or a scribe	Part 1 of Form 8, confirming the candidate's learning difficulties and that the use of a computer reader and/or a reader reflects their normal and current way of working within the centre . Standardised scores are not required for a computer reader/reader.
When a candidate progresses from GCSE to GCE AS and/or A-level qualifications and will continue to require a computer reader and/or a reader in addition to 25% extra time and/or a scribe, the Form 8 may roll forward. The SENCo must complete Form 8RF.	Form 8RF completed by the SENCo, would be attached to the Form 8 confirming the nature of the candidate's impairment and that the use of a computer reader and/or a reader continues to reflect their normal and current way of working within the centre . NB Form 8RF must also detail the updated centre based evidence for 25% extra time and/or scribe.
Learning difficulties, where the candidate requires a computer reader/reader but does not require extra time and/or a scribe or Communication and interaction needs English as an additional language Medical condition (formally diagnosed by a registered specialist) Sensory and/or physical needs Social, emotional and mental health needs Speech, Language and Communication Needs	Form 9 completed by the SENCo, confirming the nature of the candidate's impairment and that the use of a computer reader and/or a reader reflects their normal and current way of working within the centre . Standardised scores are not required for a computer reader/reader.

5.6 READ ALOUD AND/OR THE USE OF AN EXAMINATION READING PEN*

*There is **not** a requirement to process an application for read aloud and/or the use of an examination reading pen using *Access arrangements online*. No evidence is needed to support the arrangement for inspection purposes.

Read aloud

- 5.6.1 It can make a significant difference to a candidate who **persistently** struggles to understand what they have read to read aloud. Where a candidate is reading difficult text, they may work more effectively if they can hear themselves read.
- 5.6.2 The arrangement **must** reflect the candidate's **normal way of working** in internal school tests and mock examinations.
- 5.6.3 A candidate who reads aloud to themselves **must** be accommodated in another room, away from the main examination room.
- 5.6.4 A candidate who would normally be eligible for a reader but is not permitted this arrangement in a paper (or a section of a paper) testing reading may read aloud with up to a maximum of 50% extra time.

Examination reading pen

- 5.6.5 A permitted examination reading pen **must not** have an in-built dictionary or thesaurus, or a data storage facility.
- The use of an examination reading pen, **provided by the centre**, might benefit those candidates who wish to work independently. It may increase the independence of candidates who needed a reader for accuracy rather than comprehension.
- The use of an examination reading pen should always be considered for those candidates who only require occasional words or phrases to be read to them.
- As an examination reading pen may be used in papers (or sections of papers) testing reading, candidates **cannot** additionally be granted up to a maximum of 50% extra time in place of the reader.

Example – examination reading pen

A candidate was found to be mildly dyslexic in Year 7. The candidate has always used a reader in internal school tests.

However, the SENCo trials the use of an examination reading pen which subsequently becomes her **normal way of working** within the centre. It is an effective arrangement, appropriate to her needs.

5.7 SCRIBE/SPEECH RECOGNITION TECHNOLOGY

5.7.1 Processing applications

For those qualifications listed within the [Deadlines section](#), an application for a scribe or speech recognition technology **must** be processed using *Access arrangements online*. Appropriate evidence of need **must** be available at the centre for inspection.

If a word processor (with the spelling and grammar check switched off) is the candidate's normal way of working within the centre, then it should be used in examinations to encourage independent working and access to marks awarded for spelling, punctuation and grammar (see [section 5.8](#)).

A scribe **must only** be used where a candidate is not sufficiently competent or confident in using a word processor with the spelling and grammar check or predictive text facility switched off.

Some candidates will be able to use a word processor in most of their subjects but may require a scribe in subjects such as Maths and Science.

A scribe or speech recognition technology software **will not** be allowed if a candidate's literacy difficulties are primarily caused by English, Irish or Welsh not being his/her first language.

A scribe

- 5.7.2 A scribe is a responsible adult who, in non-examination assessments and/or in an examination but not in a Speaking Test, types or writes a candidate's dictated answers to the questions. (See the rules – the use of a scribe within this section.)
- If a candidate dictates answers on to a tape, the scribe **must** type or write the candidate's dictated answers to the questions. The candidate **must** be present when the scribe types or writes their dictated answers. (A scribe cover sheet **must** be completed.)

Candidates **must** respond in English, Irish or Welsh as appropriate, to meet the assessment of written communication in English, Irish or Welsh.

- 5.7.3 A scribe **is not** a practical assistant, a prompter or a reader. The same person may act as a practical assistant, a prompter, a reader and/or a scribe if permission has been given for these arrangements. **The regulations for the use of each arrangement must be strictly adhered to.**

Use of speech recognition technology

- 5.7.4 Where the centre has approval for the use of a scribe and where it reflects the candidate's normal way of working within the centre, as appropriate to their needs, the candidate may alternatively use:
- speech recognition technology with predictive text when the candidate dictates into a word processor. Software (a screen reader) may be used to read back and correct the candidate's dictated answers; (**NB** This arrangement **will not** be permitted in ELC, GCSE and GCE AS, A-level Modern Foreign Language specifications. See [paragraph 5.7.7](#).)
 - computer software, producing speech, which is used to dictate to a scribe.

However, the candidate **will not** have access to marks awarded for spelling, punctuation and/or grammar unless he/she has independently dictated spelling, punctuation and/or grammar, and this has been recorded on the scribe cover sheet.

Use of a word processor with the spelling and grammar check switched on

- 5.7.5 Where the centre has approval for the use of a scribe and where it reflects the candidate's normal way of working within the centre, as appropriate to their needs, the candidate may alternatively use:
- a word processor with the spelling and grammar check switched on; **or**
 - a word processor with predictive text/spelling and grammar check switched on.

Where a candidate with learning difficulties is **not** subject to a **current** Education, Health and Care Plan (England), a **current** Statement of Special Educational Needs (Northern Ireland), or a current Individual Development Plan (Wales), Form 8 **must** show a below average spelling accuracy standardised score (a standardised score of 84 or less) with unrecognisable spellings.

NB This arrangement **will not** be permitted in ELC, GCSE and GCE AS, A-level Modern Foreign Language specifications. See [paragraph 5.7.7](#).

The candidate **will not** have access to marks awarded for spelling, punctuation and grammar.

In all cases a scribe cover sheet must be completed.

Types of disability or access needs

- Cognition and learning needs (learning difficulties)
- Communication and interaction needs (ASD)
- Sensory and/or physical needs
- Social, emotional and mental health needs (e.g. ADHD)
- Speech, Language and Communication Needs (SLCN)

So as not to give an unfair advantage, a scribe will only be allowed where:

- an impairment has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on the candidate's writing; **or**
- a candidate cannot write, type or Braille independently, or at sufficient speed to record their answers even with extra time allowed, because of a substantial and long-term impairment.

The use of a scribe **must** reflect the candidate's normal way of working within the centre in the light of their substantial and long-term impairment.

NB Many candidates who produce inaccurate spellings write legibly as they make reasonable phonetic approximations of the word in question, which can be read by the examiner. These candidates are unlikely to need a scribe unless they have other substantial and long-term writing difficulties.

Learning difficulties

Where a candidate has learning difficulties and is **not** subject to a **current** Education, Health and Care Plan (England), a **current** Statement of Special Educational Needs (Northern Ireland), or a **current** Individual Development Plan (Wales), Form 8 **must** be completed.

An assessment **no earlier than the start of Year 9** (Part 2 of Form 8) in relation to the candidate's writing skills is required. (See [Chapter 7, paragraph 7.5.10](#) for more detail.)

Usually, for examination purposes, a substantial impairment will be shown by the candidate having:

- a below average standardised spelling accuracy score (a standardised score of 84 or less) with unrecognisable spelling attempts[†]; **or**
- a below average standardised score for writing speed (a standardised score of 84 or less).

In some cases, the candidate's writing is illegible or grammatically incomprehensible but improves significantly when a scribe is used. If these difficulties are not evidenced by a below average standardised spelling accuracy score, or a below average standardised score for writing speed, *Access arrangements online* will not approve the application. The SENCo may then decide to refer the application to the awarding body/bodies. (See [paragraph 8.4](#), Example 2.)

[†]For the use of a word processor with the spelling and grammar check switched on, Form 8 **must** show a below average spelling accuracy score with unrecognisable spellings.

Communication and interaction needs, sensory and/or physical needs, social, emotional and mental health needs

Where a candidate has complex needs, i.e.

- communication and interaction needs; **or**
- a learning difficulty with a **current** EHCP (England), or a **current** Statement of special educational needs (Northern Ireland), or a **current** Individual Development Plan (Wales); **or**
- sensory and/or physical needs; **or**
- social, emotional and mental health needs;

the candidate's writing skills **do not** need to be assessed. Form 8 **is not** required and **must not** be used. Standardised scores **are not** required.

However, the SENCo **must** complete Form 9 to demonstrate that the candidate has an impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their writing.

Substantial impairment – evidence of need

Communication and interaction needs, sensory and/or physical needs, social, emotional and mental health needs

For those qualifications listed within the [Deadlines section](#), appropriate evidence of need **must** be available at the centre for inspection.

5.8.4 For the regulations on the use of word processors in written examinations, please see the JCQ document *Instructions for conducting examinations* (commonly known as the JCQ 'ICE' document): <http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/ice---instructions-for-conducting-examinations>

An awarding body may require a word processor cover sheet to be completed.

A word processor **cannot** simply be granted to a candidate because he/she now wants to type rather than write in examinations or can work faster on a keyboard, or because he/she uses a laptop at home.

The use of a word processor **must** reflect the candidate's normal way of working within the centre. For example, where the curriculum is delivered electronically and the centre provides word processors to all candidates.

The centre may wish to set out the types of candidates which it considers would benefit from the use of a word processor. For example, a candidate with:

- a learning difficulty which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to write legibly;
- a medical condition;
- a physical disability;
- a sensory impairment;
- planning and organisational problems when writing by hand;
- poor handwriting.

This list **is not** exhaustive.

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.

Examples - Word processor

- A candidate who cannot write legibly because she has significant learning difficulties asks to use a word processor in her examinations. It is her **normal means of producing written work within the centre** because her teachers cannot read her writing. She is very proficient in using a word processor. The SENCo allows her to use a word processor in her examinations.
- A candidate does not have a learning difficulty but is a 'messy' writer. His handwriting is hard to decipher. He requests the use of a word processor. This is granted by the SENCo because it reflects his **normal way of working within the centre**.
- A candidate wishes to use a word processor in her examinations since this is her **normal way of working within the centre**. However, the candidate additionally wishes to use the spelling and grammar check facility. Given that she does not meet the published criteria for a scribe, the candidate cannot use the spelling and grammar check facility. The SENCo allows her to use a word processor in line with the regulations as set out in the JCQ 'ICE' document.
- A candidate who has significant learning difficulties has quite legible writing. However, he makes many omissions and cannot order his ideas correctly. His written scripts are legible but covered in crossings-out and omission marks. He requests a word processor and this is granted by the SENCo. The use of a word processor allows him to correct text, sequence his answers and reflects his **normal way of working within the centre**.
- A blind candidate asks to use a word processor in his examinations. He also requests the use of a screen reader to allow him to 'read' back and check the answers he has typed. These arrangements are permitted when using a word processor in his examinations. However, if the candidate also wants to use predictive text and/or the spelling and grammar check facility he **must** meet the published criteria for a scribe, with an approved application in place.

Examples - Word processor and 25% extra time

- A candidate has a below average free writing speed when handwriting. However, using a word processor is her **normal way of working within the centre**. When typing she can produce her written work effectively. The SENCo awards the use of a word processor as it removes the barrier presented by her slow handwriting. The SENCo will consider whether 25% extra time is required when she writes by hand such as in GCSE Mathematics and Science examinations. The candidate's cognitive processing will need to be assessed as she will require two below average standardised scores or one below average standardised score **and** one low average standardised score to be awarded 25% extra time.
- A candidate with significant learning difficulties has a below average speed of writing and below average scores in areas of cognitive processing and reading speed. As using a word processor is his **normal way of working within the centre**, he has been able to improve his typing speed to match the equivalent average writing rate. However, he has **persistent and significant difficulties** in interpreting questions and formulating his typed answers. He is given 25% extra time, as well as the use of a word processor, as both arrangements are appropriate to his needs.

5.9 BRAILLE TRANSCRIPT*

*There **is not** a requirement to process an application for a Braille transcript using *Access arrangements online*. No evidence is needed to support the arrangement for inspection purposes.

- 5.9.1 Manual brailers will require transcription into print. Braille scripts **must** be transcribed by the centre.
- 5.9.2 For the regulations on the use of a Braille transcript, please see the JCQ document *Instructions for conducting examinations*:
<http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/ice---instructions-for-conducting-examinations>

5.10 PROMPTER*

*There **is not** a requirement to process an application for a prompter using *Access arrangements online*. No evidence is needed to support the arrangement for inspection purposes.

- 5.10.1 A prompter may be permitted where a candidate has a substantial and long-term adverse impairment resulting in persistent distractibility or significant difficulty in concentrating.

For example, the candidate:

- has little or no sense of time (e.g. candidates with ADHD or ASD); **or**
- persistently loses concentration; **or**
- is affected by an Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder which leads them to keep revising a question rather than moving onto other questions.

A candidate may be assisted by a prompter who can keep them focused on the need to answer a question and then move on to answering the next question.

- 5.10.2 For the regulations on the use of a prompter please see the JCQ document *Instructions for conducting examinations*:
<http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/ice---instructions-for-conducting-examinations>

Examples – prompts

- A candidate with ASD has no sense of time. The prompter sees that the candidate is doing nothing. She says “Jake, focus on the question, there are 15 minutes left”.
- A candidate with an Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder goes over the first question again and again. The prompter taps on the desk every quarter of an hour. The candidate knows how many questions must be done in that time and tries to move on.
- A candidate with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder works for a few minutes then looks out of the window. As she is taking her examination in an alternative room, the prompter can call out her name to bring her attention back to the question paper.

5.11 LANGUAGE MODIFIER

- 5.11.1 *Access arrangements online* **does not** include a Language Modifier. However, centres may refer applications to awarding bodies. In the first instance the centre should select 'Other'. This will result in an automatic rejection. The centre **must** then make an online referral to the relevant awarding body who will consider the application in the light of the candidate's needs.

A Language Modifier should be a rare and exceptional arrangement. It **must** only be considered for those candidates whose disability has a very substantial and long-term adverse effect resulting in very persistent and significant difficulties in accessing and processing information.

A Language Modifier is an adjustment of the last resort. An application should only be made once all other relevant adjustments have been considered and found to be unsuitable or unworkable. There **must** be a very strong justification as to why a Language Modifier is required.

5.11.2 Substantial impairment - suitability and evidence of need

As part of the supporting evidence to an awarding body, the candidate **must** have a standardised score of 69 or less (a very substantially below average standardised score) in relation to reading comprehension and/or vocabulary. The candidate will have been assessed using current editions of nationally standardised tests conducted **within 26 months of the final examination**. (The candidate may be assessed by a Qualified Teacher of Deaf Children and Young People who will record the results of their assessment within Part 2 of Form 8.)

The extensive modification of language **must** reflect the candidate's normal way of working within the centre as evidenced within Part 1 of Form 8.

An awarding body reserves the right to request 'call-in' evidence from the centre.

5.11.3 A Language Modifier

A Language Modifier is a responsible adult who may clarify the carrier language used in the examination paper when requested to do so by a candidate.

The Language Modifier **must not** explain technical terms or subject-specific terms. The ability to understand these terms is part of the assessment. If such terms are explained to the candidate then the demands of the question will have been compromised which may constitute malpractice. (See [The rules – the use of a Language Modifier](#) within this section.)

A Language Modifier may also act as a reader (see [section 5.5](#)). A separate application for a reader **is not** required.

5.11.4 Papers (or sections of papers) testing reading

A Language Modifier **will not** be allowed to read questions or text in a paper (or a section of a paper) testing reading.

A candidate who would normally be eligible for a Language Modifier but **is not** permitted this arrangement in a paper (or a section of a paper) testing reading may be granted up to a maximum of 50% extra time. An approved application for a Language Modifier will allow the SENCo to grant the candidate up to a maximum of 50% extra time in a paper (or a section of a paper) testing reading.

Where a Language Modifier uses sign language interpretation, he/she can sign the instructions/rubric, but **not** the questions, in Modern Foreign Languages, English, Irish and Welsh Language examinations. Text/source material or literacy extracts **must not** be signed to the candidate.

5.12 LIVE SPEAKER FOR PRE-RECORDED EXAMINATION COMPONENTS*

*There **is not** a requirement to process an application for a Live Speaker using *Access arrangements online*. No evidence is needed to support the arrangement for inspection purposes.

- 5.12.1 The SENCo is allowed to provide a live speaker for pre-recorded examination components, e.g. MFL Listening examinations, where it is the candidate's normal way of working within the centre. The candidate will have **persistent and significant difficulties** in following speech at normal speed.
- 5.12.2 For aural tests, clear amplification may be necessary to improve the candidate's ability to hear, or a transcript of a listening test may be read to enable the candidate to also lip/speech-read. (See [Chapter 6, paragraph 6.6.5](#) for further information on ordering transcripts of tests.). **The SENCo should consult a specialist teacher when considering arrangements for candidates with a sensory impairment i.e. a Qualified Teacher of Deaf Children and Young People.**
- 5.12.3 The live speaker will speak, read aloud or cue in the language being assessed, e.g. Cued French, the contents of the CD in a Listening examination.
- 5.12.4 Where the initial letters of words could be easily confused, e.g. deux fois and neuf fois, the live speaker may:
- hold up a card with the initial letter, i.e. 'd' or 'n';
 - write 'n' or 'd' on a board;
 - finger spell or cue the initial letter of the word.
- 5.12.5 The live speaker should, wherever possible, be the candidate's subject or specialist teacher. However, an invigilator **must always** be present in the examination room.
- 5.12.6 Ideally a live speaker should work with one candidate. The centre **must always** consider the candidates' abilities as lip/speech readers when requiring them to share a live speaker. There **must never** be more than six candidates to one live speaker and candidates should be seated to gain maximum benefit from the live speaker.
- 5.12.7 Where CDs or transcripts of tests are used, the live speaker should be allowed access to the CD or the transcript, **one hour before the awarding body's published starting time for the examination.**
- This is to allow time for the live speaker to prepare. It may be necessary to delay the start of the examination for the candidate(s) concerned. The candidate(s) **must** be placed under centre supervision whilst the live speaker prepares for the examination.
- 5.12.8 Additional repetition is allowed, if necessary, to take into account **persistent** loss of concentration or to enable the candidate to process the information more easily.
- 25% extra time may be needed due to the additional repetition and the candidate's **persistent and significant difficulties** in following speech at normal speed. (See [Chapter 5, paragraph 5.2.3.](#))
- In **very rare and exceptional circumstances** the candidate may require up to 50% extra time. (See [Chapter 5, section 5.3.](#))
- An application for extra time **must always** be processed online.
- 5.12.9 If the recording involves the use of two or more characters, a separate live speaker could be used for each role. However, if it is felt desirable to only use one live speaker for the entire test, the live speaker **must** make it clear which character is speaking.

5.13 COMMUNICATION PROFESSIONAL (FOR CANDIDATES USING SIGN LANGUAGE)*

*There **is not** a requirement to process an application using *Access arrangements online* or to record the use of the arrangement. No evidence is needed to support the arrangement.

- 5.13.1 The SENCo is allowed to provide a Communication Professional where it is the candidate's normal way of working within the centre.

A Communication Professional

- 5.13.2 The role of a Communication Professional is to present the questions in a different language without:
- changing the meaning; **and/or**
 - providing any additional information; **or**
 - providing an explanation as to what the question requires of the candidate.
- 5.13.3 A Communication Professional will work 'live' in the presence of the candidate during the examination to allow for the candidate's regional variations in BSL/ ISL signs. Consequently, this cannot be checked by the awarding body for accuracy. **Great care must be taken not to disadvantage or advantage the candidate.** Centres should video the signing of the Communication Professional to demonstrate accuracy.

The rules – the use of a Communication Professional

- 5.13.4 The Communication Professional **must** be proficient in the use of the candidate's sign language, ideally being qualified to a **minimum** of BSL/ISL at Level 3 (and aspiring towards Level 6). The Communication Professional **must** be at an appropriate level for the examination. It is advisable that the Communication Professional should also be a qualified Language Modifier. The Communication Professional **must** be familiar to the candidate and **must always** work at the candidate's pace.
- 5.13.5 The Communication Professional **must** be familiar with the subject being examined and the candidate's normal way of working. This will ensure that the meaning of the question **is not** changed and that technical and subject specific terms are recognised and finger spelt. (Technical and subject specific terms **must not** be signed.)
- (The candidate's ability to recognise and understand the English version of the technical or subject specific terms within a subject is part of the assessment. If such terms are signed instead of finger spelt, then the demands of the question will have been compromised. **This will constitute malpractice.**)
- 5.13.6 A Communication Professional **is not** a reader. However, the same person may act as a Communication Professional and a reader. Permission must have been given for the use of a Communication Professional and a reader. The regulations for the use of each arrangement must be strictly adhered to. (See [Chapter 5, section 5.5](#), for the rules on the use of a reader.)
- 5.13.7 The Communication Professional can sign the instructions and questions to candidates taking written papers except in Modern Foreign Languages or English, Irish or Welsh Language examinations.
- 5.13.8 In Modern Foreign Languages or English, Irish or Welsh Language examinations the Communication Professional can only sign the instructions/rubric, and not the questions.
- 5.13.9 The Communication Professional **must not** sign texts/source material or literary extracts.

Communication Professional

5.13.10 The Communication Professional may use repetition if requested to do so by the candidate. An alternative signing of the carrier language may be provided. However, **under no circumstances may an explanation of the question or clarification of the carrier language be given.** These actions would be deemed as giving the candidate an unfair advantage and **may constitute malpractice.**

5.13.11 Candidates may only sign their answers in question papers or in non-examination assessments where it is possible to finger spell the answers or where the answers involve single words.

A suggested memory aid for a Communication Professional can be found at [Appendix 4](#).

Factors the centre must consider

5.13.12 25% extra time may be needed due to the additional repetition and the candidate's **persistent and significant difficulties.** (See [Chapter 5, paragraph 5.2.3](#).)

5.13.13 Where available, modified language papers **must always** be ordered for candidates who will be using a Communication Professional (see [Chapter 6, section 6.6](#)).

5.13.14 The question paper packet may be opened **in the secure room one hour before the awarding body's published starting time for the examination.** A question paper should be provided to the Communication Professional to allow them to prepare for the examination. **The content of the paper must not be discussed with or shown to any other person during this time as this would constitute malpractice.**

5.13.15 Candidates requiring the use of a Communication Professional may need to be accommodated in another room, away from the main examination room, in which case a separate invigilator will be required.

Entry Level Certificate (ELC) qualifications

In English, Irish and Welsh Speaking and Listening Tests a Communication Professional **must not** be used.

A communication professional **will not** be permitted in English, Irish and Welsh written papers except for the instructions of the question papers, unless specifically permitted by the specification at certain levels.

In English, Irish and Welsh reading tests no part of an assessment may be signed to a candidate. However, the candidate may indicate using sign language to show that they have read the passage correctly. Please consult the awarding body for advice.

Remember

Aside from Entry Level Certificate qualifications, Form 6 (Communication Professional cover sheet) **must** be printed from the JCQ website:
<http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/access-arrangements-and-special-consideration/forms>

For Entry Level Certificate qualifications, Form 13 **must** be downloaded from the Centre Admin Portal (CAP). CAP can be accessed via any of the awarding bodies' secure extranet sites.

Form 6 or Form 13 **must** be placed inside the candidate's completed script.

5.14 PRACTICAL ASSISTANT

Processing applications

5.14.1 For those qualifications listed within the [Deadlines section](#), an application **must** be processed using *Access arrangements online*.

5.14.2 *Access arrangements online* will automatically reject applications for the use of a practical assistant. The centre **must** then make an online referral. Detailed information **must** be provided listing the tasks which the practical assistant would perform. This will allow the awarding body to ensure that the assessment objectives are not compromised, particularly in subjects such as Geography, Mathematics and the Sciences.

5.14.3 A practical assistant **must not** be allowed to carry out physical tasks or demonstrate physical abilities where they form part of the assessment objectives. The role of a practical assistant will be more limited in subjects such as Art & Design, Design & Technology and Music.

5.14.4 Where approved, the practical assistant will carry out practical tasks at the instruction of the candidate.
(See [The rules – the use of a practical assistant](#) within this section.)

For example:

- A candidate with very poor motor co-ordination may need help in holding a ruler, placing a ruler in the correct place for a line to be drawn or turning the pages of the script. The candidate may also need help when using mathematical equipment.
- A candidate with a severe vision impairment may need their hand to be guided to the relevant page or section of text in a question paper. **Care must be taken not to direct the candidate to the answer.**
- A Blind candidate may require a practical assistant to record the position of points or lines indicated on a tactile graph by means of pins and elastic bands.

Factors the centre must consider

5.14.5 A practical assistant **is not** a reader or a scribe. The same person may act as a practical assistant, a reader and/or a scribe if permission has been given for these arrangements. The regulations for the use of each arrangement must be strictly adhered to.

5.14.6 Candidates using a practical assistant may need to be accommodated in another room, away from the main examination room.

Where the candidate and practical assistant are accommodated in another room, on a **one-to-one** basis, the practical assistant **cannot** additionally act as the invigilator where he/she is the candidate's subject teacher, Learning Support Assistant or teaching assistant.

5.14.7 The practical assistant **must** be made aware, prior to the examination, of the task(s) they will be performing as approved by the awarding body.

The rules – the use of a practical assistant

- **must** perform practical tasks **as approved by the awarding body** and according to the candidate's instructions, unless the skill to be performed is the focus of the assessment, (in which case the practical assistant **will not** be permitted) or the procedure would be unsafe;

- **must** immediately refer any problems in communication during the assessment to the invigilator or examinations officer;
- **must abide by the regulations since failure to do so could lead to the disqualification of the candidate;**
- **must** ensure the safety of the candidate and those around them;
- **must not** give factual help to the candidate or indicate when the task is complete;
- **must not** advise the candidate on which questions to do, when to move on to the next question, or the order in which questions should be answered;
- **may** ask the candidate to repeat instructions where these are not clear.

Remember

Where an application is processed using *Access arrangements online*, e.g. GCSE and GCE qualifications, a pre-populated Practical Assistant cover sheet must be printed from the system and **must** be placed inside the candidate’s script.

For Entry Level Certificate qualifications, Form 13 **must** be downloaded from the Centre Admin Portal (CAP). CAP can be accessed via any of the awarding bodies’ secure extranet sites.

Form 13 **must** be placed inside the candidate’s script.

A cover sheet **must** be **securely** attached to any non-examination assessment completed with the aid of a practical assistant. The work **must** be sent to the moderator in addition to the sample requested.

Cover sheets **must** indicate the level of assistance given by the practical assistant.

The cover sheet **must** be signed by the practical assistant and countersigned by the head of centre or examinations officer.

Examples - practical assistant

- A candidate has cerebral palsy with no use of his hands. He wants to be entered for a GCSE Design & Technology course but cannot perform any design making skills. His teacher helps him during the course. As he will not be able to be credited with any marks for skills performed by a practical assistant, it is decided that he should complete the course without being entered for the specification.
- A candidate wants to be entered for GCSE Art & Design but cannot perform any practical skills independently. The centre requests permission to use a practical assistant. This is refused. It is realised that there are other skills required by the specification which she cannot fulfil. The candidate decides to follow the course for her education but is not entered for the specification.
- A candidate studying GCSE Physical Education is a wheelchair user. She can demonstrate her performance skills in track and field events in athletics. She does require the help of a practical assistant to set up her wheelchair and other equipment to maximise her performance. The input from the practical assistant is not deemed to give her an undue advantage and is therefore permitted.

5.15 ALTERNATIVE SITE FOR CONDUCTING EXAMINATIONS

An alternative site arrangement for conducting examinations is permitted for the following qualifications:

- AQA Applied General qualifications
- AQA Level 2 Certificate in Further Maths
- AQA Level 3 Certificate in Mathematical Studies
- BTEC Firsts
- **BTEC Level 2 Technicals**
- BTEC Nationals
- BTEC Tech Awards
- Cambridge Nationals
- Cambridge Technicals
- ELC
- FSMQ
- GCE (AS and A-level)
- GCSE
- OCR Level 3 Certificates
- **T-Levels (Pearson specifications)**
- WJEC Level 1 and Level 2 General qualifications
- WJEC Level 1 and Level 2 Vocational qualifications
- WJEC Level 1 and Level 2 Vocational Awards (Technical Awards)
- WJEC Level 3 Applied qualifications.

The SENCo **must** liaise with the examinations officer who will need to refer to the JCQ document *Instructions for conducting examinations*:
<http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/ice---instructions-for-conducting-examinations>

5.15.1 An invigilator will conduct the candidate’s examination at a residential address or at a hospital which is a non-registered centre due to, for example:

- the candidate having a serious medical condition; **or**
- social, emotional and mental health needs.

The candidate has:

- an impairment which has a **substantial and long-term adverse effect** giving rise to **persistent and significant difficulties; or**
- a temporary illness or injury at the time of the examination(s).

The SENCo, or a senior member of staff with pastoral responsibilities, **must** be satisfied that the candidate can take their examinations.

There **is not** a requirement to process an application for an alternative site using *Access arrangements online*. Centres **must not** process an online application using ‘Other’. However, the examinations officer **must** submit an online alternative site form using the Centre Admin Portal (CAP). This is only a notification process and not an approval process.

5.16 OTHER ARRANGEMENTS FOR CANDIDATES WITH DISABILITIES*

***For the arrangements detailed below, there is not a requirement to process an application using *Access arrangements online*. No evidence is needed to support the arrangement for inspection purposes.**

5.17.4 *Access arrangements online* **does not** include exemptions. However, it enables centres to refer individual applications to awarding bodies.

In the first instance the centre should select ‘Other’. This will result in an automatic rejection. The centre **must** then make an online referral to the relevant awarding body using *Access arrangements online*.

The centre **must** indicate the candidate’s disability so an awarding body has the necessary information to hand when considering an application for an exemption. The awarding body **must** be assured that the exemption is an arrangement of the last resort.

Additionally, the JCQ form *Application for an Exemption*: <http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/access-arrangements-and-special-consideration/forms> **must** be uploaded to *Access arrangements online*, along with all other relevant documentation, to support the online application for an exemption.

5.17.5 In the GCE A-level Biology, Chemistry, Geology or Physics practical endorsement, or the GCSE English Language Spoken Language endorsement where a candidate cannot access the endorsement due to a substantial impairment, an application for an exemption **must** be submitted to the relevant awarding body. The regulators require that a candidate who has an exemption from the practical endorsement element of a qualification **must not** have any other exemptions in that qualification.

5.18 BILINGUAL TRANSLATION DICTIONARY WITH 25% EXTRA TIME

There is **not** a requirement to process an application for a bilingual translation dictionary (without 25% extra time) using *Access arrangements online*. No evidence is needed to support the arrangement for inspection purposes.

For the regulations on the use of a bilingual dictionary, including those subjects where a bilingual dictionary is not permitted, please see the JCQ document *Instructions for conducting examinations*: <https://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/ice---instructions-for-conducting-examinations>

Processing applications

- 5.18.1 A bilingual translation dictionary with 25% extra time is available to candidates entered for the following Entry Level, Level 1 and Level 2 qualifications, **and** who meet **all** of the published criteria in [paragraph 5.18.6](#):
- AQA Level 2 Certificate in Further Maths
 - BTEC Firsts
 - **BTEC Level 2 Technicals**
 - BTEC Tech Awards
 - Cambridge Nationals
 - Cambridge Technicals (Level 2)
 - Entry Level Certificate (ELC)
 - GCSE
 - WJEC Level 1 and Level 2 General qualifications
 - WJEC Level 1 and Level 2 Vocational Awards (Technical Awards)
 - WJEC Level 1 and Level 2 Vocational qualifications

5.18.2 Where a bilingual translation dictionary with 25% extra time will be used in the following Level 1 and Level 2 qualifications, an online application must be processed using *Access arrangements online*: **No further evidence is required for inspection purposes.**

- AQA Level 2 Certificate in Further Maths
- **BTEC Firsts**
- **BTEC Level 2 Technicals**
- **BTEC Tech Awards**
- Cambridge Nationals
- Cambridge Technicals (Level 2)
- GCSE
- WJEC Level 1 and Level 2 General qualifications
- WJEC Level 1 and Level 2 Vocational Awards (Technical Awards)
- WJEC Level 1 and Level 2 Vocational qualifications

For Entry Level Certificate (ELC) qualifications, please see [Chapter 8](#).

5.18.3 A bilingual dictionary with 25% extra time **is not** normally available to candidates entered for the following Level 3 qualifications:

- AQA Applied General qualifications
- AQA Level 3 Certificate in Mathematical Studies
- AQA Level 3 Technical qualifications
- BTEC Nationals
- Cambridge Technicals (Level 3)
- GCE AS and A-level qualifications
- OCR Level 3 Certificates
- **T-Levels**
- WJEC Level 3 Applied qualifications.

In **rare and exceptional circumstances** where a candidate for whom English is an additional language has arrived in the United Kingdom due to **mitigating and challenging personal circumstances**, the centre may select ‘Other’ using *Access arrangements online*. This will result in an automatic rejection. The centre **must** then make an online referral to the relevant awarding body.

A compelling rationale **must** be produced by the EAL Co-ordinator or the SENCo setting out the candidate’s exceptional circumstances. Reference should be made to [paragraph 5.18.6](#).

5.18.4 The EAL Co-ordinator or the SENCo **must** determine the needs of the individual candidate. Not all candidates for whom English is an additional language will need to use a bilingual translation dictionary. Very few bilingual translation dictionary users will need to have 25% extra time.

This is a rare and exceptional arrangement specifically for a candidate who entered the United Kingdom less than three years before the time of the examination(s), with no prior knowledge of the English Language. (Holiday periods are included in the three-year rule.)

Centres are reminded that applications processed online will automatically give an ‘application approved expiry date’ 26 months from the date of processing the application and not the date of entry to the United Kingdom. It is the end of the month, three years after the candidate has entered the United Kingdom, which **must** be adhered to.

5.18.5 In subjects where a bilingual dictionary is not permitted, 25% extra time **will** still be available. This is to help compensate for lack of access to the bilingual dictionary. An approved online application for a bilingual dictionary with 25% extra time will allow the SENCo to grant 25% extra time to the candidate in those examinations where a bilingual dictionary **is not** permitted.

- 5.18.6 An online application for a bilingual dictionary with 25% extra time **must only** be applied for by the EAL Co-ordinator or the SENCo where all of the following exist:
- the candidate's first language **is not** English, Irish or Welsh;
 - the candidate entered the United Kingdom within three years of the examination(s), **is new to learning in English and does not have sufficient prior and current knowledge of academic English. The candidate may have been assessed on arrival as being new to English (Band A on the DfE scales) or in the early acquisition stages of language development (Band B on the DfE scales).**
 - English **is not** one of the languages spoken in the family home†;
 - **prior to their arrival in the United Kingdom** the candidate **was not**:
 - o educated in an international school where some or the entire curriculum was delivered in English;
 - o prepared for or entered for IGCSE qualifications where the question papers were set in English;
 - o prepared in English for other qualifications, e.g. IELTS qualifications, Preliminary English Tests;
 - the candidate has to refer to the bilingual translation dictionary **so often** that examination time is used for this purpose, delaying the answering of questions;
 - the provision of 25% extra time reflects the candidate's normal way of working with the dictionary. (A definition of normal way of working is provided within [Chapter 4, paragraph 4.2.5.](#))

^aA candidate **with no prior knowledge of the English Language** who has been placed in a foster home upon arriving in the United Kingdom would **not** be considered living in their family home.

- 5.18.7 Where a candidate with English as an additional language **does not** use a bilingual dictionary but will require 25% extra time and/or a scribe, the SENCo **must** demonstrate an underlying learning difficulty using Form 8, or other substantial impairment using Form 9, **before** processing an online application.

5.19 ACCESS TO A MOBILE PHONE FOR MEDICAL PURPOSES

- 5.19.1 For those qualifications listed within the [Deadlines section](#), an application **must** be processed using *Access arrangements online*.
- 5.19.2 The SENCo **must** complete Form 9 confirming the candidate's medical condition and the need to access their mobile phone during an examination. Formal evidence **must** be available to confirm the candidate's medical condition.
- 5.19.3 *Access arrangements online* will approve applications where a candidate has a medical condition and when handed their mobile phone by an invigilator to check their medical condition will be individually supervised.

5.20 REMOTE INVIGILATION THROUGH THE USE OF TECHNOLOGY, E.G. MICROSOFT TEAMS OR ZOOM

- 5.20.1 For those qualifications listed within the [Deadlines section](#), an application **must** be processed using *Access arrangements online*.
- 5.20.2 *Access arrangements online* will automatically reject applications for the use of remote invigilation. The centre must then make an online referral.
- 5.20.3 The remote invigilation of examinations may be acceptable in **exceptional circumstances** to support a candidate who would not otherwise be able to sit their examinations. The candidate has:
- a formally diagnosed medical condition; **or**
 - a physical disability; **or**
 - social, emotional and mental health needs; **or**
 - a very substantial temporary illness or temporary injury.

Formal evidence **must** be available to confirm the candidate's impairment.

- 5.20.4 As part of the online referral process the SENCo **must** complete Form 9 confirming that **all** of the following have been exhausted:
- the candidate sitting their examinations at the centre through alternative rooming arrangements;
 - an invigilator going to the candidate's home to conduct each examination (an alternative site arrangement);
 - the candidate has not already completed some examinations and would therefore be able to meet the published criteria for special consideration.
- 5.20.5 The head of centre **must** confirm that a remotely invigilated examination can be run in accordance with the awarding body's requirements as well as the expectations set out in the JCQ document *Instructions for conducting examinations*.
- 5.20.6 Remote invigilation can only be used where an awarding body has given prior approval. The awarding body must be satisfied that the integrity and security of the examination can be maintained. Approval **will not** be granted on the day of an examination.
- 5.20.7 Guidance for centres on remote invigilation may be found at:
<http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/access-arrangements-and-special-consideration>

5.21 TIMETABLE VARIATION REQUIRING OVERNIGHT SUPERVISION FOR A CANDIDATE WITH A DISABILITY

- 5.21.1 For those qualifications listed within the [Deadlines section](#), an application **must** be processed using *Access arrangements online*.
- 5.21.2 An application for a timetable variation may be processed in **exceptional circumstances** where a candidate has:
- a formally diagnosed medical condition; **or**
 - a physical disability; **or**
 - social, emotional and mental health needs; **or**
 - a visual impairment.

Formal evidence **must** be available to confirm the candidate's impairment.

- 5.21.3 The SENCo **must** complete Form 9 confirming the candidate's disability and the need for a timetable variation.
- 5.21.4 *Access arrangements online* will approve applications where only one examination in the series is being transferred from the published afternoon session to the following morning.
- The centre will be required to confirm that the candidate and their parent(s)/carer(s) will adhere to the requirements for overnight supervision. A completed overnight supervision declaration form **must** be completed and be available for inspection.
- 5.21.5 *Access arrangements online* will automatically reject applications where it is proposed that multiple timetable variations will be required during the examination series. The centre **must** then make an online referral.

Full details of all the candidate's examinations which will be subject to a timetable variation **must** be recorded as part of the online referral to the awarding body. The proposed date and session for each examination **must** be provided.

5.22 TIMETABLE VARIATION ON THE DAY OF THE EXAM FOR A CANDIDATE WITH A DISABILITY

- 5.22.1 For those qualifications listed within the [Deadlines section](#), an application **must** be processed using *Access arrangements online*.
- 5.22.2 An application for a timetable variation may be processed in **exceptional circumstances** where a candidate has:
- a formally diagnosed medical condition; **or**
 - a physical disability; **or**
 - social, emotional and mental health needs; **or**
 - a visual impairment;

which means they **must** sit an examination at a later or earlier time on the published day of the examination.

Formal evidence **must** be available to confirm the candidate's impairment.

- 5.22.3 The SENCo **must** complete Form 9 confirming the candidate's disability and the need for a timetable variation.
- 5.22.4 *Access arrangements online* will approve applications where a candidate with a disability:
- will be sitting examinations scheduled for the morning session later that morning; **or**
 - will be sitting examinations scheduled for the morning session in the afternoon; **or**
 - will be sitting examinations scheduled for the afternoon session in the morning.
- 5.22.5 The centre will confirm that the candidate and their parent(s)/carer(s) will adhere to the requirements for supervision where the candidate will be arriving at the centre after 9.30 am for examinations scheduled for the morning session.
- 5.22.6 The centre will confirm that the candidate will remain under centre supervision until 2.30 pm where an examination scheduled for the afternoon session will be sat in the morning.

5.23 LISTENING TO MUSIC/WHITE NOISE DUE TO A SUBSTANTIAL IMPAIRMENT

- 5.23.1 For those qualifications listed within the [Deadlines section](#), an application **must** be processed using *Access arrangements online*.
- 5.23.2 The SENCo **must** complete Form 9 confirming the candidate's disability. This will be a candidate with social, emotional and mental health needs or a candidate with a sensory impairment such as tinnitus or misophonia. Formal evidence **must** be available to confirm the candidate's medical condition.
- 5.23.3 The centre **must** ensure that the candidate uses a device which cannot be connected to the internet.

The music playlist **must** be checked to ensure an advantage is not conferred to the candidate.



Chapter 6 Summary

Modified Papers

This chapter contains information about modified papers.

Centres must order modified papers in advance of a specific examination series, no later than the published deadline for the series concerned.

Modified papers are prepared for candidates for whom other adjustments are unsuitable.

Centres must not order modified papers for candidates unless they intend to enter them for the relevant examination series.

For the adjustment to be effective, the candidate must have had appropriate opportunities to practise using an awarding body's past modified papers before their first examination.

The content of the chapter includes:

An overview of the process
Braille papers
Modified enlarged papers
Reasonable adjustments – modified enlarged papers
Coloured/enlarged paper (e.g. A3 unmodified enlarged papers)
Modified language papers and transcript of Listening test/media
Non-interactive electronic (PDF) question papers
Ordering modified papers
Final deadlines for submitting orders for modified papers

Chapter 6

Modified Papers

6.1 MODIFIED PAPERS – AN OVERVIEW OF THE PROCESS

Centres **must** order modified papers in advance of a specific examination series, no later than the published deadline for the series concerned. (See the deadlines within this Chapter.)

Modified papers are prepared for candidates for whom other adjustments are unsuitable. The modification of papers involves additional resources. Therefore centres must provide the awarding bodies with early notification that a candidate will require a modified paper.

Centres **must not** order modified papers for candidates unless they intend to enter them for the relevant examination series.

Access arrangements online allows centres to submit orders for modified papers for the following qualification types:

- AQA Applied General qualifications
- AQA Level 2 Certificate in Further Maths
- AQA Level 3 Certificate in Mathematical Studies
- BTEC Firsts
- BTEC Level 2 Technicals
- BTEC Nationals
- BTEC Tech Awards
- Cambridge Nationals
- Cambridge Technicals
- ELC
- FSMQ
- GCE (AS and A-level)
- GCSE
- OCR Level 3 Certificates
- T-Levels (Pearson specifications)
- WJEC Level 1 and Level 2 General qualifications
- WJEC Level 1 and Level 2 Vocational Awards (Technical Awards)
- WJEC Level 1 and Level 2 Vocational qualifications
- WJEC Level 3 Applied qualifications.

There is a separate area within *Access arrangements online* which enables centres to make orders for modified papers. Centres **must not** process an online application using 'Other'.

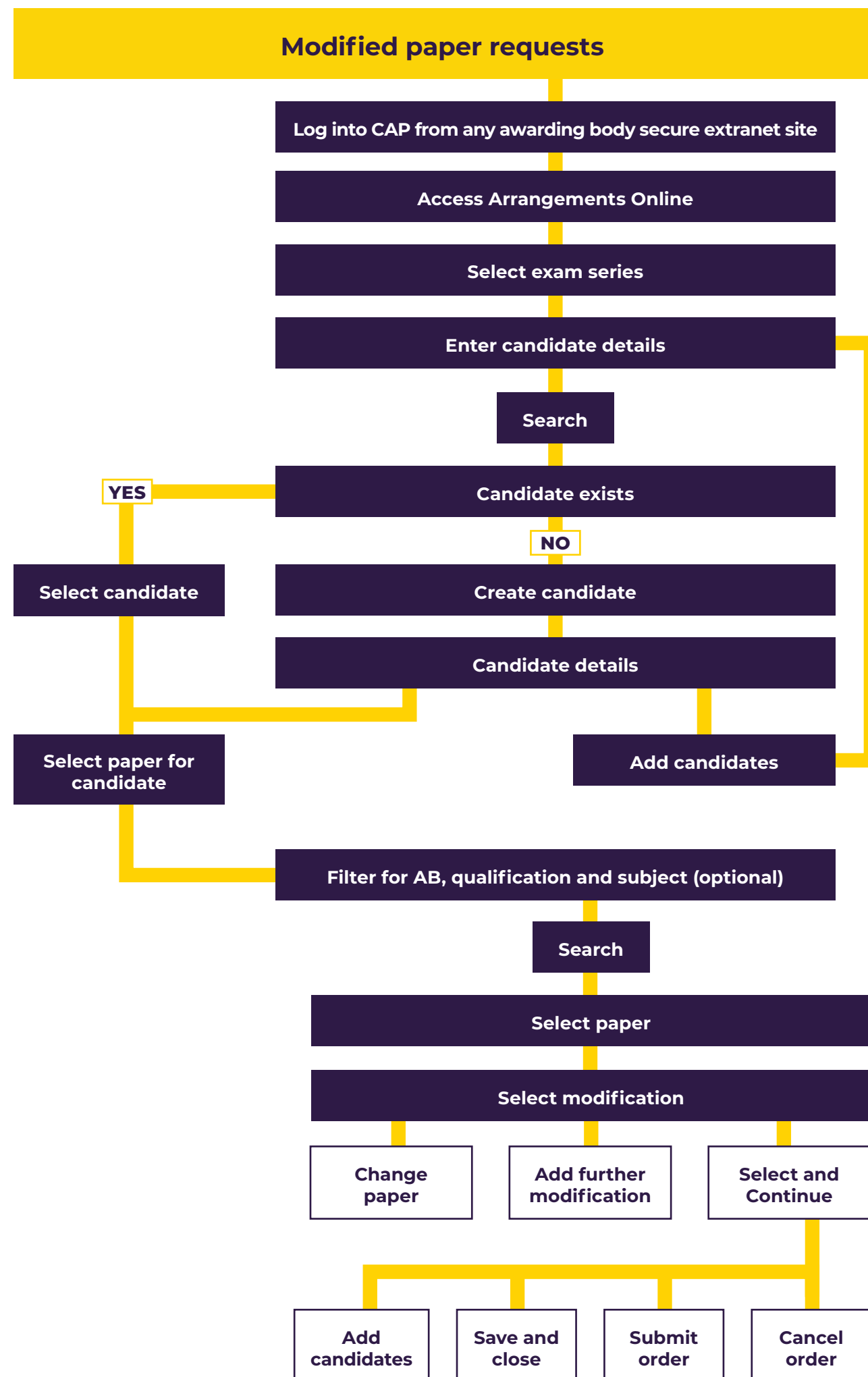
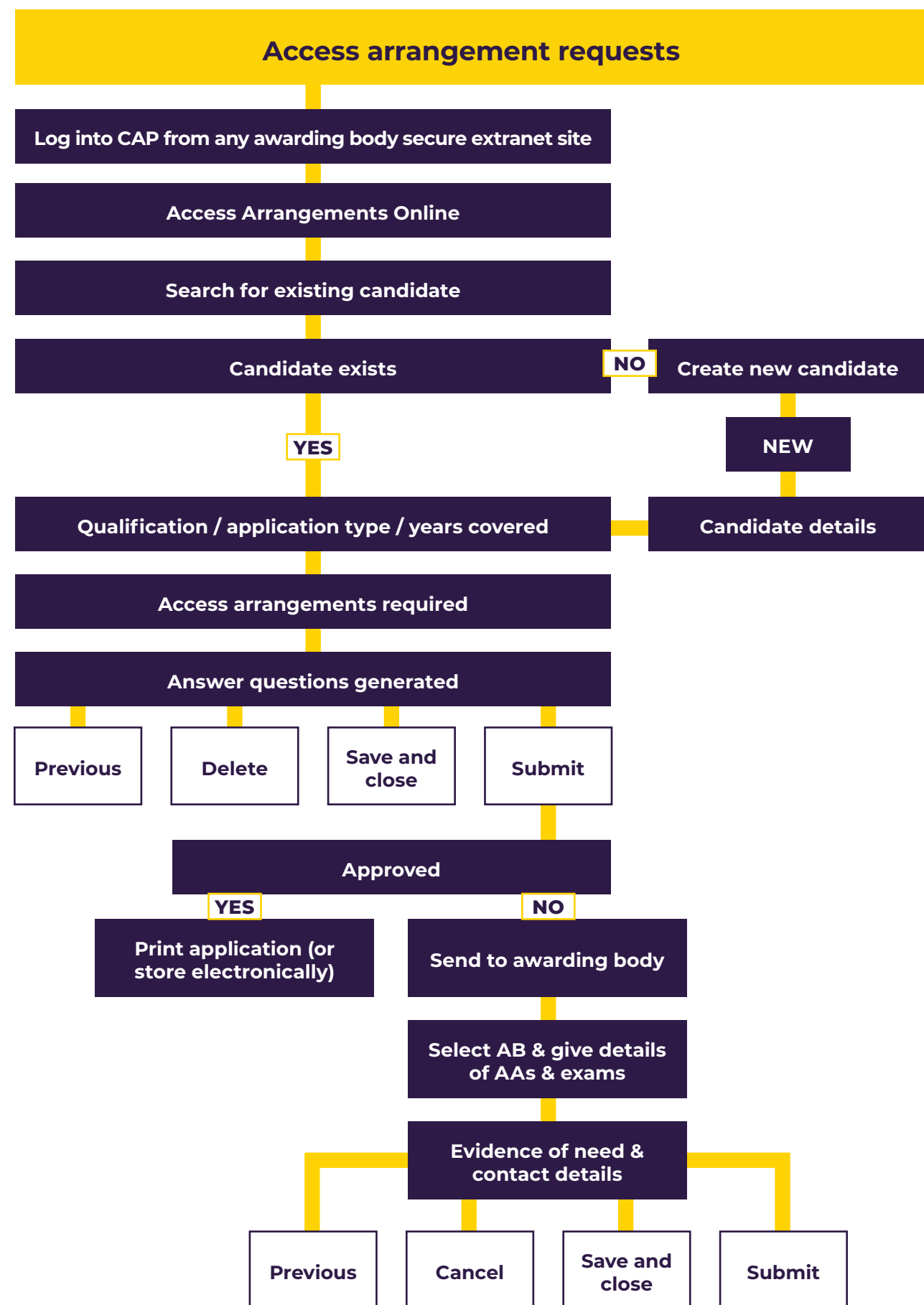
For the adjustment to be effective, the candidate **must** have had appropriate opportunities to practise using an awarding body's past modified papers before their first examination.

The standard formats available are:

- A4 modified 18 point bold
- A3 modified 24 point bold
- A4 modified 24 point bold
- A3 modified 36 point bold
- Tactile diagrams with print labels for use with modified enlarged papers
- Braille papers including tactile diagrams with Braille labels
- Modified language (where available)
- Non-interactive electronic (PDF) question paper
- Transcript of listening test/media

Centres should note that the option of an A3 modified enlarged paper, 36 point bold, may not be available in all subjects.

Access arrangements online **is not** linked to awarding bodies' entries systems. Centres should check that orders for modified papers and actual entries made to an awarding body match.





The awarding bodies use the UKAAF publication *General and Vocational Examinations for Candidates with Visual Impairment - Best Practice Guidance for Modifiers and Producers* as a source of reference when producing Braille and modified enlarged papers. This publication may be accessed from the UKAAF website: www.ukaaf.org/sectors/#education

SENCoS **must** ensure that candidates are familiar with the format of modified enlarged papers or Braille papers being requested for examinations. If a candidate intends to use a non-interactive electronic (PDF) question paper in their examination(s), the SENCo **must** ensure they are familiar with the format.

If a candidate requires access to a modified paper which has not previously been produced by the awarding body, it cannot be downloaded from the awarding body's website, then the awarding body must be contacted by no later than 31 October 2024 where the candidate will be sitting examinations in June 2025.

6.2 BRAILLE PAPERS

- 6.2.1 **Braille papers are only produced when orders are made by the deadline. They are not produced automatically.** Awarding bodies **do not** require evidence of the candidate's vision impairment.
- 6.2.2 The layout and presentation of the standard paper is modified prior to Braille by a teacher specialised in vision impairments.
- 6.2.3 The modified paper is then sent to a Braille agency for the content to be transcribed into Grade 2 contracted Unified English Braille (UEB).
- 6.2.4 Tactile diagrams and graphs will be provided where appropriate with the Braille paper. Tactile diagrams **do not** need to be ordered separately.
- 6.2.5 Centres may be required to provide models in advance for certain types of questions.
- 6.2.6 Videos or films used in assessments may be requested with audio description.

6.3 MODIFIED ENLARGED PAPERS

- 6.3.1 **Modified enlarged papers are only produced when orders are made by the deadline. They are not produced automatically.** As candidates' needs are on-going and long term, and modification of printed material reflects their normal way of working within the classroom, an assessment of the candidate **is not** required to determine their need for modified enlarged papers.
- 6.3.2 Modified enlarged papers are intended for candidates who cannot read a standard examination paper. The layout and presentation of the standard paper is modified to remove elements of visual complexity without changing the demands of the assessment. Pictures and diagrams are often re-drawn to make them more visually accessible.
- 6.3.3 Centres should note that sometimes it may be necessary for an awarding body to produce a page in a larger format for diagrams.
- 6.3.4 Centres may be required to provide models in advance for certain types of questions.
- 6.3.5 Some candidates with a severe vision impairment may benefit from using an electronic or optical magnifier with a modified enlarged paper. (Centres **do not** need to process an online application for a magnifier.)
- 6.3.6 Where a centre requires an A4 modified 18 point bold paper in a non-interactive (PDF) electronic format the relevant awarding body/bodies should be contacted.



For some subjects such as Archaeology, Geology, Geography and Music a modified enlarged paper alone **may not** be a reasonable adjustment for a candidate with a severe vision impairment. A practical assistant and/or a reader may also be required.

6.4 REASONABLE ADJUSTMENTS – MODIFIED ENLARGED PAPERS

- 6.4.1 The standard modified paper formats will, in the vast majority of cases, enable a candidate with a substantial and long-term vision impairment to access their examinations.
- 6.4.2 However, in rare and exceptional cases, a candidate with a substantial and long-term vision impairment may require question papers in an alternative format. The candidate will require a reasonable adjustment on account of their disability.
- Alternatively, a candidate with a substantial and long-term multi-sensory impairment may require question papers where the language has been modified, **as well as** the layout and presentation of the paper to remove elements of visual complexity.
- 6.4.3 Where a disabled candidate requires question papers in an alternative format, the centre **must** discuss his/her requirements at the earliest opportunity with the relevant awarding body's Modified Papers Unit, ideally at the start of the course. The SENCo **must** demonstrate to the awarding body that all appropriate adjustments such as a computer reader, an examination reading pen, a magnifier and a reader, alongside the standard modified enlarged paper formats, have been considered and totally exhausted.
- The application of the reasonable adjustment, i.e. question papers in an alternative format, will depend on several factors including:
- the needs of the disabled candidate; **and**
 - the effectiveness of the adjustment and its cost.
- 6.4.4 An adjustment **will not** be approved if it involves unreasonable costs, time frames or affects the security or integrity of the assessment. This is because the adjustment is not 'reasonable'.

6.5 COLOURED/ENLARGED PAPER (E.G. A3 UNMODIFIED ENLARGED PAPERS)

- 6.5.1 Where a candidate requires a question paper on coloured paper and/or enlarged from A4 to A3, it is strongly recommended that a PDF copy of the standard question paper is used. The use of a PDF copy of the question paper will ensure better print quality and reduce the possibility of human error when collating and stapling.
- For AQA, Pearson and WJEC centres,** a PDF copy of the standard question paper is downloaded from AQA Centre Services, Pearson Edexcel Online (SDS) or WJEC Portal within 60 minutes of the awarding body's published starting time for the examination.
- For CCEA and OCR centres,** a non-interactive electronic (PDF) question paper must be ordered using *Access arrangements online*. A PDF copy of the question paper can then be downloaded within 60 minutes of the awarding body's published starting time for the examination.
- Where a centre requires access to a PDF copy of the standard question paper for this purpose, the 60 minute release time should be considered. An awarding body **will not** vary the release time for a PDF copy of the standard question paper to accommodate a centre's earlier starting time for the examination.

- WJEC Level 1 and Level 2 Vocational Awards (Technical Awards)
- WJEC Level 1 and Level 2 Vocational qualifications
- WJEC Level 3 Applied qualifications.

- 6.8.2 Orders **must** be made for each examination series.
- 6.8.3 Modified papers **must** be ordered by component code for each subject.
- 6.8.4 The SENCo **must** work with teaching staff to identify the most appropriate published format of modified papers so the candidate(s) can access their examinations.
- 6.8.5 Where FE colleges operate as part of a group with several centre numbers, modified paper orders **must** be processed using the centre number of the site where the candidate(s) will sit their examinations.

6.9 FINAL DEADLINES FOR SUBMITTING ORDERS FOR MODIFIED PAPERS

EXAM SERIES	LAST DATE BY WHICH ORDERS MUST BE MADE
November 2024	20 September 2024
January 2025	4 October 2024
June 2025	31 January 2025

GCSE January 2025 examination series – GCSE specifications **are not** available to centres in England.

For those candidates who decide to re-sit GCSE units in June 2025, following the publication of January 2025 GCSE examination results, orders for modified papers must be received no later than 21 March 2025.

(For unitised GCSE qualifications in Northern Ireland in March 2025, please see CCEA's website for information.)

Timely orders for modified papers are essential. Late orders **will not** be readily accepted as delivery cannot be guaranteed.

6.9.1 Late requests may not be fulfilled.

The production window, from an awarding body receiving an order for modified papers through to those papers being despatched, is extremely limited. The quality assurance process is even more rigorous for modified papers; there are many more quality checks to undertake.



Learning difficulties

This chapter provides guidance for centres on support for candidates with learning difficulties.

The range of learning difficulties is extensive: some of the implications for assessment are not always obvious. Therefore, candidates must be assessed by an assessor to ensure that the access arrangements/reasonable adjustments approved allow the candidate to access the assessment, but do not result in an unfair advantage.

This chapter therefore provides information on:

Centre and SENCo accountabilities
Appropriate adjustments for candidates with learning difficulties
Appointment of assessors
Reporting the appointment of assessors
Guidelines for the assessment of the candidate’s learning difficulties
Completing Form 8 – JCQ/AA/LD, Profile of Learning Difficulties

Learning difficulties

The range of learning difficulties is extensive: some of the implications for assessment are not always obvious. Candidates **must** therefore be assessed by an assessor (see [paragraphs 7.3.3 and 7.3.4](#)). This ensures that the access arrangements/reasonable adjustments approved allow the candidate to access the assessment, but do not result in an unfair advantage.

Where assessment objectives ([Chapter 3](#)) would be compromised by an access arrangement/adjustment, the assessment objectives will take precedence and **will not** be waived. This includes the demonstration of knowledge, understanding and skills required by the specification. The arrangement **must not** affect the integrity of the assessment.

7.1 ACCOUNTABILITIES

- 7.1.1 The SENCo **must**:
 - ensure that applications are processed **on time**, no later than the published deadline;
 - ensure that the **full** supporting evidence is in place **before** an online application is processed;
 - review the evidence **before** an online application is processed, ensuring that the candidate does meet the published criteria for the respective arrangement;
 - hold all supporting evidence and present such evidence to a JCQ Centre Inspector upon request; **and**
 - ensure that the agreed adjustment has been put in place **before** the candidate’s first examination, e.g. internal school tests and mock examinations.
- 7.1.2 The centre’s appointed assessor **must**:
 - record the results of any tests completed indicating that the impairment has a **substantial and long-term adverse effect** on the candidate’s performance;
 - only work within their area of expertise **and** in an ethical fashion;
 - use current editions of nationally standardised tests appropriate to the candidate’s chronological age and areas of need;
 - report the results of their assessment within Part 2 of Form 8; **and**
 - provide the centre with evidence of their qualification(s) **before** assessing any candidate (see [paragraph 7.3.3](#)).

7.2 APPROPRIATE ADJUSTMENTS FOR CANDIDATES WITH LEARNING DIFFICULTIES WHICH HAVE A SUBSTANTIAL AND LONG-TERM ADVERSE EFFECT

Access arrangements/reasonable adjustments are based on an individual candidate’s needs. Consideration **must** be given as to whether the proposed adjustment is effective and suitable for the candidate’s learning difficulty. For example, if a candidate can complete a paper in the normal length of time and never uses the 25% extra time which has been made available, then it is not an effective adjustment. It **would not** be appropriate to process an application for 25% extra time. Similarly, if a candidate requests the use of a word processor but cannot type comprehensible prose, it is not an effective adjustment for their examinations. However, a scribe may be required.

7.3 APPOINTMENT OF ASSESSORS

- 7.3.1 The head of centre is responsible for:
 - the quality of the access arrangements/reasonable adjustments process within the centre; **and**
 - the appointment of assessors, checking the qualifications of those assessing candidates (e.g. photocopy of certificate or printout of screenshot of HCPC or SASC registration).

The JCQ **cannot** approve an assessor's qualification(s) and **does not** maintain a list of appropriate qualifications for assessors.

7.3.2 Heads of centre **must** satisfy themselves that a professional does have the required level of competence and training.

The professional **must** present evidence of successful completion of a post-graduate course in individual specialist assessment at or equivalent to Level 7 **or a printout of a screenshot of HCPC or SASC registration.**

7.3.3 A head of centre will appoint:

- an access arrangements assessor who has successfully completed a post-graduate course at or equivalent to Level 7, including at least 100 hours relating to individual specialist assessment†. An access arrangements assessor may conduct assessments to be recorded within Part 2 of Form 8; **and/or** †The reference to at least 100 hours relating to individual specialist assessment would include lecture, seminar and tutorial time, study time, assessment time and time spent completing assignments. Courses which are accredited at AMBDA or APC Level would meet this requirement, as would post-graduate courses at or equivalent to Level 7 which provide a qualification in access arrangements assessment.
- a specialist teacher assessor with a **current** SpLD Assessment Practising Certificate, as awarded by BDA, the Dyslexia Guild or Patoss and listed on the SASC website. A specialist teacher assessor may conduct assessments to be recorded within Part 2 of Form 8 and where necessary undertake full diagnostic assessments; **and/or**
- an appropriately qualified psychologist registered with the Health & Care Professions Council who may conduct assessments to be recorded within Part 2 of Form 8 and where necessary undertake a full assessment.

7.3.4 An access arrangements assessor **must** have successfully completed a post-graduate course at or equivalent to Level 7, including at least 100 hours relating to individual specialist assessment, which **must** include training in **all** of the following:

- the theoretical basis underlying psychometric tests, such as the concepts of validity and reliability; standard deviations and the normal curve; raw scores, standard scores, quotients, percentiles and age equivalent scores; the concept of statistically significant discrepancies between scores; standard error of measurement and confidence intervals;
- the appropriate use of nationally standardised tests for the age group being tested;
- the objective administration of attainment tests which can be administered individually. This **must** include tests of reading accuracy, reading comprehension, reading speed and spelling. Appropriate methods of assessing writing skills, including speed, **must** also be covered;
- the appropriate selection and objective use of tests of cognitive skills (see [paragraph 7.5.12](#));
- the ethical administration of testing including the ability to understand the limitation of their own skills and experience, and to determine when it is necessary to refer the candidate to an alternative professional.

All assessors **must**:

- have a thorough understanding of the **current** edition of the JCQ document *Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments* and the principles, procedures and accountabilities involved;
- be familiar with the Equality Act 2010 (although it is not their role to determine what is a 'reasonable adjustment', but rather to help identify access arrangements that might assist the candidate in examinations and assessments and are thus potentially reasonable adjustments);
- either hold an appropriate qualification to teach and make recommendations for secondary aged or adult learners who have learning difficulties or be a HCPC registered psychologist.

The head of centre **must** ensure that evidence of the assessor's qualification(s) is obtained at the point of engagement/employment and prior to the assessor undertaking any assessment of a candidate.

Evidence of the assessor's qualification(s) must be held on file for inspection purposes and be presented to the JCQ Centre Inspector by the SENCo.

7.3.5 The assessor should be employed or contracted by the centre.

Alternatively, the assessor is:

- employed at another centre, e.g. within an Academy chain; **or**
- employed by the Local Authority; **or**
- an external assessor who has contacted the centre prior to any candidate assessment, establishes a working relationship with the centre and is approved by the head of centre. Before assessing the candidate the assessor will receive as a minimum a 'skeleton' Part 1 of Form 8, working with the SENCo.

7.3.6 A privately commissioned assessment, where the centre has not been involved, **cannot** be used to award access arrangements and **cannot** be used to process an application using *Access arrangements online*. This would be where the assessor has not contacted the centre, has not established a working relationship with the centre, has not been approved by the head of centre and has not received as a minimum a 'skeleton' Part 1 of Form 8 from the SENCo.

(Where a learning difficulty specifically arises as a result of a medical condition, please see [paragraph 5.2.3](#) and [section 5.7](#) - 25% extra time and/or a scribe.)

As a privately commissioned report, or an assessment from an external professional, **cannot** be used to award access arrangements, the head of centre or a member of the senior leadership team should provide a written rationale supporting their decision to the parent/carer.

SENCos and assessors working within the centre should always carefully consider any privately commissioned assessment to see whether the process of gathering a picture of need, demonstrating normal way of working within the centre and ultimately assessing the candidate themselves should be instigated.

7.4 REPORTING THE APPOINTMENT OF ASSESSORS

7.4.1 SENCos **must** hold on file for inspection purposes evidence that the assessor(s) is/are suitably qualified. This can be drawn, for example, from the following sources:

- copy of current Assessment Practising Certificate (APC) issued by Patoss, Dyslexia Guild or British Dyslexia Association;
- copy of Level 7 assessment qualification certificate;
- screenshot of HCPC registration showing the Unique Registration Number;
- screenshot of SASC listing showing the APC code number and expiry date;
- screenshot of listing for PAPAA Graduates showing the certificate number;
- screenshot of listing for CPT3A Certificate Holders showing the certificate number;
- screenshot of listing for ETAAC Certificate Holders showing the certificate number; or
- screenshot of listing for Patoss AAA Certificate Holders showing the certificate number.

7.4.2 In the case of appropriately qualified psychologists (registered with the Health & Care Professions Council), or specialist teacher assessors holding a current SpLD Assessment Practising Certificate, who are directly employed within the centre, there is no need to record the names of these individuals within *Access arrangements online*.

Examples of temporary access arrangements

Example 1

A Year 11 GCSE candidate fell off her bike and injured her writing hand a few days before her first GCSE examination. The candidate is unable to write or type. The SENCo processes a temporary application for the use of a scribe using *Access arrangements online (AAO)*. As the use of a scribe is not her normal way of working and she is not entirely comfortable or indeed conversant in dictating her responses to another person, 25% extra time is granted.

The SENCo types a note to support the application for a scribe and 25% extra time and with the approval sheet from AAO, retains on file for inspection purposes. Two days later, the candidate brings a note from her GP which confirms the injury to her hand and this is added to the SENCo's file. Once recovered, the candidate will sign the candidate personal data consent form to confirm her consent for the scribe application.

On the day of her first GCSE examination the candidate becomes highly anxious and stressed, as the use of a scribe is not her normal way of working. In view of this, the exams officer processes an application for special consideration.

Example 2

A Year 13 GCE A-level candidate has suffered a back injury playing rugby. He cannot come to school to sit his examinations. The SENCo liaises with the exams officer about him sitting his examinations at home through an alternative site arrangement. (See [section 11 of the JCQ document Instructions for conducting examinations](#).) In addition, the SENCo allows the candidate supervised rest breaks as sitting for an extended period of time causes him significant discomfort.

The invigilator takes the question paper in a sealed non-transparent secure transit envelope to the candidate's home and conducts the examination as per the [JCQ document Instructions for conducting examinations](#). However, during the examination, the candidate is in severe pain and the invigilator makes a note of this. Having received the invigilator's incident log, the exams officer then submits an online application for special consideration to the respective awarding body.

Example 3

A Year 11 GCSE candidate arrives in school on the first morning after the Whitsun half term break. She has had chicken pox. The candidate is clearly unwell and possibly contagious, so she is sent home. The centre decides that it will arrange for her examinations to be sat at home.

In addition, the SENCo grants supervised rest breaks, as sitting for an extended period of time, whilst feeling unwell, may not be conducive to the candidate demonstrating her full potential.

As the candidate has had a contagious disease, the exams officer seeks medical guidance from one of their local GP surgeries, primarily regarding the risk to others, in this case the invigilator. The exams officer also reads the advice in [section 11 of the JCQ document Instructions for conducting examinations](#).

The risks are deemed to be minimal. The invigilator takes the question paper in a sealed non-transparent secure transit envelope to the candidate's home and conducts the examination as per the [JCQ document Instructions for conducting examinations](#).

However, during the examination, the candidate begins to feel unwell and cannot continue with the examination for the remaining 45 minutes.

The invigilator makes a note of the fact that the candidate was only able to complete the first hour of the examination.

The exams officer, using the invigilator's incident log, submits an online application for special consideration to the awarding body. The awarding body is informed that the candidate did not complete the examination.

The candidate is unable to sit any more examinations that week. The exams officer submits further applications for special consideration.

Whilst the awarding bodies will try to accommodate any arrangements for a late diagnosis or late manifestation, there may be occasions where otherwise reasonable adjustments cannot be made due to the limited time available.

8.4 CASES THAT DO NOT GAIN APPROVAL

Access arrangements online approves around 90% of all applications made by centres in the United Kingdom, providing a single automated response.

It is inevitable that some individual needs will not be accommodated by a computer system, which cannot deal with every reasonable adjustment which may be required in specific cases. For example:

- a candidate with a brain injury who may need access to eye gaze technology; or
- a candidate who cannot use a pen and must use a pencil due to sensory processing difficulties.

If a candidate has very substantial needs which are not accommodated by the online system, it may be because they relate to reasonable adjustments which are not listed. Alternatively, the arrangement(s) may require further exploration in relation to the competence being tested in the specification(s). These cases should be discussed with the relevant awarding body. SENCos should keep a written record of such discussions. Additional paperwork may be required to justify the request being made.

If an application is not approved, the SENCo or the assessor working within the centre must consider whether this is because the candidate does not meet the published criteria for one of the arrangements requested and does not have a substantial and long-term impairment for the required arrangement.

Example 1

A candidate with learning difficulties has used a reader and a word processor with the spelling and grammar check switched on throughout her course and has requested these in her examinations. In a spelling test she achieves a below average standardised score of 77. Using *Access arrangements online*, the SENCo keys in the score of 77 for spelling. However, her spelling attempts are phonetically plausible and readable. They are not unrecognisable. The application is not approved. The SENCo makes a new online application for the candidate, this time only for a reader. The application is approved.

Example 2

A candidate with dyslexia has persistent difficulties with writing. His subject teachers report that in class his verbal contributions show good understanding of the subject matter. However, his written responses both in class and in internal school tests are at a level expected of a much younger student and largely grammatically incomprehensible. When he dictates to a scribe the quality of his work improves substantially and is age appropriate.

The candidate is assessed and achieves low average standardised scores (85-89) on assessments of spelling and writing speed. The SENCo applies for a scribe but the application is not approved as none of the scores are below average. The SENCo decides to make an online referral to the awarding bodies using *Access arrangements online*. As she can show that the candidate's incomprehensible writing improves substantially when he dictates to a scribe, the awarding bodies approve the use of a scribe.

8.5 QUALIFICATIONS AND ARRANGEMENTS COVERED BY ACCESS ARRANGEMENTS ONLINE

Access arrangements online **must** be used for the following qualifications:

- AQA Applied General qualifications
- AQA Level 2 Certificate in Further Maths
- AQA Level 3 Certificate in Mathematical Studies
- BTEC Firsts
- BTEC Level 2 Technicals
- BTEC Nationals
- BTEC Tech Awards
- Cambridge Nationals
- Cambridge Technicals
- FSMQ
- Functional Skills (AQA and Pearson specifications)
- GCE (AS and A-level)
- GCSE
- OCR Level 3 Certificates
- T-Levels (Pearson specifications)
- Welsh Baccalaureate qualification (WBQ)
- WJEC Level 1 and Level 2 General qualifications
- WJEC Level 1 and Level 2 Vocational qualifications
- WJEC Level 1 and Level 2 Vocational Awards (Technical Awards)
- WJEC Level 3 Applied qualifications.

Qualification types other than GCE or GCSE can be selected by clicking 'Other' Qualification Type when processing an online application.

Online applications **must** only be processed where they are supported by the centre, the candidate meets the published criteria for the arrangement(s) with the full supporting evidence in place.

The following arrangements **must** be applied for online:

- Access to a mobile phone for medical purposes
- Bilingual dictionary with 25% extra time (solely for those qualifications listed within [Chapter 5, paragraph 5.18.2](#))
- Computer reader/reader
- 25% extra time
- Extra time over 25%†
- Listening to music/white noise due to a substantial impairment
- Practical Assistant†
- Remote invigilation†
- Scribe/speech recognition technology
- Timetable variation on the day of the exam for a candidate with a disability
- Timetable variation requiring overnight supervision for a candidate with a disability

†The arrangement will be automatically rejected. Applications should then be referred online to the relevant awarding body.

The following arrangements **do not** need to be processed online:

(Please **do not** select 'Other' when using *Access arrangements online*.)

- Alternative rooming arrangements - sitting the examination outside of the main examination hall/room, e.g. a room for a smaller group of candidates
- Amplification equipment
- Bilingual dictionary
- Braille transcript
- Braille
- Colour naming by the invigilator for candidates who are colour blind
- Coloured overlays
- Communication Professional (for candidates using Sign Language)
- Examination on coloured/enlarged paper
- Fidget toys and stress balls
- Live speaker for pre-recorded examination components
- Low vision aid/magnifier
- Non-electronic ear defenders/ear plugs
- Non-electronic headphones
- Optical Character Reader (OCR) scanners
- Prompter
- Read aloud (which can include an examination reading pen)
- Squared paper for visual spatial difficulties
- Supervised rest breaks
- Timer on a candidate's desk – a small countdown clock, a small analogue or digital clock, digital timer
- Word processor.

How to access the *Access arrangements online* system:

www.aqa.org.uk
www.ccea.org.uk
<http://qualifications.pearson.com>
www.ocr.org.uk
www.wjec.co.uk

Access arrangements online has been specifically designed to provide centres with a user-friendly experience across a wide range of the **latest versions** of internet browsers via PCs and tablets. Centres **must** always use the most up-to-date/modern version of their chosen browser and ensure that their internet browser is not set in compatibility view mode. Centres **must** use Microsoft Edge or a current version of Chrome, Safari or Firefox.

Please note that the latest version of TLS **must** be enabled.

8.6 HOW TO USE ACCESS ARRANGEMENTS ONLINE

Getting started

Before logging in to *Access arrangements online* using one of the awarding bodies' secure extranet sites centres will need:

- the candidate's consent (completed candidate personal data consent form) to record their personal data online; (When progressing from GCSE to GCE AS and/or A-level qualifications the candidate will need to sign a new candidate personal data consent form.)
- paperwork determining the candidate's needs;
- log-in details for an awarding body's secure extranet site, e.g. AQA Centre Services.

The SENCo **must** keep detailed records for inspection purposes, whether electronically or in hard copy paper format, of all the essential information on file. This includes:

- a signed [candidate personal data consent form](#);
- a completed [Data protection confirmation by the examinations officer or SENCo](#) form;
- a copy of the candidate's approved application;
- appropriate evidence of need (where required);
- evidence of the assessor's qualification (where required).

Quick guide to applying for access arrangements/reasonable adjustments using *Access arrangements online*:

Step 1 Log-in

Log-in to an awarding body's secure extranet site, e.g. AQA Centre Services and navigate to *Access arrangements online*. Select the option *Create application* from the home page.

Step 2 Candidate details

Enter the candidate's details (* denotes that input is mandatory).

Step 3 Qualification type and application duration

Select the qualification type(s) which is/are relevant to the candidate's application and select either:

- Long-term condition* = lasts duration of a two-year course; **or**
- Temporary condition* = lasts duration of a single exam series.

Step 4 The academic year

Select the academic year(s) in which the access arrangement/reasonable adjustment(s) will be used.

Step 5 Access arrangements/reasonable adjustments

Choose the access arrangement/reasonable adjustment(s) required for the candidate from the list shown. More than one arrangement can be selected, but each one selected **must** have supporting evidence, where required, in order to secure approval.

Step 6 Evidence of need

Answer all the questions about the evidence available on file to support the application.

Step 7 Part 2 of Form 8

Some applications will require details from Part 2 of Form 8 to be entered to substantiate the evidence of need. Centres **must** specify who carried out the assessment and when.

Step 8 Confirmation

The submission is now complete. Tick the [Confirmation](#) box to state that the legal statements have been read and accepted and click [SUBMIT](#).

Step 9 Outcome

The application outcome will now be displayed, along with the details of the application.

If the application has not been approved, it can be referred online to the relevant awarding body for consideration using the awarding body referral section. However, centres **must always** re-check the JCQ regulations to see if the candidate does meet the published criteria for the arrangement(s).

Step 10 Save & Close

The application has been saved and can be found at any time using the search facility. Click [SAVE & CLOSE](#) to return to the Home page.

A flow diagram of the process can be found within [Chapter 6](#).

8.7 PRE-PLANNING IN ADVANCE OF EXAMINATION SERIES

Applications processed and approved online can be recorded as a CSV file. By using Excel, an instant list of candidates who have access arrangements/reasonable adjustments can be produced. This information will be invaluable for centres. It will enable exam officers, prior to the start of each exam series, to plan and identify:

- the number of additional rooms required within the centre to accommodate candidates with access arrangements;
- invigilation resources; **and**
- the number of computer readers, readers and scribes that will be needed.

Access arrangements online will also enable centres to generate pre-populated cover sheets for a practical assistant and a scribe.

8.8 ENTRY LEVEL CERTIFICATE (ELC) QUALIFICATIONS

Where permitted by the specification, the following arrangements may be granted by the centre and **do not** need to be recorded. Evidence of need **is not** required to be held on file:

- Alternative rooming arrangements - sitting the examination outside of the main examination hall/room, e.g. a room for a smaller group of candidates
- Amplification equipment, taped questions and responses
- Bilingual dictionary
- Braille transcript
- Braillers
- Brailling of non-secure assessment material
- Colour naming by the invigilator for candidates who are colour blind
- Coloured overlays
- Communication Professional for written questions and responses (but not in MFL Speaking assessments)
- Enlarge or photocopy the question paper on to coloured paper
- Fidget toys and stress balls
- Live speaker for pre-recorded examination components
- Low vision aid/magnifier
- Non-electronic ear defenders/ear plugs
- Non-electronic headphones**
- Optical Character Reader (OCR) scanners
- Prompter

- Read aloud (which can include an examination reading pen)
- Squared paper for visual spatial difficulties
- Supervised rest breaks
- Timer on a candidate's desk – a small countdown clock, a small analogue or digital clock, digital timer
- Word processor.

Where permitted by the specification, the following arrangements may be granted by the centre **without prior approval** from an awarding body:

- Bilingual dictionary with 25% extra time (for the use of the dictionary)
- Computer reader/reader
- Extra time in timed components
- Practical Assistant
- Scribe.

However, Form 11 – JCQ/EL/NF **must** be completed online.

Form 11 can be assessed online through the Centre Admin Portal (CAP). CAP can be accessed via any of the awarding bodies' secure extranet sites.

8.9 OTHER ADJUSTMENTS

Where a candidate's disability has a substantial and long-term adverse effect, other adjustments, which are not listed, may be required. The centre should, in the first instance, contact the relevant awarding body at the earliest opportunity to discuss the candidate's needs.

8.10 INTERNALLY ASSESSED CAMBRIDGE TECHNICALS AND PROJECT QUALIFICATIONS

For internally assessed Cambridge Technicals and Project qualifications (including the Extended Project), centres **do not** need to apply to the individual awarding body.

Access arrangements/reasonable adjustments **must not**, however, affect the reliability or validity of assessment outcomes. They **must not** give the learner an advantage over other learners undertaking the same or similar assessments.

It is recommended that centres discuss the application of access arrangements/reasonable adjustments to internally assessed units with the awarding body.

SECTION C

Appendix 1

Memory aid for a reader

I am here to read for you in your exam.
You **must** make clear what you want to be read.

I can **only** read the instruction and the questions.

I can repeat instructions, but **only** if you make it clear
which instructions you want me to read.

I **can't** tell you which questiona to choose.
I **can't** tell you when to move on to the next question.
I **can't** tell you which questios to do first.

I can spell words if you ask me, but **only** words on the question paper.

I can read back your answer, but **only** if you ask me.

GCSE English Language examinations:
I can read the questions in the writing section of the paper, but I **can't**
read any of the questions or the insert in the reading section.

Centres **must** ensure that both invigilators and those acting as a reader are thoroughly trained and familiar with the rules detailed within [section 5.5](#).

The candidate **must** be made aware of what a reader can and cannot do in advance of their first examination, e.g. internal school tests or mock exams.

Appendix 2

Memory aid for a scribe

I am here to type/write for you in your exam.

I must type/write **exactly** what you say.

I can draw maps, graphs and diagrams, but I can only draw **exactly** what you tell me.
I **can't** draw for you in a Design examination.

I can change what I have typed/written, but **only** if you ask me.

If we have problems communicating, I **must** tell the invigilator.

I **can't** give you any help with answers.
I **can't** suggest when an answer is finished.

I **can't** tell you which questions to choose.
I **can't** tell you when to move on to the next question.
I **can't** tell you which questions to do first.

If you are allowed rest breaks, I **can't** type/write in those breaks.

I can read back what I have typed/written, but **only** if you ask me.

Centres **must** ensure that both invigilators and those acting as a scribe are thoroughly trained and familiar with the rules detailed within [section 5.7](#).

The candidate **must** be made aware of what a scribe can and cannot do in advance of their first examination, e.g. internal school tests or mock exams.

Appendix 3

Memory aid for a Language Modifier

I can **only** change words or phrases if you make it clear that you need help with them.

I **can't** change words or phrases that the examiner thinks you should have learnt.

I can **only** change things that the examiner has written,
e.g. I cannot change text from a book, maps, tables, etc.

I can **only** make changes if you make it clear what is confusing you.

I can speak, write or sign any changes.

i can read for you if you make it clear what you want to be read.

GCSE English Language examinations:
I can read words, phrases or sentences in the writing section of the paper,
but I **can't** read or change anything in the reading section except the instructions.

Centres **must** ensure that both invigilators and those acting as a Language Modifier are thoroughly trained and familiar with the rules detailed within [section 5.11](#).

The candidate **must** be made aware of what a Language Modifier can and cannot do in advance of their first examination, e.g. internal school tests or mock exams.

Memory aid for a Communication Professional

i am here to sign the questions in British Sign Language.

I **can't** sign words or phrases that the examiner thinks you should have learnt, but I can fingerspell them.

I **can't** sign anything the examiner didn't write, e.g. text from a book, maps, tables, etc.

I can sign the questions more than once, but I **can't** explain the questions.

I **can't** explain what the examiner wants you to write.

You can fingerspell answers, or sign an answer, if it is one word only and I will write it for you.

GCSE English Language examinations:
I can sign the instructions/rubric, but **not** the questions.

Centres **must** ensure that both invigilators and those acting as a Communication Professional are thoroughly trained and familiar with the rules detailed within [section 5.13](#).

The candidate **must** be made aware of what a Communication Professional can and cannot do in advance of their first examination, e.g. internal school tests or mock exams.



A

CHAPTER 1

CHAPTER 2

CHAPTER 3

B

CHAPTER 4

CHAPTER 5

CHAPTER 6

CHAPTER 7

CHAPTER 8

C