



Joint Council for
Qualifications

Adjustments for candidates with disabilities and learning difficulties

Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments

This booklet covers the following qualifications:

AQA Applied General qualifications,
AQA Level 1, Level 2 and Level 3 Technical qualifications,
BTEC Firsts, BTEC Nationals,
Cambridge Nationals, Cambridge Technicals,
CCEA Essential Skills qualifications,
City & Guilds Level 2 & Level 3 Technical qualifications,
ELC, FSMQ, Functional Skills, GCE, GCSE, OCR Level 3 Certificates,
Welsh Baccalaureate qualification (WBO),
WJEC Level 1 and Level 2 General qualifications,
WJEC Level 1 and Level 2 Vocational qualifications,
WJEC Level 3 Applied qualifications

With effect from 1 September 2017 to 31 August 2018

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

Produced on behalf of:



Statement

These regulations reflect a whole centre approach to access arrangements.

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 SENCo, fully supported by teaching staff and members of the senior leadership team, must lead on the access arrangements process within his/her centre.

Teaching staff and members of the senior leadership team must support the SENCo in determining and implementing appropriate access arrangements.

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 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 and medical professionals.

Ideally, the SENCo will also be the in-house designated assessor and will thus assess candidates, process applications on-line and hold the evidence for inspection purposes for GCSE and/or GCE qualifications.

The SENCo must work with teaching staff to identify the most appropriate published format of modified papers (see pages 76 to 79) which will enable the candidate(s) to access their examinations.

These regulations must be used when processing applications using *Access arrangements online*. (See page 2 for the list of qualifications).

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

Failure to comply is defined as putting in place access arrangements that are not approved, or permitting access arrangements within the centre which are not supported by appropriate evidence.

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 paragraph 7.3.3, page 82.

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†Queries to the JCQ must be submitted by e-mail and not by telephone. All queries must be sent to centresupport@jcq.org.uk

The e-mail address info@jcq.org.uk must not be used for access arrangements queries.

Changes for the academic year 2017/18

Changes made to the content of this document since the previous version (1 September 2016 to 31 August 2017) are highlighted for easy identification.

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

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 and modified papers using *Access arrangements online*

Access arrangements 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:

AOA Applied General qualifications, AOA Level 1, Level 2, Level 3 Technical qualifications, BTEC Firsts, BTEC Nationals, Cambridge Nationals, Cambridge Technicals, FSMQ, GCE, GCSE, OCR Level 3 Certificates, WJEC Level 1, Level 2 General qualifications, WJEC Level 1, Level 2 Vocational qualifications, WJEC Level 3 Applied qualifications.

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

Month of examination	Access arrangement	Final deadline‡
November 2017	Modified papers	20 September 2017
November 2017	All other access arrangements	4 October 2017
January 2018†	Modified papers	4 October 2017
January 2018†	All other access arrangements	21 October 2017
May/June 2018	Modified papers	31 January 2018
May/June 2018	All other access arrangements	21 February 2018

†GCSE January 2018 examination series – GCSE specifications are not available to centres in England.

†For those candidates who decide to re-sit GCSE units in June 2018, following the publication of January 2018 GCSE examination results, orders for modified papers must be received no later than 21 March 2018.

(For unitised GCSE qualifications in Northern Ireland in March 2018 please see CCEA's website for information.)

N.B. Please note that candidates may not be able to have the modified papers requested, if orders are not received by the published deadline.

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

‡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 per **paragraph 8.3, page 89** 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 2018 examination series, **and the candidate is studying at the same qualification level**, it is perfectly permissible to re-process the application **upon expiry** and after 21 February 2018.

Centres should refer to **Chapter 8, pages 89-93**, for more detailed information on how to use *Access arrangements online* and the JCQ website – <http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/aao-access-arrangements-online>

Definitions

Access Arrangements

Access arrangements are agreed before an assessment. They allow candidates with 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 particular 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 a number of 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".

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. As set out in **Chapter 2, page 9**, there is no duty to make adjustments to competence standards within vocational qualifications.

(See **Chapter 3, pages 13-14** for information on assessment objectives and **section 1.6, page 6** and **section 1.8, page 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 **section 1.8, page 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**, may be found at:

- **section 5.2, 25% extra time, pages 22 to 26;**
- **section 5.3, extra time of up to 50% (between 26% and 50% extra time), pages 28 and 29;**
- **section 5.5, a computer reader/reader, pages 34, 35 and 37;**
- **section 5.7, scribe/speech recognition technology, pages 47, 48 and 49.**

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 - <http://odi.dwp.gov.uk/docs/wor/new/ea-guide.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 in 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.

Section A

Chapter 1

General qualifications - information and guidance for centres

The awarding bodies have a duty not to discriminate against individuals in 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 awarding bodies must not discriminate, harass or victimise when conferring general qualifications 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 with a candidate who is not disabled. In such circumstances, the awarding body is required to take reasonable steps to avoid that disadvantage.

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
- Functional Skills
- General Certificate of Education (Advanced and Advanced Subsidiary levels)
- General Certificate of Secondary Education
- Principal Learning and 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 on page 7.

Examples of reasonable adjustments for disabled candidates

- A candidate with Dyslexia needs to use a coloured overlay and a word processor, and requires 25% extra time. The use of a yellow coloured overlay is a reasonable adjustment for the candidate since it helps him to improve his reading accuracy. 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 an assessor using up to date nationally standardised tests. **The assessment shows that the candidate has a substantial and long term impairment as his working memory score is in the below average range. The candidate has a standardised score of 79.** The SENCo can supplement the assessor's report (Section C of Form 8) with **a detailed picture of need (see page 25)** showing 25% extra time as his normal way of working within the centre. The application of 25% extra time is a reasonable adjustment and the SENCo processes an application on-line using *Access arrangements online*.

- A candidate with ADD (Attention Deficit Disorder) has **persistent difficulty** concentrating and poor working memory. Supervised rest breaks and the use of a prompter, who may need to physically show him where on a page he had been working in order to re-start his work, would be reasonable adjustments.
- A candidate has Asperger's Syndrome 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, 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 on-line 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 in order 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. These arrangements are approved by the awarding body as the candidate has **a substantial and long term impairment**.
- A candidate is profoundly deaf and 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 Sign Language Interpreter. 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 on-line application for a reader is approved as the candidate has **a substantial and long term impairment resulting in a below average reading comprehension score** – a standardised score of 72. The candidate, in light of his **substantial difficulties**, is presented with a number of 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. Extra time of 25% 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 awards the candidate 25% extra time **and shows the need for both a reader and 25% extra time within Section A of Form 8.**

Candidates with substantial needs

However, there may be candidates who suffer from particular disabilities who may require other adjustments which are not listed in this document. Accordingly, **the list of access arrangements is not exhaustive.**

Where a candidate has substantial needs which are not accommodated by *Access arrangements online*, the centre should make an on-line referral to the relevant awarding body. **This may be done via *Access arrangements online* by selecting 'Other'.** However, additional paperwork may be required in order to justify the request being made.

Awarding bodies may require more compelling evidence of need before approving an arrangement that would otherwise unfairly advantage the candidate. **The requirement for evidence of need is important so as to maintain the rigour and standard of the examination system.** Evidence is also necessary to ensure that those using examination certificates can continue to have confidence in the awarding of qualification grades.

Each application will be considered individually in light of the candidate's needs. The response will relate primarily to the effect the requested adjustment may have on the assessment objective being tested in the qualification.

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:

- Advanced Extension Awards
- Entry level qualifications
- Essential Skills
- Free Standing Mathematics qualifications
- General Certificate of Education (Advanced and Advanced Subsidiary levels)
- General Certificate of Secondary Education
- Key Skills.

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 general qualifications.

A copy of the guidance can be found on the Equality Commission's website:

<http://www.equalityni.org/ECNI/media/ECNI/Publications/Employers%20and%20Service20Providers/DraftguidetodiscrimlawGeneralQualificationsbodies2010.pdf?ext=.pdf>

Chapter 2

Vocational qualifications - information and guidance for centres

2.1 Which qualifications are covered?

This section relates specifically to vocational qualifications as defined in section 53 of the Equality Act 2010.

2.2 Awarding bodies – vocational qualifications

Section 53 of the Equality Act 2010 states that awarding bodies must not discriminate, harass or victimise when conferring vocational qualifications. Awarding bodies 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.

2.4 Application of competence standards

Awarding bodies offering vocational qualifications are allowed to apply competence standards to a disabled person.

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 particular advice from the awarding body issuing the qualification.

In the majority of 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. In particular, 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 and making 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 of the assessments for the selected qualification, this **must** be communicated clearly to the learner. A learner may still decide to proceed with a particular 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 of the required assessments; **and**
- any restrictions on progression routes to the learner as a result 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**.

Reasonable adjustments must not, however, affect the reliability or validity of assessment outcomes nor must they give the learner an unfair assessment advantage over other learners undertaking the same or similar assessments.

The head of centre/Principal/CEO (or designated nominee) **must** ensure that a reasonable 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 in order to demonstrate competence. The aids must either be generally commercially available, or available from specialist suppliers, and can feasibly be used in the centre or on the employers' premises.

The following adaptations are examples of what may be considered for the purposes of facilitating access, as long as 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;
- language modified assessment material;
- practical assistant;
- prompter;
- providing assistance during assessment;
- reader;
- scribe;
- use of assistive software;
- using assistive 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 of the adjustments (as above) will be reasonable, permissible or practical in particular 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 particular 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 or training providers **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 centre must contact the relevant awarding body for advice.

2.10 How can centres apply for reasonable adjustments for external assessments?

Centres or training providers who wish to apply for a reasonable adjustment in a vocational qualification **must** make an application to the relevant awarding body **at least six weeks before the date of the series in which the assessment is to be taken**. Form VQ/EA must be used.

Form VQ/EA is available electronically at:

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

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.

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, please submit **Form VQ/EA no later than ten weeks before the date of the assessment**.

Where it reflects the learner's normal way of working, centres or training providers 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.

Form VQ/EA is available electronically at:

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

For AQA and OCR vocational qualifications with externally assessed components Form 7 must be completed. Form 7 is available electronically at:

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

Chapter 3

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

General qualifications

- 3.1 **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.

Assessment objectives

- 3.2 In general qualifications, (**see section 1.6, page 6 and section 1.8, page 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.

Grade boundaries

- 3.3 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.**

- 3.4 **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 section 5.17, page 70**) if that is the only adjustment available to enable him/her 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 assessment.

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 his/her 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 section 7.3, page 82**) have access to the assessment objectives for the relevant specification(s).

- 3.5 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 for the candidate to enter for the assessment, (unless it is felt that the impairment will not affect a significant proportion of the assessment).
- 3.6 As stated on **page 3**, 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

- A candidate with severe 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 particular subject. The assessment objectives are designing and making, so no adjustment can be made.
- A candidate with severe 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 disabled, he can access the examinations independently.
He can have a scribe though 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 particular 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.

SECTION B:

Adjustments for candidates with disabilities and learning difficulties

Chapter 4

4.1 Managing the needs of candidates with disabilities and learning difficulties

Some candidates with disabilities and learning difficulties are likely to have a number of the needs **set out in paragraphs 4.1.1–4.1.4**. They may require a range of access arrangements. **The examples given are therefore not exhaustive and are illustrative only.**

(See Chapter 5, pages 20-70 and Chapter 6, pages 74-80, for details of these arrangements).

4.1.1 Cognition and Learning Needs†

E.g. General and/or Specific Learning Difficulties (such as Dyscalculia and Dyslexia)

Candidates with learning difficulties may require for example:

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

†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. Hearing Impairment (HI), Multi-Sensory Impairment (MSI), Physical Disability (PD), Vision Impairment (VI)

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 word processor
- a scribe
- a live speaker
- a Sign Language Interpreter
- a practical assistant
- Braille papers, modified enlarged and/or modified language papers.

4.1.4 Social, Mental and Emotional Needs†

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

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

- supervised rest breaks
- a prompter
- separate invigilation within the centre
- alternative site arrangement
- extra time
- a word processor
- a computer reader or a reader
- read aloud or an examination reading pen
- a scribe.

†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 is to ensure, where possible, that barriers to assessment are removed for a disabled candidate preventing him/her from being placed at a substantial disadvantage as a consequence of persistent and significant difficulties.

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

- 4.2.2 Although access arrangements 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, page 13). **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 in each specification.** Subjects and their methods of assessments may vary, leading to different demands of the candidate. **SENCos should consider the need for access arrangements on a subject-by-subject basis. (See the second example below).**

Examples

- A GCE AS student 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 student is awarded 25% extra time in papers with extended writing – English Language, English Literature, Geography and History because his impairment **substantially** impacts only upon his ability to compose continuous text. These difficulties are not so extensive in short answer French and Spanish papers, Biology, Chemistry, Mathematics and Physics papers; therefore extra time is not awarded.
- A GCSE student 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 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 should be applied for as soon as is practicable. Centres **must** process applications as per **paragraph 8.3, page 89**, 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;
 - literacy support lessons;
 - literacy intervention strategies;
 - in internal school 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 Section A of Form 8 by the SENCo or the assessor working within the centre.

SENcos and assessors must refer to **section 7.6.1, page 87**, for information on how to confirm 'normal way of working'. †The only exception to this is where an arrangement is put in place as a consequence of a temporary injury or impairment (**see section 8.3, page 89**).

- 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 his/her 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 practice using the access arrangement(s) before his/her first examination. **This is particularly so where a computer reader, modified enlarged papers, a scribe or speech recognition technology will be used in examinations.**

- 4.2.8 If a candidate has **never** made use of the arrangement granted to him/her, e.g. 25% extra time or supervised rest breaks, then it is **not** his/her normal way of working. **The SENCo may consider withdrawing the arrangement.** (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 must not compromise assessment requirements.**

- 4.2.10 Where a person is appointed to facilitate an access arrangement, i.e.

- an Oral Language Modifier
- a practical assistant
- a prompter
- a reader
- a scribe
- a Sign Language Interpreter

he/she is responsible to the head of centre and must be acceptable to the head of centre. The person appointed must not normally be the candidate's own subject teacher and **must not** be a relative, friend or peer of the candidate.

The head of centre **must** ensure that the person appointed is a responsible adult, is appropriately trained and fully understands the rules of the particular access arrangement(s), as detailed in this document. **It is not acceptable for a centre to use a Year 12 or Year 13 candidate to facilitate an access arrangement.**

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

Failure to comply is defined as:

- putting in place access arrangements that are not approved; **or**
- permitting access arrangements within the centre which are not supported by appropriate evidence.

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

- 4.2.13 When an access arrangement has been processed on-line 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. **This must be in hard copy format.**

The appropriate evidence and confirmation of the approval for the respective access arrangement(s) **must** be available for inspection at the venue where the candidate is taking the examination(s). **This must also include a signed Data Protection Notice** (see **Appendix 1, page 97**) or **a signed Privacy Notice** which specifically makes reference to AAO, confirming the candidate's consent to the processing of the access arrangement(s).

The Data Protection Notice may be downloaded from -

<http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/aao-access-arrangements-online/data-protection-notice>

All GCSE and GCE centres will be inspected by a member of the JCQ Centre Inspection Service. Inspectors will expect to see appropriate documentation to substantiate the use of an access arrangement processed electronically.

If a JCQ centre inspection reveals deficient performance by a centre in respect of its role in requesting and/or implementing access arrangements, 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.

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

Examples – evidence for inspection purposes

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

- **a file note on centre headed paper** which is supplemented by a written statement from a Speech and Language Therapist; (The **signed and dated** centre file note, **written by the SENCo**, is produced in line with the guidance on **pages 35 and 48.**)
- the approval sheet from AAO;
- **a signed** data protection notice.

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

- **Form 8, signed by hand and dated, with Sections A, B and C completed;**
- an IEP; (As the candidate has two low average standardised scores the centre is required to paint a detailed picture of need **in addition to** Form 8, **see page 25.**)
- the approval sheet from AAO;
- **a signed** Privacy Notice which makes specific reference to AAO.

A GCSE candidate with ADHD is awarded a computer reader on account of his **below average reading comprehension score (a standardised score of 72)**. **The SENCo** presents for inspection:

- **Form 8, signed by hand and dated, with Sections A, B and C completed;**
- the approval sheet from AAO;
- **a signed** data protection notice.

Chapter 5

Access arrangements available

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

- AQA Applied General qualifications
- AQA Level 1, Level 2 and Level 3 Technical qualifications
- BTEC Firsts
- BTEC Nationals
- Cambridge Nationals
- Cambridge Technicals
- City & Guilds Level 2 & Level 3 Technical qualifications
- Entry Level Certificate qualifications
- Free Standing Mathematics qualifications (FSMQ)
- Functional Skills
- GCE
- GCSE
- OCR Level 3 Certificates
- Welsh Baccalaureate qualification (WBO)
- WJEC Level 1 and Level 2 General qualifications
- WJEC Level 1 and Level 2 Vocational qualifications
- WJEC Level 3 Applied qualifications

(where permitted by the specification)

The principle will be the same across all qualification types: access arrangements 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.

Appendix 2, pages 98-100, details the permitted access arrangements for Functional Skills qualifications.

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. 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 his/her 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.

N.B. 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.

N.B. In Wales an Individual Development Plan which confirms the candidate's disability has exactly the same status as an Education, Health and Care Plan or a statement of special educational needs.

N.B. 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 using *Access arrangements online*.

However, for GCSE and GCE qualifications the SENCo must produce written evidence confirming the need for supervised rest breaks to a JCQ Centre Inspector upon request. This must confirm the candidate's established difficulties and that supervised rest breaks reflect his/her normal way of working within the centre.

Supervised rest breaks must always be considered before making an application for extra time.

- 5.1.1 The SENCo is allowed to provide a supervised rest break to a candidate where it is his/her 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; and (The candidate is disabled within the meaning of the Equality Act.)
- 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, mental and emotional needs.

In addition, the candidate's difficulties must be established within the centre and thus 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.

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

There is no maximum time set for supervised rest breaks. The decision must be made 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. The duration of the supervised rest break should ideally be determined by the SENCo before the start of the examination series.

- 5.1.3 There will be some constraints on timing if the candidate has more than one examination to take each day. **The supervised rest break is not included in any extra time allowance.**

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 page 21).

Where a candidate requires a reader or a scribe with 25% extra time in all their examinations you must refer to sections 5.5.7 and 5.7.9, pages 38 and 51.

Processing applications

- 5.2.1 For those qualifications listed on page 2 an application for 25% extra time must be processed using *Access arrangements online*. (Page 2 also lists the published deadlines.)

Where candidates have access needs other than learning difficulties, please see section 5.2.3, page 26.

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

Learning difficulties – core evidence required

- 5.2.2 In order to award 25% extra time the SENCo must determine the needs of the candidate based on one of the following documents:

- a Statement of Special Educational Needs relating to secondary education, or an Education, Health and Care Plan, which confirms the candidate's disability (see pages 23 and 26 for the required centre based evidence); or
- an assessment (Section C 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.

Substantial impairment

So as not to give an unfair advantage, the assessor's report (Section C of Form 8) must confirm that the candidate has:

at least one below average standardised score of 84 or less which relates to an assessment of:

- speed of reading; or
- speed of reading comprehension; or
- speed of writing; or
- cognitive processing measures which have a substantial and long term adverse effect on speed of working (see pages 84-86).

Exceptional circumstances

In exceptional circumstances 25% extra time may be awarded to a candidate 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.

Rare and very exceptional circumstances

Where there are a cluster of scores (at least three, relating to three different areas of speed of working) just within the average range (90 to 94), in rare and very exceptional circumstances 25% extra time may be awarded.

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 specialist diagnostic assessor.

25% extra time

In all cases, in addition to the core evidence on page 22, 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 his/her examinations.

(A definition of normal way of working is provided within section 4.2.5, page 17.)

The amount of evidence required to paint a picture of need will vary according to the candidate's standardised scores (see pages 24 and 25).

The documentation presented for inspection purposes must show a compelling case for 25% extra time with a clear and detailed picture of current need.

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

Where a candidate has a statement of special educational needs **relating to secondary education**, or an Education, Health and Care Plan, the SENCo must embellish the documentation with a picture of need (as per page 26). **(Form 8 is not required.)**

Where a candidate progresses from GCSE to GCE qualifications

When a candidate progresses from GCSE to GCE AS and A-level qualifications a re-submission of the application for 25% extra time must be processed on-line.

An assessment conducted no earlier than the start of Year 9 (Section C 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 (Sections A, B and C), signed by hand and dated, may roll forward from GCSE to GCE qualifications†. 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 A-level examinations. (This must be produced on centre headed paper, signed by hand and dated):

- ❖ confirm that the candidate continues to have persistent and significant difficulties when accessing and processing information, and is disabled within the meaning of the Equality Act 2010;
- ❖ include evidence of the candidate's current difficulties and how they **substantially** impact on teaching and learning in the classroom;
- ❖ show the involvement of teaching staff in determining the need for 25% extra time for GCE AS/A-level examinations;
- ❖ confirm that without the application of 25% extra time the candidate would continue to be at a substantial disadvantage when taking GCE AS/A-level examinations; **(The candidate would be at a substantial disadvantage when compared with other, non-disabled candidates undertaking the assessment.)**
- ❖ confirm that 25% extra time continues to be the candidate's normal way of working within the centre **as a direct consequence of their disability.**

†The rolling forward of a Form 8 from GCSE to GCE qualifications principally applies in the context of 11 to 18 schools, including 11 to 18 schools operating local Sixth Form consortium arrangements for GCE AS and A-level qualifications. A FE College or a Sixth Form College must have established working relationships with 'feeder' schools in order for the Form 8 to roll forward from GCSE to GCE qualifications.

Evidence from an assessor



The vast majority of candidates awarded 25% extra time will have an assessment of speed of working showing at least one standardised score of 84 or less. Rare and exceptional cases may however exist.

At least one standardised score of 84 or less

Where a candidate has at least one standardised score of 84 or less the SENCo must present for inspection purposes a substantial and comprehensive body of evidence.

Page 25 shows the balance of requirements between core evidence (the quantitative data from the assessor's report – Section C of Form 8) and supplementary evidence (painting the picture of need).

Rare and exceptional cases

For those rare and exceptional cases which fall outside the standard expected category, of at least one standardised score of 84 or less, the amount of evidence of need will vary, and will likely need to be greater, according to the candidate's standardised scores on tests of speed.

SENCos are reminded that if a candidate does not qualify for 25% extra time, consideration should be given to other access arrangements such as, for example, the use of a prompter or supervised rest breaks.

Pictorial representation of the evidence requirements for candidates with learning difficulties requiring 25% extra time, showing the balance of requirements between core and supplementary evidence

Core evidence – defined as the quantitative data from the assessor's report (Section C of Form 8).

Proportion of candidates typically awarded 25% extra time with an assessor's report showing standardised scores on tests of speed:

<p>At least one score of 84 or less</p> <p>The vast majority of candidates with a substantial and long term impairment awarded 25% extra time will fall into this category.</p>	<p>Two or more scores between 85-89</p> <p><u>A small proportion</u> of candidates will fall into this category.</p>	<p>Three or more scores between 90-94</p> <p><u>Very few candidates</u> awarded extra time are expected to be in this category.</p>
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Supplementary evidence – painting the picture of need

The amount of evidence required to paint the picture of need will vary according to the candidate's standardised scores on tests of speed:

<p>At least one score of 84 or less</p> <p>Evidence of normal way of working within the centre (i.e. Section A of Form 8)</p> <p><u>and</u></p> <p>Internal school tests/mock exam papers showing the application of extra time</p> <p><u>or</u></p> <p>IEP/ILP making reference to the need for extra time</p> <p><u>or</u></p> <p>Comments and observations from teaching staff as to why the candidate needs extra time and how he/she uses the extra time awarded.</p>	<p>Two or more scores between 85-89 relating to <u>two different areas of speed of working</u></p> <p>Evidence of normal way of working within the centre (i.e. Section A of Form 8)</p> <p><u>and</u></p> <p>Internal school tests/mock exam papers showing the application of extra time</p> <p><u>or</u></p> <p>IEP/ILP making reference to the need for extra time</p> <p><u>or</u></p> <p>Comments and observations from teaching staff as to why the candidate needs extra time and how he/she uses the extra time awarded.</p>	<p>Three or more scores between 90-94 <u>relating to three different areas of speed of working</u></p> <p>Evidence of normal way of working within the centre showing <u>an extensive history of need; and</u></p> <p>Evidence of <u>a clear, measurable and substantial long term adverse effect on performance and speed of working; and</u></p> <p>A diagnostic assessment report, from <u>no earlier than Year 9</u>, confirming a significant learning difficulty or disability. This <u>must</u> have been undertaken by a HCPC registered psychologist or specialist diagnostic assessor; and</p> <p>A cluster of standardised scores (at least three) relating to <u>three different areas of speed of working just within the average range, - 90 to 94.</u></p> <p>To assist centres with these rare and very exceptional cases, the Equality Act 2010 definition of disability is provided on page 4.</p> <p>HCPC registered psychologists and specialist diagnostic assessors are advised to consider in extreme and unusual cases, particularly where the candidate has complex learning needs, whether section 5.2.3, page 26, might apply.</p>
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25% extra time

Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD)

Sensory and/or Physical Needs (HI, MSI, PD, VI)

Social, Mental and Emotional Needs

Speech, Language and Communication Needs (SLCN)

Supervised rest breaks must always be considered before making a request for extra time, since they may be more appropriate for candidates with a medical condition, a physical disability or a psychological condition. (See Chapter 5, section 5.1, page 21 for more detail).

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

- Communication and Interaction Needs; **or**
- Sensory and/or Physical Needs; **or**
- Social, Mental and Emotional Needs;

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. **In these specific cases Form 8 is not required.**

Substantial impairment – evidence of need

So as not to give an unfair advantage, the SENCo's letter or file note (written on centre headed paper, signed by hand and dated) must:

- ❖ confirm that the candidate has **persistent and significant difficulties when accessing and processing information, and is disabled within the meaning of the Equality Act 2010;**
- ❖ include evidence of the candidate's current difficulties and how they **substantially** impact on teaching and learning in the classroom;
- ❖ show the involvement of teaching staff in determining the need for 25% extra time;
- ❖ confirm that without the application of 25% extra time the candidate would be at **a substantial disadvantage; (The candidate would be at a substantial disadvantage when compared with other, non-disabled candidates undertaking the assessment.)**
- ❖ confirm that 25% extra time is the candidate's normal way of working within the centre **as a direct consequence of their disability.**

The SENCo's detailed information, as above, will be supported by:

- a letter from CAMHS, a HCPC registered psychologist, a hospital consultant, a psychiatrist; **or**
- a letter from the Local Authority Specialist Service, Local Authority Sensory Impairment Service or Occupational Health Service†; **or**
- a letter from a Speech and Language Therapist (SaLT); **or**
- a Statement of Special Educational Needs relating to the candidate's secondary education, or an Education, Health and Care Plan, **which confirms the candidate's disability.**

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

25% extra time

Factors the centre must take into account

- 5.2.4 Where 25% extra time is to be made available to a candidate in his/her examinations, the centre **must** ensure that appropriate invigilation and timetabling arrangements are in place.
- 5.2.5 **Extra time will not be permitted in examinations testing the time in which a skill is performed, such as expressive arts, a musical performance, or a sport, where timing is an explicit part of the assessment objective.**
- 5.2.6 **Candidates may not require extra time for each subject.** As subjects and the methods of assessment vary, so the demands on the candidate will vary.
(See the third example on page 7 and the second example on page 17).

Extra time **may not** be appropriate in:

- practical examinations; or
- medium level or limited level GCSE controlled assessments where the impairment has a **minimal effect** on the assessment.

Care **must** be taken within the centre to ensure that candidates (whose normal way of working is to use extra time) are not placed at a disadvantage.

- 5.2.7 For recorded examinations, the centre must request an extra recording from the awarding body, unless they normally receive enough spares.

Where a candidate has an approved application for 25% extra time, advice should always be sought from the relevant awarding body as to how the extra time is to be applied in a Listening examination.

Entry Level qualifications

For Entry Level qualifications – Entry Level Certificate qualifications and Entry Level Functional Skills qualifications, the centre is not required to have each candidate individually assessed.

The SENCo **must** determine the need for 25% extra time on the basis of how the candidate normally works in the classroom.

5.3 Extra time of up to 50% (between 26% and 50% extra time)

Access arrangements are determined on an individual basis, based on the assessment evidence, the candidate's demonstrated needs within the centre and his/her normal way of working. If a candidate with processing difficulties is able to demonstrate his/her knowledge, understanding and skills with 25% extra time then it would not be appropriate to award more than this. To do so would not create a level playing field. It would advantage the candidate over his/her peers.

For the overwhelming majority of candidates with cognition and learning needs who require extra time, 25% will be sufficient. If more than this is needed, there must be a strong justification as to why more than 25% extra time is required, including a substantial body of centre based evidence.

Processing applications

- 5.3.1 For those qualifications listed on page 2, an application for extra time of up to 50% must be processed using *Access arrangements online*. (Page 2 also lists the published deadlines.)

Access arrangements online will automatically reject applications for extra time of more than 25%. However, the centre will be able to refer the application to the relevant awarding body. Each application will be considered individually in light of the candidate's needs. An awarding body reserves the right to request evidence from the centre and will expect to see a strong justification for the arrangement.

- 5.3.2 An application for extra time of more than 25% and up to 50% must only be processed in the following exceptional circumstances:

Learning Difficulties

Very substantial impairment - evidence of need

- A candidate working independently with a learning difficulty which has a very substantial and long term adverse effect on speed of working (as evidenced within Section A of Form 8).

Results must be given as standardised scores.

So as not to give an unfair advantage, only very substantially below average standardised scores of 69 or less are acceptable.

The candidate must have two very substantially below average standardised scores which 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 measures; **or**
- speed of reading comprehension **and** speed of writing; **or**
- speed of reading comprehension **and** cognitive processing measures; **or**
- speed of writing **and** cognitive processing measures; **or**
- two different areas of cognitive processing.

The candidate will have been assessed with appropriate up to date tests being conducted within 26 months of the final examination (see section 7.5, pages 84-86). This will be in addition to a compelling and substantial picture of need, indicating the candidate's normal way of working, as evidenced within Section A of Form 8.

A physical, a sensory or multi-sensory impairment

Very substantial impairment – evidence of need

- **A candidate who has a physical, a sensory or multi-sensory impairment that very substantially hinders his/her speed of working.**

Candidates with a **very substantial physical, sensory or multi-sensory impairment** will require extra time of up to 50% to complete an examination. The extra time might be needed for various reasons. For example, it could take a candidate with a **very substantial multi-sensory impairment** longer to read and process text, and to find their way round a modified enlarged paper.

Where a candidate is proficient in reading a Braille paper it would normally be appropriate to award no more than 50% extra time.

Where a candidate is proficient in using a modified enlarged paper, whether with a reader and/or a scribe, it would normally be appropriate to award no more than 50% extra time. (See the example on page 32).

SENCoS must have clear evidence that extra time of up to 50% is needed.

So as not to give an unfair advantage, the SENCo must:

- ❖ confirm that the candidate has **very persistent and significant difficulties when accessing and processing information, and is disabled within the meaning of the Equality Act 2010**;
- ❖ include evidence of the candidate's current difficulties and how they **very substantially** impact on teaching and learning in the classroom;
- ❖ **indicate the maximum amount of extra time required, e.g. 40%;**
- ❖ provide evidence of how the amount of extra time required has been determined;
- ❖ show the involvement of teaching staff in determining the need for extra time of up to 50%;
- ❖ **indicate whether the candidate will be using a computer reader/reader and/or a scribe and/or a word processor;**
- ❖ confirm that without the application of extra time of up to 50% the candidate would be at **a very substantial disadvantage**; and
(The candidate would be at a very substantial disadvantage when compared with other, non-disabled candidates undertaking the assessment.)
- ❖ confirm that extra time of up to 50% is the candidate's normal way of working within the centre **as a direct consequence of their disability**.

The SENCo's detailed information, as above, will be supported by:

- a letter from a hospital consultant; **or**
- a letter from the Local Authority Sensory Impairment Service; **or**
- a letter from the Occupational Health Service†; **or**
- a letter from a Speech and Language Therapist (SaLT); **or**
- a Statement of Special Educational Needs relating to the candidate's secondary education, or an Education, Health and Care Plan, **which confirms the candidate's disability**.

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

5.4 Extra time of over 50%

- 5.4.1 **In very exceptional circumstances**, a candidate may require more than 50% extra time in order to manage **a very substantial impairment**.

For example, a candidate with **a severe vision impairment** who is **very slow** in reading a modified enlarged or Braille paper and cannot access an electronic paper.

Access arrangements online will automatically reject applications for extra time of over 50%. However, the centre will be able to refer the application to the relevant awarding body. Each application will be considered individually in light of the candidate's needs. An awarding body reserves the right to request evidence from the centre and will expect to see a strong justification for the arrangement.

Detailed information **must** be provided to the relevant awarding body, indicating the **very substantial** nature of the candidate's impairment and why 50% extra time is insufficient.

The SENCo must:

- ❖ confirm that the candidate has **very persistent and significant difficulties when accessing and processing information, and is disabled within the meaning of the Equality Act 2010**;
- ❖ include evidence of the candidate's current difficulties and how they **very substantially** impact on teaching and learning in the classroom;
- ❖ indicate the maximum amount of extra time required, e.g. 75%;
- ❖ provide evidence of how the amount of extra time has been determined;
- ❖ show the involvement of teaching staff in determining the amount of extra time required;
- ❖ indicate whether the candidate will be working independently with Braille or modified enlarged papers;
- ❖ indicate whether the candidate will be using a computer reader/reader and/or a scribe **and/or a word processor**; **and**
- ❖ confirm that extra time of over 50% is the candidate's normal way of working within the centre **as a direct consequence of their disability**.

The amount of extra time requested must be both reasonable and appropriate to the candidate's needs.

SENcos should note that extra time of over 100% is likely to be counter-productive in terms of fatigue. Other access arrangements, particularly supervised rest breaks, should be identified to make this arrangement unnecessary.

Examples - extra time (learning difficulties)

A candidate not awarded extra time

- A Year 11 GCSE student has an assessment which identifies that his underlying cognitive abilities fall in the upper range, with a score of **125**. His literacy skills are within the average range and his processing ability scores are in the range of **94-96**. There is no evidence that he requires extra time in light of his performance in the classroom, in internal school tests and in his GCSE English Language examination sat in Year 10. **An application for extra time is not pursued as he does not meet the published criteria.**

A candidate with no previous history of need

- A Year 12 A-level student has recently been identified as having a specific learning difficulty, with processing speeds in the below average range, (**standardised scores of 80 and 83**). The assessor **who has an established working relationship with the centre** recommends 25% extra time. However, the SENCo only managed to produce a 'skeleton' Section A of Form 8 prior to the candidate being assessed. Extra time was not needed for GCSE examinations. The SENCo decides to trial and monitor the award of 25% extra time and records its impact and use. By the February of Year 13 **a detailed picture of need** and evidence of normal way of working has been firmly established. The SENCo, having collected data throughout the monitoring period, is now able to **fully complete Section A of Form 8**. Together with the two below average standardised scores, **as recorded within Section C of Form 8**, the SENCo processes an on-line application for 25% extra time by 21 February.

Using evidence of working memory difficulties

- A GCSE student has an assessment which confirms the presence of a weak, below average working memory (**a standardised score of 77**). Her teachers observe she is slow at gathering her thoughts and putting them down onto paper, especially under the timed conditions of an examination. They confirm she regularly needs verbal instructions repeated. Class test papers additionally show that the quality and quantity of her written answers improves significantly with the allowance of 25% extra time. The SENCo processes an on-line application for 25% extra time on the basis of her below average working memory, **as recorded within Section C of Form 8, and a detailed picture of need (Section A of Form 8 and additional supplementary evidence)**.

Re-assessment in Year 12

- An A-level student was found to have learning difficulties in Year 9. When re-assessed on entry to the Sixth Form his reading accuracy and comprehension skills are well within the average range. His writing speed has never posed a difficulty but he has previously received extra time in exams requiring extended reading. The new assessment does not indicate below average speeds of working, but they fall into the low average range (i.e. 85-89), with one measure falling just within the average range. His reading speed using continuous texts is measured with a standardised score of **89**, his single word reading speed is **86**, his phonological processing speed is **91** and his score for working memory is **88**. The SENCo considers his history of need. He has consistently used his extra time in exams requiring extended reading and extension times are allowed for reading in class. In addition, the assessor is aware that for this candidate the difficulties are exacerbated when working under the pressure of examination conditions. Having painted **a detailed picture of need** from the assessment data **and** normal way of working, the SENCo processes an on-line application for 25% extra time.

A candidate with specific learning difficulties

- An A-level student has a long established diagnosis of a specific learning difficulty. She has been awarded 25% extra time throughout her schooling to date (National Curriculum Tests and GCSE examinations). When entering the Sixth Form for her A-level studies the school's specialist assessor reported the continued existence of a significant learning difficulty. The candidate's standardised scores generally fall just within the average range in tests of reading comprehension (92), reading speed (94), working memory (89) and rapid naming skills (91). **These scores compare to underlying cognitive abilities which fall into the upper range with a score of 130.** The SENCo is able to paint **a compelling picture of need** with **substantial evidence** of a significant improvement in quality of performance in mock exams and classroom activities when 25% extra time is allowed - in measures of reading comprehension, writing coherence, quality of ideas and information content.

The SENCo decides to process an on-line application for 25% extra time. This is based on the **substantial weight of evidence** from the assessment, her normal way of working, the history of need and the fact that she is following A-level courses in English Literature, History and Psychology, all of which require extended reading and writing.

A candidate with a vision impairment

- A blind candidate is using Braille papers. There is a great deal of text to read in GCSE History and there are many diagrams and tables in GCSE Science. The candidate's vision impairment **very substantially** hinders his speed of working.

The SENCo processes an application for **a practical assistant in written examinations, a reader** (in order to assist the candidate in examinations involving diagrams, graphs and tables) **and 50% extra time. The application is automatically rejected by the on-line system. The SENCo refers the application on-line to the relevant awarding bodies.**

The awarding bodies will consider the application in light of the candidate's particular needs.

A candidate with a vision impairment using non-interactive electronic (PDF) papers

- A candidate with a vision impairment uses a print size larger than the published modified enlarged paper formats. Her normal way of working involves enlarging scanned material on a laptop in order to read it. The SENCo is able to order A4 modified enlarged 18 point bold papers in a non-interactive electronic (PDF) format which the candidate will enlarge on a laptop. The candidate will additionally require 50% extra time in light of her vision impairment which **very substantially** hinders her speed of working.

The SENCo processes an application for 50% extra time which is automatically rejected by the on-line system. The SENCo refers the application on-line to the relevant awarding bodies who will consider the application in light of the candidate's particular needs.

5.5 Computer reader/Reader

Processing applications

- 5.5.1 **For those qualifications listed on page 2** an application for a computer reader/reader **must** be processed using *Access arrangements online*. **(Page 2 also lists the published deadlines.)** Appropriate evidence of need **must** be available at the centre for inspection (see pages 34, 35 and 37).

A computer reader/reader will not be allowed if a candidate's literacy difficulties are primarily caused by English, Irish or Welsh not being his/her first language.

For a candidate with a disability or a learning difficulty 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 is able to 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 a computer reader.**

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 particular 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 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 orders a **non-interactive electronic question paper** (see section 6.7, page 79).

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, page 39).
- 5.5.4 **A reader is not a practical assistant, a prompter, a scribe or a Sign Language Interpreter.** The same person may act as a practical assistant, a prompter, a reader, a scribe and/or a Sign Language Interpreter as long as permission has been given for these arrangements. **The regulations for the use of each arrangement must be strictly adhered to.**

Computer reader/Reader

Types of disability or access needs

Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD)

Learning Difficulties

Sensory and/or Physical Needs (HI, MSI, PD, VI)

Social, Mental and Emotional Needs

Speech, Language and Communication Needs (SLCN)

So as not to give an unfair advantage, a computer reader/reader will only be allowed if a candidate has:

- language and vocabulary difficulties which have a **substantial and long term adverse effect on his/her ability to access written text**; or
- a **substantial and long term vision impairment and cannot read a Braille paper or a modified enlarged paper independently, or at a sufficient speed even with extra time allowed.**

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

Where a candidate has complex needs, i.e.

- Communication and Interaction Needs; **or**
- Sensory and/or Physical Needs; **or**
- Social, Mental and Emotional Needs;

it is not necessary to formally assess the candidate's reading accuracy or reading comprehension or reading speed by means of an assessment.

(See the second, third and eighth examples on page 40). Form 8 is not required.

However, the SENCo must demonstrate that the candidate has an impairment which has a substantial and long term adverse effect on his/her reading as per page 35.

Where a candidate has learning difficulties and is not subject to a Statement of Special Educational Needs or an Education, Health and Care Plan, Form 8 must be completed.

An assessment no earlier than the start of Year 9 (Section C of Form 8) showing a below average standardised score of 84 or less in relation to reading accuracy or reading comprehension or reading speed is required.

(See Chapter 7, section 7.5.10, page 85 for more detail).

Computer reader/Reader

Substantial impairment – evidence of need

For those qualifications listed on page 2, appropriate evidence of need **must** be available at the centre for inspection.

SENCOs must have clear evidence that a computer reader/reader is needed. So as not to give an unfair advantage, the SENCO's letter or file note (written on centre headed paper, signed by hand and dated) must:

- ❖ confirm that the candidate has **persistent and significant difficulties in accessing written text and is disabled within the meaning of the Equality Act 2010;**
- ❖ include evidence of the candidate's current difficulties and how they **substantially** impact on teaching and learning in the classroom;
- ❖ show the involvement of teaching staff in determining the need for a computer reader/reader;
- ❖ confirm that without the application of a computer reader/reader the candidate would be at **a substantial disadvantage**;
(For example, in cases of severe autism or where the candidate has Social, Mental and Emotional Needs, the removal of a reader where it has come to reflect the candidate's normal way of working within the centre could lead to a severe adverse reaction.)

The candidate would be at a substantial disadvantage when compared with other, non-disabled candidates undertaking the assessment.

- ❖ confirm that a computer reader/reader is the candidate's normal way of working within the centre **as a direct consequence of their disability.**

The SENCO's detailed information, as above, will be supported by:

- a letter from CAMHS or a HCPC registered psychologist or a psychiatrist; **or**
- a letter from a hospital consultant; **or**
- a letter from the Local Authority Educational Psychology Service; **or**
- a letter from the Local Authority Sensory Impairment Service; **or**
- a letter from the Occupational Health Service[†]; **or**
- a letter from a Speech and Language Therapist (SaLT); **or**
- a Statement of Special Educational Needs relating to the candidate's secondary education, or an Education, Health and Care Plan, **which confirms the candidate's disability.**

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

N.B. Where an assessment has been undertaken, *Access arrangements online* will not accept '<85'. The symbol '<' must never be input onto the on-line system. If an assessor has written '<85' you should type in 84. The assessor should however, be providing a specific standardised score.

Only a standardised score of 84 or less in relation to reading accuracy or reading comprehension or reading speed is acceptable where a candidate has learning difficulties.

Where candidates do not meet the criteria for a computer reader/reader the SENCo may wish to consider alternative access arrangements such as **25% extra time**, (see **Chapter 5, section 5.2, page 22**), **Read Aloud** or **Modified papers**.

Reading aloud sometimes helps a candidate to spot their own mistakes and improves their comprehension of written text (see **Chapter 5, section 5.6, page 44**).

The use of an examination reading pen might support a candidate's reading accuracy (see **Chapter 5, section 5.6, page 44**).

An A3 unmodified enlarged examination paper (see **Chapter 6, section 6.5, page 77**) may help some candidates.

Where available, an examination paper with the carrier language made more accessible may be of benefit (see **Chapter 6, section 6.6, page 78**).

The use of a coloured overlay may support a candidate's reading (see **Chapter 5, section 5.16, page 69**).

Entry Level qualifications

For Entry Level qualifications – Entry Level Certificate qualifications and Entry Level Functional Skills qualifications, the centre is not required to have each candidate individually assessed.

The SENCo **must** determine the need for a computer reader or a reader on the basis of how the candidate normally works in the classroom.

In Entry Level English a reader is not permitted in the Reading component.

A computer reader may be used in the Reading component of Entry Level English where its use reflects the candidate's normal way of working within the centre.

A candidate who would normally be eligible for a reader, but is not permitted this arrangement, may be granted up to a maximum of 50% extra time.

Where a candidate progresses from GCSE to GCE qualifications

When a candidate progresses from GCSE to GCE AS and A-level qualifications a re-submission of the application for a computer reader/reader must be processed on-line.

An assessment conducted no earlier than the start of Year 9 (Section C of Form 8) recommending a computer reader/reader for GCSE examinations will be valid for GCE AS and A-level examinations.

A fully completed Form 8 (Sections A, B and C), signed by hand and dated, may roll forward from GCSE to GCE qualifications†. 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 a computer reader/reader is still needed for GCE AS and A-level examinations. (This must be produced on centre headed paper, signed by hand and dated):

- ❖ confirm that the candidate continues to have persistent and significant difficulties in accessing written text and is disabled within the meaning of the Equality Act 2010;
- ❖ include evidence of the candidate's current difficulties and how they **substantially** impact on teaching and learning in the classroom;
- ❖ show the involvement of teaching staff in determining the need for a computer reader/reader for GCE AS/A-level examinations;
- ❖ confirm that without the application of a computer reader/reader the candidate would continue to be at a substantial disadvantage when taking GCE AS/A-level examinations;
(The candidate would be at a substantial disadvantage when compared with other, non-disabled candidates undertaking the assessment.)
- ❖ confirm that a computer reader/reader continues to be the candidate's normal way of working within the centre **as a direct consequence of their disability.**

†The rolling forward of a Form 8 from GCSE to GCE qualifications principally applies in the context of 11 to 18 schools, including 11 to 18 schools operating local Sixth Form consortium arrangements for GCE AS and A-level qualifications.

A FE College or a Sixth Form College must have established working relationships with 'feeder' schools in order for the Form 8 to roll forward from GCSE to GCE qualifications.

Computer reader/Reader

Papers (or sections of papers) testing reading

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

A computer reader and a reader do not interpret text in the same way. A reader can add a layer of vocal interpretation (nuance and meaning). This could affect a candidate's response and therefore compromise the reliability of the qualification. A computer reader is an acceptable arrangement since it allows the candidate to independently meet the requirements of the reading standards.

(See page 41 on the permitted use of computer readers in GCSE and GCE qualifications).

5.5.6 A reader will not be allowed to read questions or text in papers (or sections of papers) testing reading.

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 be granted up to a maximum of 50% extra time. **(Where a candidate is using a computer reader or an examination reading pen the SENCo cannot grant up to a maximum of 50% extra time.)**

An approved application for a reader 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.

Factors the centre must take into account

5.5.7 **In some cases** a candidate will need 25% extra time when working with a reader because working with a reader slows them down. The candidate may need to have the question paper and their answers read to them a number of times. There **is not** a requirement to process a separate application, or show slow processing scores in order to award 25% extra time alongside a reader. However, the SENCo or the assessor working with the centre **must** explain the need for 25% extra time when using a reader, for example through Section A of Form 8. When processing an application for a reader using *Access arrangements online* the question 'Will the candidate be awarded 25% extra time on account of his/her disability' should be answered with a 'Yes'.

Candidates within the autistic spectrum, with a hearing impairment and those with Speech, Language and Communication Needs may have **persistent and significant difficulties** in following a reader. A reader alone may not be sufficient in removing barriers to assessment as language and vocabulary difficulties will often have **a substantial and long term adverse effect on the candidate's speed of working**. (See the sixth example on page 7).

5.5.8 The centre is responsible for ensuring that the candidate and reader cannot be overheard by, or distract, other candidates. (This will also apply if the candidate uses a computer reader.) **Where the candidate and reader are accommodated in another room, on a one to one basis, the invigilator may additionally act as the reader.**

5.5.9 Readers may work with more than one candidate, but **must not** read the paper to a group of candidates at the same time, as this imposes the timing of the paper on the candidates.

Where candidates require only occasional words or phrases to be read, **three or four candidates may share one reader**. The candidate will need to put their hand up or use a card (see the sixth example on page 7) when he/she needs help with reading. If the group is accommodated in another room **a separate invigilator will be required**.

Each candidate in the group must meet the published criteria for a reader.

The rules – the use of a reader

- **may** enable a vision impaired candidate to identify diagrams, graphs and tables but **must not** give factual information nor offer any suggestions, other than that information which would be available on the paper for sighted candidates;
- **may** read numbers printed in figures as words (e.g. 356 would be read as three hundred and fifty six, but when reading the number it should also be pointed to on the question paper). An exception would be when the question is asking for a number to be written in words (e.g. write the number 356 in words);
- **may** read back, when requested, what the candidate has written without any emphasis on any errors;
- **may**, if requested, give the spelling of a word which appears on the paper but otherwise spellings **must not** be given;
- **must** read accurately;
- **must** only **read** the instructions of the question paper and questions, and **must not** explain or clarify;
- **must** only repeat the instructions of the question paper or questions when a candidate indicates a specific need for help;
- **must only read the instructions/rubric of a paper testing reading and must not read individual questions or text**;
- **must** abide by the regulations since failure to do so could lead to the disqualification of the candidate;
- **must not** advise the candidate regarding which questions to do, when to move on to the next question, nor the order in which questions should be answered;
- **must not decode any symbols (e.g. mathematical, musical, scientific) and unit abbreviations**, e.g. 2^2 should not be read as two squared, but the function simply pointed to by the reader. **Part of the assessment is recognising what the superscript 2 means**. Similarly, if the symbol $>$ is printed, it should not be read as 'greater than' but simply pointed to by the reader.

A suggested memory aid for a reader can be found at Appendix 3, page 101.

Remember

For Entry Level qualifications where a reader is used, **Form 13 must** be printed from the JCQ website – <http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/access-arrangements-and-special-consideration/forms>

Form 13 must be placed inside the candidate's script.

Examples – Computer readers and Readers

- A candidate on the autistic spectrum with **substantial and long term reading difficulties** is granted the use of a reader. She hears the words read out by the reader but cannot understand the question. She asks the reader to explain. The reader reads the question again but cannot offer any explanation. **A reader is only permitted to read the text and not to explain it.**
- A candidate with **a substantial and long term vision impairment** requests an A3 modified 24 point bold paper, which the SENCo orders. As his condition is a deteriorating one, he has gradually become accustomed to using a tablet with computer reading software (a computer reader). The SENCo processes an application for a computer reader which is approved by *Access arrangements online*. He is allowed a computer reader in his examinations, including those testing reading.
- A candidate has had a severe hearing loss since birth and related language delay. This is partly shown by **persistent and significant difficulties** in understanding complex language. His reading age has consistently been below that of his hearing peers. He is thus at **a substantial disadvantage**. He has regular support with reading in class and teaching resources are modified by a Communication Support Worker. He also has behavioural difficulties at school. Due to the history of his reading difficulties caused by his deafness, and his behavioural difficulties which make a standardised test difficult to administer, he is allowed a reader in all examinations except those testing reading. The use of a reader will remove his **substantial disadvantage**. (A computer reader is not appropriate to his needs because he relies on lip-reading.)
- A candidate with Dyslexia achieves **a below average standardised score of 84** following a thorough test of sentence and text level comprehension. She is allowed a reader, which reflects her normal way of working, in her examinations, except those testing reading.
- A candidate with Speech, Language and Communication Needs has a complex language disorder. He has **persistent and significant difficulties** with sentence recall. This will have **a substantial and adverse impact** on the speed at which he can process spoken information. He is allowed a reader due to his **below average reading comprehension score (a standardised score of 73)**. The candidate also needs 25% extra time, **which is demonstrated through Section A of Form 8**, in order to allow for repetition by the reader.
- A candidate with ADHD has achieved average scores on single word reading accuracy but his speed of reading is in **the below average range (a standardised score of 82)**. He is allowed a laptop with computer reading software (a computer reader) in all subjects, including those testing reading, as this has reflected his normal way of working within the centre since Year 7.
- A blind candidate in GCE AS Mathematics examinations requires a combination of access arrangements. His centre orders **a Braille paper and tactile diagrams**. An application for **a practical assistant in written examinations, a reader and a scribe** is subsequently approved by the awarding body having been automatically rejected by the on-line system. The reader will enable the candidate to identify diagrams correctly. The practical assistant will guide the candidate's hand under instruction to the tactile graphs. The scribe will draw a straight line between the points the candidate has plotted independently on the tactile graphs. The same person will act as a reader, a scribe and a practical assistant.
- A candidate is studying for three A-levels (Biology, Chemistry and Physics). He has **complex learning needs** – ASD, Dyslexia and Dyspraxia. The candidate has an Education, Health and Care Plan and has received classroom support since Year 7. His normal way of working is a reader and 25% extra time (since he has **persistent and significant difficulties** in following the reader as a consequence of **substantial language and vocabulary difficulties**). The SENCo processes an application for a reader since without the arrangement the candidate would be at **a substantial disadvantage** - removing the reader might cause a severe adverse reaction. The SENCo is able to paint a substantial and compelling picture of need for a reader and 25% extra time **(as per pages 26 and 35)**.

Permissions table for the use of readers and computer readers in GCSE, GCE and Functional Skills qualifications

Qualification	Current position		Rationale for current position
	Candidate must read for him/herself	Reader allowed	
A level English Language	No	Yes	For A level English Language, 'reading' is essentially a requirement to understand the text. A reader or a computer reader would be permitted to support the candidate in understanding the text.
A level English Literature	No	Yes	The candidate's response to literature and texts is being assessed rather than reading. A reader or a computer reader would be permitted to support the candidate in understanding the text.
A level English Language and Literature	No	Yes	The same position holds as for A level English Language and A level English Literature. A reader or a computer reader would be permitted to support the candidate in understanding the text.
A level Welsh	No	Yes	A level Welsh is a combination of both Welsh Language and Welsh Literature elements. Although reading is a requirement, by this level (in a first language) learners are assumed to have progressed beyond taking meaning off the page from text. A reader or a computer reader would be permitted.
A level Welsh second language	Yes in components that assess reading	Yes except in components that assess reading	A level Welsh second language assessment objectives show that learners must actually 'read' and demonstrate understanding of the written language. This requires taking meaning off the page from text or Braille. A reader would not be permitted for components that assess reading. N.B. A candidate may however use a computer reader in components that assess reading. A computer reader allows the candidate to independently meet the requirements of the reading standards.

A level MFL specifications	Yes in MFL Reading papers	Yes except in MFL Reading papers	<p>The assessment objectives show that learners must actually "understand and respond, in speech and writing, to written language" (A02). This requires taking meaning off the page from text or Braille. Using a reader to read the English Language rubric is acceptable. However, using a reader to read the respective Modern Foreign Language would not be permitted. This would turn the task into a listening one.</p> <p>N.B. A candidate may however use a computer reader, if available, in a MFL Reading paper. A computer reader allows the candidate to independently meet the requirements of the reading standards.</p>
GCSE English Language	Yes in the section of a paper that assesses reading	Yes except in the section of a paper that assesses reading	<p>GCSE English Language assessment objectives show that learners must actually "read" and demonstrate understanding of the written language. This requires taking meaning off the page from text or Braille. A reader would not be permitted for components that assess reading.</p> <p>N.B. A candidate may however use a computer reader in the section of the paper that assesses reading. A computer reader allows the candidate to independently meet the requirements of the reading standards.</p>
GCSE English Literature	No	Yes	<p>Reading is not being assessed in GCSE English Literature. A reader or a computer reader would be permitted.</p>
GCSE Welsh first language	Yes in components that assess reading	Yes except in components that assess reading	<p>GCSE Welsh requires learners to read and demonstrate understanding of the written language, taking meaning off the page from text or Braille. A reader would not be permitted for components that assess reading.</p> <p>N.B. A candidate may however use a computer reader in components that assess reading. A computer reader allows the candidate to independently meet the requirements of the reading standards.</p>
GCSE Welsh Literature	No	Yes	<p>In GCSE Welsh Literature candidates are required to extract literary meaning. A reader or a computer reader would be permitted.</p>

GCSE Welsh second language	Yes in components that assess reading	Yes except in components that assess reading	<p>GCSE Welsh second language assessment objectives show that learners must actually 'read' and demonstrate understanding of the written language. This requires taking meaning off the page from text or Braille. A reader would not be permitted for components that assess reading.</p> <p>N.B. A candidate may however use a computer reader in components that assess reading. A computer reader allows the candidate to independently meet the requirements of the reading standards.</p>
GCSE MFL specifications	Yes in MFL Reading papers	Yes except in MFL Reading papers	<p>As for A level Modern Foreign Languages, the assessment objectives require that learners must actually "understand written language". This requires taking meaning off the page from text or Braille. Using a reader would not be permitted as it would turn this task into a listening task.</p> <p>N.B. A candidate may however use a computer reader, if available, in a MFL Reading paper. A computer reader allows the candidate to independently meet the requirements of the reading standards.</p>
Functional Skills English (all levels)	Yes in the Reading Paper	Yes except in the Reading Paper	<p>Reading within Functional Skills English is defined as the independent decoding and understanding of written language and text in a purposeful context. "Text" is defined as materials that include the use of words that are written, printed, on-screen or presented using Braille.</p> <p>A computer reader may be used in the Reading component of Functional Skills English where its use reflects the candidate's normal way of reading. A computer reader is an acceptable arrangement, since it still allows the candidate to independently meet the requirements of the reading standards.</p> <p>A reader cannot be used to demonstrate the requirements of the reading standards as this does not meet the requirement for independence. As a last resort, an exemption from the Reading component can be requested for a disabled candidate who cannot use assistive technology.</p>

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Updated by JCQ – April 2012 to reflect the fact that a computer reader may be used in a paper or a section of a paper testing reading

5.6 Read aloud and/or the use of an examination reading pen*

***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.**

Read aloud

- 5.6.1 It can make a significant difference to a candidate who **persistently** struggles to understand what they have read, but who does not qualify for a reader, to read aloud. Where a candidate is reading difficult text he/she 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 himself/herself **must** be accommodated separately within the centre.

Examination reading pen

- 5.6.4 A permitted examination reading pen **will 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 who do not qualify for a reader. It may increase the independence of candidates who needed a reader for accuracy rather than comprehension.

The use of an examination reading pen might also benefit those candidates who only require occasional words or phrases to be read to them.

An examination reading pen may be used in papers (or sections of papers) testing reading. However, the candidate 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, upon being assessed at the start of Year 10, his standardised scores are **89** (reading accuracy), **90** (reading comprehension) and **93** (reading speed). He does not meet the published criteria for a reader.

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

5.7 Scribe / Speech recognition technology

Processing applications

- 5.7.1 **For those qualifications listed on page 2** an application for a scribe or speech recognition technology **must** be processed using *Access arrangements online*. **(Page 2 also lists the published deadlines.)** Appropriate evidence of need **must** be available at the centre for inspection (see pages 47, 48 and 49).

If a word processor (with the spelling and grammar check disabled) is the candidate's normal way of working within the centre, then it should be used in examinations in order to encourage independent working and access to marks awarded for spelling, punctuation and grammar. (See section 5.8, page 54).

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 disabled (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, writes or types a candidate's dictated answers to the questions. (See the rules – the use of a scribe, page 52).

If a candidate dictates answers on to a tape, a responsible adult must write down or word process the candidate's dictated answers to the questions.
(A scribe cover sheet must be completed.)

Candidates must respond in English, Irish or Welsh as appropriate, so as 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 as long as permission has been given for these arrangements. **The regulations for the use of each arrangement must be strictly adhered to.**

Scribe / Speech recognition technology

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 his/her needs, the candidate may alternatively use:

- a word processor with the spelling and grammar check facility enabled;
(N.B. This arrangement **will not** be permitted in ELC, GCSE and GCE Modern Foreign Language specifications. †See section 5.7.6, page 50.)
- a word processor with predictive text/spelling and grammar check facility enabled;
(N.B. This arrangement **will not** be permitted in ELC, GCSE and GCE Modern Foreign Language specifications. †See section 5.7.6, page 50.)
- 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;
(N.B. This arrangement **will not** be permitted in ELC, GCSE and GCE Modern Foreign Language specifications. †See section 5.7.6, page 50.)
- 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.

In **all** cases a scribe cover sheet must be completed and **not** a word processor cover sheet.

Scribe / Speech recognition technology

Types of disability or access needs

Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD)

Learning Difficulties

Sensory and/or Physical Needs (HI, MSI, PD, VI)

Social, Mental and Emotional Needs

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, as a result 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 light of their substantial and long term impairment.

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

Where a candidate has complex needs, i.e.

- Communication and Interaction Needs; **or**
- Sensory and/or Physical Needs; **or**
- Social, Mental and Emotional Needs;

it is not necessary to formally assess the candidate's writing skills. Form 8 is not required.

However, the SENCo must demonstrate that the candidate has an impairment which has a substantial and long term adverse effect on his/her writing as per page 48.

Where a candidate has learning difficulties and is not subject to a Statement of Special Educational Needs or an Education, Health and Care Plan, Form 8 must be completed.

An assessment no earlier than the start of Year 9 (Section C of Form 8) in relation to the candidate's writing skills is required. (See Chapter 7, section 7.5.11, page 86 for more detail).

Scribe / Speech recognition technology

Substantial impairment – evidence of need

For those qualifications listed on page 2, appropriate evidence of need **must** be available at the centre for inspection.

SENCoS must have clear evidence that a scribe is needed. So as not to give an unfair advantage, the SENCo's letter or file note (written on centre headed paper, signed by hand and dated) **must:**

- ❖ confirm that the candidate has **persistent and significant writing difficulties and is disabled within the meaning of the Equality Act 2010**;
- ❖ include evidence of the candidate's current difficulties and how they **substantially** impact on teaching and learning in the classroom;
- ❖ show the involvement of teaching staff in determining the need for a scribe;
- ❖ confirm that without the application of a scribe the candidate would be at **a substantial disadvantage**;
(For example, in cases of severe autism or where the candidate has Social, Mental and Emotional Needs, the removal of a scribe where it has come to reflect the candidate's normal way of working within the centre could lead to a severe adverse reaction.)
The candidate would be at a substantial disadvantage when compared with other, non-disabled candidates undertaking the assessment.
- ❖ confirm that a scribe is the candidate's normal way of working within the centre **as a direct consequence of their disability**;
- ❖ confirm that the candidate is not sufficiently competent or confident in using a word processor **with the spelling and grammar check or predictive text facility disabled (switched off)**.

The SENCo's detailed information, as above, will be supported by:

- a letter from CAMHS or a HCPC registered psychologist or a psychiatrist; **or**
- a letter from a hospital consultant; **or**
- a letter from the Local Authority Educational Psychology Service; **or**
- a letter from the Local Authority Sensory Impairment Service; **or**
- a letter from the Occupational Health Service†; **or**
- a letter from a Speech and Language Therapist (SaLT); **or**
- a Statement of Special Educational Needs relating to the candidate's secondary education, or an Education, Health and Care Plan, **which confirms the candidate's disability**.

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

Scribe / Speech recognition technology

Where a candidate progresses from GCSE to GCE qualifications

When a candidate progresses from GCSE to GCE AS and A-level qualifications a re-submission of the application for a scribe must be processed on-line.

An assessment conducted no earlier than the start of Year 9 (Section C of Form 8) recommending a scribe for GCSE examinations will be valid for GCE AS and A-level examinations.

A fully completed Form 8 (Sections A, B and C), signed by hand and dated, may roll forward from GCSE to GCE qualifications†. 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 a scribe is still needed for GCE AS and A-level examinations. (This must be produced on centre headed paper, signed by hand and dated):

- ❖ confirm that the candidate continues to have persistent and significant writing difficulties and is disabled within the meaning of the Equality Act 2010;
- ❖ include evidence of the candidate's current difficulties and how they **substantially** impact on teaching and learning in the classroom;
- ❖ show the involvement of teaching staff in determining the need for a scribe for GCE AS/A-level examinations;
- ❖ confirm that without the application of a scribe the candidate would continue to be at a substantial disadvantage when taking GCE AS/A-level examinations;
(The candidate would be at a substantial disadvantage when compared with other, non-disabled candidates undertaking the assessment.)
- ❖ confirm that a scribe continues to be the candidate's normal way of working within the centre **as a direct consequence of their disability.**

†The rolling forward of a Form 8 from GCSE to GCE qualifications principally applies in the context of 11 to 18 schools, including 11 to 18 schools operating local Sixth Form consortium arrangements for GCE AS and A-level qualifications.

A FE College or a Sixth Form College must have established working relationships with 'feeder' schools in order for the Form 8 to roll forward from GCSE to GCE qualifications.

Use of a scribe - Modern Foreign Language papers

- 5.7.5 **A scribe will not be allowed in Modern Foreign Language papers, unless the candidate can dictate foreign words letter by letter - see section 5.7.6).**

A candidate who would normally be eligible for a scribe, but is not permitted this arrangement may be granted up to a maximum of 50% extra time.

The candidate's dictation may be taped. This will help the candidate to get the flow of the respective Modern Foreign Language. When the candidate has finished dictating his/her response the tape may be re-run, enabling the candidate to give the exact spellings of the words dictated.

An approved application for a scribe will allow the SENCo to grant up to a maximum of 50% extra time in Modern Foreign Language papers.

- 5.7.6 In **Modern Foreign Language Writing papers** candidates are marked for the quality of their language which not only covers the range and complexity of the language, but also the accuracy of their language and spelling. **It is therefore essential for the words to be spelled out in such examinations.**

Similarly, in **Modern Foreign Language Listening and Reading papers**, marks are awarded for comprehension. Sometimes the spelling of a word in a language can indicate a particular tense and this can be of significant importance in the marking process.

† In Modern Foreign Language Listening and Reading papers where answers are required to be given in English or Welsh a scribe is permitted.

Use of a scribe - in subjects assessing quality of written communication or spelling, punctuation and grammar

- 5.7.7 In subjects where quality of written communication (QWC) is being assessed or where the candidate's spelling, punctuation and grammar (SPaG) is specifically being assessed, a scribe will be allowed.

A scribe will be allowed in the written papers of the following GCSE subjects:

- GCSE English Language (**including the Writing section**);
- GCSE English Literature;
- GCSE Geography;
- GCSE History; and
- GCSE Religious Studies.

However, 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 particular skills being assessed.

(This also applies where a candidate uses a scribe due to a temporary injury at the time of the examination.)

Although it is not recommended, where, in exceptional circumstances, a candidate specifically chooses to dictate his/her spellings and/or punctuation in those particular questions assessing spelling, punctuation and grammar, this must be recorded on the scribe cover sheet.

If a candidate chooses to dictate his/her spellings and/or punctuation, up to a maximum of 50% extra time may be awarded. An approved application for a scribe will allow the SENCo to grant up to a maximum of 50% extra time to the candidate when spelling, punctuation and grammar is being assessed.

Scribe / Speech recognition technology

Exception to the rule: Functional Skills English (Writing component)

Writing within Functional Skills English is defined as the independent construction of written text to communicate in a purposeful context. 'Text' is defined as materials that include the use of words that are written, printed, on-screen or presented using Braille and which are presented in a way that is accessible for the intended audience.

Speech recognition technology may be used in the Writing component of Functional Skills English (all Levels) where its use reflects the candidate's normal way of writing. The use of speech recognition technology is acceptable since it allows the candidate to independently meet the requirements of the writing standards.

A scribe cannot be used to demonstrate the requirements of the standards as this does not meet the requirement for independence. As a last resort, an exemption from the Writing component can be requested for a disabled candidate who cannot use assistive technology, once all other access arrangements have been exhausted.

Entry Level qualifications

For Entry Level qualifications – Entry Level Certificate qualifications and Entry Level Functional Skills qualifications, the centre is not required to have each candidate individually assessed.

The SENCo **must** determine the need for a scribe or speech recognition technology on the basis of how the candidate normally works in the classroom.

In Entry Level Certificate (ELC) English a scribe or speech recognition technology is not permitted in the Writing component. A candidate who would normally be eligible for a scribe, but is not permitted this arrangement, may be granted up to a maximum of 50% extra time.

Factors the centre must take into account

- 5.7.8 **A scribe will not be permitted to perform tasks which are part of the assessment objectives, which might include application of skills in ICT or graphic design.**
For further information please consult the awarding body.
- 5.7.9 **In cases where a candidate is dictating to a scribe for the entire duration of the examination 25% extra time should always be considered.** The scribe will often require the candidate to repeat his/her dictation whilst he/she catches up and to ensure the candidate's response has been correctly recorded. There **is not** a requirement to process a separate application or show slow processing scores in order to award 25% extra time alongside a scribe. However, the SENCo or the assessor working with the centre **must** explain the need for 25% extra time when using a scribe, for example through Section A of Form 8. When processing an application for a scribe using *Access arrangements online* the question 'Will the candidate be awarded 25% extra time on account of dictating to a scribe for the entire duration of the examination?' should be answered with a 'Yes'.
- 5.7.10 **Where a temporary injury at the time of the examination gives rise to the need for a scribe the centre must:**
- process the arrangement using *Access arrangements online* ;
 - ensure that appropriate documentation is on file to substantiate the arrangement;
 - abide by the regulations in **section 5.7**;
 - ensure that the scribe cover sheet is completed.
- 5.7.11 The centre is responsible for ensuring that the candidate and scribe cannot be overheard by, or distract, other candidates. (This will also apply if the candidate uses speech recognition technology.)

Normally, the candidate and the scribe will be accommodated in another room.

Where the candidate and scribe are accommodated in another room, on a one to one basis, the invigilator may additionally act as the scribe.

The rules – the use of a scribe

- **must write or type** accurately, and at a reasonable speed, what the candidate has said;
- **must** draw or add to maps, diagrams and graphs strictly in accordance with the candidate's instructions, **unless the candidate is taking a design paper, in which case a scribe will only be permitted to assist with the written parts of the paper**;
- **must** abide by the regulations since failure to do so could lead to the disqualification of the candidate;
- **must** write or word process a correction on a typescript or Braille sheet if requested to do so by the candidate;
- **must** immediately refer any problems in communication during the examination to the invigilator or examinations officer;
- **must not** give factual help to the candidate or indicate when the answer 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**, at the candidate's request, read back what has been recorded.

A suggested memory aid for a scribe can be found at Appendix 4, page 102.

Remember

Where an application is processed using *Access arrangements online*, e.g. GCSE and GCE qualifications, a pre-populated scribe cover sheet **must** be printed from the system.

For Level 1 and Level 2 Functional Skills qualifications Form 2 (scribe 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 qualifications, Form 13 **must** be printed from the JCQ website –

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

The cover sheet **must** indicate whether graphs and diagrams were completed by the candidate or the scribe.

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

The cover sheet **must** be placed inside the candidate's completed script when handwritten.

Where the candidate's completed script has been typed, please refer to the relevant awarding body's instructions as different processing arrangements apply.

A cover sheet **must** also be securely attached to any non-examination assessment completed with the aid of a scribe. The work **must** be sent to the moderator in addition to the sample requested. The cover sheet **must** be signed by the scribe and countersigned by the head of centre or examinations officer.

Examples - scribes

- A candidate, who has significant learning difficulties, cannot write legibly. He can use a word processor, with the spelling and grammar check facility disabled, to record his answers. The SENCo permits the candidate to use a word processor in his examinations, as it reflects his normal way of working within the centre and will allow him to work independently.
- A candidate with severe cerebral palsy has no use of his hands. He cannot use speech recognition technology because his speech is indistinct. An approved on-line application permits the use of a scribe in all subjects except Modern Foreign Language writing papers since it is too difficult for him to spell out each word letter by letter.
- A candidate with severe dyspraxia cannot use a word processor because she has poor motor skills. She can dictate words in Spanish, her chosen Modern Foreign Language, letter by letter. She is permitted a scribe provided that she dictates in Spanish writing papers by spelling out words letter by letter. In other subjects, she is permitted to use speech recognition technology without spelling out the words, unless they are uncommon ones. She will be awarded marks for those skills which she has demonstrated.
- The SENCo compares a few lines of text written by a candidate with substantial learning difficulties in the same period of time that a whole page of text can be produced when he dictates to a third party. The written text is of a standard typical of a much younger age range than the candidate's. However, the text produced when the candidate dictates to a third party fits within the standard of his own age range. The difference in content of the written and spoken material is startling. The SENCo, having undertaken this assessment, processes an application for a scribe.
- The SENCo has had concerns over a pupil for some time. He has been diagnosed with an autistic spectrum disorder. The pupil has **persistent and significant difficulties** when concentrating and writing in detail. His verbal recall is very good. Teachers have shown concern but because his handwriting is not illegible or unrecognisable, he has not been awarded a scribe. When taking his last set of mock examinations every teacher showed concern. He is able to answer multiple choice questions but has a complete block when writing detailed answers. The SENCo arranged for his mock GCSE English Language exam to be conducted again with a scribe to see if it made any difference. He was able to answer questions that he did not attempt before and it appears to have substantially increased his chances of getting a grade in the subject. The SENCo decides to process an on-line application for a scribe which is approved.

5.8 Word processor*

***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. (This also applies where a candidate is using a word processor on a temporary basis as a consequence of a temporary injury.)**

- 5.8.1 Centres are allowed to provide a word processor with the spelling and grammar check facility/predictive text disabled (switched off) to a candidate where it is their normal way of working within the centre. (See the first example on page 7 and the examples on page 55).

For example, the quality of language significantly improves as a result of using a word processor due to problems with planning and organisation when writing by hand.

(This also extends to the use of electronic brailers and tablets.)

- 5.8.2 The use of word processors in non-examination assessment components will be considered standard practice unless prohibited by the specification.
- 5.8.3 It is permissible for a candidate using a word processor in an examination to type certain questions, i.e. those requiring extended writing, and handwrite shorter answers.

N.B. Examinations which have a significant amount of writing, as well as those that place a greater demand on the need to organise thought and plan extended answers, are those where candidates will frequently need to type. Examinations which require more simplistic answers are often easier to handwrite within the answer booklet. The candidate avoids the difficulty of visually tracking between the question paper and screen.

- 5.8.4 For the regulations on the use of word processors in written examinations, please see section 8.8, page 25 of the JCQ publication *Instructions for conducting examinations* (commonly known as the JCQ 'ICE' booklet)
<http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/ice---instructions-for-conducting-examinations>

In all cases a word processor cover sheet (Form 4) must be completed.

It is strongly recommended that a centre has a policy on the use of word processors which it can articulate to parents/carers. Principally, that 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.

The centre may wish to set out the particular 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 statement for inspection purposes which details the criteria the centre uses to award and allocate word processors for examinations.

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 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' booklet.
- A candidate taking a GCSE Computer Science paper wishes to use a word processor with the spelling and grammar check facility enabled. However, the paper is testing his ability to proof-read a document. The SENCo refuses the use of the spelling and grammar check facility. He uses the word processor with the spelling and grammar check disabled (switched off).
- 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 and qualifies for 25% extra time. However, using a word processor is her **normal way of working within the centre**. When typing she can produce her written work effectively and at a speed equivalent to an average handwriting rate. She has no further learning difficulties. The SENCo awards the use of a word processor as it removes the barrier presented by her slow handwriting, and only awards 25% extra time when she writes by hand such as in GCSE Mathematics examinations.
- A candidate with significant learning difficulties has a below average speed of handwriting 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 handwriting 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 using *Access arrangements online* or to record the use of the arrangement. No evidence is needed to support the arrangement.**

- 5.9.1 Manual brailers will require transcription into print. Braille scripts **must** be transcribed by the centre.
- 5.9.2 **For regulations on the use of a Braille transcript, please see section 8.7, page 24 of the JCQ publication *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 using *Access arrangements online* or to record the use of the arrangement. No evidence is needed to support the arrangement.**

- 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.

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

- 5.10.2 For regulations on the use of a prompter please see section 8.4, page 23 of the JCQ publication *Instructions for conducting examinations*
<http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/ice---instructions-for-conducting-examinations>

Examples – prompters

- A candidate with Asperger's syndrome 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 have to be done in that time and tries to move on.
- A candidate with Attention Deficit Disorder works for a few minutes then looks out of the window. As he is taking his examination under separate invigilation, the invigilator is able to call out his name to bring his attention back to his question paper.

5.11 Oral Language Modifier

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

An Oral Language Modifier must be seen as 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.

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

Substantial impairment - suitability and evidence of need

- 5.11.2 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 with appropriate up to date tests being conducted **within 26 months of the final examination**. (The candidate may be assessed by a qualified Teacher of the Deaf who will record the results of their assessment within Section C of Form 8.)

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

An awarding body reserves the right to request evidence from the centre.

An Oral Language Modifier

- 5.11.3 An Oral 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 Oral 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 and may constitute malpractice. (See the rules – the use of an Oral Language Modifier, page 60).

An Oral Language Modifier may also act as a reader (see section 5.5, page 33). Centres should note that a separate application for a reader is not required.

Papers (or sections of papers testing reading)

- 5.11.4 An Oral 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 an Oral 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 an Oral 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 an Oral Language Modifier uses sign language interpretation, he/she can only 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.

Factors the centre must take into account

- 5.11.5 The centre **must** remember that acting as an Oral Language Modifier requires **significantly** more skills than most other access arrangements.

An Oral Language Modifier **must** have:

- **successfully completed accredited training**; (A JCQ Centre Inspector will ask to see evidence of successfully completed accredited training.)
- knowledge of the subject being examined in order to recognise subject-specific vocabulary and technical terms;
- a good working knowledge of English Language grammatical structures;
- an understanding of the impact of command words and an examiner's expectations of a candidate's answer.

A fully qualified Teacher of the Deaf may act as an Oral Language Modifier without the need to successfully complete accredited training.

- 5.11.6 The candidate should, wherever possible, be familiar with the Oral Language Modifier. **(This will be essential for some autistic candidates and hearing-impaired candidates who will be reliant on familiar voice/lip patterns.)**

Where this is not the case, the candidate **must**:

- have the opportunity to familiarise him/herself with the Oral Language Modifier using a trial presentation; **and**
- be comfortable with the method of communication.

- 5.11.7 The candidate and the Oral Language Modifier should be accommodated separately.

- 5.11.8 **A separate Oral Language Modifier and invigilator must be available for each candidate. The invigilator must listen carefully and observe the conduct of the Oral Language Modifier throughout the duration of the examination. The invigilator must countersign the cover sheet ensuring that it accurately reflects the actions of the Oral Language Modifier during the examination.**

- 5.11.9 **Where available, modified language papers must always be ordered for candidates who use an Oral Language Modifier. (Please see Chapter 6, section 6.6, page 78.)**

- 5.11.10 An approved application for an Oral Language Modifier will allow the centre to open the question paper packet **one hour before the published starting time for the examination**. A copy of the question paper should be provided to the Oral Language Modifier to enable him/her to:

- identify and highlight technical or subject-specific terms and command words **which cannot be modified**;
- make notes on the copy if, for example, potentially problematic language is identified.

The Oral Language Modifier must only modify in an examination if the candidate makes clear that he/she does not understand the wording of a specific question.

The Oral Language Modifier's copy of the question paper **must**:

- only be annotated in the examination room and **must not** be shown to another person except for another Oral Language Modifier working in the same room; **and**
- be retained by the centre until the closing date for enquiries about results for the respective examination series.

Remember

Aside from ELC qualifications and Entry Level Functional Skills qualifications, Form 6A (Oral Language Modifier cover sheet) **must** be printed from the JCQ website – <http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/access-arrangements-and-special-consideration/forms>

For ELC qualifications and Entry Level Functional Skills qualifications Form 13 **must** be printed from the JCQ website – <http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/access-arrangements-and-special-consideration/forms>

Form 6A or Form 13 **must** be placed inside the candidate's completed script. A photocopy of the completed cover sheet **must** also be faxed to the JCQ Office – fax number 020 7374 4343.

The rules – the use of an Oral Language Modifier

- **may** go through the instructions/rubric and read the questions to the candidate; (Where permitted, reading to a candidate is part of the role of an Oral Language Modifier.)
- **must only** re-phrase or explain the carrier language of a question paper **when a candidate indicates a specific need for help**;
- **must not** re-phrase or explain technical or subject specific terms as this could advantage or disadvantage the candidate;
- **must not** change source material which is testing the ability of the candidate to comprehend the information. Source material is often an extract and may have an acknowledgement of the original source;
- **must** take great care if modifying 'command' words in questions such as *describe*, *explain* and *suggest* as changing such words may change the nature of the question and disadvantage the candidate. **In most cases command words should not be modified**;
- **must** ensure that the method of communication used reflects normal classroom practice. This may include **saying the word or phrase, manually coded English**, i.e. finger spelling or Signed Supported English (SSE), **the use of Cued Speech, the use of BSL or the use of writing to explain the meaning of a word or phrase**;
- **must** record on the OLM cover sheet any re-phrasing or explaining. Where no re-phrasing or explaining took place this **must** also be noted on the cover sheet;
- **must** underline at the end of the examination any words or phrases on the candidate's question paper which were re-phrased or explained. If the question paper is separate from the answer booklet, it **must** be attached to the candidate's answer booklet;
- **must** ensure that a note of the method of communication used, e.g. **spoken, written, BSL**, is made on the OLM cover sheet.

A suggested memory aid for an Oral Language Modifier can be found at Appendix 5, page 103.

5.12 Live speaker for pre-recorded examination components*

***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.**

- 5.12.1 The SENCo is allowed to provide a live speaker for pre-recorded examination components, e.g. MFL Listening examinations, to a candidate where it is their 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, section 6.6.7, page 78 for further information on ordering transcripts of tests). **The SENCo may need to consult a specialist teacher, i.e. a qualified Teacher of the Deaf, to identify the most appropriate arrangement for a candidate with hearing loss.**
- 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 or tape 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 be present in the examination room at all times.**
- 5.12.6 **Ideally a live speaker should work with one candidate.** The centre **must** always consider the abilities of the candidates as lip/speech readers when requiring them to share a live speaker. **There must never be more than six candidates to one live speaker**, who should be seated so as to gain maximum benefit from the live speaker.
- 5.12.7 **Where CDs, audio-cassette tapes or transcripts of tests are used, the live speaker should be allowed access to the CD, or tape, or the transcript, one hour before the 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.

Extra time of 25% should always be considered on account of the additional repetition which may be required. Additionally, 25% extra time may also be required in light of the candidate's **persistent and significant difficulties** in following speech at normal speed. (See Chapter 5, section 5.2.3, page 26).

In **very rare and exceptional circumstances** the candidate may require up to 50% extra time. (See Chapter 5, section 5.3, page 28).

An application for extra time must always be processed on-line.

- 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 Sign Language Interpreter*

***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 Sign Language Interpreter to a candidate where it is their normal way of working within the centre.

A Sign Language Interpreter

- 5.13.2 The role of a Sign Language Interpreter may be undertaken by a Communication Support Worker, a Sign Language Interpreter, a Teaching Assistant or a Teacher of the Deaf.

The Sign Language Interpreter will present the questions in a different language without:

- changing the meaning;
- providing any additional information; or
- providing an explanation as to what the question requires of the candidate.

- 5.13.3 Sign Language interpretation is done 'live' in the presence of the candidate during the examination in order to allow for the candidate's regional variations in BSL/ISL signs.

Consequently, sign language interpretation cannot be checked by the awarding body for accuracy. Great care must be taken not to disadvantage or advantage the candidate. Centres may wish to video the sign language interpretation.

The rules – the use of a Sign Language Interpreter

- 5.13.4 The Sign Language Interpreter **must** be proficient in the use of the candidate's sign language **and** at an appropriate level for the examination. The Sign Language Interpreter should, wherever possible, be familiar to the candidate and **must** always work at the candidate's pace.

- 5.13.5 The Sign Language Interpreter **must** be familiar with the subject being examined. 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 Sign Language Interpreter is not a reader.** However, the same person may act as a reader and a Sign Language Interpreter. **Permission must have been given for the use of a reader and a Sign Language Interpreter. The regulations for the use of each arrangement must be strictly adhered to. (See section 5.5, page 39, for the rules on the use of a reader).**

- 5.13.7 The Sign Language Interpreter 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 Sign Language Interpreter can only sign the instructions/rubric, and not the questions.**

- 5.13.9 The Sign Language Interpreter **must not** sign texts/source material or literary extracts.

Sign Language Interpreter

- 5.13.10 The Sign Language Interpreter may repeat the translation if requested to do so by the candidate. An alternative translation 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 assessment where it is possible to finger spell the answers or where the answers involve single words.**

A suggested memory aid for a Sign Language Interpreter can be found at Appendix 6, page 104.

Factors to consider

- 5.13.12 Extra time of 25% should always be considered on account of the additional repetition which may be required. (See Chapter 5, section 5.2.3, page 26). **An application for extra time must always be processed on-line.**
- 5.13.13 Where available, modified language papers **must always** be ordered for candidates who will be using a Sign Language Interpreter (see Chapter 6, section 6.6, page 78).
- 5.13.14 The question paper packet may be opened **one hour before the published starting time for the examination.** A copy of the question paper should be provided to the Sign Language Interpreter to allow him/her 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 Sign Language Interpreter may need to be accommodated in another room in which case **a separate invigilator will be required.**

ELC qualifications

In English, Irish and Welsh Speaking and Listening Tests a Sign Language Interpreter **must not** be used.

Sign Language Interpreters 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 reading tests in English, Irish and Welsh no part of an assessment may be signed to a candidate. However, the candidate may indicate using sign language to show that he or she has read the passage correctly. Please consult the awarding body for advice.

Remember

Aside from Entry Level qualifications, Form 6 (Sign Language Interpreter 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 qualifications, Form 13 must be printed from the JCQ website -

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

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 on page 2** an application **must** be processed using *Access arrangements online*. **(Page 2 also lists the published deadlines.)**

Practical assistant in practical components

- 5.14.2 *Access arrangements online* will automatically reject applications for the use of a practical assistant in practical components.

However, the centre will be able to refer the case to the relevant awarding body. **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.

- 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. A practical assistant will not normally be permitted in subjects such as Art & Design, Design & Technology and Music.**

Practical assistant in written papers

- 5.14.4 *Access arrangements online* will automatically reject applications for the use of a practical assistant in written papers.

However, the centre will be able to refer the case to the relevant awarding body. **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.

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, page 66).

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 his or her hand to be guided to the relevant page or section of text in a 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.

Practical assistant

Factors the centre must take into account

- 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 as long as 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.
- Where the candidate and practical assistant are accommodated in another room, on a one to one basis, the invigilator may additionally act as the practical assistant.**
- 5.14.7 The practical assistant **must** be made aware, prior to the examination, of the particular task(s) he/she will be performing as specifically approved by the awarding body.

The rules – the use of a practical assistant

- **must** perform practical tasks **as specifically 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 him/her;
- **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 Level 1 and Level 2 Functional Skills qualifications, Form 3 (Practical Assistant 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 qualifications, Form 13 **must** be printed from the JCQ website -

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

Form 3 or 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 hemiplegia affecting his left side. He is right-handed. He only needs a practical assistant in GCSE Science to hold equipment still while he performs practical tasks. The practical assistant is acting as a second hand where two hands are needed. The candidate does not lose any marks for implementation because he performs by himself those skills which are being assessed.
- A candidate has severe cerebral palsy with no use of his hands. He wants to be entered for a GCSE Design and 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 he cannot fulfil. The candidate decides to follow the course for his education but is not entered for the specification.
- A candidate studying GCSE Physical Education is a wheelchair user. She is able to 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 the conduct of examinations

For the following qualifications:

AQA Applied General qualifications, AQA Level 1, Level 2 and Level 3 Technical qualifications, BTEC Firsts, BTEC Nationals, Cambridge Nationals, Cambridge Technicals, ELC, FSMQ, GCE, GCSE, OCR Level 3 Certificates, WJEC Level 1 and Level 2 General qualifications, WJEC Level 1 and Level 2 Vocational qualifications and WJEC Level 3 Applied qualifications

the SENCo **must** liaise with the examinations officer who will need to refer to **section 5.3, page 14**, of the JCQ publication *Instructions for conducting examinations* –

<http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/ice---instructions-for-conducting-examinations>

For other qualification types, please consult the relevant awarding body for advice.

5.15.1 The candidate will be sitting his/her examination(s) at a residential address or at a hospital which is a non-registered centre due to, for example:

- **a medical condition** which prevents the candidate from taking examinations in the centre; **or**
- **Social, Mental and Emotional 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 is able to take examinations;**
- **produce written evidence confirming the need for an alternative site arrangement to a JCQ Centre Inspector upon request.**

There is not a requirement to process an application using *Access arrangements online*. Centres **must not process an on-line application using 'Other'.**

5.16 Other arrangements for candidates with disabilities*

***For the access arrangements detailed below, 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.**

Amplification equipment

Brailers

Closed circuit television (CCTV)

Colour naming by the invigilator for candidates who are Colour Blind

Coloured Overlays (this would also include reading rulers, virtual overlays and virtual reading rulers)

Examination on coloured/enlarged paper

Low vision aid/magnifier

Optical Character Reader (OCR) scanners

Separate invigilation within the centre

The SENCo must make their decision based on:

- whether the candidate has **a substantial and long term impairment** which has **an adverse effect**; **and**
- the candidate's normal way of working within the centre.

SENCos must note that candidates are only entitled to the above arrangements if they are disabled within the meaning of the Equality Act. The candidate is at a substantial disadvantage when compared with other non-disabled candidates undertaking the assessment and it would be reasonable in all the circumstances to provide the arrangement. (The only exception to this would be a temporary illness, a temporary injury or other temporary indisposition which is clearly evidenced.)

For example, in the case of separate invigilation, the candidate's difficulties are established within the centre (see section 4.1.4, page 16) and known to a Form Tutor, a Head of Year, the SENCo or a senior member of staff with pastoral responsibilities.

Separate invigilation reflects the candidate's normal way of working in internal school tests and mock examinations as a consequence of a long term medical condition or long term social, mental or emotional needs.

For further information please see **Chapter 8** of the JCQ publication *Instructions for conducting examinations* –

<http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/ice---instructions-for-conducting-examinations>

For further information on coloured/enlarged papers please see section 6.5, page 77.

5.17 Exemptions

- 5.17.1 **An exemption is an agreement reached by an awarding body, before the examination, for a disabled candidate to miss a component or components.**

An indication will be placed on the candidate's certificate to show that not all of the assessment objectives were accessible.

- 5.17.2 **An application for an exemption must be submitted in line with the published deadlines quoted on page 2 of this document.**

- 5.17.3 An exemption **must**:

- not undermine the integrity of the qualification;
- only be granted as a last resort when no other access arrangement is available;
- apply **only to whole components where the candidate cannot demonstrate any of the skills**;
- **make up no more than 40% of a linear or unitised GCSE or GCE qualification.** For unitised GCE A-level qualifications at least one A2 unit **must** be completed;
- only apply in general qualifications (see section 1.6, page 6 and section 1.8, page 8 for the list of general qualifications covered by equality legislation in England, Wales and Northern Ireland).

An exemption will not be granted if an alternative and accessible route through a qualification is available to the candidate.

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

The centre in the first instance should select 'Other'. This will result in an automatic rejection. **The centre must then make a referral to the relevant awarding body.**

The centre **must** indicate the candidate's disability in order that 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 submitted to the awarding body concerned, along with any other paperwork requested by the awarding body.

- 5.17.5 **In the GCE A-level Biology, Chemistry or Physics practical endorsement** where a candidate cannot access the practical endorsement due to a substantial impairment, an application for an exemption **must** be submitted to the relevant awarding body.

- 5.17.6 **In Functional Skills English** where barriers to access remain, candidates can be exempted from up to two of the three assessed components.

Such an arrangement does not apply to Functional Skills ICT and Mathematics qualifications, as these qualifications consist of only one component.

For Functional Skills qualifications please refer to **page 94**.

5.18 Bilingual translation dictionaries with 10% extra time

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

However, for the use of a bilingual translation dictionary with 10% extra time an application must be processed using *Access arrangements online* for:

AQA Level 1 and Level 2 Technical qualifications, BTEC Firsts, Cambridge Nationals, Cambridge Technicals (Level 2), GCSE qualifications, WJEC Level 1 and Level 2 General qualifications and WJEC Level 1 and Level 2 Vocational qualifications. (Page 2 lists the published deadlines.)

Appropriate evidence of need **must** be available at the centre for inspection (see page 73). The evidence must be compiled by the EAL Co-ordinator or the SENCo.

For other qualification types, please see Chapter 8.

Bilingual translation dictionaries

5.18.1 A bilingual translation dictionary **must**:

- only be used in examinations by candidates whose first language is not English, Irish or Welsh; **and**
- reflect the candidate's normal way of working within the centre.

Unless an awarding body's specification says otherwise, a bilingual translation dictionary may be used in GCE AS, A2 and A-level examinations.

A bilingual translation dictionary **must not** be used in:

- English Language examinations;
- Irish or Welsh Language examinations; and
- Modern Foreign Language examinations testing one of the languages of the dictionary or a similar language, e.g. a Portuguese dictionary in a Spanish examination.

Additionally, due to the assessment of spelling, punctuation and grammar a bilingual translation dictionary **must not** be used in:

- GCSE English Literature examinations;
- GCSE Geography examinations;
- GCSE History examinations; and
- GCSE Religious Studies examinations.

Exceptions to these rules are:

The Writing Test in GCSE Arabic, GCSE Bengali, GCSE Dutch, GCSE Greek, GCSE Gujarati, GCSE Japanese, GCSE Modern Hebrew, GCSE Panjabi, GCSE Persian, GCSE Polish, GCSE Portuguese, GCSE Russian and GCSE Turkish where the specification states that all candidates must have access to a bilingual dictionary.

Functional Skills English examinations – where the use of a bilingual dictionary is permitted.

- 5.18.2 A standard bilingual translation dictionary **must** be used by the candidate. This may be an electronic bilingual translation dictionary or more typically a hard copy paper bilingual translation dictionary.

Monolingual dictionaries (which define words and phrases), translators (including web based translators), wordlists or glossaries **must not** be used.

The bilingual translation dictionary **must not**:

- contain/display pictures; **or**
- provide an explanation or clarification of words and phrases.

As an example, a Polish to English bilingual translation dictionary **must** simply be the word in Polish and the equivalent word in English.

- 5.18.3 Bilingual translation dictionaries to be used in the examination **must** be:

- held in the centre under secure conditions; **and**
- **thoroughly checked to ensure that no unauthorised information such as notes and revision data have been enclosed within or written on the pages of the dictionary.**

A candidate using a bilingual translation dictionary which contains notes or revision data will lose their marks and their right to this access arrangement.

- 5.18.4 **Translation of examination material or the candidate's answers into or from the candidate's first language will not be permitted.** The regulations for the use of bilingual translation dictionaries **must** be adhered to; failure to do so can lead to the disqualification of the candidate.

The application of 10% extra time when a candidate uses a bilingual translation dictionary (this will be in rare and exceptional circumstances)

A bilingual translation dictionary and 10% extra time **is only** available to candidates entered for the following qualifications **and who meet all of the published criteria as per paragraph 5.18.7, page 73:**

- **AQA Level 1 and Level 2 Technical qualifications;**
- **BTEC Firsts;**
- Cambridge Nationals;
- **Cambridge Technicals (Level 2);**
- Entry Level Certificate (ELC);
- Functional Skills (Entry Level, Level 1 and Level 2);
- GCSE;
- **WJEC Level 1 and Level 2 General qualifications;**
- **WJEC Level 1 and Level 2 Vocational qualifications.**

A bilingual dictionary and 10% extra time **is not** available to candidates entered for:

- **AQA Applied General qualifications;**
- AQA Level 3 Technical qualifications;
- **BTEC Nationals;**
- **Cambridge Technicals (Level 3);**
- GCE AS and A-level qualifications;
- OCR Level 3 Certificates;
- **WJEC Level 3 Applied qualifications.**

5.18.5 **In rare and exceptional circumstances candidates entered for the following qualifications: AQA Level 1 and Level 2 Technical qualifications, BTEC Firsts, Cambridge Nationals, Cambridge Technicals (Level 2), Entry Level Certificate (ELC), Functional Skills (Entry Level, Level 1 and Level 2), GCSE, WJEC Level 1 and Level 2 General qualifications and WJEC Level 1 and Level 2 Vocational qualifications**

who are permitted to use a bilingual translation dictionary may also be allowed 10% extra time, depending on need, if they have been resident in the UK for less than three years at the time of the examination(s). Holiday periods are included in the three year rule.

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 extra time.**

This is an 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.

Centres are reminded that applications processed on-line will automatically give an 'application approved expiry date' 26 months from the date of 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.**

5.18.6 **In subjects where a dictionary is not permitted, 10% extra time will not be available.**

5.18.7 **Extra time must only be awarded 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) **with no prior knowledge of the English Language**;
- English **is not** one of the languages spoken in the family home;
- **prior to their arrival in the United Kingdom** the candidate **was not** educated in an International school where some or the entire curriculum was delivered in English;
- **prior to their arrival in the United Kingdom** the candidate **was not** prepared for or entered for IGCSE qualifications where the question papers were set in English;
- **prior to their arrival in the United Kingdom** the candidate **was not** 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 10% extra time reflects the candidate's usual way of working with the dictionary. (A definition of normal way of working is provided within section 4.2.5, page 17.)

The evidence compiled by the EAL Co-ordinator or the SENCo must confirm all of the above.

5.18.8 **Extra time must not be awarded to a candidate using a bilingual translation dictionary in order to compensate for difficulties in reading and writing in English.**

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 on page 80).

They are individually prepared for candidates for whom other access arrangements are unsuitable. The modification of papers involves additional resources. Therefore centres are required to provide the awarding bodies with early notification that a candidate will require a modified paper.

Centres **must not** order 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 1, Level 2, Level 3 Technical qualifications, BTEC, Cambridge Nationals, Cambridge Technicals, CCEA Essential Skills, CCEA Key Skills, Edexcel Awards, Edexcel IGCSE (UK centres), ELC, FSMQ, GCE, GCSE, OCR Level 3 Certificates, WJEC Level 1, Level 2 General qualifications, WJEC Level 1, Level 2 Vocational qualifications and WJEC Level 3 Applied qualifications.

There is a separate area within *Access arrangements online* which enables centres to place these orders.

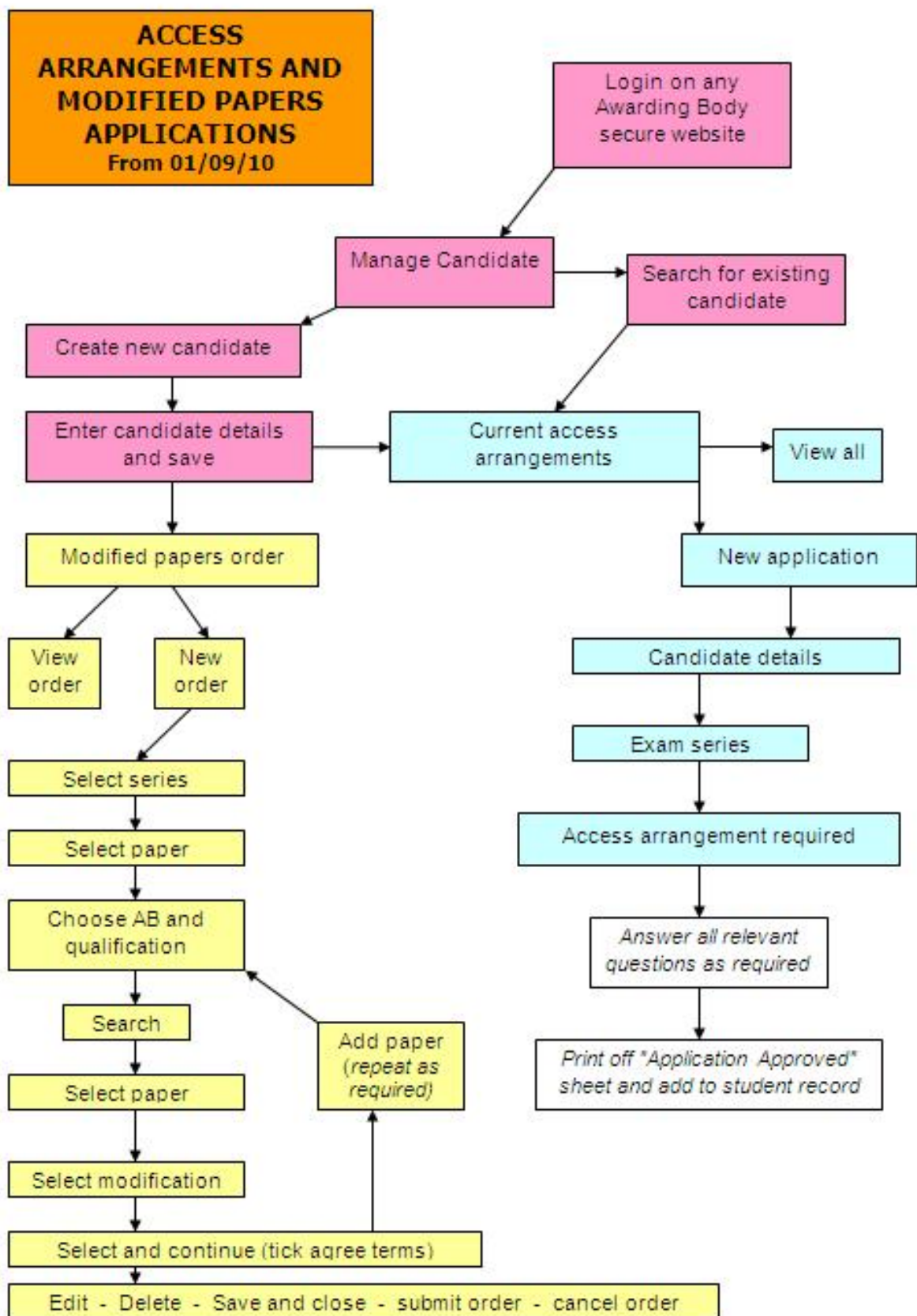
For the adjustment to be effective, the candidate must have had appropriate opportunities to practise using an awarding body's past modified papers before his/her first examination.

The standard formats available are:

- A4 modified 18 point bold
- A3 modified 24 point bold
- **A3 modified 36 point bold**
- Braille papers (SEB and UEB) and tactile diagrams with Braille labels
- Modified language (where available)
- Non-interactive electronic (PDF) question paper
- Tactile diagrams with print labels
- Transcript of listening test/video

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 body entry systems. It is recommended that centres undertake a check to ensure that orders for modified papers and actual entries made to an awarding body match.



Braille and large print papers are produced in line with the publication *Best Practice Guidance for the Modification and Production of Examination Papers for Candidates with a visual impairment*. This publication may be accessed from the UKAAF website: www.ukaaf.org/exams

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 he/she is familiar with the format.

6.2 Braille papers

- 6.2.1 **Braille papers are only produced when applications 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 standard paper is modified prior to Braille by a teacher specialised in vision impairments. The layout and presentation of the standard paper is modified accordingly.
- 6.2.3 The modified paper is then sent to a Braille agency for the content to be transcribed into **Grade 2 contracted Standard English Braille (SEB)** or **Grade 2 contracted Unified English Braille (UEB)**.
- 6.2.4 **Centres must order Braille papers as appropriate to the candidate's normal way of reading Braille, i.e. SEB or UEB, and the particular subjects being studied.** (Grade 1 uncontracted Braille is available upon request.)
- 6.2.5 Tactile diagrams and graphs will be provided where appropriate **with the Braille paper. Tactile diagrams do not need to be ordered separately.**
- 6.2.6 Centres may be required to provide models in advance for certain types of questions.
- 6.2.7 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 on-line 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 his/her 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 his/her 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 in order 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 particular 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 access arrangements 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 a number of 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, timeframes 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 **The centre is permitted to open the question paper packet in the secure room within 90 minutes of the published starting time for the examination. Prior permission is not required.**

However, **it is strongly recommended** that a non-interactive electronic (PDF) question paper is ordered, as printing directly from a PDF of the question paper will ensure better print quality and reduce the possibility of human error when collating and stapling.

Only the following actions are permissible:

- copy and enlarge the standard paper from A4 to A3; **or**
- copy a question paper onto coloured paper; **or**
- produce a question paper with single sided print.

No further modification is permissible such as re-typing the question paper. Such actions may constitute malpractice.

- 6.5.2 Centres should be aware that enlarging an examination question paper may affect questions relating to scale. This must be considered in your production process. It is the responsibility of the centre to ensure that the examination question paper is photocopied to a high standard.

6.6 Modified language papers and transcript of Listening test/video

Modified language papers

- 6.6.1 Where a paper has not been modified at source, (see 6.6.4) awarding bodies will accept an order for a modified language paper for a candidate who is deemed to have **persistent and significant difficulties when accessing and processing information**.

Awarding bodies do not require evidence of the candidate's difficulties.

- 6.6.2 **Modified language papers are only produced for some specifications when orders are made by the deadline. They are not produced automatically.**
- 6.6.3 **Only the carrier language is modified. The meaning of the questions remains the same and will require the same answers as the standard paper. Any technical and subject specific language will remain unchanged.**
- 6.6.4 A large number of question papers are already language modified since language specialists have been involved in the question paper setting process.

In such circumstances the standard paper is accessible: a modified language paper is not required and cannot be ordered. ('Modified language' will not appear in the drop down list within *Access arrangements online*.)†

†AQA ensures that all standard papers are checked for accessible language according to the guidelines published by BATOD (British Association of Teachers of the Deaf). AQA does not produce modified language papers.

- 6.6.5 **Where a candidate is identified as requiring a Sign Language Interpreter, a modified language paper must always be ordered by the respective deadline.**
- 6.6.6 **Where a candidate has an approved application for an Oral Language Modifier, a modified language paper must always be ordered by the respective deadline.**

A modified language paper may reduce or sometimes completely remove the need for an Oral Language Modifier.

Transcript of Listening test/video

- 6.6.7 **In Modern Foreign Language Listening examinations, a transcript of the recording can be requested and read to the candidate, who speech-reads from a live speaker.**

A transcript of the Listening CD may also benefit those candidates who have **persistent and significant difficulties in following speech at normal speed**. The live speaker will read to the candidate separately, but at a pace which enables the candidate to process the information more easily.

(Please see Chapter 5, section 5.12, page 61, on the use of a live speaker in pre-recorded examination components.)

- 6.6.8 Videos or films used in assessments should be requested with subtitles for a candidate with hearing loss. **Advice should be sought from the relevant awarding body.**

6.7 Non-interactive electronic (PDF) question papers

6.7.1 Non-interactive electronic question papers are in PDF format. They can be read on-screen but cannot be typed into. A candidate may require a non-interactive electronic question paper where he/she:

- requires a coloured/enlarged paper; or
- requires a computer reader (an approved application for a computer reader being in place); or
- has a substantial and long term vision impairment and prefers to read on-screen, rather than on paper, as part of their normal way of working. This may additionally be in conjunction with an on-screen/virtual coloured overlay.

By ordering a non-interactive electronic (PDF) question paper there is no need for the centre to scan in a question paper for computer reading purposes or photocopy a question paper onto coloured and/or enlarged paper.

The awarding body will supply a modified language version of the paper in PDF format where available.

Where several candidates will require a non-interactive electronic (PDF) question paper for the same examination, the centre only needs to make one order on-line.

The centre **must**:

- maintain the integrity and security of non-interactive electronic (PDF) question papers;
- ensure only authorised members of centre staff have access to non-interactive electronic (PDF) question papers.

The centre **must not**:

- undertake further modification to a non-interactive (PDF) electronic question paper, for example, converting the paper from PDF to Word;
- use software to completely re-format the text and remove diagrams.

Such actions may constitute malpractice.

It is the responsibility of the centre to ensure that the PDF is fully compatible with their chosen software package.

Standard print ready PDFs that were used in previous examination series, and currently available to use as past papers, can be downloaded from awarding body websites.

6.8 Ordering modified papers

AQA Applied General qualifications, AQA Level 1, Level 2 and Level 3 Technical qualifications, BTEC, Cambridge Nationals, Cambridge Technicals, CCEA Essential Skills, CCEA Key Skills, Edexcel Awards, Edexcel IGCSE (UK centres), ELC, FSMQ, GCE, GCSE, OCR Level 3 Certificates, WJEC Level 1 and Level 2 General qualifications, WJEC Level 1 and Level 2 Vocational qualifications and WJEC Level 3 Applied qualifications

6.8.1 For the above qualifications (timetabled written components) orders **must** be made using *Access arrangements online*.

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 (see pages 76-79) which will enable the candidate(s) to access their examinations.

6.9 Final deadlines for submitting orders for modified papers to awarding bodies

Month of examination	Last date by which orders <u>must</u> be made
November 2017	20 September 2017
January 2018†	4 October 2017
May/June 2018	31 January 2018

†GCSE January 2018 examination series – GCSE specifications are not available to centres in England.

†For those candidates who decide to re-sit GCSE units in June 2018, following the publication of January 2018 GCSE examination results, orders for modified papers must be received no later than 21 March 2018.

(For unitised GCSE qualifications in Northern Ireland in March 2018 please see CCEA's website for information.)

Failure to apply on time can lead to the rejection of the order as modified papers cannot be produced at short notice.

Late requests severely impede the work of the awarding bodies.

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.

An awarding body may apply a financial penalty to the centre for any late orders.

It is unlikely that a penalty will be applied in respect of a late request arising from a temporary injury or impairment, a late diagnosis of a disability or manifestation of an impairment relating to an existing disability, as long as the order is made as soon as is practicable.

Other qualifications

6.10 Other qualifications

6.10.1 **Modified papers for timetabled written components (i.e. secure question paper materials) within:**

- City & Guilds Level 2 and Level 3 Technical qualifications;
- Functional Skills qualifications.

must be applied for in advance of a specific examination series.

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

6.10.2 **A paper application must be sent to the individual awarding body using Form 7 – JCQ/Modified Papers.** The form is available electronically at:

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

Centres must order a modified paper no later than ten weeks before the date of the assessment.

Chapter 7

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 page 82).** This ensures that the access arrangements approved allow the candidate to access the assessment, but do not result in the candidate gaining an unfair advantage.

It should be remembered that where assessment objectives (Chapter 3, page 13) would be compromised by an access arrangement, 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** (see page 2);
- ensure that the **full supporting evidence** is in place **before** an on-line application is processed;
- review the evidence **before** an on-line 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 access arrangement has been put in place **before** the candidate's first examination, **e.g. internal school tests and mock examinations.**

7.1.2 The 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;
- work only within their area of expertise **and** in an ethical fashion;
- use age appropriate, nationally standardised and up-to-date tests appropriate to the individual;
- report the results of their assessment **within Section C of Form 8; and**
- provide the centre with evidence of their qualifications.

7.1.3 It is the responsibility of staff within the JCQ and the awarding bodies to give appropriate advice and information to centres. **Staff within the JCQ and the awarding bodies cannot determine whether a candidate has a learning difficulty.**

7.2 Appropriate adjustments for candidates with learning difficulties which have a substantial and long term adverse effect

Access arrangements are made on the basis of an individual candidate's needs. **Consideration must be given as to whether the proposed access arrangement is effective and suitable for the candidate's particular learning difficulty.**

For example, if a candidate can complete a paper in the normal length of time and never uses the extra time which has been made available, then it is not an effective arrangement. **It would not be appropriate to process an application for extra time.** Similarly, if a candidate requests the use of a word processor but cannot type comprehensible prose, it is not an effective arrangement to give him or her. However, he or she may require a scribe.

7.3 Appointment of assessors of candidates with learning difficulties

7.3.1 The head of centre is responsible for:

- the quality of the access arrangements process within his or her centre; **and**
- the appointment of assessors, checking the qualifications of those assessing candidates (e.g. photocopy of certificate or printout).

The JCQ is not able to 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.

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 Section C 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 assessor with a **current** SpLD Assessment Practising Certificate, as awarded by Patoss, Dyslexia Action or BDA and listed on the SASC website, who may conduct assessments to be recorded within Section C 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 Section C of Form 8 and where necessary undertake full diagnostic assessments.

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 speed, reading comprehension 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, page 86**;
- the ethical administration of testing including the ability to understand the limitation of their own skills and experience, and to define 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 publication *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);
- hold an appropriate qualification to teach and make recommendations for secondary aged or adult learners who have learning difficulties.

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 ideally be employed within 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 an established relationship with the centre or, before an assessment, establishes a relationship with the centre.**

7.3.6 A privately commissioned assessment carried out without prior consultation with the centre cannot be used to award access arrangements and cannot be used to process an application using *Access arrangements online*.

The SENCo must complete at least a ‘skeleton’ Section A of Form 8 prior to the candidate being assessed (Section C of Form 8).

(Where a learning difficulty specifically arises as a result of a medical condition please see **pages 26, 34-35 and/or 47-48**; 25% extra time, a computer reader/reader and/or a scribe.)

Where a privately commissioned report, or a report from an external professional, is rejected by a centre, the head of centre or a member of the senior leadership team should provide a written rationale supporting their decision to the parent/carer.

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 as per pages 82 and 83.
- 7.4.2 In the case of **appropriately qualified psychologists** (registered with the Health & Care Professions Council), or **specialist 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*.
- 7.4.3 The names of all other assessors, **who are assessing candidates studying qualifications as listed on page 2**, **must** be entered into *Access arrangements online* to confirm their status. This will include all other professionals working outside the centre.
- 7.4.4 **For Functional Skills qualifications the centre must list all assessors on Form 8A as contracted to work for the centre.** Form 8A **must** be retained on file within the centre for inspection by an awarding body.

7.5 Guidelines for the assessment of the candidate's learning difficulties by an assessor

- 7.5.1 The SENCo must arrange for the candidate to be assessed by an assessor.
- 7.5.2 Before the candidate's assessment, the SENCo must provide the assessor with background information, i.e. a picture of need has been painted as per Section A of Form 8. The SENCo and the assessor must work together to ensure a joined-up and consistent process.
- 7.5.3 An independent assessor must contact the centre and ask for evidence of the candidate's normal way of working and relevant background information. This must take place before the candidate is assessed.

The candidate must be assessed in light of the picture of need and the background information as detailed within Section A of Form 8.

An independent assessor must discuss access arrangements with the SENCo. The responsibility to request access arrangements specifically lies with the SENCo.

- 7.5.4 The assessor is required to establish if the results of tests in literacy and/or cognitive abilities present evidence that the candidate has **an impairment which substantially affects their performance**.
- 7.5.5 Assessors must personally conduct the assessments. They must not sign off assessments carried out by another professional.
- 7.5.6 The assessor must carry out tests which are relevant to support the application. For example, if the candidate requires a reader but does not have writing difficulties, there is no requirement to carry out tests of writing skills.
- 7.5.7 **Recent editions of nationally standardised tests which produce standardised scores must be used, where published.**

- 7.5.8 **The candidate's chronological age must be less than the 'ceiling' of the test**, unless no test is published for the candidate's age.
- 7.5.9 **Results must be given as standardised scores which use a mean of 100 and a standard deviation of 15. (These are standard scores.)**

Standardised scores of 85-89 are described as 'low average'.

Standardised scores of 84 or less are described as 'below average'.

Test results for Section C of Form 8 must not be reported as percentiles, scaled scores, T-scores or age-equivalent scores. Such scores must be converted into standard scores.

7.5.10 **Reading skills**

Reading accuracy: reading accuracy **must** be assessed using an individually administered, untimed test of single word reading.

Reading comprehension: reading comprehension **must** be assessed using a recognised test of text or sentence comprehension.

Reading speed: a candidate with a history of reading difficulties, whose reading accuracy (at single word level) is within normal limits for his/her age, may read slowly and/or need to re-read text many times in order to absorb its meaning.

A timed, text-level reading test which includes comprehension questions, **and provides a standardised score for reading speed**, can be administered to assess the candidate's need for extra time, or a computer reader/reader.

Assessors may also use a test which combines text-level speed and accuracy (sometimes known as reading fluency) **as evidence for a computer reader/reader and/or extra time**. The results may be recorded within Section C of Form 8 under reading speed.

Tests which measure single word reading speed and efficiency are not appropriate in this context, although they may contribute to cognitive processing measures for extra time, **as recorded within Section C of Form 8 under cognitive processing or in other relevant information**.

The provision of a computer reader/reader will depend on whether the candidate's impairment in reading accuracy or reading comprehension or reading speed has a substantial and long term adverse effect.

For examination purposes, a substantial impairment is interpreted as a standardised score in tests of reading accuracy or reading comprehension or reading speed which falls in the below average range, i.e. a standardised score of 84 or less.

A below average standardised score for reading comprehension can be used to award a computer reader/reader but not 25% extra time.

A below average standardised score for reading fluency, reading speed or speed of reading comprehension can be used to award a computer reader/reader and/or extra time as all are measures of speed.

7.5.11 Writing skills

A scribe, a word processor with the spell check enabled, or speech recognition technology will be allowed in certain subjects when a candidate's impairment has a substantial and long term adverse effect.

For examination purposes, a substantial impairment is interpreted as the candidate having:

- a spelling accuracy score **in the below average range (a standardised score of 84 or less) where target words are unrecognisable and the writing is incomprehensible**; or
- free writing which cannot be read by others; or
- free writing which is grammatically incomprehensible; or
- free writing which is produced so slowly that answers could not be fully recorded even with extra time allowed. (**The candidate's handwriting speed as a standardised score being in the below average range for their age.**)

7.5.12 Cognitive processing

Cognitive processing assessments would include, for example, investigations of short-term/working memory, phonological processing (e.g. phonological awareness, phonological memory and/or rapid naming) visual processing, sequencing problems, organisational problems, visual/motor co-ordination difficulties or other measures as determined appropriate for the candidate by an assessor.

Extra time of 25% may be granted where a candidate has cognitive processing difficulties which have a substantial and long term adverse impact on their speed of working. (See section 5.2.2, page 22). These difficulties will be demonstrated by tests which result in at least one below average standardised score, i.e. a score of 84 or less.

In exceptional circumstances at least two low average standardised scores (85-89) relating to two different areas of speed of working are acceptable. This may include two different areas of cognitive processing.

An awarding body may grant extra time of up to 50% in very exceptional circumstances - see section 5.3.2, page 28.

7.5.13 Other cognitive ability measures

In most cases there is not a requirement to carry out tests of general cognitive abilities. **However, in rare and exceptional circumstances the SENCo** may need to refer a candidate to an alternative professional, such as a HCPC registered psychologist or a specialist assessor with a **current** SpLD Assessment Practising Certificate, where further investigation is warranted which may include tests of general cognitive ability. The initial assessment may have indicated specific/global learning needs, mental health or developmental concerns.

Access arrangements online will not be able to process applications for a computer reader/reader, 25% extra time, extra time of up to 50% and/or a scribe for candidates with learning difficulties unless a standardised score has been recorded within Section C of Form 8. Where required, the score(s) must be processed on-line.

7.6 Completing Form 8 – JCQ/AA/LD, Profile of Learning Difficulties

Applications for access arrangements for the qualifications listed on page 2 must be processed using *Access arrangements online*. Where approved, most arrangements will cover non-examination assessment and timetabled written examinations during the two-year course.

Form 8 – JCQ/AA/LD must be used to record information about a candidate's access arrangements and be presented by the SENCo for inspection. The candidate's name **must** be recorded **on every page of Form 8** and the form **must** be stapled together.

Form 8 – JCQ/AA/LD is available from:

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

Only Form 8 is acceptable. Spreadsheets, e-mail messages, centre devised equivalents of Form 8, educational psychologists' reports and other reports are not acceptable for inspection purposes.

7.6.1 **A fully completed Form 8 – JCQ/AA/LD** acts as a passport to access arrangements if the candidate progresses from GCSE to GCE qualifications (**see below**).

A Form 8, with Section C produced no earlier than the start of Year 9 for GCSE qualifications, may roll forward to GCE qualifications where a candidate requires:

- 25% extra time;
- a computer reader/reader; and/or
- a scribe.

The rolling forward of a fully completed Form 8 (Sections A, B and C), signed by hand and dated, from GCSE to GCE qualifications principally applies in an 11 to 18 school setting where a candidate proceeds to the school's Sixth Form. This also includes 11 to 18 schools operating local Sixth Form consortium arrangements for GCE AS and A-level qualifications. A FE College or a Sixth Form College **must** have established working relationships with 'feeder' schools in order for the Form 8 to roll forward from GCSE to GCE qualifications.

The centre **must** apply on-line once more for the respective access arrangement(s). (See pages 23, 37 and 49).

Section A of Form 8 **must** be completed by the SENCo or **the assessor working within the centre** detailing the candidate's background and history of support, **prior to the assessor completing Section C**. The three questions within Section A of Form 8 **must** be addressed.

Section A of Form 8 is a pen portrait of the candidate's needs. It allows the SENCo to 'paint a holistic picture of need', confirming normal way of working bringing together:

- if known, arrangements made for Key Stage 2 tests;
- comments and observations from teaching staff and support staff (i.e. **Learning Support Assistants, Teaching Assistants and Communication Support Workers**);
- intervention strategies (e.g. individual education/learning plans, School Action, support plans) in place for the candidate; pupil premium indicators;
- screening test results;
- normal way of working in the classroom (**where appropriate**);
- arrangements made for end of year internal school examinations/mock examinations.

Effective screening and monitoring systems during Years 7 to 9 will enable the SENCo to paint an appropriately detailed picture of need. School tests might identify those candidates who need to be assessed for access arrangements.

If very little information is available, a selection from the following can be used by the SENCo to paint a picture of need within Section A of Form 8, for example:

- screening test results;
- the candidate's self reported difficulties;
- comments and observations from teaching staff and support staff (i.e. Learning Support Assistants, Teaching Assistants and Communication Support Workers) who have noted the candidate's difficulties;
- comments in school reports and/or pupil tracking data;
- information relayed by telephone, with notes taken, or a photocopy of Form 8, where a candidate has moved, for example, from an 11 to 16 school to a Sixth Form College.

Section B of Form 8 must be completed by the SENCo once the assessor has completed their testing and confirmed that the candidate has an impairment which substantially affects their performance.

Section B of Form 8 must make recommendations for access arrangements taking into account:

- the information from the assessment (**Section C of Form 8**);
- the requirements of the specifications; **and**
- the candidate's normal way of working in the centre (**Section A of Form 8**).

7.6.2 The completion of Form 8, **Sections A, B and C** will enable the JCQ Centre Inspector to see clearly and concisely the candidate's **normal way of working within the centre and the results of an assessment**.

7.6.3 **All assessors, as appointed by the head of centre and thus having an established relationship with the centre, must use Form 8, Section C, to record the results of their assessment. At the same time, the assessor must sign by hand and date Section C.**

7.6.4 **Once Form 8 has been completed, assessors employed within the centre may process the application using *Access arrangements online* (see the qualifications listed on page 2). They must keep within the centre for inspection purposes a fully completed Form 8 (Sections A, B and C), signed by hand and dated.**

7.6.5 **Assessors employed outside the centre must complete Section C of Form 8, after receiving Section A from the SENCo, to enable the SENCo to process the application electronically.**

7.6.6 The assessor **must**:

- **sign by hand and date** Form 8, Section C;
- **have administered each particular assessment him/herself.**

The assessor must not sign off assessments carried out by a teacher or another professional.

Unsigned and undated assessments cannot be accepted as appropriate evidence. The signature acts as confirmation that the assessor has completed the assessments and supports the recommendation made.

An electronic signature is not permissible.

Photocopies of Form 8 are not acceptable for processing and inspection purposes.

Chapter 8

Processing applications for access arrangements

8.1 General information

For those qualifications listed on page 2, *Access arrangements online* enables centres to make a single on-line application for a candidate requiring access arrangements using any of the secure awarding body extranet sites. *Access arrangements online* will provide an instant response and will only allow a maximum of 26 months for any arrangement.

Further information on *Access arrangements online* is available from:
<http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/aao-access-arrangements-online>

Extra time of more than 25% (26% to 50%) and/or an Oral Language Modifier must have tests recorded within Section C of Form 8 dated within 26 months of the final examination.

8.2 JCQ regulations and *Access arrangements online*

Access arrangements online does not give details of the JCQ regulations or how the JCQ regulations are to be applied. Centres must use the JCQ regulations in conjunction with *Access arrangements online*. Once an arrangement has been approved on-line, it **must** be put into effect in accordance with these regulations and without affecting the integrity of the qualification.

8.3 **Late diagnosis of a disability, late manifestation of an impairment or a temporary injury/impairment**

Arrangements for a late diagnosis of a disability or late manifestation of an impairment may be processed as the need arises. **However, evidence of need will still be required to the same standard as if it was an application being processed by the published deadline.** Please refer to the definition of evidence of need (see page 3) **and** the relevant section(s) of Chapter 5 for full details as to what constitutes the core evidence/evidence of need for each access arrangement. **It is important that the appropriate evidence is identified and processed with the application. Appropriate documentation (where required), as per Chapter 5, must be held on file to support the access arrangement(s) processed and be available for inspection.**

Access arrangements online must be used for **those qualifications listed on page 2** for candidates with a temporary injury or temporary impairment, such as a broken arm. These arrangements can be processed as the need arises. Appropriate documentation (where required) **must** be held on file to support any temporary access arrangement made.

Examples of temporary access arrangements

Example 1

A Year 11 GCSE candidate fell off his bike and injured his writing hand a few days before his first GCSE examination. The candidate is unable to write or type and therefore 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 the candidate's normal way of working and he is not entirely comfortable or indeed conversant in dictating his 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 his GP which confirms the injury to his hand and this is added to the SENCo's file. Once recovered, the candidate will sign the data protection notice to confirm his consent for the scribe application.

On the day of his first GCSE examination the candidate becomes highly anxious and stressed, as the use of a scribe is not his 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. The candidate is unable to come to school to sit his examinations. The SENCo liaises with the exams officer in respect of the candidate sitting his examinations at home through an alternative site arrangement. **(See Chapter 5 of the JCQ publication *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 envelope to the candidate's home and conducts the examination as per the JCQ publication *Instructions for conducting examinations*. However, during the course of 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 on-line 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. He has had chicken pox. The candidate is clearly unwell and possibly contagious so he is sent home. The centre decides that it will arrange for the candidate to take his examinations 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 his full potential.

As the candidate has had a contagious disease, the exams officer seeks medical guidance from one of their local GP surgeries, primarily with regard to the risk to others, in this case the invigilator. The exams officer also reads the advice in **section 5 of the JCQ publication *Instructions for conducting examinations***.

The risks are deemed to be minimal. The invigilator takes the question paper in a sealed envelope to the candidate's home and conducts the examination as per the JCQ publication *Instructions for conducting examinations*.

However, during the course of the examination, the candidate begins to feel unwell and is unable to continue with the paper 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 paper.

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

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 which do not gain approval

Access arrangements online approves around 90% of all applications made by centres in the United Kingdom, providing centres with 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. If a candidate has **very substantial needs** which are not accommodated by the on-line 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. **Centres 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:

A candidate with learning difficulties has requested a reader and a scribe in her examinations. Her writing is totally illegible and she has used a scribe throughout the course. Her reading has improved during the year and she now achieves standardised scores of **86, 89 and 93** for reading accuracy, reading comprehension and reading speed on nationally standardised tests.

The SENCo keys into the on-line system **a score of 86 for reading accuracy** and also confirms that her writing is illegible. The application is not approved because **the candidate's score for reading accuracy is not in the below average range (i.e. a standardised score of 84 or less).** **Whilst the candidate may have a disability within the meaning of the Equality Act, their competency standard for reading means they are not eligible for a reader as an appropriate access arrangement.**

Where a candidate has learning difficulties *Access arrangements online* will only accept standardised scores of 84 or less when processing applications for a computer reader/reader.

The SENCo makes another application for the candidate, this time only for a scribe. The application is approved. Before she processes the next application, she checks the criteria to make sure this does not happen again.

Applications for extra time of more than 25%, a practical assistant in practical assessments and a practical assistant in written papers will be automatically rejected. Applications should be referred on-line to the relevant awarding body.

8.5 Pre-planning in advance of examination series

Applications processed and approved on-line can be recorded as a CSV file. By using Excel an instant list of candidates who have access arrangements 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 ahead 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 which will be needed.

Access arrangements online will also enable centres to generate pre-populated cover sheets.

Access arrangements online must be used for the following qualifications:

AQA Applied General qualifications, AQA Level 1, Level 2, Level 3 Technical qualifications, BTEC Firsts, BTEC Nationals, Cambridge Nationals, Cambridge Technicals, FSMQ, GCE, GCSE, OCR Level 3 Certificates, WJEC Level 1, Level 2 General qualifications, WJEC Level 1, Level 2 Vocational qualifications, WJEC Level 3 Applied qualifications

Access arrangements that must be applied for on-line include:

- Bilingual dictionary with 10% extra time (solely for those qualifications as listed within paragraph 5.18.4, page 72)
- Computer reader/Reader
- 25% extra time
- Extra time over 25%†
- Modified papers (see Chapter 6, pages 74-80)
- Practical Assistant in practical assessments†
- Practical Assistant in written papers†
- Scribe/speech recognition technology

†The arrangement will be automatically rejected. Applications should be referred on-line to the relevant awarding body.

The following arrangements do not need to be processed on-line:

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

- Amplification equipment
- Bilingual dictionary
- Braille transcript
- Braille
- Closed Circuit Television (CCTV)
- Colour naming by the invigilator for candidates who are colour blind
- Coloured overlays
- Examination on coloured/enlarged paper
- Live speaker for pre-recorded examination components
- Low vision aid/magnifier
- Optical Character Reader (OCR) scanners
- Prompter
- Read aloud (including an examination reading pen)
- Separate invigilation within the centre
- Sign Language Interpreter
- Supervised rest breaks
- 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 IE11 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* you will need:

- the candidate's consent (completed data protection notice) to record their personal data on-line;
- paperwork determining the candidate's needs;
- your log-in details for an awarding body's secure extranet site, e.g. e-AQA.

Good practice

The SENCo **must** keep detailed records of all the essential information on file. This includes a printed copy of the candidate's approved application, appropriate evidence of need (where required) **and** a signed data protection notice for inspection by the JCQ Centre Inspection Service.

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

Step 1 Log-in

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

Step 2 Candidate details

Enter the candidate's details. The candidate's UCI and/or ULN **must** be entered in addition to the candidate number. (* denotes that input is mandatory).

Step 3 The academic year

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

Step 4 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 GCSE or GCE course.*
- *Temporary condition = lasts duration of an exam series.*

Step 5 Access arrangements

Choose the access arrangement(s) required for the candidate from the list shown. You can select more than one but you **must** have supporting evidence, where required, in each instance to secure approval.

Step 6 Evidence of need

Answer all of the questions about the evidence you have on file to support the application.

Step 7 Assessor's report (Section C of Form 8)

Some applications will require you to enter details from **Section C of Form 8** to substantiate the evidence of need. You **must** specify who carried out the assessment and when.

Step 8 Confirmation

Your submission is now complete.

Tick the **Confirmation** box to state that you have read and accept the legal statements and click **SUBMIT**.

Step 9 Outcome

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

If your application has been refused, you may refer it to the relevant awarding body for consideration using the awarding body referral section. **However, you 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

Your application has been saved and can be found at any time using the search facility.

Click **SAVE & CLOSE** to return to the Home page.

Candidates sitting Level 1 and Level 2 Functional Skills 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.

- Amplification equipment
- Bilingual dictionary
- Braille transcript
- Braille
- Closed Circuit Television (CCTV)
- Colour naming by the invigilator for candidates who are colour blind
- Coloured overlays
- **Examination on coloured/enlarged paper**
- Live speaker for pre-recorded examination components
- Low vision aid/magnifier
- Optical Character Reader (OCR) scanners
- Prompter
- Read aloud
- Separate invigilation within the centre
- Sign Language Interpreter
- Supervised rest breaks
- 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 10% extra time (solely for the use of the dictionary)
- 25% extra time

Form 9 – JCQ/CA must be completed and kept on the centre's files for inspection by an awarding body, (with appropriate evidence of need as per section 5.2, page 22 and section 5.18.7, page 73). The names and numbers of candidates who were granted these arrangements must be listed.

For all other access arrangements (as detailed below) centres must apply to the relevant awarding body at least six weeks before the date of the series in which the examination is to be taken.

- **Computer reader/Reader**
- Exemptions
- Extra time over 25%
- Practical Assistant in practical assessments
- Practical Assistant in written papers
- Scribe/speech recognition technology

Form 1 – JCQ/AA or Form 8 – JCQ/AA/LD, as appropriate, must be sent to the awarding body.

Other adjustments

Where a candidate whose disability has a substantial and long term adverse effect on him/her, 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 particular needs.

Entry Level qualifications

Entry Level Certificate (ELC) qualifications

Entry Level Functional Skills qualifications

Entry Level 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.

- Amplification equipment, taped questions and responses
- Bilingual dictionary
- Braille transcript
- Braille
- Braille of non-secure assessment material
- Closed Circuit Television (CCTV)
- Colour naming by the invigilator for candidates who are colour blind
- Coloured overlays
- **Enlarge or photocopy the question paper on to coloured paper**
- Live speaker for pre-recorded examination components
- Low vision aid/magnifier
- Optical Character Reader (OCR) scanners
- Prompter
- Read aloud
- Separate invigilation within the centre
- Sign Language Interpreter for written questions and responses (but not in MFL oral examinations)
- Supervised rest breaks
- Word processor

Entry Level qualifications

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

- Bilingual dictionary with 10% extra time (for the use of the dictionary)
- **Computer reader/Reader**
- Extra time in timed components
- Practical Assistant
- Scribe

Form 11 – JCQ/EL/NF must be completed and kept on the centre's files for inspection by an awarding body. The names and numbers of candidates who were granted these arrangements must be listed.

Form 11 is available from:

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

Timetabled Entry Level examinations

Question papers must always remain secure.

Form 12 – JCQ/EL/AA must be sent to the relevant awarding body at least six weeks before the date of the series in which the examination is to be taken.

Form 12 is available from:

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

Form 12 must be completed where a centre wishes to open the question paper packet prior to the published starting time to:

- conduct an examination at an alternative venue for an individual candidate, e.g. the candidate's home;
- **enable an Oral Language Modifier or a Sign Language Interpreter to prepare for the examination;**
- scan the hard copy question paper into PDF format to allow the candidate access to a computer reader.

Other adjustments

Where a candidate whose disability has a substantial and long term adverse effect on him/her, 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 particular needs.

Internally assessed units

Cambridge Technicals

Functional Skills

Project qualifications (including the Extended Project)

- 8.7 For internally assessed Cambridge Technicals, Functional Skills and Project qualifications, centres do not need to apply to the individual awarding body concerned.

Access arrangements for internally assessed Functional Skills units **must** be in line with Ofqual's Functional Skills qualifications criteria.

Access arrangements 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 to internally assessed units with the awarding body concerned.

Data Protection Notice

So that we can process your application for access arrangements electronically via the *Access arrangements online* system† we need your consent to share some of your personal data with a number of organisations. This data may relate to your health, medical condition or disability. In some cases, we may need to provide more detailed personal information to support the application for access arrangements being made on your behalf.

These organisations are the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) and the participating awarding bodies (AQA, CCEA, OCR, Pearson and WJEC).

Your application will be processed in line with the common standards, regulations and guidance developed by the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) and the participating awarding bodies.

If you are happy for us to share your data please provide your consent by completing the declaration below. We will not use your data for any other purpose without your consent (unless authorised to do so by law).

Declaration

For the purpose of processing my access arrangement application, I consent to the use of my name, date of birth and other relevant data as set out above. I understand that this information will not be used for any other purpose without my consent unless authorised by law.

Signed Date

Print Name.....

This form may be downloaded from the JCQ website –
<http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/aao-access-arrangements-online/data-protection-notice>

†*Access arrangements online* covers the following qualifications:
AQA Applied General qualifications, AQA Level 1, Level 2, Level 3 Technical qualifications,
BTEC Firsts, BTEC Nationals, Cambridge Nationals, Cambridge Technicals, FSMQ, GCE, GCSE,
OCR Level 3 Certificates, WJEC Level 1, Level 2 General qualifications, WJEC Level 1, Level 2
Vocational qualifications, WJEC Level 3 Applied qualifications.

Functional Skills qualifications

The qualification regulators for England, Wales and Northern Ireland published the Functional Skills qualifications criteria in November 2009. The specific criteria for the individual Functional Skills in English, Mathematics and ICT were also published at the same time.

The information published applies to all levels of Functional Skills English, ICT and Mathematics qualifications.

Functional Skills English (Reading)

Access Arrangement	Yes/No	Type of assessment
Extra time	Yes	
Dictionaries and bilingual dictionaries	Yes	The use of a dictionary or a bilingual dictionary is permitted for all candidates .
Reader	No	
Computer reader	Yes	
Sign Language Interpreter	No	
Scribe	Yes	
Speech recognition technology	Yes	
Word processor	Yes	
Practical Assistant	Yes	
Modified question papers (including Braille)	Yes	
Models, visual/tactile aids, speaking scales	Yes	
External device to load personal settings	Yes	Permitted as a reasonable adjustment provided that this does not compromise the assessment or give the candidate any advantage not available to other candidates.

Functional Skills English (Speaking, Listening and Communication)

Sign Language (i.e. BSL, SSE) is permissible in the Speaking, Listening and Communication component, provided this is made accessible to all participants in the discussion. (It is recognised that BSL is a language in its own right and not a form of English.

BSL is, however, permitted as an alternative to English for the assessment of Speaking, Listening and Communication where BSL is the candidate's normal way of communicating in the contexts described by the standards.) **No other languages are permitted as alternatives to English.**

Similarly, access to augmentative speech equipment is permissible where it reflects the candidate's normal way of working.

As a last resort, candidates who are disabled under the terms of the Equality Act 2010 and have no accessible means of communication may request an exemption from the Speaking, Listening and Communication component.

Functional Skills English (Writing)

Access Arrangement	Yes/No	Type of assessment
Extra time	Yes	
Dictionaries and bilingual dictionaries	Yes	The use of a dictionary or a bilingual dictionary is permitted for all candidates .
Reader	Yes	
Computer reader	Yes	
Sign Language Interpreter	Yes	
Scribe	No	
Speech recognition technology	Yes	
Word processor	Yes	
Practical Assistant	Yes	
Modified question papers (including Braille)	Yes	
Models, visual/tactile aids, speaking scales	Yes	
External device to load personal settings	Yes	Permitted as a reasonable adjustment provided that this does not compromise the assessment or give the candidate any advantage not available to other candidates.

In **Functional Skills Mathematics and Functional Skills ICT qualifications** candidates can have access to all forms of equipment, software and practical assistance, such as a reader or a scribe that reflect their **normal way of working within the centre**. However, such adjustments **must not** affect the reliability or validity of assessment outcomes or give the candidate an assessment advantage over other candidates undertaking the same or similar assessments.

Functional Skills Mathematics

Access Arrangement	Yes/No	Type of assessment
Extra time	Yes	
Dictionaries and bilingual dictionaries	Yes	The use of a dictionary or a bilingual dictionary is permitted for all candidates .
Reader	Yes	
Computer reader	Yes	
Sign Language Interpreter	Yes	
Scribe	Yes	
Word processor	Yes	
Practical Assistant	Yes	
Modified question papers (including Braille)	Yes	
Models, visual/tactile aids, speaking scales	Yes	

Functional Skills ICT

Access Arrangement	Yes/No	Type of assessment
Extra time	Yes	
Dictionaries and bilingual dictionaries	Yes	The use of a dictionary or a bilingual dictionary is permitted for all candidates .
Reader	Yes	
Computer reader	Yes	
Sign Language Interpreter	Yes	
Scribe	Yes	
Word processor	Yes	
Practical Assistant	Yes	A practical assistant may switch on the computer and insert a storage device at the candidate's instruction but must not perform any skill for which marks will be credited. A practical assistant may be used in written examinations.
Modified question papers (including Braille)	Yes	
External device to load personal settings	Yes	Permitted as a reasonable adjustment provided that this does not compromise the assessment or give the candidate any advantage not available to other candidates.

A memory aid for a reader

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

I can only read the instructions 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 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**

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 in the Reading section**

Centres must ensure that both invigilators and those acting as a reader are appropriately trained and familiar with the rules as detailed on page 39.

It is essential that the candidate is made aware of what a reader can and cannot do in advance of their first examination, e.g. internal school tests or mock exams.

A memory aid for a scribe

I am here to write/type for you in your examination

I must write/type 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 written/typed, 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 onto the next question
I can't tell you which questions to do first**

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

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

Centres must ensure that both invigilators and those acting as a scribe are appropriately trained and familiar with the rules as detailed on page 52.

It is essential that the candidate is made aware of what a scribe can and cannot do in advance of their first examination, e.g. internal school tests or mock exams.

Memory aid for an Oral 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 or change words, phrases and sentences in the Writing section of the paper but I can't read or change anything in the Reading section

Centres must ensure that both invigilators and those acting as an Oral Language Modifier are appropriately trained and familiar with the rules as detailed on page 60.

It is essential that the candidate is made aware of what an Oral Language Modifier can and cannot do in advance of their first examination, e.g. internal school tests or mock exams.

Memory aid for a Sign Language Interpreter

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 only sign the instructions/rubric, but not the questions

Centres must ensure that both invigilators and those acting as a Sign Language Interpreter are appropriately trained and familiar with section 5.13, pages 62-63.

It is essential that the candidate is made aware of what a Sign Language Interpreter can and cannot do in advance of their first examination, e.g. internal school tests or mock exams.