



Pearson

Pearson Access Arrangements Online FAQs (for UK centres)

What is new for this year?

We have introduced a new access arrangement system called Pearson Access Arrangement Online. This will now mean that centres can apply for access arrangements online for BTEC, Functional Skills (excluding QMA), CiDA/DiDA, PLSC, Level 3 Core, Edexcel Award, PTE, International GCSE, International A Level and GCE and GCSE (international centres **only**).

Why are these changes being introduced?

Some of the Pearson qualifications cannot be included in Access Arrangements Online (AAO) as the JCQ regulations do not cover all qualifications. We have introduced the new Pearson Access Arrangements Online (PAAO) system to allow centres to apply online for those qualifications and to get auto approval on those applications. **Please note** although BTEC is under JCQ regulations, due to the onscreen test element, we have taken this out of AAO and put it in to PAAO. We have done this to ensure that you will not need to apply for extra time to be added to an onscreen examination separately, when this feature of the system is released in the New Year. We have been unable to build this in to AAO due to the system being shared with all the other awarding organisations for GCSE and GCE.

Which online portal should I use to make access arrangement applications?

For GCSE and GCE, you should apply via JCQ AAO.

For all other qualifications including BTEC, Functional Skills (excluding QMA), CIDA/DIDA, PLSC, Level 3 Core, Edexcel Award, PTE, IGCSE, IAL and also GCE and GCSE (international centres **only**), you will need to apply via PAAO.

Will I have to make two separate applications for a student doing BTEC and GCSE, one on AAO and one on PAAO?

You will now need to make your application for GCSE and GCE via AAO, and a separate application for BTEC in PAAO. We have added the functionality in PAAO for BTEC and Functional Skills to enable you to search for your candidates without having to create them in PAAO first. PAAO will search Pearson systems and find your candidate details, provided that the candidate has been registered. This means you will need to register your candidates **before** you apply for BTEC access arrangements. This ensures that when the extra time element is live, we can be certain it is added to the correct candidate. Please note this only applies to BTEC and Functional Skills; candidates will need to be created for all other qualifications.

Will all outcomes be immediate?

Each application will either be “approved” or “not approved”. Where the application is “not approved” you have the option to refer the application to the Special Requirements Team, attach further evidence to the application and provide further information to support the application. This will then be reviewed and a decision made to either approve or reject the application.

Do all applications need to be made online?

All applications will need to be made online. The only paper based applications we will accept are for QMA Functional Skills and Jetset/LCCI qualifications. You can find the new Functional Skills forms on our [Access Arrangement webpage](#).

If I make all the applications online, what documentation should I keep for inspection purposes?

The process for keeping your internal records has not changed. You will still need to keep your own candidate assessment records. This new process is simply for getting approval for your applications.

Do I need to apply again for a candidate who has current access arrangements in place?

As long as the arrangement is still in date, you do not need to re-submit the application. If you already have approvals in AAO for BTEC then these will remain valid until the application expires. This also applies to any paper-based approvals for other qualifications.

Does the application need to be made by the Exams Officer, or can it be made by a member of the Exams Office Team or SENCO?

This is left to the discretion of the centre, but ideally should be someone who fully understands the process and has access to the necessary paperwork. The person making the application will need their Edexcel Online profile permissions set up to enable them to manage Access Arrangements. If you don't have access to the system, please request this via your Pearson Account Specialist.

Is it possible to apply for arrangements before the student has been registered on a BTEC or entered for a Functional Skills exam?

You will need to register the candidate in the first instance so our system can find the correct candidate. This is to ensure that, when the extra time element is made live, we have the correct candidate selected in our system.

Why can't I find my candidate for BTEC or Functional Skills?

In order for you to be able to search for your candidate, they need to be registered first. Also ensure that you select the correct subsite from the centre dropdown field. Also ensure that you do not add an additional space after you have typed the candidates name, this can also prevent the search from returning a candidate.

Can I apply via PAAO to request extra time for BTEC onscreen tests?

To add extra time to an onscreen examination, you are able to add 25% extra time on Edexcel Online at the time of booking. For anything above or below 25% extra time please email uk.special.requirements@pearson.com at least 15 days in advance where possible. This allows us plenty of time to add extra time to the examination. In the New Year there will no longer be any need to request this separately as PAAO will add this for you. This functionality is not available at present: we will communicate this to you when this functionality becomes live.

Why can't I apply for 25% extra time for Functional Skills exams on PAAO?

25% extra time is centre delegated for Functional Skills therefore there is no need to apply. The new Functional Skills guidelines are now available on our [Access Arrangement webpage](#).

Why am I getting an error message in PAAO/CAP stating my centre/host centre doesn't exist?

In order for a centre (or a subsite linked to that centre) to apply for access arrangements, each centre/subsite must perform an initial log in to PAAO. After the first login, the system will recognise the centre/subsite and you will no longer see this error message.

What does it mean when I get the below warning message?

THE FOLLOWING VALIDATION ERRORS MUST BE CORRECTED BEFORE SUBMITTING YOUR APPLICATION

- **Please Note:** Cannot submit application. Your exam centre has no awarding body relationships

If you get this message, click Manage Data > Manage list of awarding bodies. Tick "Pearson", then click save and close. This will resolve this issue.

Can I make applications for other awarding bodies on PAAO?

The PAAO system is a Pearson based system only. Other awarding organisations have their own internal processes.

On the search screen the application shows approved but when I print the application it says not approved, how do I know whether it is approved or not?

This will show as not approved in the application due to the original outcome, being not approved. When the application is referred to us and then approved it, the approval will show in the referral outcome and not the main application.