

## 2020/21 Update to:

# Assessing the need for Access Arrangements in Examinations

A Practical Guide – Fifth Edition, by Lia Castiglione

## Introduction

This document provides a brief commentary on the changes to the JCQ regulations “**Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments**”. It covers essential changes made within the 2020/21JCQ regulations.

The 5<sup>th</sup> edition of the book itself, which was fully updated in 2018, provides much greater detail on the more fundamental aspects of access arrangements work including, for example, the range of skills to be investigated, tests to be used, interpretation of results, and discussion of the wider issues involved. **Please note** that this update should be read in conjunction with the 2019/20 update, which is available on the Patoss website, and the book, which is available to purchase on the Patoss website: [www.patoss-dyslexia.org/Books](http://www.patoss-dyslexia.org/Books)

However, it is also **imperative** that all professionals familiarise themselves with the JCQ regulations directly and in full as the Guide and these notes are intended to support, but in no way replace, the regulations.

## Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments (AARA)

The JCQ publishes a revised AARA document each autumn, setting out its regulations and guidance on access arrangements for the forthcoming year. The document is available to download as a PDF from the JCQ website and for schools and colleges as an interactive document through the Centre Admin Portal (CAP). CAP can be accessed via any of the awarding bodies' secure extranet sites such as eAQA or Edexcel Online.

For the 2020/21 academic year, the regulations have remained largely unchanged, with some minor wording revisions and clarifications rather than substantial changes.

## Lead on Access Arrangements

The opening statement of the AARA document contains the following information:

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

The additional wording, "*or an equivalent member of staff within a FE college,*" recognises that FE colleges may not have a member of staff entitled 'SENCo'. The lead on the access arrangements process would be a member of staff such as an 'Access Arrangements Coordinator' who is likely to be a member of the learning support team within the college.

## Interactive documents

Since September 2019, the JCQ publications: Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments (AARA), Instructions for conducting examinations (ICE), General Regulations for Approved Centres and A guide to the special consideration process, have been available as interactive documents through the Centre Admin Portal (CAP).

Sencos and equivalent members of staff in FE are encouraged to use the interactive versions of the AARA and ICE documents. The interactive format includes functions such as highlighting, adding notes, bookmarking and hiding text, enabling personalised versions of the documents to be saved and printed.

## Assessment evidence for 25% extra time

There have been no changes to the evidence requirements for 25% extra time. Assessment evidence must relate to speed of working, with scores in Part 2 of Form 8 for speed of reading, speed of writing and/or cognitive processing measures which have a substantial and long-term adverse effect on speed of working.

An additional measure of cognitive processing, mathematical processing, has been added to the examples provided in paragraph 7.5.12 of the AARA. Mathematical processing is defined as the time taken to process mathematical concepts. In many test batteries, this is known as mathematical fluency. This is not the same as a timed assessment of mathematics, where the focus is on the understanding, or attainment, of mathematics rather than the fluency with which mathematics can be processed.

However, a measure of mathematical processing can only be used as evidence for 25% extra time in maths examinations. Where a candidate requires 25% extra time in other

subjects, additional assessment evidence relating to speed of working must be recorded in Part 2 of Form 8.

The following tests provide measures of mathematical processing. Chapter 10 provides further tables of tests which can be used to gain assessment evidence for access arrangements. It is important to note that this is not a prescribed list of tests. Other tests that can be used in an access arrangements assessment may be available.

## Mathematical Processing

### Assessment evidence for extra time in maths exams

Test	Ceiling	Year of publication	Notes
Feifer Assessment of Mathematics (FAM)	21.11	2016	Measures of: Addition Fluency Subtraction Fluency Multiplication Fluency Division Fluency
Kaufman Test of Educational Achievement Third Edition (KTEA-3)	25.11	2014	Maths Fluency (See chapter 10 for additional processing measures)
Wechsler Individual Achievement Test 3 <sup>rd</sup> UK Edition	25.11	2017	Maths Fluency Note: closed test available to registered or chartered psychologists only. Teacher edition does not contain this subtest.
Woodcock-Johnson IV Tests of Achievement (WJ IV) UK and Ireland Edition	90	2014	Maths Fluency (See chapter 10 for additional processing measures)

# Important supplementary information for SENCOs and Assessors

The JCQ has issued supplementary information for the 2020/21 academic year due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The guidance document can be found on the JCQ website:

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

Full information can be found within the guidance document. In brief:

## November 2020 examination series

Other than GCSE English Language and Mathematics examinations, which fall under the condition of funding arrangements, candidates are expected to sit their examinations at the centre which entered them for examinations for the June 2020 examination series.

For candidates sitting examinations at their former school or college, where an approved application was in place but has expired prior to the November examinations, this may now roll forward until 27<sup>th</sup> November 2020 with no further application or evidence required, provided that the candidate's needs have not changed.

For candidates moving from a school to a FE college, schools are strongly encouraged to assist FE colleges in providing evidence for access arrangements in GCSE English Language and Mathematics examinations, even when there is no established working relationship. The school is asked to send a PDF of the Form 8, together with evidence of the assessor's qualification, enabling the college to process an application based on this existing evidence. For candidates requiring 25% extra time, the college will also need to provide a detailed picture of need (see Chapter 6: Gathering Centre Evidence).

## Assessing candidates

Where possible, assessments should take place in the physical presence of the candidate, with social distancing measures in place as appropriate. It is vital that test scores reported in Part 2 of Form 8 are robust and have been attained in accordance with professional advice (for example, from SASC: <https://sasc.org.uk/>) and within publishers' guidelines).

## Deadline for June 2021 examination series

The deadline for processing applications for access arrangements in GCSE and GCE examinations in June 2021 has been extended to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021. This change of deadline has been made in view of the disruption encountered in the summer term of 2020 and the readjustment required during the autumn 2020 term.

## Updated resource to accompany the 5<sup>th</sup> Edition

A number of resources to accompany the book are available to download from the reference provided in the 5<sup>th</sup> Edition (Appendix 2).

The Guidance sheet to complete Form 8 has been updated using the 2020/21 form.

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Update by Lia Castiglione in conjunction with Nick Lait

Note: No responsibility is taken by Patoss, or contributing authors, for any misunderstandings or failures to comply with the JCQ regulations during this or subsequent years.

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