



Joint Council for  
Qualifications

## Reasonable Adjustments for GCE A-level sciences Endorsement of practical skills

The JCQ publication *Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments* sets out all available access arrangements. Some arrangements are delegated to centres and do not require evidence of need or a formal online application. Arrangements which are delegated to centres include, for example, a bilingual dictionary, colour naming, a prompter, supervised rest breaks and the use of a word processor (with the spelling and grammar check disabled). Other arrangements require evidence of need to be submitted as part of a formal online application. These include extra time, a reader and a scribe.

The SENCo (Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator) will need to work with teaching staff, and where necessary senior leaders, to determine access arrangements which are both appropriate and reasonable in the context of the Practical Endorsement.

**The Practical Endorsement in A-level Biology, Chemistry, Geology and Physics is not a timed component and is carried out during normal lesson time. As such there is no need to award extra time and/ or supervised rest breaks.**

A candidate who has an access arrangement, put in place by the SENCo, which forms part of their normal way of working, may continue to use it in the course of the Practical Endorsement if it is required and does not undermine the assessment. **The only exception is the use of a practical assistant, as this does not allow a candidate to show their independent skills/mastery of the practical skills.**

A candidate, who because of their disability cannot demonstrate one or more of the competences in the required skills, use of apparatus or techniques, may request an exemption. If agreed, an indication will appear on the candidate's certificate indicating that he/she has been granted an exemption. The candidate should participate in as much of the practical activity as possible to support their knowledge and understanding for the indirect assessment of practical skills in the written examination.

Specific examples for the Common Practical Assessment Criteria (CPAC) are detailed below.

**CPAC1** requires candidates to ***follow written procedures.***

**CPAC2** requires candidates to apply ***investigative approaches and methods when using instruments and equipment.***

**CPAC3** requires candidates to ***safely use a range of practical equipment and materials.***

**CPAC4** requires candidates to *make and record observations*.

**CPAC5** requires candidates to research, reference and *report*.

For CPAC2 and CPAC3, the manipulation of equipment is a skill which is being assessed and is a practical activity which **must** be demonstrated by the candidate. **Therefore, a practical assistant is not permitted to perform such a task on behalf of the candidate.**