Joint Council for Qualifications CIC

Adjustments for candidates with disabilities and learning difficulties

Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments

This document covers the following qualifications:

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

1 September 2023 to 31 August 2024

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

Produced on behalf of:

AQA City & Guilds CEA Rewarding Learning OCR Oxford Cambridge and RSA Pearson WJEC CBAC

©JCQ CIC 2023

© JCQ[CIC] 2023

First published in 2023 by

Joint Council for Qualifications[CIC]

Email: centresupport@jcq.org.uk

Available in pdf format from:

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

Centres are encouraged to access the interactive version of this document using the Centre Admin Portal (CAP). CAP is accessible via any of the awarding bodies' secure extranet sites.

Contents

Key changes for 2023/24 v

Introduction

Importance of these regulations 1

Contact details 3

Changes for the academic year 2023/24 4

Deadlines for submitting applications for access arrangements/reasonable adjustments and orders for modified papers using *Access arrangements online* 5

Definitions 7

The Equality Act 2010 definition of disability 9

Section A

Chapter 1 General qualifications – information and guidance for centres 11

1.1 Awarding bodies – general qualifications 11

1.2 Duty to make a reasonable adjustment 11

1.3 Definition of disability 11

1.4 Definition of special educational needs 11

1.5 The power of the regulator 12

1.6 Which qualifications are covered by section 96 of the Equality Act 2010 in England and Wales? 12

1.7 How can centres apply for reasonable adjustments for candidates defined as disabled under the terms of the Equality Act 2010? 12

1.8 Arrangements in Northern Ireland 15

Chapter 2 Vocational qualifications – information and guidance for centres 16

2.1 Which qualifications are covered? 16

2.2 Awarding bodies – vocational qualifications 16

2.3 What are the duties of awarding bodies? 16

2.4 Application of competence standards 16

2.5 Taking advice from the awarding body about competence standards 16

2.6 Recruiting learners with integrity 17

2.7 Guidance on reasonable adjustments 17

2.8 Reasonable adjustments with vocational qualifications 17

2.9 Applying reasonable adjustments to internal assessments 18

2.10 How can centres apply for reasonable adjustments for external assessments? 19

2.11 Modified papers 19

Chapter 3 Candidates with disabilities and learning difficulties, and the application of assessment objectives 20

General qualifications 20

Assessment objectives and grade boundaries 20

Section B Adjustments for candidates with disabilities and learning difficulties

Chapter 4 Managing the needs of candidates and principles for centres **23**

4.1 Managing the needs of candidates with disabilities and learning difficulties **23**

4.2 Principles for centres **25**

Chapter 5 Access arrangements and adjustments **29**

5.1 Supervised rest breaks **30**

5.2 25% extra time **31**

5.3 Extra time of up to 50% (between 26% and 50% extra time) **37**

5.4 Extra time of over 50% **39**

5.5 Computer reader/reader **43**

5.6 Read aloud and/or the use of an examination reading pen **50**

5.7 Scribe/speech recognition technology **51**

5.8 Word processor **58**

5.9 Braille transcript **60**

5.10 Prompter **60**

5.11 Language Modifier **61**

5.12 Live speaker for pre-recorded examination components **64**

5.13 Communication Professional (for candidates using Sign Language) **65**

5.14 Practical assistant **67**

5.15 Alternative site for the conduct of examinations **69**

5.16 Other arrangements for candidates with disabilities **70**

5.17 Exemptions **71**

5.18 Bilingual translation dictionary with 25% extra time **72**

5.19 Access to a mobile phone for medical purposes **74**

5.20 Remote invigilation **74**

5.21 Timetable variation requiring overnight supervision for a candidate with a disability **75**

Chapter 6 Modified papers **76**

6.1 Modified papers – an overview of the process **76**

6.2 Braille papers **79**

6.3 Modified enlarged papers **79**

6.4 Reasonable adjustments – modified enlarged papers **80**

6.5 Coloured/enlarged paper (e.g. A3 unmodified enlarged papers) **80**

6.6 Modified language papers and transcript of Listening test/media **81**

6.7 Non-interactive electronic (PDF) question papers **81**

6.8 Ordering modified papers **82**

6.9 Final deadlines for submitting orders for modified papers **83**

Chapter 7 Learning difficulties **84**

7.1 Accountabilities **84**

7.2 Appropriate adjustments for candidates with learning difficulties **84**

7.3 Appointment of assessors **85**

7.4 Reporting the appointment of assessors **86**

7.5 Guidelines for the assessment of the candidate's learning difficulties **87**

7.6 Completing Form 8 – JCQ/AA/LD, Profile of Learning Difficulties **89**

Chapter 8 Processing applications for access arrangements and adjustments **92**

8.1 General information **92**

8.2 JCQ regulations and *Access arrangements online* **92**

8.3 Late diagnosis of a disability, late manifestation of an impairment or a temporary injury/impairment **92**

8.4 Cases that do not gain approval **94**

8.5 Qualifications and arrangements covered by *Access arrangements online* **95**

8.6 How to use *Access arrangements online* **97**

8.7 Pre-planning in advance of examination series **98**

8.8 Entry Level Certificate (ELC) qualifications **98**

8.9 Other adjustments **99**

8.10 Internally assessed Cambridge Technicals and Project qualifications **99**

Appendices

Appendix 1 Memory aid for a reader **101**

Appendix 2 Memory aid for a scribe **102**

Appendix 3 Memory aid for a Language Modifier **103**

Appendix 4 Memory aid for a Communication Professional **104**

Key changes for 2023/24

Page number	Section	Paragraph	Summary of change
1	Introduction		Clarification given on the term 'SENCo'.
7	Definitions		Requirement that approved adjustments must be deliverable to candidates.
19	2	2.10	Requirement that approved adjustments must be deliverable to candidates.
30	5	5.1	SENCo must complete Form 9 for inspection purposes.
32		5.2.2	SENCos must complete at least a skeleton Part 1 of Form 8 before candidates are assessed.
33		5.2.2	Completion of Form 8RF or Form 9 to support an online application and for inspection purposes.
36		5.2.3	Completion of Form 9 to support an online application and for inspection purposes.
39		5.3.2b	Completion of Form 9 to support an online application.
40		5.4	Completion of Form 9 to support an online application.
44		5.5.5	Completion of Form 8RF or Form 9 to support an online application and for inspection purposes.
45		5.5.8	Guidance on how readers should support vision impaired candidates retrieve information from diagrams, graphs, maps and tables.
46, 56, 67		5.5.9, 5.7.12, 5.14.6	Subject teachers, Learning Support Assistants and teaching assistants cannot be an invigilator for their own candidates when acting as a reader, a scribe and/or a practical assistant.
52		5.7.5	Use of a word processor with the spelling and grammar check switched on.
53–54		5.7.5	Completion of Form 8RF or Form 9 to support an online application and for inspection purposes.
70		5.16	Alternative rooming arrangements (formally known as separate invigilation).
72		5.18	Use of bilingual translation dictionary with 25% extra time.
72		5.18.2	Completion of Form BD25% to support an online application and for inspection purposes.
73		5.19	Access to a mobile phone for medical purposes.
73		5.20	Remote invigilation.

Page number	Section	Paragraph	Summary of change
74	5	5.21	Timetable variation requiring overnight supervision for a candidate with a disability.
79	6	6.1	Process for when candidates require modified papers not previously produced by an awarding body.
88	7	7.5.11	Assessments for assessing cognitive processing/fluency.
90		7.6.1	SENCos must complete at least a skeleton Part 1 of Form 8 before candidates are assessed.
91		7.6.3	Record forms from standardised assessments are not needed for inspection.

Form 8RF, Form 9 and Form BD25% may be found at:

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

Introduction

Importance of these regulations

Contact details

Changes for the academic year 2023/24

Deadlines for submitting applications for access arrangements/ reasonable adjustments and orders for modified papers using *Access arrangements online*

Definitions

The Equality Act 2010 definition of disability

Importance of these regulations

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

The head of centre **must** ensure that the SENCo has sufficient time to both manage the access arrangements process within the centre **and** familiarise him/herself with the JCQ document *Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments*.

The term 'SENCo' used throughout this document refers to the person appointed by the head of centre to coordinate the access arrangements process within the centre.

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

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

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

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

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

†An assessor is defined in Chapter 7, paragraph 7.3.3.

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

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

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

Examples of failure to comply include:

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

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

Contact details

JCQ†
Email: centresupport@jcq.org.uk
Website: jcq.org.uk

AQA
Stag Hill House
Guildford
Surrey
GU2 7XJ

Tel: 0800 197 7162
Website: aqa.org.uk

CCEA
29 Clarendon Road
Belfast
BT1 3BG

Tel: 02890 261 200
Website: ccea.org.uk

City & Guilds
Giltspur House
5-6 Giltspur Street
London
EC1A 9DE

Tel: 020 7294 2772
Website: cityandguilds.com

Pearson
Special Requirements Team
Lowton House
Lowton Way
Hellaby Business Park
Rotherham
S66 8SS

Tel: 0344 463 2535
Website: qualifications.pearson.com

OCR
The Triangle Building
Shaftesbury Road
Cambridge
CB2 8EA

Tel: 01223 553 998
Website: ocr.org.uk

WJEC/CBAC
245 Western Avenue
Cardiff
CF5 2YX

Email: specialrequirements@wjec.co.uk
Tel: 02920 265 000
Website: wjec.co.uk

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

The email address info@jcq.org.uk **must not** be used for access arrangements queries.

Changes for the academic year 2023/24

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

Changes made to the content of this document since the previous version (1 September 2022 to 31 August 2023) are highlighted in yellow for easy identification and the principal changes have been listed on pages v and vi.

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

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

Centres should note that any reference to 'JCQ' or 'Joint Council for Qualifications' within this document should be read as JCQ[CIC] or the Joint Council for Qualifications[CIC].

Deadlines for submitting applications for access arrangements/ reasonable adjustments and orders for modified papers using *Access arrangements online*

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

- AQA Applied General qualifications
- AQA Level 1, Level 2 and Level 3 Technical qualifications
- AQA Level 2 Certificate in Further Maths
- AQA Level 3 Certificate in Mathematical Studies
- Cambridge Nationals
- Cambridge Technicals
- FSMQ
- GCE (AS and A-level)
- GCSE
- OCR Level 3 Certificates
- Welsh Baccalaureate Qualification (WBQ)
- WJEC Level 1 and Level 2 General qualifications
- WJEC Level 1 and Level 2 Vocational qualifications
- WJEC Level 1 and Level 2 Vocational Awards (Technical Awards)
- WJEC Level 3 Applied qualifications.

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

Exam series	Access arrangement	Final deadline
November 2023	Modified papers	20 September 2023
November 2023	All other access arrangements	1 November 2023
January 2024	Modified papers	4 October 2023
January 2024	All other access arrangements	21 October 2023
June 2024	Modified papers	31 January 2024
June 2024	All other access arrangements	21 March 2024

GCSE January 2024 examination series – GCSE specifications are **not** available to centres in England and Northern Ireland.

For those candidates who decide to re-sit GCSE units in June 2024, following the publication of January 2024 GCSE examination results, orders for modified papers **must** be received no later than 21 March 2024.

(For unitised GCSE qualifications in Northern Ireland in March 2024 please see CCEA's website for information.)

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

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

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

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

Where an existing approved application will expire prior to or during the June 2024 examination series, and the candidate is studying at the same qualification level, it is permissible to process a new online application upon expiry and after 21 March 2024.

Centres should refer to Chapter 8 for more detailed information on how to use *Access arrangements online*.

Definitions

Access arrangements

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

Reasonable adjustments

The Equality Act 2010* requires an awarding body to make reasonable adjustments where a candidate, who is disabled within the meaning of the Equality Act 2010, would be at a **substantial disadvantage** in comparison to someone who is not disabled. The awarding body is required to take reasonable steps to overcome that disadvantage. An example would be a Braille paper which would be a reasonable adjustment for a vision impaired candidate who could read Braille. A reasonable adjustment may be unique to that individual and may not be included in the list of available access arrangements. Whether an adjustment will be considered reasonable will depend on several factors which will include, but are not limited to:

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

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

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

This is because the adjustment is not 'reasonable'.

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

In most cases it will not be reasonable for adjustments to be made to assessment objectives within a qualification. To do so would likely undermine the effectiveness of the qualification in providing a reliable indication of the 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, there is no duty to make adjustments to competence standards within vocational qualifications.

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

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

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

Evidence of need

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

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

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

The Equality Act 2010 definition of disability

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

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

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

Statutory guidance on the Equality Act 2010 definition of disability has been produced by the Office for Disability Issues (within the Department for Work and Pensions) to help better understand and apply this definition:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/570382/Equality_Act_2010-disability_definition.pdf

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Section A

Chapter 1 General qualifications – information and guidance for centres

Chapter 2 Vocational qualifications – information and guidance for centres

Chapter 3 Candidates with disabilities and learning difficulties, and the application of assessment objectives

Chapter 1 General qualifications – information and guidance for centres

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

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

1.1 Awarding bodies – general qualifications

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

1.2 Duty to make a reasonable adjustment

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

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

1.3 Definition of disability

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

1.4 Definition of special educational needs

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

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

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

1.5 The power of the regulator

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

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

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

1.6 Which qualifications are covered by section 96 of the Equality Act 2010 in England and Wales?

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

1.7 How can centres apply for reasonable adjustments for candidates defined as disabled under the terms of the Equality Act 2010?

Reasonable adjustments

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

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

Please see the examples below.

Examples of reasonable adjustments for disabled candidates

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

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

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

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

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

- A candidate has a Hearing Impairment 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 Communication Professional. These are reasonable adjustments for the candidate. The SENCo orders modified language papers, where available, using *Access arrangements online.*

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

It is possible that where a disabled candidate has very substantial and complex needs these may not be accommodated by the range of published arrangements. For example, a candidate with a brain injury who may need access to eye gaze technology or a candidate who needs to listen to white noise played through headphones. The list of arrangements is not exhaustive.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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:

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

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

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

https://www.equalityni.org/ECNI/media/ECNI/Publications/Employers%20and%20Service%20Providers/DraftguidetodiscrimlawGeneralQualificationsbodies2010.pdf?ext=.pdf

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

- The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (as amended) ("the 1995 Act")
- The Special Educational Needs and Disability (Northern Ireland) Order 2005 ("the 2005 Order")
- The Special Educational Needs and Disability (General Qualifications Bodies) (Relevant Qualifications, Reasonable Steps and Physical Features) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2008 ("the 2008 Order")

Chapter 2 Vocational qualifications – information and guidance for centres

2.1 Which qualifications are covered?

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

2.2 Awarding bodies – vocational qualifications

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

2.3 What are the duties of awarding bodies?

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

2.4 Application of competence standards

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

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

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

2.5 Taking advice from the awarding body about competence standards

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

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

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

2.6 Recruiting learners with integrity

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

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

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

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

2.7 Guidance on reasonable adjustments

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

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

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

The head of centre/Principal/CEO (or designated nominee) **must** ensure that an adjustment implemented by the centre on behalf of the learner is based on firm evidence of a barrier to assessment and is in line with this guidance. Failure to do so may result in advice or action for the centre through to the implementation of steps to manage centre malpractice. This could ultimately lead to the recall of certificates, removal of qualification approval or removal of centre approval.

2.8 Reasonable adjustments within vocational qualifications

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

2.9 Applying reasonable adjustments to internal assessments

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

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

Form VQ/IA is available electronically at:

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

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

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

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

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

2.11 Modified papers

To apply for Braille papers, modified enlarged papers, modified language papers or papers adapted for the purpose of using a recording, 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 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

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 and grade boundaries

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

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

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

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

3.3 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 Chapter 5, section 5.17) 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 qualification.

The centre may include a candidate on a course in the full knowledge that they may not be able to fulfil all the assessment requirements. The candidate and 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 Chapter 7, section 7.3) 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 qualification (unless it is felt that the impairment will not affect a significant proportion of the qualification).

3.6 In most cases it will not be reasonable for adjustments to be made to assessment objectives within a qualification. To do so would likely undermine the effectiveness of the qualification in providing a reliable indication of the knowledge, skills and understanding of the candidate. There is no duty to make adjustments which the qualifications regulators have specified should not be made.

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

- A candidate with 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 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 switched off, he can access the examinations independently.

  He can however have a scribe in the Reading and Writing sections of the GCSE English Language paper. (Where a scribe is used in an examination assessing quality of written communication or spelling, punctuation and grammar, marks can only be awarded if the candidate can demonstrate that he/she has carried out the skills being assessed.)
- A candidate with no hands wishes to take GCE A level Fine Art. It is suggested that mouth or foot painting will be acceptable. The candidate cannot do either and wants another person to paint at her instruction. This is **not** permitted as the assessment includes the skill of painting.

Section B
Adjustments for candidates with disabilities and learning difficulties

Chapter 4 Managing the needs of candidates and principles for centres

Chapter 5 Access arrangements and adjustments

Chapter 6 Modified papers

Chapter 7 Learning difficulties

Chapter 8 Processing applications for access arrangements and adjustments

Chapter 4 Managing the needs of candidates and principles for centres

4.1 Managing the needs of candidates with disabilities and learning difficulties

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

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

4.1.1 Cognition and learning needs†

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

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

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

4.1.2 Communication and interaction needs†

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

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

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

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

4.1.3 Sensory and physical needs

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

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

- supervised rest breaks
- extra time
- a computer reader or a reader
- read aloud or an examination reading pen
- a scribe
- a word processor
- a Language Modifier
- a live speaker
- a Communication Professional
- a practical assistant
- Braille papers, modified enlarged and/or modified language papers.

4.1.4 Social, emotional and mental health needs†

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

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

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

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

4.2 Principles for centres

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

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

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

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

Examples

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

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

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

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

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

- in the classroom (where appropriate);
- working in small groups for reading and/or writing;
- support lessons;
- intervention strategies;
- in internal 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 Part 1 of Form 8 by the SENCo or the assessor working within the centre.

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

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

4.2.6 As subjects vary, leading to different demands of the candidate, support may be needed in just one or two subjects; another candidate may need support in all their subjects. The key principle is that the SENCo, or the assessor working within the centre, can show a history of support and provision. The arrangement **is not** suddenly being granted to the candidate at the time of 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 practise using the access arrangement(s)/reasonable adjustments before his/her first examination. This is particularly so where a computer reader, modified enlarged papers, a scribe, speech recognition technology or a word processor will be used in examinations.

4.2.8 If a candidate has never made use of the arrangement granted to 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, provided the candidate **will not** be placed at a substantial disadvantage. (The SENCo would have monitored the use of the arrangement in internal school tests and mock examinations.)

4.2.9 Where non-examination assessment is marked by teachers, credit must only be given for skills demonstrated by the candidate working independently. Access arrangements/adjustments **must not** compromise assessment requirements.

4.2.10 Where a person is appointed to facilitate an access arrangement/reasonable adjustment(s), i.e.

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

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

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

It **is not** acceptable for a centre to use a Year 12 or Year 13 candidate to facilitate an access arrangement/reasonable adjustment.

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

Examples of failure to comply include:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Examples – evidence for inspection purposes

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Chapter 5 Access arrangements and adjustments

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

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

(where permitted by the specification).

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

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

The SENCo **must** undertake the necessary and appropriate steps to gather an appropriate picture of need and demonstrate normal way of working for a private candidate. This includes distance learners and home educated students. The centre, where required, **must** lead on the assessment process. The candidate **must** be assessed by the centre's appointed assessor. In some instances, depending on 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/reasonable adjustments.

For those centres who accept entries from private candidates, the SENCo **must** also refer to the JCQ document *An overview of the access arrangements and reasonable adjustments process for centres accepting private candidates:*

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

NB

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

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

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

5.1 Supervised rest breaks*

*There **is not** a requirement to process an application for supervised rest breaks using *Access arrangements online*. However, for GCSE and GCE AS and A-level qualifications the SENCo **must** complete the statement within Form 9, confirming the need for supervised rest breaks. This **must** confirm the nature of the candidate's impairment and that supervised rest breaks reflect his/her normal way of working within the centre. A JCQ Centre Inspector may ask to see the completed Form 9 supporting the awarding of supervised rest breaks.

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

Some candidates may additionally require 25% extra time.

5.1.1 The SENCo is allowed to provide a supervised rest break to a candidate where it is 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 (the candidate is disabled within the meaning of the Equality Act); and
- there is a genuine need for the arrangement.

Supervised rest breaks will be awarded on account of:

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

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

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

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

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. It may be helpful to consider in advance of the examination(s) how many breaks a candidate might need and the approximate duration of the supervised rest break. This will allow sufficient staff to be available to facilitate the rest break.

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

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

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

5.2 25% extra time

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

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

Processing applications

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

Where candidates have complex needs other than learning difficulties, please see paragraph 5.2.3.

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

Candidates with learning difficulties – core evidence required

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

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

Substantial impairment

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

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

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

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

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

See paragraphs 7.5.10 to 7.5.13 for further information on reading skills, writing skills and cognitive processing.

When to use a reading speed or writing speed score

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

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

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

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

See paragraphs 7.5.10 to 7.5.13 for further information on reading skills, writing skills and cognitive processing.

Exceptional circumstances

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

Rare and very exceptional circumstances

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Where a candidate progresses from GCSE to GCE qualifications

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

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

A fully completed Form 8 (Parts 1, 2 and 3), signed and dated, may roll forward from GCSE to GCE qualifications where the candidate meets the **current** published criteria for 25% extra time, i.e. the 2023/24 JCQ regulations†. No further assessment is required.

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

The SENCo **must**:

- 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 within the meaning of the Equality Act 2010;
- provide evidence from teaching staff that the candidate has persistent and significant difficulties, and how these substantially impact on teaching and learning.

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

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

The SENCo, or an equivalent member of staff within a FE college, **must** ensure that 25% extra time remains appropriate, practicable and reasonable.

The Form 8 **must** be checked to ensure that all parts of the form have been completed and that it has been signed and dated.

The SENCo **must** check that the candidate meets the **current** published criteria for 25% extra time, i.e. the 2023/24 JCQ regulations, **before** a new online application for 25% extra time is processed.

Evidence from an assessor – Part 2 of Form 8

Standard expected categories

The standard expected categories are where a candidate has:

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

which relate to two different areas of speed of working.

Rare and exceptional cases

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

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

Evidence requirements for 25% extra time

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

+

Part 2 of Form 8 showing:

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

or

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

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

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

+

Part 2 of Form 8 showing:

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

+

Samples of evidence for inspection purposes

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

or

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

or

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

Part 1 of Form 8

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

+

Part 2 of Form 8 showing:

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

+

Samples of evidence for inspection purposes

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

and

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

and

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

and

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

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

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

Types of disability or access needs

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

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

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

Some candidates may additionally require supervised rest breaks.

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

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

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

Substantial impairment – evidence of need

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

- confirm that 25% extra time is the candidate's normal way of working within the centre;
- provide evidence from teaching staff that the candidate has persistent and significant difficulties, and how these substantially impact on teaching and learning.

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

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

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

Specialist evidence **is not** required to recommend 25% extra time. However, it **must** confirm the candidate's disability. The specialist evidence may relate to any age provided it remains current.

Factors the centre must consider

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 every examination/assessment and every subject.** As subjects and the methods of assessment vary, so the demands on the candidate will vary.

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

- practical examinations; or
- non-examination 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 Certificate (ELC) qualifications

For Entry Level Certificate qualifications, the centre **is not** required to have each candidate individually assessed.

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

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

Access arrangements and reasonable adjustments are determined on an individual basis. They are 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 can 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. 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 within the Deadlines section, an application for extra time of up to 50% **must** be processed using *Access arrangements online.*

Access arrangements online will automatically reject applications for extra time of more than 25%. The centre must then make an online referral to the relevant awarding body/bodies using *Access arrangements online*. Each application will be considered in the light of the candidate's needs. An awarding body reserves the right to request 'call-in' 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:

a) Learning difficulties (including a candidate who has a learning difficulty as evidenced by a current EHCP (England), a current Statement of special educational needs (Northern Ireland), or a current Individual Development Plan (Wales)): Very substantial impairment – evidence of need.

A candidate with a learning difficulty which has a very substantial and long-term adverse effect on speed of working (as comprehensively detailed within Part 1 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/fluency; **or**
- speed of writing **and** cognitive processing/fluency; **or**
- **two different areas** of cognitive processing/fluency which have a very substantial and long-term adverse effect on speed of working.

The candidate will have been assessed with current editions of nationally standardised tests conducted **within 26 months of the final examination** (see Chapter 7, section 7.5). This will be in addition to a compelling and substantial picture of need, indicating the candidate's normal way of working, as evidenced within Part 1 of Form 8.

When to use a reading speed or writing speed score

Where a candidate reads for him/herself, a measure of text reading speed can be used as one of the two required scores for extra time of up to 50%. The result will be recorded within Part 2 of Form 8 under 'Other relevant information'.

Where the candidate uses a computer reader, a reader or an examination reading pen, a measure of reading speed **cannot** be used as evidence for extra time of up to 50%.

Where a candidate writes by hand, a measure of writing speed can be used as one of the two required scores for extra time of up to 50%. The result will be recorded within Part 2 of Form 8 under 'Other relevant information'.

Where the candidate uses a scribe, speech recognition technology or a word processor, a measure of writing speed **cannot** be used as evidence for extra time of up to 50%.

See paragraphs 7.5.10 to 7.5.13 for further information on reading skills, writing skills and cognitive processing.

b) A medical condition, a physical disability, a sensory impairment (hearing, vision or multi-sensory impairment): Very substantial impairment – evidence of need.

A candidate who has a formally diagnosed medical condition from a registered specialist, a physical disability, a sensory impairment (hearing, vision or multi-sensory impairment) that very substantially hinders his/her speed of working.

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, 50% extra time will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Where a candidate is **proficient** in using a modified enlarged paper, with or without a computer reader/reader and/or a scribe, 50% extra time will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

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** complete Form 9 to:

- 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 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;
- 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 specialist evidence confirming the candidate's disability:

- a letter/report from CAMHS, a HCPC registered psychologist, a medical consultant, a psychiatrist, a Speech and Language Therapist (SaLT); **or**
- a letter/report from the Local Authority Specialist Service, Local Authority Sensory Impairment Service or Occupational Health Service†; **or**
- a **current** Education, Health and Care Plan (England), a **current** Statement of Special Educational Needs (Northern Ireland), or a **current** Individual Development Plan (Wales) which confirms the candidate's medical condition, physical disability, sensory impairment (hearing, vision or multi-sensory impairment).

†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 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%. The centre must then make an online referral to the relevant awarding body/bodies using *Access arrangements online*. Each application will be considered in the light of the candidate's needs. An awarding body reserves the right to request 'call-in' 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** complete Form 9 to:

- 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 required 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 without the application of extra time of over 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 over 50% is the candidate's normal way of working within the centre **as a direct consequence of their disability** which **must** be supported by specialist evidence.

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 the 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 **cannot** be 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' Part 1 of Form 8 prior to the candidate being assessed. Extra time **was not** needed for GCSE examinations. The SENCo decides to trial and monitor 25% extra time and records its impact and use. By the March of Year 13 a **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 Part 1 of Form 8. Together with the two below average standardised scores which relate to two different areas of speed of working, as recorded within Part 2 of Form 8, the SENCo processes an online application for 25% extra time by 21 March.

Using evidence of cognitive processing difficulties

- A GCSE student has an assessment which confirms the presence of a weak, below average working memory and below average phonological processing (standardised scores of 77 and 82). Her teachers have already observed that 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 online application for 25% extra time based on her two below average standardised scores, as recorded within Part 2 of Form 8, as well as the **picture of need** recorded within Part 1 of Form 8.

Re-assessment in Year 12 – two low average standardised scores (85-89)

- 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. 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 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. Having saved samples of evidence, the SENCo processes an online application for 25% extra time. The application will need to be referred online using *Access arrangements online* to the relevant awarding body/bodies.

Examples - extra time (learning difficulties) (continued)

A candidate with specific learning difficulties with three standardised scores just within the average range (90-94)

- 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 specific learning difficulty. The candidate's standardised scores generally fall just within the average range in tests of visual processing (92), reading speed (94), working memory (89) and rapid naming (91). These scores compare to underlying cognitive abilities which fall into the upper range with a score of 130. Within Part 1 of Form 8, the SENCo can paint a **compelling picture of need** with **substantial evidence** of a significant improvement in quality of performance in mock exams and timed classroom activities when 25% extra time is allowed - in measures of reading speed, writing coherence, quality of ideas and information content.

  The SENCo decides to process an online application for 25% extra time. The application will need to be referred online using *Access arrangements online* to the relevant awarding body/bodies.

A candidate with a vision impairment using Braille papers

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

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

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

A candidate with a vision impairment using modified enlarged 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 orders 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 as her vision impairment **very substantially** hinders her speed of working.

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

5.5 Computer reader/reader

Processing applications

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

A 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 can use a computer reader effectively.

A computer reader

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

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

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

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

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

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

A reader

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

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

Types of disability or access needs

- Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD)
- Learning difficulties
- Sensory and/or physical needs (HI, MSI, PD, VI)
- Social, emotional and mental health needs (e.g. ADHD)
- Speech, Language and Communication Needs (SLCN)

Evidence of need for all types of disability

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

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

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 reading difficulties (the candidate is disabled within the meaning of the Equality Act); **and**
- there is a genuine need for the arrangement.

A computer reader/reader will be awarded on account of:

- cognition and learning needs;
- communication and interaction needs;
- a medical condition formally diagnosed by a registered specialist;
- sensory and physical needs;
- social, emotional and mental health needs.

Entry Level Certificate (ELC) qualifications

For Entry Level Certificate qualifications, the SENCo **must** determine the need for a computer reader and/or a reader based on how the candidate normally works in the classroom.

In Entry Level Certificate English, a reader **is not** permitted in the Reading component. A computer reader may be used in the Reading component of Entry Level Certificate 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.

The need for 25% extra time alongside the use of a computer reader/reader should **always** be considered. If the candidate requires 25% extra time, then he/she **must** meet the published criteria for 25% extra time.
The required evidence **must** be in place to support an online application.

Papers (or sections of papers) testing reading

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

A computer reader is an acceptable arrangement since it allows the candidate to independently meet the requirements of the reading standards.

(See the Permissions table within this section on the use of computer readers/ readers in GCSE and GCE AS and A-level qualifications.)

5.5.7 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. Where reading and writing are being assessed in the same paper, the maximum allowance of 50% extra time **must only** be allocated to the reading section.

Centres should calculate the total time allocated to reading based on the number of marks allocated to the reading questions and add up to a maximum of 50% to that time. Advice from the relevant awarding body may need to be sought.

In a paper (or a section of a paper) testing reading a reader may read back, upon request, what the candidate has written without any emphasis on errors.

5.5.8 A reader would bring their own interpretation to a description of a diagram. This could affect a candidate's response and compromise the reliability of the qualification. A reader should only help a vision impaired candidate retrieve information found in diagrams, graphs, maps and tables in response to a request from the candidate.

Factors the centre must consider

5.5.9 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 reader **cannot** additionally act as the invigilator where he/she is the candidate's subject teacher, Learning Support Assistant or teaching assistant.

5.5.10 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 only require 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 prompt card when he/she needs help with reading. If the group is accommodated in another room, away from the main examination 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** help a vision impaired candidate retrieve information found in diagrams, graphs, maps and tables so that he/she has access to the same visual information as a sighted candidate. The candidate **must** make clear what help he/she requires;
- **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** decode symbols and unit abbreviations in Maths and Science examinations for candidates who require this arrangement to access the assessment, reflecting the candidate's current and normal way of working within the centre;
- **may**, if requested, give the spelling of a word which appears on the paper but otherwise spellings **must not** be given;
- **may** read back, when requested, what the candidate has written without any emphasis on any errors;
- **must** read accurately;
- **must** have appropriate subject knowledge in order to act effectively as a reader in Maths and Science examinations, and decode symbols and formulae with accuracy;
- **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 in a Music examination.

A suggested memory aid for a reader can be found at Appendix 1.

Remember

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

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

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 A4 modified 24 point bold papers, which the SENCo orders. As his condition is a deteriorating one, he has been 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. Her reading age has consistently been below that of her hearing peers. She is at a **substantial disadvantage**. She has regular support with reading in class and teaching resources are modified by a Communication Support Worker. She also has behavioural difficulties at school. She is allowed a reader in all examinations except those testing reading. The use of a reader will remove her **substantial disadvantage**. (A computer reader is not appropriate to her needs because she relies on lip-reading.)
- A candidate with Speech, Language and Communication Needs has a complex language disorder. He has **persistent and significant difficulties** with sentence recall. As this will have a **substantial and adverse impact** on the speed at which he can process spoken information, he is allowed a reader.
- A candidate with ADHD is allowed a laptop with computer reading software (a computer reader) in all subjects, including those testing reading, as this has reflected her normal way of working within the centre since Year 7. The SENCo can produce a statement using Form 9 confirming the nature of the candidate's impairment and that the use of a computer reader reflects her **normal and current way of working within the centre.**
- A blind candidate in A-level Mathematics and Further Mathematics examinations requires a combination of reasonable arrangements. The centre orders Braille papers and tactile diagrams. An application for a practical assistant, a reader and a scribe is subsequently approved by the awarding body having been automatically rejected by the online 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). She has **complex learning needs** – ASD, Dyslexia and Dyspraxia. The candidate has a **current** Education, Health and Care Plan and has received classroom support since Year 7. Her normal way of working is a reader and 25% extra time (since she has **persistent and significant difficulties** in following the reader because of **substantial language and vocabulary difficulties**). The SENCo processes an online 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 can produce a picture of need for a reader using Form 9 (see paragraph 5.5.5).
- A candidate with vision impairment asks the reader if an unlabelled shape on a diagram has five sides and is a pentagon. The reader can state how many sides the shape has but **cannot** confirm that it is a pentagon.

  A reader can only help retrieve visual information that a sighted candidate has access to.

Permissions table for the use of readers and computer readers in GCSE and GCE qualifications			
	Current position		Rationale for current position
Qualification	**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. **NB** 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	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 as this would turn the task into a listening one. **NB** A candidate may however use a computer reader in a MFL Reading paper. A computer reader allows the candidate to independently meet the requirements of the reading standards.

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

	Current position		Rationale for current position
Qualification	**Candidate must read for him/herself**	**Reader allowed**	
GCSE English Language	Yes, in the section of a paper that assesses reading	Yes, except in the section of a paper that assesses reading	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. **NB** 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.
GCSE English Literature	No	Yes	Reading is not being assessed in GCSE English Literature. A reader or a computer reader would be permitted.
GCSE Welsh first language	Yes, in components that assess reading	Yes, except in components that assess reading	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. **NB** 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.
GCSE Welsh Literature	No	Yes	In GCSE Welsh Literature candidates are required to extract literary meaning. A reader or a computer reader would be permitted.
GCSE Welsh second language	Yes, in components that assess reading	Yes, except in components that assess reading	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. **NB** 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.
GCSE MFL specifications	Yes, in MFL Reading papers	Yes, except in MFL Reading papers	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. **NB** A candidate may however use a computer reader in a MFL Reading paper. A computer reader allows the candidate to independently meet the requirements of the reading standards.

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

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

Read aloud

5.6.1 It can make a significant difference to a candidate who **persistently** struggles to understand what they have read to read aloud. Where a candidate is reading difficult text, 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 him/herself **must** be accommodated in another room, away from the main examination room.

5.6.4 A candidate who would normally be eligible for a reader but is not permitted this arrangement in a paper (or a section of a paper) testing reading may read aloud with up to a maximum of 50% extra time.

Examination reading pen

5.6.5 A permitted examination reading pen **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. It may increase the independence of candidates who needed a reader for accuracy rather than comprehension.

The use of an examination reading pen should always be considered for those candidates who only require occasional words or phrases to be read to them.

As a examination reading pen may be used in papers (or sections of papers) testing reading, candidates **cannot** additionally be granted up to a maximum of 50% extra time in place of the reader.

Example – examination reading pen

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

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

5.7 Scribe/speech recognition technology

Processing applications

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

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

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

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

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

A scribe

5.7.2 A scribe is a responsible adult who, in non-examination assessments and/or in an examination but not in a Speaking Test, types or writes a candidate's dictated answers to the questions. (See the rules – the use of a scribe within this section.)

If a candidate dictates answers on to a tape, the scribe **must** type or write the candidate's dictated answers to the questions. The candidate **must** be present when the scribe types or writes their dictated answers. (A scribe cover sheet **must** be completed.)

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

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

Use of speech recognition technology

5.7.4 Where the centre has approval for the use of a scribe and where it reflects the candidate's normal way of working within the centre, as appropriate to his/her needs, the candidate may alternatively use:

- speech recognition technology with predictive text when the candidate dictates into a word processor. Software (a screen reader) may be used to read back and correct the candidate's dictated answers;
  (**NB** This arrangement **will not** be permitted in ELC, GCSE and GCE AS, A-level Modern Foreign Language specifications. See paragraph 5.7.7.)
- computer software, producing speech, which is used to dictate to a scribe.

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

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

5.7.5 Where the centre has approval for the use of a scribe and where it reflects the candidate's normal way of working within the centre, as appropriate to his/her needs, the candidate may alternatively use:

- a word processor with the spelling and grammar check switched on; **or**
- a word processor with predictive text/spelling and grammar check switched on.

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

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

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

In all cases a scribe cover sheet **must** be completed.

Types of disability or access needs

- Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD)
- Learning difficulties
- Sensory and/or physical needs (HI, MSI, PD, VI)
- Social, emotional and mental health needs (e.g. ADHD)
- Speech, Language and Communication Needs (SLCN)

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

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

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

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

Learning difficulties

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

An assessment **no earlier than the start of Year 9** (Part 2 of Form 8) in relation to the candidate's writing skills is required. (See Chapter 7, paragraph 7.5.11 for more detail.)

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

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

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

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

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

Where a candidate has complex needs, i.e.

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

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

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

Substantial impairment – evidence of need

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

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

So as not to give an unfair advantage, the SENCo **must** complete Form 9 addressing the three bullet points below:

- confirm that a scribe is the candidate's normal way of working within the centre;
- provide evidence from teaching staff that the candidate has persistent and significant difficulties, and how these substantially impact on teaching and learning;
- confirm if there are some subjects (e.g. Maths, Science) where the candidate **cannot** use a word processor with the spelling and grammar check or predictive text facility switched off.

The SENCo's detailed information, as above, will be supported by specialist evidence confirming the candidate's disability:

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

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

The specialist evidence **is not** required to recommend a scribe but to simply confirm the candidate's disability. The specialist evidence may relate to any age provided it remains current.

Where a candidate progresses from GCSE to GCE qualifications

When a candidate progresses from GCSE to GCE AS and/or A-level qualifications a new online application for a scribe **must** be processed.

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

A fully completed Form 8 (Parts 1, 2 and 3), signed and dated, may roll forward from GCSE to GCE qualifications†. 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/or A-level examinations. (This updated centre-based evidence **must** be completed using Form 8RF and **must** specifically relate to GCE AS and/or A-level examinations).

The SENCo **must**:

- confirm that a scribe **continues** to be the candidate's normal way of working within the centre as a direct consequence of their disability within the meaning of the Equality Act 2010;
- provide evidence from teaching staff that the candidate has persistent and significant difficulties, and how these substantially impact on teaching and learning.

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

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

The SENCo, or an equivalent member of staff within a FE college, **must** ensure that a scribe remains appropriate, practicable and reasonable.

Form 8 **must** be checked to ensure that all parts of the form have been completed, and that it has been signed and dated, **before** a new online application for a scribe is processed.

Use of a scribe – Modern Foreign Language examinations

5.7.6 A scribe **will not** be allowed in Modern Foreign Language examinations, unless the candidate can dictate foreign words letter by letter (see paragraph 5.7.7).

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

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.

5.7.7 In Modern Foreign Language Writing examinations, 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 examinations, marks are awarded for comprehension. Sometimes the spelling of a word in a language can indicate a particular tense and this can be significant in the marking process.

In Modern Foreign Language Listening and Reading examinations 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

5.7.8 In subjects where quality of written communication (QWC) is being assessed or where the candidate's spelling, punctuation and grammar (SPaG) is 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 spelling, punctuation and grammar, marks can only be awarded if the candidate can demonstrate that he/she has carried out the 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 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.)

It **must** be recorded on the scribe cover sheet that the candidate dictated spellings and/or punctuation.

Entry Level Certificate (ELC) qualifications

For Entry Level Certificate 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 based on how the candidate normally works in the classroom.

Factors the centre must consider

5.7.9 A scribe **will not** be permitted to perform tasks which are part of the assessment objectives. For further information please consult the awarding body.

5.7.10 In cases where a candidate will be working with 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 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 Part 1 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'.

Where a candidate requires 25% extra time without the use of a scribe, a separate application for 25% extra time is required. The candidate **must** meet the published criteria for 25% extra time.

5.7.11 Where a candidate with a temporary injury at the time of the examination needs 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 rules;
- ensure that the scribe cover sheet is completed.

5.7.12 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, away from the main examination room.

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

The rules – the use of a scribe

- **must** type or write 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 2.

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

The cover sheet **must**:

- indicate whether graphs and diagrams were completed by the candidate or the scribe;
- be signed by the scribe and countersigned by the head of centre or the examinations officer;
- 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. However, he can use a word processor, with the spelling and grammar check facility switched off, 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 online 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 if 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.
- A candidate with **substantial learning difficulties** is assessed by the centre's appointed assessor. She achieves a below average standardised spelling score of 73. As many of her incorrect spellings are unrecognisable, the SENCo decides to apply for a scribe which reflects her normal way of working in internal school tests. The SENCo processes an online application for a scribe which is approved.
- 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 is totally unable to write in any 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 can answer multiple choice questions but has a complete block when writing detailed answers. The SENCo arranged for his mock GCSE English Language exams 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 online application for a scribe which is approved.

5.8 Word processor*

*There **is not** a requirement to process an application for a word processor using *Access arrangements online*. No evidence is needed to support the arrangement for inspection purposes. (This also applies where a candidate is using a word processor on a temporary basis because of a temporary injury.)

5.8.1 Centres are allowed to provide a word processor with the spelling and grammar check facility/predictive text switched off where it is the candidate's normal way of working within the centre.

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

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

Centres should refer to **paragraph 5.7.5** for the use of a word processor with the spelling and grammar check switched on.

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 A candidate may use a word processor in an examination to type certain questions, i.e. those requiring extended writing, and handwrite shorter answers.

NB 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 as the candidate avoids the difficulty of visually tracking between the question paper and computer screen.

5.8.4 For the regulations on the use of word processors in written examinations, please see the JCQ document *Instructions for conducting examinations* (commonly known as the JCQ 'ICE' document):

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

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

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

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

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

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

This list **is not** exhaustive.

A member of the centre's senior leadership team **must** produce a word processor policy, specific to the centre, which details the criteria the centre uses to award and allocate word processors for examinations and assessments. This policy **must** be available for inspection.

Examples – Word processor

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

Examples – Word processor and 25% extra time

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

5.9 Braille transcript*

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

5.9.1 Manual braillers will require transcription into print. Braille scripts **must** be transcribed by the centre.

5.9.2 For the regulations on the use of a Braille transcript, please see the JCQ document *Instructions for conducting examinations:*

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

5.10 Prompter*

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

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

For example, the candidate:

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

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

5.10.2 For the regulations on the use of a prompter please see the JCQ document *Instructions for conducting examinations:*

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

Examples – prompters

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

5.11 Language Modifier

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

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

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

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 using current editions of nationally standardised tests conducted **within 26 months of the final examination**. (The candidate may be assessed by a qualified Teacher of the Deaf who will record the results of their assessment within Part 2 of Form 8.)

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

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

A Language Modifier

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

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

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

Papers (or sections of papers) testing reading

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

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

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

Factors the centre must consider

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

A 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 a Language Modifier without the need to successfully complete accredited training.

5.11.6 The candidate should, wherever possible, be familiar with the 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 Language Modifier using a trial presentation; **and**
- be comfortable with the method of communication.

5.11.7 The candidate and the Language Modifier should be accommodated in another room, away from the main examination room.

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

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

5.11.10 An approved application for a Language Modifier will allow the centre to open the question paper packet **one hour before the awarding body's published starting time for the examination.** A question paper should be provided to the 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 the question paper if, for example, potentially problematic language is identified.

The 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 Language Modifier's question paper **must:**

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

Remember

Aside from ELC qualifications, Form 6A (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, Form 13 **must** be downloaded from the Centre Admin Portal (CAP). CAP can be accessed via any of the awarding bodies' secure extranet sites.

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

The rules – the use of a 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 a 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 Language Modifier 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 Language Modifier cover sheet.

A suggested memory aid for a Language Modifier can be found at Appendix 3.

5.12 Live speaker for pre-recorded examination components*

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

5.12.1 The SENCo is allowed to provide a live speaker for pre-recorded examination components, e.g. MFL Listening examinations, where it is the candidate's normal way of working within the centre. The candidate will have **persistent and significant difficulties** in following speech at normal speed.

5.12.2 For aural tests, clear amplification may be necessary to improve the candidate's ability to hear, or a transcript of a listening test may be read to enable the candidate to also lip/speech-read. (See Chapter 6, paragraph 6.6.5 for further information on ordering transcripts of tests.) The SENCo 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 in a Listening examination.

5.12.4 Where the initial letters of words could be easily confused, e.g. deux fois and neuf fois, the live speaker may:

- hold up a card with the initial letter, i.e. 'd' or 'n';
- write 'n' or 'd' on a board;
- finger spell or cue the initial letter of the word.

5.12.5 The live speaker should, wherever possible, be the candidate's subject or specialist teacher. However, an invigilator **must always** be present in the examination room.

5.12.6 Ideally a live speaker should work with one candidate. The centre **must always** consider the candidates' abilities as lip/speech readers when requiring them to share a live speaker. There **must never** be more than six candidates to one live speaker and candidates should be seated to gain maximum benefit from the live speaker.

5.12.7 Where CDs or transcripts of tests are used, the live speaker should be allowed access to the CD or the transcript, **one hour before the awarding body's published starting time for the examination.**

This is to allow time for the live speaker to prepare. It may be necessary to delay the start of the examination for the candidate(s) concerned. The candidate(s) **must** be placed under centre supervision whilst the live speaker prepares for the examination.

5.12.8 Additional repetition is allowed, if necessary, to take into account **persistent** loss of concentration or to enable the candidate to process the information more easily.

25% extra time may be needed due to the additional repetition and the candidate's **persistent and significant difficulties** in following speech at normal speed. (See Chapter 5, paragraph 5.2.3.)

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

An application for extra time **must always** be processed online.

5.12.9 If the recording involves the use of two or more characters, a separate live speaker could be used for each role. However, if it is felt desirable to only use one live speaker for the entire test, the live speaker **must** make it clear which character is speaking.

5.13 Communication Professional (for candidates using Sign Language)*

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

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

A Communication Professional

5.13.2 The role of a Communication Professional is to present the questions in a different language without:

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

5.13.3 A Communication Professional will work 'live' in the presence of the candidate during the examination to allow for the candidate's regional variations in BSL/ISL signs. Consequently, this cannot be checked by the awarding body for accuracy. **Great care must be taken not to disadvantage or advantage the candidate.** Centres should video the signing of the Communication Professional to demonstrate accuracy.

The rules – the use of a Communication Professional

5.13.4 The Communication Professional **must** be proficient in the use of the candidate's sign language, ideally being qualified to a **minimum** of BSL/ISL at Level 3 (and aspiring towards Level 6). The Communication Professional **must** be at an appropriate level for the examination. It is advisable that the Communication Professional should also be a qualified Language Modifier. The Communication Professional **must** be familiar to the candidate and **must always** work at the candidate's pace.

5.13.5 The Communication Professional **must** be familiar with the subject being examined and the candidate's normal way of working. This will ensure that the meaning of the question **is not** changed and that technical and subject specific terms are recognised and finger spelt. (Technical and subject specific terms **must not** be signed.)

(The candidate's ability to recognise and understand the English version of the technical or subject specific terms within a subject is part of the assessment. If such terms are signed instead of finger spelt, then the demands of the question will have been compromised. **This will constitute malpractice.**)

5.13.6 A Communication Professional **is not** a reader. However, the same person may act as a Communication Professional and a reader. Permission must have been given for the use of a Communication Professional and a reader. The regulations for the use of each arrangement must be strictly adhered to. (See Chapter 5, section 5.5, for the rules on the use of a reader.)

5.13.7 The Communication Professional can sign the instructions and questions to candidates taking written papers except in Modern Foreign Languages or English, Irish or Welsh Language examinations.

5.13.8 In Modern Foreign Languages or English, Irish or Welsh Language examinations the Communication Professional can only sign the instructions/rubric, and not the questions.

5.13.9 The Communication Professional **must not** sign texts/source material or literary extracts.

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

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

A suggested memory aid for a Communication Professional can be found at Appendix 4.

Factors the centre must consider

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

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

5.13.14 The question paper packet may be opened **one hour before the awarding body's published starting time for the examination.** A question paper should be provided to the Communication Professional to allow 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 Communication Professional may need to be accommodated in another room, away from the main examination room, in which case a separate invigilator will be required.

Entry Level Certificate (ELC) qualifications

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

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

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

Remember

Aside from Entry Level Certificate qualifications, Form 6 (Communication Professional cover sheet) **must** be printed from the JCQ website:

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

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

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

5.14 Practical assistant

Processing applications

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

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

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

5.14.4 Where approved, the practical assistant will carry out practical tasks at the instruction of the candidate.

(See The rules – the use of a practical assistant within this section.)

For example:

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

Factors the centre must consider

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

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

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

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

The rules – the use of a practical assistant

- **must** perform practical tasks **as approved by the awarding body** and according to the candidate's instructions, unless the skill to be performed is the focus of the assessment, (in which case the practical assistant **will not** be permitted) or the procedure would be unsafe;
- **must** immediately refer any problems in communication during the assessment to the invigilator or examinations officer;
- **must abide by the regulations since failure to do so could lead to the disqualification of the candidate;**
- **must** ensure the safety of the candidate and those around 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 Entry Level Certificate qualifications, Form 13 **must** be downloaded from the Centre Admin Portal (CAP). CAP can be accessed via any of the awarding bodies' secure extranet sites.

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

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

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

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

Examples – practical assistant

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

5.15 Alternative site for the conduct of examinations

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

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

The SENCo **must** liaise with the examinations officer who will need to refer to the JCQ document *Instructions for conducting examinations:*

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

5.15.1 The candidate will be sitting their 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, emotional and mental health needs.

The candidate has:

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

The SENCo, or a senior member of staff with pastoral responsibilities, **must:**

- be satisfied that the candidate 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 for an alternative site using *Access arrangements online.* Centres **must not** process an online application using 'Other'. However, the examinations officer **must** submit an online alternative site form using the Centre Admin Portal (CAP). This is only a notification process and not an approval process.

5.16 Other arrangements for candidates with disabilities*

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

- Alternative rooming arrangements, e.g. a room for a smaller group of candidates with similar needs (formerly known as separate invigilation)
- Amplification equipment
- Braillers
- 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
- Fidget toys and stress balls
- Low vision aid/magnifier
- Non-electronic ear defenders/ear plugs
- Optical Character Reader (OCR) scanners
- Separate invigilation within the centre (sitting the examination outside of the main examination hall/room, e.g. a room for a smaller group of candidates)
- Squared paper for visual spatial difficulties

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.

In the case of alternative rooming arrangements, the candidate's disability is **established within the centre** (see Chapter 4, paragraph 4.1.4). It is known to a Form Tutor, a Head of Year, the SENCo or a senior member of staff with pastoral responsibilities. For example, a long-term medical condition which has a substantial and adverse effect.

Alternative rooming arrangements **must** reflect the candidate's normal and current way of working in internal school tests and mock examinations.

Nervousness, low level anxiety or being worried about examinations **is not** sufficient grounds for separate invigilation within the centre.

Examples of alternative rooming arrangements

- A candidate has a formal diagnosis of a tic disorder. This causes him to grunt as well as sometimes shout out words. The SENCo considers an alternative rooming arrangement to be appropriate based on his established difficulties.
- A candidate has a formal diagnosis of misophonia from a specialist. As the candidate has a distressing and exceptional aversion to sounds, the SENCo considers an alternative rooming arrangement to be an appropriate and reasonable adjustment. The exams officer will ensure that aversive sounds in the room where the candidate will be accommodated for their GCSE examinations, such as a clock ticking, will be minimized.

A blog on understanding the requirements for alternative rooming arrangements has been produced by the JCQ:

https://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/blogs/

For further information please see Section 14 of the JCQ document *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 Chapter 6, section 6.5.

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 assessment objectives were accessible.

5.17.2 An application for an exemption **must** be submitted in line with the published deadlines listed within 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 arrangement is available;
- only apply to whole components;
- only apply 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 Chapter 1, sections 1.6 and 1.8 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.

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

The centre **must** indicate the candidate's disability 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 uploaded to *Access arrangements online,* along with any other relevant documentation, to support the online application for an exemption.

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

5.18 Bilingual translation dictionary with 25% extra time

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

For the regulations on the use of a bilingual dictionary including those subjects where a bilingual dictionary is not permitted, please see the JCQ document *Instructions for conducting examinations:*

https://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/ice---instructions-for-conducting-examinations

Processing applications

5.18.1 A bilingual translation dictionary and 25% extra time is available to candidates entered for the following Entry Level, Level 1 and Level 2 qualifications, **and** who meet **all** of the published criteria in paragraph 5.18.6:

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

5.18.2 Where a bilingual translation dictionary with 25% extra time is to be used in the following Level 1 and Level 2 qualifications, an online application must be processed using *Access arrangements online:*

- AQA Level 1 and Level 2 Technical qualifications
- Cambridge Nationals
- Cambridge Technicals (Level 2)
- GCSE
- WJEC Level 1 and Level 2 General qualifications
- WJEC Level 1 and Level 2 Vocational Awards (Technical Awards)
- WJEC Level 1 and Level 2 Vocational qualifications.

Form BD25% **must** be available at the centre for inspection. **The form must be completed by the EAL Co-ordinator or the SENCo.**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

5.18.6 25% 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;
  - prepared for or entered for IGCSE qualifications where the question papers were set in English;
  - prepared in English for other qualifications, e.g. IELTS qualifications, Preliminary English Tests;
- the candidate has to refer to the bilingual translation dictionary **so often** that examination time is used for this purpose, delaying the answering of questions;
- the provision of 25% extra time reflects the candidate's normal way of working with the dictionary. (A definition of normal way of working is provided within Chapter 4, paragraph 4.2.5.)

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

Form BD25%, completed by the EAL Co-ordinator or the SENCo, **must** confirm **all** of the above.

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

5.19 Access to a mobile phone for medical purposes

5.19.1 For those qualifications listed within the Deadlines section, an application **must** be processed using *Access arrangements online*.

5.19.2 The SENCo **must** complete Form 9 confirming the candidate's medical condition and the need to access their mobile phone during an examination. Formal evidence **must** be available to confirm the candidate's medical condition.

5.19.3 *Access arrangements online* will approve applications where a candidate with a medical condition will be subject to 1:1 invigilation when in possession of their mobile phone to ensure the integrity of the examination.

5.20 Remote invigilation

5.20.1 For those qualifications listed within the Deadlines section, an application **must** be processed using *Access arrangements online*.

5.20.2 *Access arrangements online* will automatically reject applications for the use of remote invigilation. The centre must then make an online referral.

5.20.3 The remote invigilation of examinations may be acceptable in **exceptional circumstances** to support a candidate who would not otherwise be able to sit their examinations. The candidate has:

- a formally diagnosed medical or psychological condition; **or**
- a physical disability; **or**
- a very substantial temporary illness or temporary injury.

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

5.20.4 As part of the online referral process the SENCo **must** complete Form 9 confirming that **all** of the following have been exhausted:

- the candidate sitting their examinations at the centre through alternative rooming arrangements;
- an invigilator going to the candidate's home to conduct each examination;
- the candidate has not already completed some examinations and would therefore be able to meet the published criteria for special consideration.

The SENCo **must** also confirm that the candidate would be disadvantaged by not being able to sit their examinations using remote invigilation.

5.20.5 The head of centre **must** confirm that a remotely invigilated examination can be run in accordance with the awarding body's requirements as well as the expectations set out in the JCQ document *Instructions for conducting examinations*.

5.20.6 Remote invigilation can only be used where an awarding body has given prior approval. Approval **will not** be granted on the day of an examination.

5.21 Timetable variation requiring overnight supervision for a candidate with a disability

5.21.1 For those qualifications listed within the Deadlines section, an application **must** be processed using *Access arrangements online*.

5.21.2 An application for a timetable variation may be processed where a candidate has:

- a formally diagnosed medical or psychological condition; **or**
- a physical disability; **or**
- a visual impairment.

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

5.21.3 The SENCo **must** complete Form 9 confirming the candidate's disability and the need for a timetable variation.

5.21.4 *Access arrangements online* will approve applications where only one examination in the series is being transferred from the published afternoon session to the following morning.

The centre will be required to confirm that the candidate and their parent(s)/carer(s) will adhere to the requirements for overnight supervision. A completed overnight supervision declaration form **must** be completed and be available for inspection.

5.21.5 *Access arrangements online* will automatically reject applications where it is proposed that multiple timetable variations will be required during the examination series. The centre **must** then make an online referral.

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

Chapter 6 Modified papers

6.1 Modified papers – an overview of the process

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

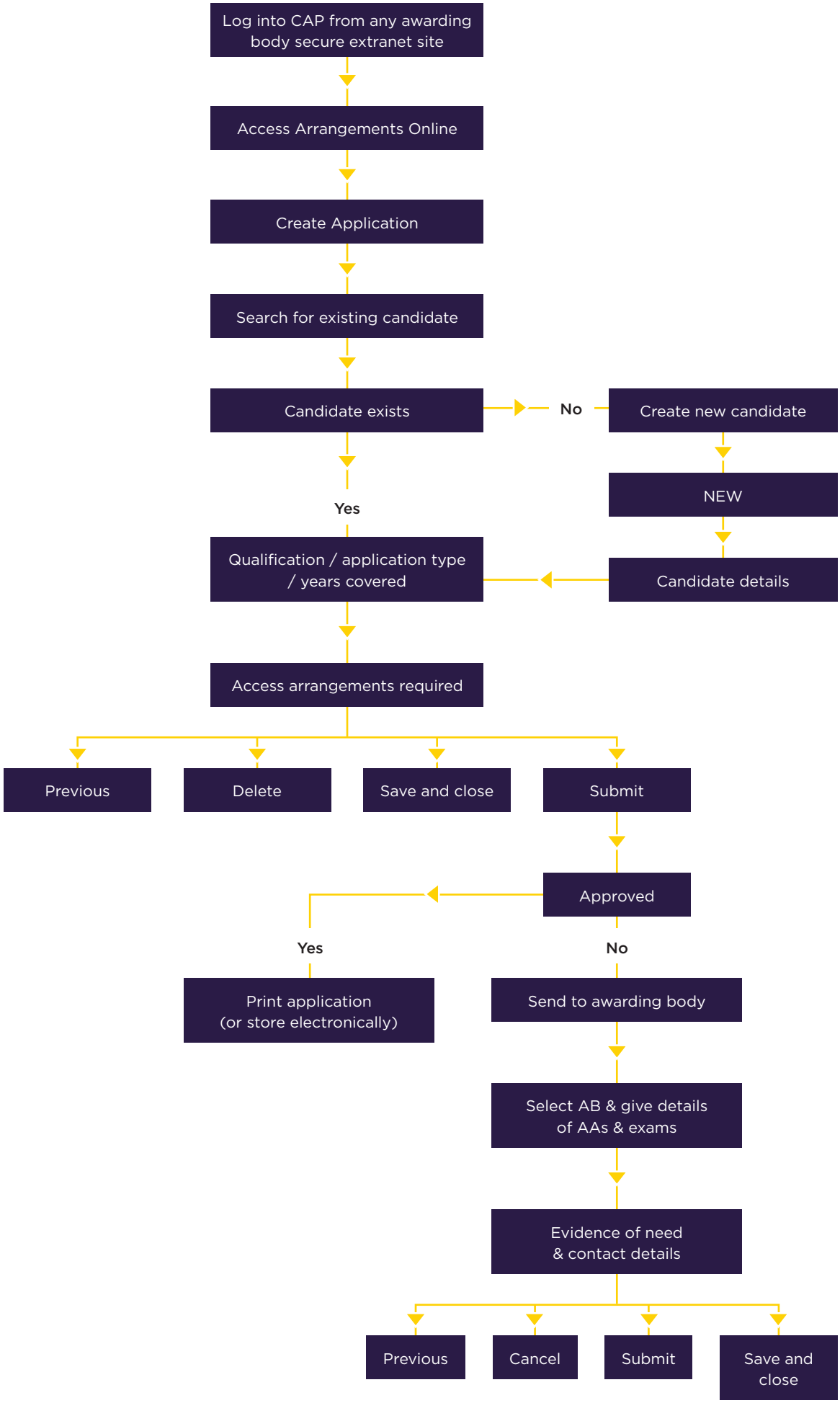
The standard formats available are:

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

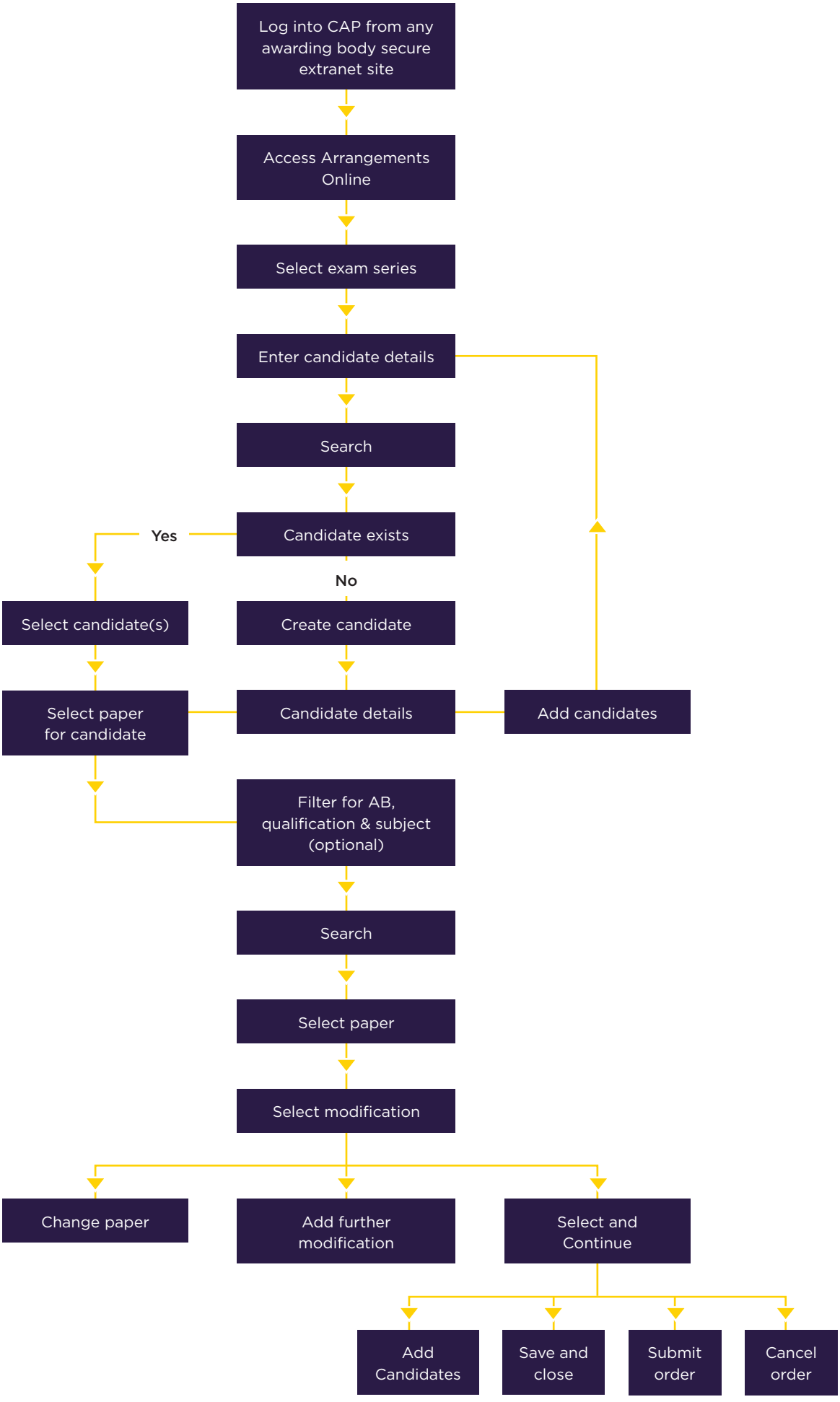
Centres should note that the option of an A3 modified enlarged paper, 36 point bold, may not be available in all subjects.

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

Access arrangement requests



Modified paper requests



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

http://www.ukaaf.org/sectors/#education

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

If a candidate requires access to a modified paper which has not previously been produced by the awarding body, it cannot be downloaded from the awarding body's website, then the awarding body **must** be contacted by no later than 31 October 2023 where the candidate will be sitting examinations in June 2024.

6.2 Braille papers

6.2.1 **Braille papers are only produced when orders are made by the deadline. They are not produced automatically.** Awarding bodies **do not** require evidence of the candidate's vision impairment.

6.2.2 The layout and presentation of the standard paper is modified prior to Brailling by a teacher specialised in vision impairments.

6.2.3 The modified paper is then sent to a Brailling agency for the content to be transcribed into Grade 2 contracted Unified English Braille (UEB).

6.2.4 Tactile diagrams and graphs will be provided where appropriate with the Braille paper. Tactile diagrams **do not** need to be ordered separately.

6.2.5 Centres may be required to provide models in advance for certain types of questions.

6.2.6 Videos or films used in assessments may be requested with audio description.

6.3 Modified enlarged papers

6.3.1 **Modified enlarged papers are only produced when orders are made by the deadline. They are not produced automatically.** As candidates' needs are on-going and long term, and modification of printed material reflects their normal way of working within the classroom, an assessment of the candidate **is not** required to determine their need for modified enlarged papers.

6.3.2 Modified enlarged papers are intended for candidates who cannot read a standard examination paper. The layout and presentation of the standard paper is modified to remove elements of visual complexity without changing the demands of the assessment. Pictures and diagrams are often re-drawn to make them more visually accessible.

6.3.3 Centres should note that sometimes it may be necessary for an awarding body to produce a page in a larger format for diagrams.

6.3.4 Centres may be required to provide models in advance for certain types of questions.

6.3.5 Some candidates with a severe vision impairment may benefit from using an electronic or optical magnifier with a modified enlarged paper. (Centres **do not** need to process an online application for a magnifier.)

6.3.6 Where a centre requires an A4 modified 18 point bold paper in a non-interactive (PDF) electronic format the relevant awarding body/bodies should be contacted.

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

6.4 Reasonable adjustments – modified enlarged papers

6.4.1 The standard modified paper formats will, in the vast majority of cases, enable a candidate with a substantial and long-term vision impairment to access 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 to remove elements of visual complexity.

6.4.3 Where a disabled candidate requires question papers in an alternative format, the centre **must** discuss his/her requirements at the earliest opportunity with the relevant awarding body's Modified Papers Unit, ideally at the start of the course. The SENCo **must** demonstrate to the awarding body that all appropriate adjustments such as a computer reader, an examination reading pen, a magnifier and a reader, alongside the standard modified enlarged paper formats, have been considered and totally exhausted.

The application of the reasonable adjustment, i.e. question papers in an alternative format, will depend on several factors including:

- the needs of the disabled candidate; **and**
- the effectiveness of the adjustment and its cost.

6.4.4 An adjustment **will not** be approved if it involves unreasonable costs, time frames or affects the security or integrity of the assessment. This is because the adjustment is not 'reasonable'.

6.5 Coloured/enlarged paper (e.g. A3 unmodified enlarged papers)

6.5.1 AQA, OCR and Pearson centres

Where a candidate requires a question paper on coloured paper and/or enlarged from A4 to A3, it is strongly recommended that a PDF copy of the standard question paper is downloaded from AQA Centre Services, Pearson Edexcel Online (SDS) or OCR (DFD) within 90 minutes of the awarding body's published starting time for the examination.

CCEA and WJEC centres

Where a candidate requires a question paper on coloured paper and/or enlarged from A4 to A3, it is strongly recommended that a non-interactive electronic (PDF) question paper is ordered via *Access arrangements online.*

The use of a PDF copy of the question paper will ensure better print quality and reduce the possibility of human error when collating and stapling.

Alternatively, the centre may open the question paper packet **in the secure room** within 90 minutes of the awarding body's published starting time for the examination. Prior permission **is not** required.

Only the following actions are permissible:

- copying and enlarging the standard question paper from A4 to A3; **and/or**
- copying a question paper onto coloured paper; **and/or**
- producing 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 the centre's 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/media

Modified language papers

6.6.1 Where a question 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 Many question papers are already language modified since language specialists have been involved in the question paper setting process. All awarding bodies have processes in place to ensure their assessments are fit for purpose and accessible and will either use BATOD modifiers or BATOD guidance.

In such circumstances the standard question 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.)*

Transcript of Listening test/media

6.6.5 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 track 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 on the use of a live speaker in pre-recorded examination components.)

6.6.6 Media 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 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.

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

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

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

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

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 which will enable the candidate(s) to access their examinations.

6.9 Final deadlines for submitting orders for modified papers

Exam series	Last date by which orders must be made
November 2023	20 September 2023
January 2024	4 October 2023
June 2024	31 January 2024

GCSE January 2024 examination series – GCSE specifications **are not** available to centres in England.

For those candidates who decide to re-sit GCSE units in June 2024, following the publication of January 2024 GCSE examination results, orders for modified papers must be received no later than 21 March 2024.

(For unitised GCSE qualifications in Northern Ireland in March 2024 please see CCEA's website for information.)

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

Late requests may not be fulfilled.

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

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 paragraphs 7.3.3 and 7.3.4). This ensures that the access arrangements/reasonable adjustments approved allow the candidate to access the assessment, but do not result in him/her gaining an unfair advantage.

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

7.1 Accountabilities

7.1.1 The SENCo **must:**

- ensure that applications are processed **on time**, no later than the published deadline;
- ensure that the **full** supporting evidence is in place **before** an online application is processed;
- review the evidence **before** an online application is processed, ensuring that the candidate does meet the published criteria for the respective arrangement;
- hold all supporting evidence and present such evidence to a JCQ Centre Inspector upon request; **and**
- ensure that the agreed adjustment has been put in place **before** the candidate's first examination, e.g. internal school tests and mock examinations.

7.1.2 The centre's appointed assessor **must:**

- record the results of any tests completed indicating that the impairment has a **substantial and long-term adverse effect** on the candidate's performance;
- only work within their area of expertise **and** in an ethical fashion;
- use **current** editions of nationally standardised tests appropriate to the candidate;
- report the results of their assessment within Part 2 of Form 8; **and**
- provide the centre with evidence of their qualification(s) **before** assessing any candidate (see paragraph 7.3.3).

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

7.3 Appointment of assessors

7.3.1 The head of centre is responsible for:

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

The JCQ **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 at or equivalent to Level 7.

7.3.3 A head of centre will appoint:

- an access arrangements assessor who has successfully completed a post-graduate course at or equivalent to Level 7, including at least 100 hours relating to individual specialist assessment†. An access arrangements assessor may conduct assessments to be recorded within Part 2 of Form 8; **and/or**

  †The reference to at least 100 hours relating to individual specialist assessment would include lecture, seminar and tutorial time, study time, assessment time and time spent completing assignments. Courses which are accredited at AMBDA or APC Level would meet this requirement, as would post-graduate courses at or equivalent to Level 7 which provide a qualification in access arrangements assessment.

- a specialist teacher assessor with a **current** SpLD Assessment Practising Certificate, as awarded by BDA, the Dyslexia Guild or Patoss and listed on the SASC website, who may conduct assessments to be recorded within Part 2 of Form 8 and where necessary undertake full diagnostic assessments; **and/or**
- an appropriately qualified psychologist registered with the Health & Care Professions Council who may conduct assessments to be recorded within Part 2 of Form 8 and where necessary undertake a full assessment.

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

- the theoretical basis underlying psychometric tests, such as the concepts of validity and reliability; standard deviations and the normal curve; raw scores, standard scores, quotients, percentiles and age equivalent scores; the concept of statistically significant discrepancies between scores; standard error of measurement and confidence intervals;
- the appropriate use of nationally standardised tests for the age group being tested;
- the objective administration of attainment tests which can be administered individually. This **must** include tests of reading accuracy, reading comprehension, reading speed and spelling. Appropriate methods of assessing writing skills, including speed, **must** also be covered;
- the appropriate selection and objective use of tests of cognitive skills (see paragraph 7.5.12);
- the ethical administration of testing including the ability to understand the limitation of their own skills and experience, and to 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 document *Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments* and the principles, procedures and accountabilities involved;
- be familiar with the Equality Act 2010 (although it is not their role to determine what is a 'reasonable adjustment', but rather to help identify access arrangements that might assist the candidate in examinations and assessments and are thus potentially reasonable adjustments);
- either hold an appropriate qualification to teach and make recommendations for secondary aged or adult learners who have learning difficulties or be a HCPC registered psychologist.

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

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

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

Alternatively, the assessor is:

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

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

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

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

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

7.4 Reporting the appointment of assessors

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

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

- screenshot of listing for ETAAC Certificate Holders showing the certificate number; or
- screenshot of listing for Patoss AAA Certificate Holders showing the certificate number.

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

7.4.3 The names of all other assessors, who are assessing candidates studying qualifications as listed within the Deadlines section, **must** be entered into *Access arrangements online* to confirm their status.

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 the centre's appointed 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 required in Part 1 of Form 8. The SENCo and the assessor **must** work together to ensure a joined-up and consistent process.

7.5.3 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.**

7.5.4 Assessors **must** personally conduct the assessments. They **must not** sign off assessments carried out by another professional.

7.5.5 The assessor **must** carry out tests which are relevant to support the application.

7.5.6 **Current** editions of nationally standardised tests which produce standardised scores **must** be used, where published.

7.5.7 The candidate's chronological age **must** be less than the 'ceiling' of the test, unless there is no published test for the candidate's age.

7.5.8 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 84 or less are described as 'below average'. Standardised scores of 85-89 are described as 'low average'. Test results for Part 2 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.

7.5.9 **Reading skills**

Reading comprehension: for candidates potentially requiring a Language Modifier (see section 5.11) 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), or reading comprehension, is within normal limits for his/her age, may read slowly because he/she:

- takes longer than expected to decode the words, leading to slow reading (slow reading speed);
- needs to re-read text many times to absorb its meaning (slow reading comprehension speed).

There are various ways of assessing text level reading speed:

- a test which assesses speed at text level (known as reading rate or reading speed);
- a test which combines text level speed and accuracy (sometimes known as reading fluency);
- a test that assesses the time taken to both read the text and to answer questions on what has been read. The test **must** provide a score for reading comprehension speed, not just for reading comprehension.

Where a candidate reads for him/herself, a measure of text reading speed may be used as one of the two required scores for 25% extra time. The results will be recorded within Part 2 of Form 8 under 'Reading Speed'.

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

Tests which measure single word reading speed and efficiency **are not** appropriate in this context. However, they may contribute to cognitive processing measures for extra time, as recorded within Part 2 of Form 8 under cognitive processing or in 'Other relevant information'.

7.5.10 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.**

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

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

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

Where the candidate writes by hand, an assessment of writing speed may be used as one of the two required measures for 25% extra time. The result will be recorded within Part 2 of Form 8 under 'Writing Speed'.

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

Where a candidate uses a word processor with the spell check enabled or predictive text, a subject-specific bank of words is **not** permitted.

7.5.11 Cognitive processing/fluency

Different areas of cognitive processing/fluency assessments would include:

- short-term/working verbal memory
- short-term/working visual memory (short-term/working verbal and visual memory may be combined within a composite score)
- phonological awareness
- phonological memory
- phonological processing speed/rapid naming
- visual processing speed
- visual/motor processing
- other measures as determined appropriate for the candidate by an assessor, for example, word reading fluency/sight word efficiency, decoding fluency/non-word reading efficiency, associational /oral fluency, orthographic/spelling fluency*
- mathematical processing†.

*Spelling fluency measures the time taken to spell words. A timed or untimed test of spelling accuracy or attainment **is not** acceptable.

Where a candidate spells for him/herself, a measure of orthographic/spelling fluency can be used as one of the two required scores for 25% extra time.

Where a candidate uses a scribe, speech recognition technology or a word processor with the spell check switched on, a measure of orthographic/spelling fluency **cannot** be used as one of the two required scores for 25% extra time.

†The time taken to process mathematical concepts, sometimes known as mathematical fluency. A timed assessment of mathematical computation or attainment **is not** acceptable. An assessment of mathematical processing **must** only be used as one of the two required measures for 25% extra time in Mathematics examinations. The mathematical processing score **must** be below average. An assessment of mathematical processing **can only** contribute to the evidence for 25% extra time in Mathematics examinations.

Where a candidate has cognitive processing difficulties which have a **substantial and long-term adverse impact** on their speed of working 25% extra time may be awarded. (See Chapter 5, paragraph 5.2.2.) These difficulties will be demonstrated by tests which result in at least:

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

which relate to two different areas of speed of working. This may include two different areas of cognitive processing.

In rare and exceptional circumstances an awarding body may grant 25% extra time where a candidate has at least two low average standardised scores (85-89) relating to two different areas of speed of working. 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 Chapter 5, paragraph 5.3.2.

7.5.12 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 teacher 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.

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

Form 8 – JCQ/AA/LD **must** be used to record information about a candidate's access arrangements/reasonable adjustments and be presented by the SENCo for inspection. The candidate's name **must** be recorded on every page of Form 8 and where the form is stored in hard copy format it **must** be stapled together. The form **must only** be used for candidates with learning difficulties or where a Language Modifier is required.

Form 8 – JCQ/AA/LD is available from:

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

Alternatively, an online version of Form 8 is available to SENCos and assessors employed within the centre through the Centre Admin Portal (CAP). CAP can be accessed using any of the awarding bodies' secure extranet sites.

Only Form 8 is acceptable.

The following cannot be used for processing and inspection purposes:

- spreadsheets;
- email messages;
- centre devised equivalents of Form 8;
- educational psychologists' reports;
- a diagnosis of Dyslexia;
- diagnostic assessment reports.

7.6.1 A **fully completed** Form 8 – JCQ/AA/LD may roll forward where the candidate progresses from GCSE to GCE AS and/or A-level qualifications (see below), whether at the same centre or at a different centre.

A Form 8, with Part 2 completed **no earlier than the start of Year 9** for GCSE qualifications, may roll forward to GCE AS and/or A-level qualifications where a candidate requires:

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

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

The SENCo, or an equivalent member of staff within a FE college, **must** ensure that 25% extra time and/or a scribe remains appropriate, practicable and reasonable.

Form 8 **must** be checked to ensure that all parts of the form have been completed, it has been signed and dated and that the candidate meets the **current** evidence requirements **before** a new online application for 25% extra time and/or a scribe is processed.

Part 1 of Form 8 **must** be completed **prior** to the assessment. The SENCo or the assessor working within the centre **must** detail the candidate's background and history of support. The three questions within Part 1 of Form 8 **must** be addressed.

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

Part 1 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 across relevant subjects 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) in place for the candidate;
- pupil premium indicators;
- screening test results;
- use of pupil baseline and tracking data;
- information about any differentiation in the classroom;
- 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 provide sufficiently robust evidence of need. School tests might identify those candidates who need to be assessed for access arrangements/ reasonable adjustments.

If very little information is available, a selection from the following can be used by the SENCo to paint a picture of need within Part 1 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 FE College.

Part 3 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.

Part 3 of Form 8 **must** make recommendations for access arrangements/ adjustments taking into account:

- the information from the assessment (Part 2 of Form 8);
- the requirements of the specifications; **and**
- the candidate's normal way of working in the centre (Part 1 of Form 8).

7.6.2 The completion of Form 8, Parts 1, 2 and 3 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, Part 2, to record the results of their assessment which are relevant to the access arrangements being requested. At the same time, the assessor **must** sign and date Part 2.

Record forms from standardised assessments **do not** need to be kept on file for inspection.

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 within the Deadlines section). They **must** keep within the centre for inspection purposes a fully completed Form 8 (Parts 1, 2 and 3), signed and dated. This may be a hard copy paper version or an electronic version.

7.6.5 The assessor **must:**

- sign and date Form 8, Part 2;
- have administered each 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 or typed signature is permissible.

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

Chapter 8 Processing applications for access arrangements and adjustments

8.1 General information

For those qualifications listed within the Deadlines section, *Access arrangements online* enables centres to make a single online application for a candidate requiring access arrangements/ reasonable adjustments using any of the awarding bodies' secure 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:

AAO – Frequently Asked Questions - JCQ Joint Council for Qualifications

Extra time of more than 25% (26% to 50%) and/or a Language Modifier **must** have tests recorded within Part 2 of Form 8 dated **within 26 months of the final examination(s).**

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 online, 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 such as a medical condition 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 see the definition of evidence of need within the Definitions section and the relevant section(s) of Chapter 5 for full details as to what constitutes the core evidence/evidence of need for each arrangement. It is important that the appropriate evidence is produced and processed with the application. Appropriate documentation (where required), as per Chapter 5, **must** be held on file to support the arrangement(s) processed and be available for inspection.

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

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

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

Example 2

A Year 13 GCE A-level candidate has suffered a back injury playing rugby. He is unable to come to school to sit his examinations. The SENCo liaises with the exams officer about him sitting his examinations at home through an alternative site arrangement. (See section 11 of the JCQ document *Instructions for conducting examinations.*) In addition, the SENCo allows the candidate supervised rest breaks as sitting for an extended period of time causes him significant discomfort.

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

Example 3

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

8.4 Cases that do not gain approval

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

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

- a candidate with a brain injury who may need access to eye gaze technology; or
- a candidate with a formal diagnosis of ADHD who needs to listen to background music during his examinations; or
- a candidate who needs access to an individual timer on account of a learning difficulty.

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

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

Example 1

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

Example 2

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

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

8.5 Qualifications and arrangements covered by *Access arrangements online*

Access arrangements online must be used for the following qualifications:

- AQA Applied General qualifications
- AQA Level 1, Level 2 and Level 3 Technical qualifications
- AQA Level 2 Certificate in Further Maths
- AQA Level 3 Certificate in Mathematical Studies
- Cambridge Nationals
- Cambridge Technicals
- FSMQ
- GCE (AS and A-level)
- GCSE
- OCR Level 3 Certificates
- Welsh Baccalaureate qualification (WBQ)
- WJEC Level 1 and Level 2 General qualifications
- WJEC Level 1 and Level 2 Vocational qualifications
- WJEC Level 1 and Level 2 Vocational Awards (Technical Awards)
- WJEC Level 3 Applied qualifications.

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

The following arrangements must be applied for online:

- Access to a mobile phone for medical purposes
- Bilingual dictionary with 25% extra time (solely for those qualifications listed within Chapter 5, paragraph 5.18.2)
- Computer reader/reader
- 25% extra time
- Extra time over 25%†
- Practical Assistant†
- Remote invigilation†
- Scribe/speech recognition technology
- Timetable variation for a candidate with a disability.

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

The following arrangements do not need to be processed online:

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

- Alternative rooming arrangements – sitting the examination outside of the main examination hall/room, e.g. a room for a smaller group of candidates (formerly known as separate invigilation)
- Amplification equipment
- Bilingual dictionary
- Braille transcript
- Braillers
- Closed Circuit Television (CCTV)
- Colour naming by the invigilator for candidates who are colour blind
- Coloured overlays
- Communication Professional (for candidates using Sign Language)
- Examination on coloured/enlarged paper
- Fidget toys and stress balls
- Live speaker for pre-recorded examination components
- Low vision aid/magnifier
- Non-electronic ear defenders/ear plugs
- Optical Character Reader (OCR) scanners
- Prompter
- Read aloud (which can include an examination reading pen)
- 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 Microsoft Edge or a current version of Chrome, Safari or Firefox. Please note that the latest version of TLS **must** be enabled.

8.6 How to use *Access arrangements online*

Getting started

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

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

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

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

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

Step 1 Log-in
Log-in to an awarding body's secure extranet site, e.g. AQA Centre Services and navigate to *Access arrangements online.* Select the option *Create application* from the home page.

Step 2 Candidate details
Enter the candidate's details (* denotes that input is mandatory).

Step 3 Qualification type and application duration
Select the qualification type(s) which is/are relevant to the candidate's application and select either:

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

Step 4 The academic year
Select the academic year(s) in which the access arrangement/reasonable adjustment(s) will be used.

Step 5 Access arrangements/reasonable adjustments
Choose the access arrangement/reasonable adjustment(s) required for the candidate from the list shown. More than one arrangement can be selected, but each one selected **must** have supporting evidence, where required, in order to secure approval.

Step 6 Evidence of need
Answer all the questions about the evidence available on file to support the application.

Step 7 Part 2 of Form 8
Some applications will require details from Part 2 of Form 8 to be entered to substantiate the evidence of need. Centres **must** specify who carried out the assessment and when.

Step 8 Confirmation
The submission is now complete. Tick the *Confirmation* box to state that the legal statements have been read and accepted and click *SUBMIT.*

Step 9 Outcome
The application outcome will now be displayed, along with the details of the application.

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

Step 10 Save & Close
The application has been saved and can be found at any time using the search facility. Click *SAVE & CLOSE* to return to the Home page.

A flow diagram of the process can be found within Chapter 6.

8.7 Pre-planning in advance of examination series

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

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

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

8.8 Entry Level Certificate (ELC) qualifications

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

- Alternative rooming arrangements – sitting the examination outside of the main examination hall/room, e.g. a room for a smaller group of candidates (formerly known as separate invigilation)
- Amplification equipment, taped questions and responses
- Bilingual dictionary
- Braille transcript
- Braillers
- Brailling of non-secure assessment material
- Closed Circuit Television (CCTV)
- Colour naming by the invigilator for candidates who are colour blind
- Coloured overlays
- Communication Professional for written questions and responses (but **not** in MFL Speaking assessments)
- Enlarge or photocopy the question paper on to coloured paper
- Fidget toys and stress balls
- Live speaker for pre-recorded examination components
- Low vision aid/magnifier
- Non-electronic ear defenders/ear plugs
- Optical Character Reader (OCR) scanners
- Prompter
- Read aloud (which can include an examination reading pen)
- Squared paper for visual spatial difficulties
- 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 25% extra time (for the use of the dictionary)
- Computer reader/reader
- Extra time in timed components
- Practical Assistant
- Scribe.

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

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

8.9 Other adjustments

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

8.10 Internally assessed Cambridge Technicals and Project qualifications

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

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

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

Appendices

Appendix 1 Memory aid for a reader

Appendix 2 Memory aid for a scribe

Appendix 3 Memory aid for a Language Modifier

Appendix 4 Memory aid for a Communication Professional

Appendix 1

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 thoroughly trained and familiar with the rules detailed within section 5.5.

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.

Appendix 2

Memory aid for a scribe

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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.

Appendix 3

Memory aid for a Language Modifier

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

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

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

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

I can speak, write or sign any changes.

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

GCSE English Language examinations:

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

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

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

Appendix 4

Memory aid for a Communication Professional

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

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

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

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

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

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

GCSE English Language examinations:

I can sign the instructions/rubric, but **not** the questions.

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

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