



Joint Council for  
Qualifications<sup>CIC</sup>

# Guidance regarding access arrangements/ reasonable adjustments when a candidate changes centre

Effective from 1 September 2023

Produced on behalf of:



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The JCQ and its member awarding bodies offering GCE AS, A-level and GCSE qualifications fully understand the challenges centres face, in particular colleges, when dealing with the administration of access arrangements and reasonable adjustments where a candidate has moved centres post 16. This is especially so for those candidates re-sitting GCSE English Language and/or Mathematics qualifications. The college will often have limited knowledge of the candidate's needs and little time to gather appropriate evidence before GCSE English Language and/or Mathematics re-sits.

Robustness and fairness are essential requirements in maintaining the integrity of the process. Only those candidates who meet the published criteria, with the required evidence in place, can be awarded the arrangement(s).

### Reducing bureaucracy and burden

A key aim of the JCQ and its awarding body members is to reduce the administrative burden on schools and colleges. Over the past 15 years we have taken significant steps to reduce bureaucracy and burden.

Principally:

- by delegating **19 access arrangements/reasonable adjustments** to centres. These arrangements **do not** require an online application or, in most cases, any evidence of need. The SENCo, or an equivalent member of staff, is empowered at a local level to determine the appropriateness and reasonableness of the arrangement;
- by introducing *Access arrangements online* the process of applying for access arrangements/reasonable adjustments has been streamlined. Around 90% of applications are automatically approved by the online system where the candidate meets the published criteria for the arrangement(s);
- where a candidate has a confirmed learning difficulty, with a fully completed Form 8 in place, and will continue to require **25% extra time** and/or **a scribe**, the Form 8 may be rolled forward from one centre to another. **A fully completed Form 8 may also be rolled forward where a candidate will require a computer reader/reader in addition to 25% extra time and/or a scribe.**

### What checks need to be made when a Form 8 is received from another centre?

Where, for example, a college receives a fully completed Form 8 from a school, the following checks **must** be made by the Additional Needs/Learning Support Team:

- Has Part 1 of Form 8 been completed? Is there sufficient information within Part 1 showing the candidate's picture of need and normal way of working?
- Has Part 2 of Form 8 been completed?
- Are the tests recorded within Part 2 of Form 8 current **on the date of the assessment**, age appropriate and nationally standardised?
- Was the candidate assessed no earlier than the start of Year 9?
- Has Part 2 of Form 8 been signed and dated by the assessor?
- Has evidence been provided that the assessor holds, as a minimum, a post-graduate qualification in individual specialist assessment at or equivalent to Level 7, or is a specialist teacher assessor holding a current SpLD Assessment Practising Certificate, or is a psychologist holding HCPC registration?
- Has Part 3 of Form 8 been completed?
- Has Part 3 of Form 8 been signed and dated by the SENCo?

The above checks would also apply where a candidate transfers to a different school at the start of Year 12 or remains in the same school and moves from Year 11 to Year 12.

Form 8RF would be used to record these checks (see below).

### What is the process for GCSE re-sits?

Where a candidate wishes to be entered for GCSE examinations in the **November 2023 or June 2024 examination series** to improve upon a previous grade, the SENCo, or an equivalent member of staff, may roll forward the Form 8. However, the candidate **must** meet the published criteria for 25% extra time as per the 2023/24 JCQ document *Access arrangements and reasonable adjustments (AARA)*.

If the SENCo, or an equivalent member of staff, is satisfied that the need for the arrangement still exists, then the candidate **does not** need to be re-assessed. Form 8 may roll forward to support a new online application for **25% extra time** and/or **a scribe**.

A fully completed Form 8 may also roll forward where a candidate will require a computer reader/reader in addition to 25% extra time and/or a scribe.

The candidate **must** sign a new candidate personal data consent form. The centre **must** then process a new online application using *Access arrangements online*.

Samples of evidence (e.g. comments and observations from teaching staff, a sample of mock exam papers showing the application of extra time or an IEP) **are not** required for 25% extra time where a candidate has two below average standardised scores relating to two different areas of speed of working or one below average standardised score **and** one low average standardised score relating to two different areas of speed of working.

For a candidate with learning difficulties who requires a computer reader/reader but **does not** require extra time or a scribe, Form 9 **must** be completed.

The candidate **must** sign a new candidate personal data consent form. The centre **must** then process a new online application using *Access arrangements online*.

### Should a pro-forma be produced by the SENCo, or an equivalent member of staff, to show that Parts 1, 2 and 3 of Form 8 have been checked?

The SENCo, or an equivalent member of staff, may produce a simple pro-forma which shows that Parts 1, 2 and 3 of Form 8 have been checked and the form is in order. However, a thorough visual check of Form 8 is perfectly acceptable.

### What is the deadline for processing applications for GCSE November re-sits?

To further assist colleges, the deadline for processing access arrangements for the GCSE November series has been extended to 1 November. Late applications after 1 November may be made, where necessary, provided that the candidate meets the published criteria for the arrangement(s) and the required evidence is in place **prior** to processing an online application before the candidate's first GCSE examination.

### Is additional paperwork required when a candidate moves from GCSE to GCE AS and/or A-level qualifications?

In addition to the fully completed Form 8 (where a candidate has learning difficulties but not a current EHCP), the SENCo, or an equivalent member of staff, **must** complete Form 8RF - *Evidence to accompany Form 8 when a candidate progresses from GCSE to GCE qualifications*.

This will confirm that 25% extra time and/or a scribe (or a computer reader/reader in addition to 25% extra time and/or a scribe) continues to be the candidate's normal way of working. Evidence will be sought from teaching staff that the candidate has persistent and significant difficulties, and that these substantially impact on teaching and learning.

Where a candidate is starting a one-year GCE AS course or a two-year GCE A-level course in September 2023, the SENCo, or an equivalent member of staff, **must** check that the candidate meets the **current** published criteria for 25% extra time, i.e. as detailed in the 2023/24 JCQ regulations, **before** a new online application for 25% extra time is processed.

The candidate **must** sign a new candidate personal data consent form.

### **Are any other Level 1, Level 2 and Level 3 qualification types covered?**

Where all the required checks listed on **page 1** have taken place, a fully completed Form 8 may be used to process an online application for **25% extra time** and/or **a scribe** (or a computer reader/reader in addition to 25% extra time and/or a scribe) for the following qualification types which are covered both by the JCQ AARA and *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
- FSMQ
- OCR Cambridge Nationals
- OCR Cambridge Technicals
- 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

For Level 3 qualifications, Form 8RF **must** be completed.

### **What is the process for a candidate with complex needs?**

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; or
- a medical condition formally diagnosed by a registered specialist

Form 9 **must** be completed by the candidate's new centre to show the on-going need for extra time and/or a computer reader/reader and/or a scribe.

The candidate **must** sign a new candidate personal data consent form. The centre **must** then process a new online application using *Access arrangements online*.