



Joint Council for
Qualifications^{CIC}

Reasonable Adjustments for GCE A-level sciences

Endorsement of practical skills

Effective from 1 September 2025

Produced on behalf of:



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

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

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

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

The centre may request an exemption where a candidate, because of their disability, cannot demonstrate competence in one or more of the required practical skills, use of apparatus and techniques. If agreed, an indication will appear on the candidate's certificate. The candidate should participate in as much of the practical activity as possible to support their knowledge and understanding for the indirect assessment of practical skills in the written examination.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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