



Joint Council for Qualifications

FAQs on JCQ's invitation to tender:

Access Arrangements Regulations and Guidance Review

Update: 23 March 2026

#	Supplier question	Draft JCQ response
1	<i>What is the indicative budget for this work?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Bidders should propose a fixed price that reflects the scope and requirements set out in the ITT. As set out in the evaluation criteria, pricing and commercial considerations will be important factors, and will be assessed alongside relevant experience and the technical quality, methodology and legal/equalities approach of each proposal.
2	<i>Are there any preferred sample sizes for any or all stakeholder groups?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">The ITT does not prescribe overall sample sizes for each stakeholder group. Focus groups should typically consist of around 10 - 20 representatives drawn from the different stakeholder groups, and bidders should use their expertise to propose and justify the optimum group sizes and total sample that will deliver robust findings within the stipulated budget.
3	<i>Will JCQ be able to facilitate access to any stakeholder groups (e.g. students or representatives) for research purposes, or will we be</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">JCQ will support access to centres and relevant stakeholder groups and contacts from its existing lists. Bidders should assume they are responsible for planning, arranging and managing all focus groups and other engagement activity, including

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	<i>responsible for arranging access and recruiting all participants?</i>	the generation and management of outputs.
4	<i>Is the use of incentives permitted for all stakeholder groups?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> JCQ does not expect or require the use of incentives for any stakeholder groups and bidders should not build incentives into their proposals.
5	<i>Milestones 3 and 4 specify that versions of the guidance are to be submitted. Will draft versions of the 2028–29 AARA regulations and any associated materials also be required at these stages?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As set out in the ITT, Milestone 3 is the delivery of draft updated guidance and associated materials for review, and Milestone 4 is the delivery of refined versions of the guidance and materials updated in light of feedback and further testing, updated in light of feedback and further testing ahead of finalisation.
6	<i>Will JCQ be carrying out its own separate consultation on some or all of the materials? If so, is this likely to take place around May–June 2027?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> JCQ expects the appointed supplier to design and deliver appropriate consultation and engagement activity with relevant stakeholders, and to use the evidence gathered through this consultation to inform their analysis, interim outputs and final recommendations. JCQ will not be conducting a separate independent consultation on these materials.
7	<i>How much time should we allow for JCQ’s review of draft materials?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The appointed supplier will be responsible for planning and managing engagement with JCQ committees and other relevant groups so that all reviews are completed in time to meet the key milestone dates set out in Section 4 (Timetable and key milestones) of the ITT.

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8	<i>Does JCQ have an expectation of how many iterations may be required for each output?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> JCQ expects that there may be more than one iteration for key outputs such as draft guidance and reports. Bidders should set out a clear quality-assurance and iteration process in their methodology, including how they will manage and incorporate JCQ feedback efficiently.
9	<i>Are there any requirements for the length of outputs, such as page or word limits for Board papers, guidance or proposals?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The ITT does not specify fixed page or word limits for deliverables. JCQ expects outputs to be clear, concise and fit for purpose, and will agree any specific format expectations with the appointed supplier during project planning.
10	<i>What level of involvement does the JCQ see their accessibility committee having as part of their project. Are they there purely for sign off of deliverables or as a steer as the project goes along?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The appointed supplier will be required to engage with the relevant JCQ committee(s) as part of focus group and consultation activity to draw on their expert input on the content and potential changes, and to work with them through JCQ's internal consultation process for the final deliverables. The detailed governance and engagement arrangements will be confirmed with the appointed supplier at project inception.
11	<i>Could JCQ provide an indication of the number of documents that will be required for review as part of the project, we assume this will include the main and supplementary JCQ guidance on Access Arrangements?</i>	<p>There are 16 core JCQ documents that we expect to be in scope for review as part of this project. The documents are available at this link. The documents are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overview of evidence requirements for access arrangements An overview of the access arrangements and reasonable adjustments process for centres accepting private candidates Guidance regarding parental/candidate requests for access arrangements when the centre has no evidence of need

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guidance for parents, carers and students about access arrangements (PDF and infographic) • Access Arrangements: A guide for teaching staff • Access arrangements when a candidate changes centre • 25% extra time infographic • 26% to 50% extra time infographic • Evidencing 25% extra time in colleges • Computer reader/reader infographic • Scribe/speech recognition technology infographic • Managing parent, carer or student requests (no evidence in centre) • The role of the teacher in the access arrangements process • Form 8 • Form 8RF • Form 9
12	<p><i>Will the final guidance delivered by the supplier require review by legal counsel to ensure legal compliance on accessibility in all devolved nations? Will this final legal review and sign off need to be included with our proposal?</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The supplier is expected to ensure that its analysis, recommendations and draft guidance are consistent with the legal and equalities requirements set out in the ITT, including those applicable across the three jurisdictions (England, Wales and Northern Ireland). JCQ will arrange internal legal review and sign off (via JCQ's legal counsel); bidders are not required to include the cost of external legal sign off within their proposals.
13	<p><i>Is there any requirement for translation of consultation documents, focus groups, guidance etc. to other</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is no requirement for bidders to provide translation services as part of their proposal.

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	<i>languages e.g. Welsh for consultation in Wales.</i>	
14	<i>Is there a model contract that can be provided for review.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Due to the bespoke nature of this contract, this is currently being finalised.
15	<i>Do bidders need access to JCQ's Employee Handbook and Travel and Expenses policy in order to price and plan their proposals?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • JCQ assumes that most, if not all work under this contract will be delivered remotely, using digital channels such as Teams or Zoom. • For the purposes of bidding, suppliers should assume that any essential work-related travel will be undertaken on a value-for-money basis using standard class public transport, with taxis used only where they are needed to connect with public transport or in genuine emergencies. Where car travel is absolutely necessary, JCQ's current HMRC-aligned mileage rate is 45p per mile.