

Regulations and Guidance -

**Access Arrangements, Reasonable Adjustments and
Special Consideration**

General and Vocational qualifications

**With effect from
1 September 2011 to 31 August 2012**

Produced on behalf of:



Statement

It is the responsibility of the head of centre, the specialist teacher(s) and the examinations officer at the centre to familiarise themselves with the entire contents of this document.

For GCSE and GCE qualifications, the specialist teacher(s) and the examinations officer must use these regulations in conjunction with *Access arrangements online*.

This document addresses the duty upon awarding bodies to make reasonable adjustments and avoid unfavourable treatment towards disabled candidates.

CONTENTS	Pages
Contact details	v
Changes for the academic year 2011/12	vi
Definitions	vii
Deadlines for submitting applications for access arrangements and modified papers online for GCSE and GCE qualifications	viii
Synopsis of access arrangements and evidence requirements	ix
 SECTION A Pre-examination adjustments - Access Arrangements	
Chapter 1 Which candidates will be eligible for access arrangements?	1-3
1.1 Background information	1
1.2 Managing the needs of candidates	2
1.3 Principles for centres	3
 Chapter 2 Access arrangements available	 4-38
2.1 Extra time of up to 25%	5
2.2 Extra time of up to 100%	7
2.3 Extra time of over 100%	7
2.4 Supervised rest breaks	9
2.5 Reader/Computer reader	10
2.6 Read Aloud	16
2.7 Scribe/Voice input system	17
2.8 Word processor	22
2.9 Transcript	23
2.10 Prompter	24
2.11 Oral Language Modifier	25
2.12 Live speaker for pre-recorded examination components	29
2.13 Sign Language Interpreter	30
2.14 Practical assistant	32
2.15 Other Arrangements	35
2.16 Alternative Accommodation away from the centre	35
2.17 Bilingual translation dictionaries with up to a maximum of 25% extra time	36
2.18 Early opening of papers	37
2.19 Exemptions	38

Chapter 3	Modified Papers	39-45
3.1	Modified Papers – an overview of the process	39
3.2	Braille Papers	41
3.3	Modified Enlarged Papers	41
3.4	Coloured/Enlarged paper (A3 unmodified enlarged papers)	41
3.5	Modified Language Papers	42
3.6	GCSE and GCE qualifications - applying for modified papers	43
3.7	GCSE and GCE qualifications - final deadlines for making applications	43
3.8	Entry Level qualifications	44
3.9	Functional Skills qualifications	44
3.10	Key Skills qualifications	44
3.11	Principal Learning	45
3.12	Vocational qualifications	45
Chapter 4	Learning difficulties	46-51
4.1	Accountabilities	46
4.2	Appropriate adjustments for candidates with learning difficulties	47
4.3	Guidelines for the assessment of the candidate's learning difficulties	47
4.4	Assessment by a qualified psychologist	50
4.5	Assessment by a specialist teacher	50
4.6	Approval of a specialist teacher by a head of centre	50
4.7	Appropriate qualifications for the provision of supporting evidence on behalf of examination candidates with learning difficulties	51
Chapter 5	Assessment Objectives	52
Chapter 6	Processing applications for access arrangements	54-63
SECTION B The Equality Act 2010		
Chapter 7	General qualifications - information and guidance for centres	64-65
SECTION C The Equality Act 2010		
Chapter 8	Vocational qualifications - information and guidance for centres	66-68

SECTION D Post examination adjustments - special consideration (GCSE and GCE qualifications and Principal Learning)

Chapter 9	Which candidates will be eligible for special consideration?	69-70
Chapter 10	What is special consideration?	71-75
10.1	Candidates who are present for the assessment but disadvantaged	71
10.2	Candidates who are absent from a time-tabled component/unit for acceptable reasons	73
10.3	Minimum requirements for enhanced grading in cases of acceptable absence	73
10.4	Controlled assessment/coursework extensions	74
10.5	Shortfall in work (controlled assessments/coursework)	74
10.6	Lost or damaged work	75
10.7	Other problems	75
Chapter 11	Processing applications for special consideration (GCSE and GCE qualifications)	76-77

SECTION E Post examination adjustments - special consideration (Vocational qualifications)

Chapter 12	Special consideration	78-80
12.1	What is special consideration?	78
12.2	Who is eligible for special consideration?	78
12.3	When will learners not be eligible for special consideration?	79
12.4	Applying for special consideration in vocational qualifications	80
12.5	Lost or damaged work	80

APPENDICES

Appendix 1	Data Protection Notice	81
Appendix 2	Basic and Key Skills qualifications – permitted access arrangements	82
Appendix 3	Functional Skills qualifications – permitted access arrangements	83
Appendix 4	Memory aid for a reader	86
Appendix 5	Memory aid for a scribe	87
Appendix 6	Memory aid for an Oral Language Modifier	88
Appendix 7	Memory aid for a Sign Language Interpreter	89
Appendix 8	GCSE & GCE access arrangements questions	90

Contact details:

JCQ

29 Great Peter Street
London
SW1P 3LW
e-mail: centresupport@jcq.org.uk
Tel: 020 7638 4137 or 020 7638 4132
Fax: 020 7374 4343
Website: www.jcq.org.uk

City & Guilds

1 Giltspur Street
London
EC1A 9DD
Tel: 020 7294 2772
Website: www.cityandguilds.com

Edexcel

One90 High Holborn
London
WC1V 7BH
Tel: 0844 576 0025 (GCE)
Tel: 0844 576 0027 (GCSE)
Tel: 0844 576 0026 (BTEC & NVQ)
Website: www.edexcel.com

WJEC

245 Western Avenue
Cardiff
CF5 2YX
Tel: 02920 265 000 (Main switchboard)
or
Tel: 02920 265 155
Fax: 02920 575 994
Website: www.wjec.co.uk

AQA

Stag Hill House
Guildford
Surrey
GU2 7XJ
Tel: 0844 209 6614
Fax: 01483 300 152
Website: www.aqa.org.uk

CCEA

29 Clarendon Road
Belfast
BT1 3BG
Tel: 02890 261 200
Fax: 02890 261 234
Website: www.ccea.org.uk

OCR

Syndicate Buildings
1 Hills Road
Cambridge
CB1 2EU
Tel: 01223 553 998
Fax: 01223 553 051
Website: www.ocr.org.uk

Changes for the academic year 2011/12

Changes made to the content of this document since the previous version (1 September 2010 to 31 August 2011) are highlighted for easy identification. **However, heads of centre, specialist teachers and examination officers must familiarise themselves with the entire contents of this document.**

Principal changes:

The document has been restructured for the academic year 2011/2012 in order to assist those who use it on a day to day basis.

Chapter 2, pages 4-38, details the available access arrangements which apply to GCSE, GCE, Entry Level, Functional Skills, Key Skills and Vocational qualifications, and Principal Learning units (where permitted by the specification).

The rules regarding the use of a reader, a scribe, an oral language modifier and a practical assistant have been placed on a separate page so that exams office staff may photocopy the relevant page for invigilators and those acting as a reader, a scribe, an oral language modifier and a practical assistant.

Chapter 2, pages 14-15 - the permissions table for the use of readers in GCSE, GCE, Functional Skills and Key Skills qualifications has been included within the Reader/Computer Reader section.

Chapter 2, Section 2.4, page 9, Supervised rest breaks – this arrangement no longer needs to be recorded.

Chapter 2, Section 2.9, page 23, Transcript – this arrangement no longer needs to be recorded.

Chapter 2, Section 2.12, page 29, Live Speaker – this arrangement no longer needs to be recorded.

Chapter 2, Section 2.15, page 35, Bilingual translation dictionary (without extra time) – this arrangement no longer needs to be recorded.

Information on modified papers, Chapter 3, pages 39-45, immediately follows Chapter 2 since some candidates will invariably require access arrangements such as extra time and the provision of a modified paper. Chapter 3 details the provision of modified papers for GCSE, GCE, Entry Level, Functional Skills, Key Skills and Vocational qualifications, and Principal Learning units.

Chapter 6, pages 54-63, details the processing arrangements for access arrangements and covers all qualifications.

Chapter 7, pages 64-65, provides information and guidance for centres in relation to the Equality Act 2010 and its application to general qualifications.

Chapter 8, pages 66-68, provides information and guidance for centres in relation to the Equality Act 2010 and its application to vocational qualifications.

Appendix 2, page 82, lists the permitted access arrangements for Basic and Key Skills qualifications.

Appendix 3, pages 83-85, lists the permitted access arrangements for Functional Skills qualifications.

Definitions

The JCQ awarding bodies and the Federation of Awarding Bodies (FAB) have agreed the following definitions in relation to Access Arrangements, Reasonable Adjustments and Special Consideration.

Access Arrangements

Access arrangements are agreed before an assessment. They allow candidates/learners with special educational needs, disabilities or temporary injuries to access the assessment.

Access arrangements allow candidates/learners to show what they know and can do without changing the demands of the assessment. For example, readers, scribes and Braille question papers.

The intention behind many access arrangements is to meet the particular needs of the disabled candidate without affecting the integrity of the assessment. In this way awarding bodies will comply with the duty of the Equality Act 2010 to make 'reasonable adjustments'.

Reasonable Adjustments

The Equality Act 2010 requires an awarding body to make reasonable adjustments where a disabled person would be at a substantial disadvantage in comparison to someone who is not disabled. The awarding body is required to take reasonable steps to avoid that disadvantage. An example would be a Braille paper which would be a reasonable adjustment for a Braille reader, but not for a candidate/learner who was unable to read Braille.

A reasonable adjustment for a particular person may be unique to that individual and may not be included in the list of available access arrangements.

How reasonable the adjustment is will depend on a number of factors including the needs of the disabled candidate/learner. An adjustment may not be considered reasonable if it involves unreasonable costs, timeframes or affects the security or integrity of the assessment.

There is no duty on the awarding bodies to make any adjustment to the assessment objectives being tested in an assessment.

Special Consideration

Special consideration is an adjustment to a candidate's mark or grade to reflect temporary illness, injury or other indisposition **at the time of the assessment**.

Deadlines for submitting applications for access arrangements and modified papers online for GCSE and GCE qualifications

Access arrangements may cover the entire course and for GCSE and GCE qualifications **must** be processed using *Access arrangements online* as early as possible. **Arrangements must be processed and approved before an examination or assessment.**

Month of examination	Access arrangement	Deadline
November 2011	Modified papers	20 September 2011
November 2011	All other access arrangements (apart from modified papers)	4 October 2011†
January 2012	Modified papers	4 October 2011
January 2012	All other access arrangements (apart from modified papers)	21 October 2011†
March 2012	Modified papers	30 November 2011
March 2012	All other access arrangements (apart from modified papers)	21 January 2012†
May/June 2012	Modified papers	21 February 2012*
May/June 2012 (GCSE/GCE examinations)	All other access arrangements (apart from modified papers)	21 March 2012†

†The deadlines for access arrangements (apart from modified papers) are merely recommendations. It will be possible to make applications for access arrangements using *Access arrangements online* after these dates which coincide with the dates for entries.

However, wherever possible, applications should be processed by the respective deadline in order to allow time for the provision of an access arrangement from the perspective of timetabling, logistics, accommodation and staffing.

If a referral to an awarding body becomes necessary, there may not be sufficient time to process the application, if it is made after the respective deadline.

***For those candidates who decide to re-sit units in June 2012, following the publication of January 2012 examination results, applications for modified papers must be received no later than 21 March 2012.**

N.B Please note that candidates may not be able to have the modified papers requested, if applications are not received by the deadlines.

Centres should refer to **Chapter 6, page 54-58**, for more detailed information on how to use *Access arrangements online*.

Synopsis of access arrangements and eligibility and/or evidence requirements

The arrangements listed below reflect those access arrangements, **including modified papers**, which are available to candidates. **It is not an exhaustive list and some candidates may require alternative arrangements.**

For GCSE and GCE qualifications centres must process applications (including modified papers) using *Access arrangements online*, unless otherwise indicated. For other qualification types, please see **Chapters 3 and 6.**

(*) Where the arrangement reflects the candidate's normal way of working within the centre, it may be granted by the centre at the time of the examination/assessment. 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 substantiate the use of the arrangement.

	Access Arrangement	Eligibility and/or evidence requirement	Chapter/ section
1	Additional tapes/CD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hearing impairment Candidates requiring extra time for pre-recorded examination components 	Chapter 2, section 2.1.7
2	Alternative accommodation/venue away from the centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Behavioural, emotional and social needs Medical/Psychological condition leading to the need for an alternative venue Candidate is in hospital, in prison or at home Candidate is not attending, or transferring to, a registered centre 	Chapter 1, section 1.2.4 / Chapter 2, section 2.16
3	Amplification equipment* (personal or audiological amplification)	Normal way of working	Chapter 2, section 2.15
4	Bilingual translation dictionary*	Candidate's first language is not English, Irish or Welsh and use of a bilingual dictionary reflects the candidate's normal way of working	Chapter 2, section 2.15
5	Bilingual dictionary with up to a maximum of 25% extra time	Candidate's first language is not English, Irish or Welsh and has been in the UK for less than 2 years prior to the date of the examination, neither parent is British born and the candidate has not been educated in an English speaking school abroad. The use of a bilingual dictionary reflects the candidate's normal way of working	Chapter 2, section 2.17
6	Braille question papers	Normal way of working	Chapter 3, section 3.2
7	Closed Circuit Television* (CCTV)	Normal way of working	Chapter 2, section 2.15
8	Coloured/enlarged paper, (i.e. A3 unmodified paper)	Normal way of working	Chapter 3, section 3.4.1
9	Colour naming by the invigilator for candidates who are colour blind*	Normal way of working for candidates who are colour blind	Chapter 2, section 2.15

10	Coloured overlays*	Normal way of working	Chapter 2, section 2.15
11	Extra time Up to a maximum of 25% (N.B. for many candidates a smaller allowance, such as 10% may be appropriate)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A Statement of Special Education Needs relating to secondary education ▪ An assessment carried out by a qualified psychologist or specialist teacher confirming that extra time is needed to complete timed activities (must have been carried out no earlier than Year 7) – i.e. candidate works very slowly ▪ Medical report ▪ Normal way of working 	Chapter 1, sections 1.2.1, 1.2.2, 1.2.3, 1.2.4 / Chapter 2, section 2.1
12	Extra time over 25% and up to a maximum of 100%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ An assessment carried out by a qualified psychologist or specialist teacher confirming substantially below average speed of processing (must have been carried out within 26 months prior to the examination) ▪ Medical/physical/psychological requirement ▪ Normal way of working 	Chapter 1, sections 1.2.1, 1.2.2, 1.2.3, 1.2.4 / Chapter 2, section 2.2
13	Live speaker for pre-recorded examination components*	Speech/lip reader and normal way of working	Chapter 1, section 1.2.3 / Chapter 2, section 2.12 / Chapter 3, section 3.5.7
14	Low vision aid/magnifier*	Normal way of working	Chapter 2, section 2.15
15	A4 modified 18-point bold	Normal way of working	Chapter 3, section 3.3
16	A3 modified 24-point bold	Normal way of working	Chapter 3, section 3.3
17	Modified language paper	Learning or language difficulties	Chapter 3, section 3.5
18	Optical Character Reader (OCR) scanners*	Normal way of working	Chapter 2, section 2.15
19	Oral Language Modifier	<p>An assessment carried out by a qualified psychologist or specialist teacher confirming below average reading comprehension (must have been carried out within 26 months prior to the examination)</p> <p>The assessment must be based upon a recent edition of a national standardised test (specialist decides)</p> <p>Results must be given as a standardised score, only a standardised score of less than 85 for reading comprehension is acceptable</p> <p>Normal way of working</p>	Chapter 1, sections 1.2.1, 1.2.3 / Chapter 2, section 2.11

x

20	Practical assistant (for written papers only)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Physical disability/medical condition ▪ Visually impaired candidate using modified enlarged examination question papers or Braille examination question papers ▪ Normal way of working ▪ Temporary physical injury or temporary injury affecting vision 	Chapter 1. section 1.2.3 / Chapter 2, section 2.14
21	Practical assistant (for practical assessments)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Physical disability/medical condition ▪ Visually impaired candidate ▪ Normal way of working ▪ Temporary physical injury or temporary injury affecting vision 	Chapter 1. section 1.2.3 / Chapter 2, section 2.14
22	Prompter*	Normal way of working	Chapter 2, section 2.10
23	Read aloud*	Normal way of working	Chapter 2, section 2.6
24	Reader/Computer reader	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Visual impairment or temporary condition affecting vision ▪ An assessment carried out by a qualified psychologist or specialist teacher confirming below average reading accuracy, comprehension or speed (must have been carried out within 26 months prior to the examination) ▪ The assessment must be based upon a recent edition of a national standardised test (specialist decides) ▪ Results must be given as a standardised score, only a standardised score of less than 85 for reading accuracy or reading comprehension or reading speed is acceptable ▪ Normal way of working 	Chapter 1, section 1.2.2, 1.2.3, 1.2.4 / Chapter 2, section 2.5
25	Scribe/Voice input systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Physical disability/medical condition ▪ An assessment carried out by a qualified psychologist or specialist teacher confirming learning difficulty affecting writing (must have been carried out within 26 months prior to examination) ▪ Candidate cannot use a word processor with the spell check/predictive text disabled and either spelling in the below average range – standardised score of less than 85 and/or illegible writing and/or incomprehensible and/or below average handwriting speed ▪ Normal way of working ▪ Temporary condition/injury affecting writing 	Chapter 1 section 1.2.1 to 1.2.4 / Chapter 2, section 2.7
26	Sign Language Interpreter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Normal means of communication 	Chapter 1, section 1.2.1, 1.2.3 / Chapter 2, section 2.13

27	Supervised rest breaks*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Behavioural, emotional and social needs ▪ Medical condition ▪ Physical disability ▪ Psychological requirement ▪ Normal way of working (the centre must be satisfied of a genuine need) 	Chapter 1, section 1.2.4 / Chapter 2, section 2.4
28	Tactile diagrams	Normal way of working	Chapter 3, section 3.2.4
29	Transcript*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Handwriting difficult to decipher (word processor is not the candidate's normal way of working) ▪ Spelling is difficult to decipher for those not familiar with it ▪ Braille scripts (use of manual braille) 	Chapter 2, section 2.9
30	Transcript of recording	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Hearing impairment ▪ Candidates who have difficulty in following speech at normal speed 	Chapter 3, section 3.5.7
31	Voice activated computer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Physical disability/medical condition ▪ An assessment carried out by a qualified psychologist or specialist teacher confirming learning difficulty affecting writing (eligible for a scribe) - must have been carried out within 26 months prior to examination ▪ Normal way of working 	Chapter 2, section 2.7.4
32	Word processor*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Normal way of working ▪ Temporary injury affecting writing 	Chapter 2, section 2.8

SECTION A:

Pre-examination adjustments - Access arrangements

Chapter 1

Which candidates will be eligible for access arrangements?

1.1 Background information

- 1.1.1 All applications for GCSE and GCE qualifications must be processed using *Access arrangements online* in advance of the candidate's first examination series.

For other qualification types please refer to Chapter 6, pages 59-63 for the necessary processing arrangements.

- 1.1.2 Access arrangements should be processed at the start of the course so that candidates know what is available and have the access arrangement(s) in place for examinations and controlled assessments/coursework. Arrangements **must** be approved before an examination or assessment.

- 1.1.3 The arrangement(s) should reflect what support is usually given to the candidate in the classroom and/or in internal school tests and mock examinations. This is commonly referred to as 'normal way of working'.

The candidate must have had appropriate opportunities to practice using the access arrangement(s) before his/her first examination, e.g. a computer reader or a scribe.

- 1.1.4 A candidate does not necessarily have to be disabled to be allowed an access arrangement. A reasonable adjustment required by a candidate will usually be an access arrangement (as listed in Chapters 2 and 3 of this document). However, a candidate may require other adjustments which are not listed.

The process for granting an access arrangement and the evidence required will vary. Similarly, the nature of the access arrangement and the reason for seeking it will vary.

- 1.1.5 When an access arrangement has been processed online and approval granted, the evidence of need (where required) must be made available for inspection by the JCQ Centre Inspection Service.

Any appropriate evidence and confirmation of the approval for the respective access arrangement(s) must be available for inspection at the venue where the candidate is taking the examination(s). This must also include a signed Data Protection Notice (see Appendix 1, page 81) confirming the candidate's consent to the processing of the access arrangement(s).

- 1.1.6 Where a candidate has a temporary difficulty, for GCSE and GCE qualifications, centres must process the access arrangement using *Access arrangements online*. Appropriate evidence must be held on file to support the arrangement.

Special consideration may be appropriate in some cases – for example, where the candidate was not proficient in using a word processor in a subject for which a scribe could not be used.

1.2 Managing the needs of candidates

Some candidates are likely to have a number of the needs **set out in paragraphs 1.2.1 – 1.2.4**, which means that they may require a range of access arrangements. **The examples given are therefore not exhaustive.**

There may be restrictions on the use of a particular access arrangement, since it must not compromise the skills being tested in the assessment. For example, the use of a practical assistant may not be allowed when practical skills are being tested.

1.2.1 Communication and Interaction

Candidates with communication and interaction difficulties may have problems with written communication skills. They may need **extra time** to demonstrate written and oral communication skills. They may need to use **a word processor** or, in particular circumstances, **a scribe** to write for them. They may require the use of **an oral language modifier** and/or **a Sign Language Interpreter**. **They may require papers with modified print or modified language. (Where a candidate requires an oral language modifier and/or a Sign Language Interpreter, a modified language paper should always be ordered.)**

(See Chapter 2, pages 4-38 and Chapter 3, pages 39-45, for details of these arrangements).

1.2.2 Cognition and Learning

Candidates with learning difficulties may require **extra time** for timed examinations and assessments. In some cases, they may also need reading or writing assistance, e.g. **a reader, a word processor and/or a scribe**. **They may require papers with modified print or modified language.**

(See Chapter 2, pages 4-38 and Chapter 3, pages 39-45, for details of these arrangements).

1.2.3 Sensory and Physical Needs

Candidates with sensory and physical needs may require **extra time, a live speaker, an oral language modifier, a practical assistant, a reader, a Sign Language Interpreter, a word processor, and/or a scribe**. They may require **papers with modified print or modified language**.

(See Chapter 2, pages 4-38 and Chapter 3, pages 39-45, for details of these arrangements).

1.2.4 Behavioural, Emotional and Social Needs

Candidates with behavioural, emotional and social needs may require **supervised rest breaks, separate invigilation or alternative accommodation arrangements**. Where candidates also have learning difficulties, they may require **extra time** and, in the case of a more severe impairment, **a reader, a word processor and/or a scribe**.

(See Chapter 2, pages 4-38 for details of these arrangements).

1.3 Principles for centres

- 1.3.1 Access arrangements **must not** give candidates an unfair advantage. They are intended to give candidates a level playing field on which to demonstrate their skills, knowledge and understanding.
- 1.3.2 Whilst access arrangements are intended to increase access to assessments, they cannot be granted where they will compromise the assessment objectives of the specification in question (see Chapter 5, page 52).
- 1.3.3 Candidates and centres **must** make informed choices about the qualification routes they choose.

Centres are advised to consult specialist teachers and, if necessary, awarding bodies at the start of the course. This will ensure that access arrangements will be appropriate for the candidate before entries are made.

A centre **must** advise a candidate if he/she chooses a course and will be unable to demonstrate attainment in all parts of the qualification.

- 1.3.4 Candidates may not require the same access arrangements in each specification. Subjects and their methods of assessments may vary, leading to different demands of the candidate.
- 1.3.5 Centres **must** ensure that in controlled assessment or coursework marked by teachers, credit is given only for skills demonstrated by the candidate working independently. **Access arrangements must not compromise assessment requirements.**
- 1.3.6 Where a person is appointed to facilitate an access arrangement, i.e.
- a live speaker;
 - a practical assistant;
 - a prompter;
 - an oral language modifier;
 - a reader;
 - a scribe;
 - a sign language interpreter;

he/she is responsible to the head of centre and must be acceptable to the head of centre. The person appointed should not normally be the candidate's own subject teacher and **must not be a relative, friend or peer of the candidate.**

The head of centre must ensure that the person appointed is appropriately trained and understands the rules of the particular access arrangement, as detailed in this document.

- 1.3.7 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). Failure to comply is defined as putting in place access arrangements that are not approved, or permitting access arrangements within the centre which are not supported by appropriate evidence.
- 1.3.8 These regulations have been agreed by the JCQ member awarding bodies. As part of the annual review of the JCQ regulations, disability groups were invited to offer their comments.

Chapter 2

Access arrangements available

The access arrangements listed within this chapter apply to GCSE, GCE, Entry Level, Functional Skills, Key Skills and Vocational qualifications, and Principal Learning units (where permitted by the specification).

The principle will be the same across all qualification types in that access arrangements must not be allowed to interfere with the integrity of the assessment or to give credit for skills which cannot be performed by the candidate.

Appendix 2, page 82, details the permitted access arrangements for Basic and Key Skills qualifications.

Appendix 3, pages 83-85, details the permitted access arrangements for Functional Skills qualifications.

For GCSE and GCE qualifications, a series of Frequently Asked Questions have been written. Please see Appendix 8, pages 90-92.

2.1 Extra time of up to 25%

2.1.1 For GCSE and GCE qualifications an application **must** be submitted using *Access arrangements online* prior to the candidate's first examination. For other qualification types, please see **Chapter 6, pages 59-63**.

Learning difficulties

2.1.2 **If the candidate has learning difficulties, the centre must assess the needs of the candidate based on one of the following documents, which can be used throughout the candidate's secondary and further education:**

- **a Statement of Special Educational Needs relating to secondary education;**
- **an assessment carried out by a qualified psychologist confirming a learning difficulty relating to secondary/further education. The assessment(s) must confirm that the candidate is unable to complete an assessment in the time allowed. This will be indicated by below average standardised scores in assessments of processing speed, reading and/or writing speed or a below average free writing speed;**
- **an assessment carried out by a specialist teacher confirming a learning difficulty relating to secondary/further education. The assessment(s) must confirm that the candidate is unable to complete an assessment in the time allowed. This will be indicated by below average standardised scores in assessments of processing speed, reading and/or writing speed or a below average free writing speed;**
- **privately commissioned reports must give a clear indication that there is evidence of need. The head of centre must be satisfied that there is a history of need and provision.**

The centre is required to paint a picture of the normal way of working for the candidate, clearly demonstrating the need for extra time of up to 25%.

The documentation presented for inspection purposes must show a compelling case for extra time of up to 25% with a clear and detailed picture of current need supported by a substantial weight of evidence to demonstrate difficulties.

Evidence must also include unfinished mock examinations **or** other timed assessments **or** an individual education plan **or** an individual learning plan **or** a compilation of observations or comments from teaching staff.

Supplementary evidence may also include significant improvement in legibility or quality of language as a consequence of applying extra time of up to 25% **or** a significant improvement in the standardised score of a timed reading test when extra time of up to 25% is granted to the candidate.

Please see **page 8** for examples of the application of extra time.

N.B It is only for access arrangements such as extra time of more than 25%, Oral Language Modifiers, readers and scribes that an assessment must be carried out within 26 months of the start of the examination series.

Medical, physical or psychological requirement or a visual or hearing impairment

- 2.1.3 Where a candidate has a **medical, physical or psychological requirement**, or a **visual or hearing impairment**, **which has an adverse effect on the candidate's speed of processing**, appropriate evidence of need **must** be available at the centre for inspection.

This may be a short and concise letter or file note, signed and dated on centre headed paper, from a member of centre staff, such as a specialist teacher, a SENCO, a learning support co-ordinator or a peripatetic Teacher of the Deaf which **confirms normal way of working within the centre** and the **precise reason for extra time of up to 25%**.

Supervised rest breaks should always be considered before making a request for extra time, since they may be more appropriate for candidates with a medical or psychological condition. (See Chapter 2, section 2.4, page 9 for more detail).

Factors the centre must take into account

- 2.1.4 The centre should also take account of any history of difficulties and any residual effects there may be from those difficulties. **For many candidates a smaller allowance, such as 10% extra time, may be appropriate.**
- 2.1.5 If the centre arranges for extra time of up to 25% to be made available in examinations for a candidate, it **must** ensure that appropriate invigilation and timetabling arrangements are in place.
- 2.1.6 **Extra time will not be permitted in examinations testing the time in which a skill is performed, such as sports, musical performance, or expressive arts, where the timing may be a crucial part of the assessment.**
- 2.1.7 **Extra time may not be appropriate in practical examinations or controlled 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.

For taped/recorded examinations, the centre must request an extra recording from the awarding body, unless they normally receive enough spares. Centres should contact the awarding body for advice on how the extra time is to be applied.

Entry Level qualifications

For Entry Level qualifications – Entry Level Adult Literacy and Numeracy qualifications, Entry Level Certificate qualifications and Entry Level Functional Skills qualifications, the centre is not required to have each candidate individually assessed by a specialist.

The centre **must** determine the need for extra time of up to 25% on the basis of how the candidate normally works in the classroom.

2.2 Extra time of up to 100%

There must be a strong justification as to why more than 25% extra time is required.

Where a candidate with learning difficulties is using a reader and/or a scribe in order to remove the barrier to assessment, it would not normally be appropriate to grant more than 25% extra time. Similarly, where a candidate with learning difficulties is using a word processor in order to remove the barrier to assessment, it would not normally be appropriate to grant more than 25% extra time.

2.2.1 For GCSE and GCE qualifications, an application **must** be submitted using *Access arrangements online* prior to the candidate's first examination, with appropriate evidence of need held on file. For other qualification types please see **Chapter 6, pages 59-63**.

2.2.2 It can be applied for in the following circumstances:

- **A candidate who would normally be eligible for a reader and/or a scribe but is not permitted this arrangement in a subject (or a section of a paper) testing reading or writing may be granted up to 50% extra time;**
- **The candidate has a learning difficulty which results in substantially below average speed of processing** (reading, comprehension, writing, or cognitive processing as appropriate). **Results must be given as a standardised score, only a standardised score of less than 70 is acceptable;**
- **The candidate has a physical or sensory impairment that significantly hinders their speed of access to written information,** such as a blind candidate using Braille.

2.3 Extra time of over 100%

2.3.1 **In exceptional circumstances,** a candidate may require more than 100% extra time in order to manage a substantial impairment.

Whilst *Access arrangements online* will enable the centre to refer the application to the relevant awarding body, centres should note that extra time of over 100% is likely to be counter-productive in terms of fatigue. Other access arrangements should be identified to make this arrangement unnecessary.

Examples - extra time

- A candidate was diagnosed as mildly dyslexic at primary school. He has made good progress with his reading and writing, which are now within the normal range for his age. However, he does make some spelling mistakes, although these do not affect the ability of the examiner to read and understand his scripts. A specialist assessment confirmed his reading and writing speeds to be in the low average range, with one processing test result just in the below average range. 10% extra time in written papers [but not multiple choice papers] is recommended to allow for these residual difficulties. Observations from staff confirm the use of extra time is his normal way of working in class tests as well as mock examinations.
- A candidate with a long history of specific learning difficulties now has literacy skills within the average range. A recent specialist assessment confirmed continuing difficulties with below average standardised scores in speed of processing and a below average writing speed. 25% extra time is recommended and is supported by a mock examination paper demonstrating a clear improvement in her performance with extra time and confirmation that the use of extra time represents her normal way of working.
- A candidate has a substantial learning difficulty. He is permitted up to a maximum of 25% extra time, depending on his need, in his GCE AS and A2 English Language and History examinations. He is also entered for GCE A-level Drama. He cannot have extra time in his performance, where the group has to perform according to the script. He can have extra time in the Drama written papers.
- A candidate has severe cerebral palsy. He can manage a GCE AS General Studies multiple-choice paper with 25% extra time. He cannot word process his GCE AS English Literature and GCE AS Sociology answers in that amount of time. He is permitted up to 50% extra time for those papers.
- A blind candidate is using Braille papers. There is a great deal of text to read in GCSE History and there are many diagrams and tables in GCSE Science. The centre contemplates 100% extra time to enable the candidate to complete her GCSE examinations or 50% extra time and the use of a reader and a practical assistant, where permitted by the specification. The candidate's normal way of working is 50% extra time, a reader and a practical assistant. The centre decides to process an application for 50% extra time on the basis that the candidate is blind and uses Braille papers. A further application is processed for a reader and a practical assistant to assist the candidate in examinations involving graphs.
- A candidate with severe hearing loss is supplied with modified language papers and up to 25% extra time for her GCSE written examinations. The Peripatetic Teacher of the Deaf advises the SENCO/exams officer to request more than 25% extra time and a live speaker for the Listening Test in GCSE French. This will ensure that if any additional repetition is necessary, for example repeating a question with words which can be confused due to a similarity on the lips (such as 'neuf' and 'deux'), it can be accommodated with up to 50% extra time. A separate application for the use of a live speaker and extra time of up to 50% is approved.
- A candidate has significant learning difficulties which impair his reading and writing processes. He is allowed a reader and a scribe. He no longer needs more than 25% extra time in his GCSE examinations to complete the papers because the use of a reader and a scribe has reduced the effect of the impairment. In the Reading section of the GCSE English paper he is permitted 50% extra time because his reader cannot help him.

2.4 Supervised rest breaks*

- 2.4.1 Centres are allowed to provide a supervised rest break to a candidate where it is his/her normal way of working within the centre.

There is not a requirement to process an application using *Access arrangements online* or to record the use of the arrangement.

A centre must however be satisfied that there is a genuine need for the arrangement on account of a medical condition, a physical disability, a psychological condition or behavioural, emotional and social needs. In most cases the condition or difficulty will be known to the school or college in advance of the candidate's examination(s).

- 2.4.2 Supervised rest breaks should always be considered before making a request for extra time.

They may be appropriate for a candidate with poor concentration skills or who suffers from extreme stress. Alternatively, supervised rest breaks may be permitted for medical/psychological reasons or where a candidate has behavioural, emotional and social needs.

- 2.4.3 The timing of the examination should be stopped and re-started when the candidate is ready to continue. If the candidate needs to leave the examination room, an invigilator **must** accompany the candidate. The timing of these breaks depends on the nature of the candidate's condition.

- 2.4.4 Centres should ensure that medical advice is sought in cases of serious illness, and that the candidate is fit to take the examination. There will be some constraints on timing if the candidate has more than one examination to take each day. **The supervised rest break is not included in any extra time allowance.**

2.5 Reader / Computer reader

- 2.5.1 For GCSE and GCE qualifications, an application **must** be submitted using *Access arrangements online* prior to the candidate's first examination, with appropriate evidence of need held on file. For other qualification types, please **see Chapter 6, pages 59-63**.

A reader will not be allowed if a candidate's literacy difficulties are primarily caused by English, BSL, Irish, ISL, or Welsh not being his/her first language.

- 2.5.2 **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, page 12**).
- 2.5.3 **Computer software which reads out a scanned paper, (including synthetic speech software stored on a memory stick) but does not decode or interpret the paper, may be used as a reader. Where an application for a computer reader is approved, centres are permitted to open question papers up to 1 hour before the published starting time for the examination. Any infringement has the potential to constitute malpractice. Reading pens are not permitted.**
- 2.5.4 A reader is not a scribe or a practical assistant. The same person may act as a reader, a scribe and a practical assistant as long as permission has been given for the arrangements. **The regulations for the use of each arrangement must be strictly adhered to.**
- 2.5.5 **A reader will be allowed where a candidate has a significant impairment.**

Visual impairment

The candidate cannot read a Braille paper or modified enlarged paper independently or at a sufficient speed, or may have a visual impairment as a consequence of a temporary injury. Candidates with a severe visual impairment may need a practical assistant in written examination components to work at their instruction, guiding their hands to the requested page and section, **but not to the correct answer. Please see Chapter 2, section 2.14, page 32**, on practical assistants.

Appropriate evidence of need **must** be available at the centre for inspection. This may be a short and concise letter or file note, signed and dated on centre headed paper, from a member of centre staff, such as a specialist teacher, SENCO or learning support co-ordinator which **confirms normal way of working within the centre and the precise reason for a reader.**

Learning difficulties

The candidate has been assessed using an up to date nationally standardised test conducted by a specialist.

A standardised score of less than 85 in relation to reading accuracy or comprehension or speed is required. (See Chapter 4, section 4.3.7.3 and section 4.3.8, pages 48-49 for more detail).

Centres whose candidates do not meet the criteria for a reader may wish to consider alternative access arrangements such as **extra time of up to 25%**, (see **Chapter 2, section 2.1, page 5**), **Read Aloud** (see **Chapter 2, section 2.6, page 16**) or **Modified papers** (see **Chapter 3, page 41-42**).

Reading aloud sometimes helps a candidate to spot their own mistakes and improves their comprehension of written text.

An examination paper with enlarged font may help some candidates. Alternatively, an examination paper with the carrier language made more accessible may be of benefit.

- 2.5.6 **The provision of a reader should reflect the candidate's normal way of working within the centre**, except in cases where a temporary injury gives rise to the need for a reader.
- 2.5.7 **A reader or a computer 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 certain examinations may be granted extra time of up to 50%. Please see Chapter 2, section 2.2, page 7, on extra time over 25% and page 14 on the permitted use of readers in GCSE and GCE qualifications.

Exception to the rule – Functional Skills English (Reading component)

Reading within Functional Skills English is defined as the independent decoding and understanding of written language and text in a purposeful context. "Text" is defined as materials that include the use of words that are written, printed, on-screen or presented using Braille.

Computer/screen readers (assistive technology) may be used in the Reading component of Functional Skills English where their use reflects the candidate's normal way of reading. A computer/screen reader (assistive technology) is an acceptable arrangement, since it still allows the candidate to independently meet the requirements of the reading standards.

A 'human' reader **cannot** be used to demonstrate the requirements of the standards as this does not meet the requirement for independence. As a last resort, an exemption from the Reading component can be requested for a disabled candidate who cannot use assistive technology.

Entry Level qualifications

For Entry Level qualifications – Entry Level Adult Literacy and Numeracy qualifications, Entry Level Certificate qualifications and Entry Level Functional Skills qualifications, the centre is not required to have each candidate individually assessed by a specialist. The centre **must** determine the need for a reader on the basis of how the candidate normally works in the classroom.

Factors the centre must take into account

- 2.5.8 The centre is responsible for ensuring that if a candidate and reader are not accommodated separately, other candidates cannot overhear what the reader is saying and are not disturbed. **If the candidate and reader are accommodated separately, a separate invigilator will be required.**
- 2.5.9 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 require only occasional words or phrases to be read, three or four candidates may share one reader.** The candidate will need to put their hand up when he/she needs help with reading. **If the group is accommodated separately a separate invigilator will be required.**

Each candidate in the group must still meet the full criteria for a reader, as noted on page 10.

The rules – the use of a reader

- **must** read accurately;
- **must** only **read** the instructions of the question paper(s) and questions, and **must not** explain or clarify;
- **must** only repeat the instructions of the question paper or questions when specifically requested to do so by the candidate;
- **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 symbols and unit abbreviations (e.g. 2^2 should not be read as two squared, but the function simply pointed to by the reader since part of the assessment is recognising what the superscript 2 means. Similarly, if the symbol $>$ is printed, it should not be read as 'greater than' but simply pointed to by the reader.);
- **may** enable a visually impaired candidate to identify diagrams, graphs and tables but **must not** give factual information nor offer any suggestions, other than that information which would be available on the paper for sighted candidates;
- **may** read numbers printed in figures as words (e.g. 252 would be read as two hundred and fifty two, 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 3675 in words);
- **may** read back, when requested, what the candidate has written;
- **may**, if requested, give the spelling of a word which appears on the paper but otherwise spellings **must not** be given.

A suggested memory aid for a reader can be found at Appendix 4, page 86.

Remember

For Entry Level qualifications where a reader is used, **Form 13 must** be printed from the JCQ website - http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams_office/forms/

Form 13 must be securely attached to the candidate's script.

Examples – readers

- A candidate with significant reading difficulties is permitted the help 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 does not offer any explanation. **A reader is only permitted to read the text and not to explain it.**
- A candidate with a visual impairment requests an A3 modified enlarged paper, which his centre orders. As his condition is a deteriorating one, he has gradually become accustomed to using a computer reader. His centre processes an application for a computer reader which is approved by *Access arrangements online*. He is allowed a computer reader in subjects and sections of papers not testing reading.
- A candidate enters for an IT examination involving proof reading and document layout. A reader is requested but is not permitted. The reader must not help a candidate to proof read a document or organise its layout, as these are the skills being tested.
- A candidate achieves a standardised score of 75 following a thorough test of sentence and text level comprehension. The specialist states that the candidate's reading skills are in the below average range. She is allowed a reader in subjects not testing reading.
- A candidate achieves a standardised score in the average range on a test of single word reading accuracy. He has a complex language disorder and can read but cannot understand what he is reading. He cannot have the meaning explained because understanding is one of the assessment objectives. However, his score on comprehension tests is in the below average range. He is allowed a reader in subjects not testing reading because this enables him to concentrate on understanding rather than decoding.
- A candidate has achieved average scores on single word reading accuracy but her speed of reading is in the below average range. As a result, by the time she reaches the end of the sentence, she has forgotten what the first part of the sentence was about. She is allowed a reader in subjects not testing reading.
- A blind candidate in a GCE AS Mathematics examination requires a combination of access arrangements. His centre orders a Braille paper and tactile diagrams. They also process an application for a reader, a scribe and a practical assistant. 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.

Permissions table for the use of readers in GCSE, GCE, Functional Skills and Key Skills qualifications

Qualification criteria	Current position		Rationale for current position
	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, so a reader would be permissible for assessment of reading in this subject. Use of Braille is also permitted.
A level English Literature	No	Yes	Assessing response to literature and texts rather than reading, so a reader would be permitted.
A level English Language and Literature	No	Yes	The same position holds as for A level English Language and A level English Literature, i.e. a reader is allowed 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, so a reader would be permissible.
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 means taking meaning off the page from text or Braille, therefore, readers would not be permitted for components that assess reading.
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 means taking meaning off the page from text or Braille. Using a Reader would turn this task into a listening task.
GCSE English/ 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 assessment objectives show that learners must actually "read" and demonstrate understanding of the written language. This means taking meaning off the page from text or Braille, therefore, readers would not be permitted for components that assess reading.
GCSE English Literature	No	Yes	Reading is not being assessed in GCSE English Literature and so a 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. Readers would not be permitted for components that assess reading.
GCSE Welsh Literature	No	Yes	In GCSE Welsh Literature candidates are required to extract literary meaning. A 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 means taking meaning off the page from text or Braille, therefore, readers would not be permitted for components that assess reading.
GCSE MFL specifications	Yes in MFL Reading papers	Yes except in MFL Reading papers	As for A level MFL, i.e. the assessment objectives show that learners must actually "understand written language" (A03). This means taking meaning off the page from text or Braille. Using a reader would turn this task into a listening task.
Functional Skills English (all levels)	Yes in the Reading Paper (Candidate may use a computer/screen reader)	Yes except in the Reading Paper (Candidate may use a computer/screen reader)	<p>Reading within Functional Skills English is defined as the independent decoding and understanding of written language and text in a purposeful context. "Text" is defined as materials that include the use of words that are written, printed, on-screen or presented using Braille.</p> <p>Computer/screen readers (assistive technology) may be used in the Reading component of Functional Skills English where their use reflects the candidate's normal way of reading. A computer/screen reader (assistive technology) is an acceptable arrangement, since it still allows the candidate to independently meet the requirements of the reading standards.</p> <p>A 'human' reader cannot be used to demonstrate the requirements of the standards as this does not meet the requirement for independence. As a last resort, an exemption from the Reading component can be requested for a disabled candidate who cannot use assistive technology.</p>
Key skills Communication and Adult Literacy at all levels	Yes	No	Standards include assessment of the candidate's ability to 'read'. This means assessment of the candidate's own ability to interpret / decode printed or Braille texts and therefore a reader is not permitted. In this context 'reading' is also about understanding the way that language is encoded in text and not just about understanding the meaning it conveys.

2.6 Read Aloud*

2.6.1 A candidate may work more effectively if he/she can hear themselves read.

A centre with a candidate who reads aloud to himself/herself **must** be accommodated separately.

***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.**

2.7 Scribe / Voice input system

- 2.7.1 For GCSE and GCE qualifications an application **must** be submitted using *Access arrangements online* prior to the candidate's first examination, with appropriate evidence of need held on file.

For other qualification types please see **Chapter 6, pages 59-63**.

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

- 2.7.2 **A scribe is a responsible adult who, in controlled assessment, coursework and/or in an examination but not in orals, writes down or word processes a candidate's dictated answers to the questions. (See the rules – the use of a scribe, page 20).**

If a candidate dictates answers on to a tape, the centre must produce a transcript (see Chapter 2, section 2.9, page 23).

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

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

- 2.7.4 **A candidate who has permission to use a scribe may use:**

- **a word processor with the spell check facility enabled;** (N.B: This arrangement **will not** be permitted in ELC, GCSE and GCE Modern Foreign Language specifications.)
- **voice activated computer software which produces hard copy 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.
- **computer software which produces hard copy with predictive text/spell checker when the candidate uses a word processor;** (N.B: This arrangement **will not** be permitted in ELC, GCSE and GCE Modern Foreign Language specifications.)
- **computer software which produces speech can be used to dictate to a scribe.**

In all cases a scribe cover sheet must be completed and attached to the completed script.

- 2.7.5 **A scribe will be allowed where a candidate's impairment has a significant effect.**

Visual impairment

The candidate cannot **handwrite, touch type, use a Braille or other appropriate means to record their answers.**

Appropriate evidence of need **must** be available at the centre for inspection. This may be a short and concise letter or file note, signed and dated on centre headed paper, from a member of centre staff, such as a specialist teacher, SENCO or learning support co-ordinator which **confirms normal way of working within the centre and the precise reason for a scribe.**

Learning difficulties

The candidate has:

- a spelling accuracy score in the **below average range (a standardised score of less than 85) or**
- **free writing which cannot be read by others or**
- **free writing which is grammatically incomprehensible or**
- **free writing which is produced so slowly that answers cannot be fully recorded even with extra time allowed. (The candidate's handwriting speed as a standardised score or a words per minute score, being in the below average range for their age.)**

The candidate will have been assessed by a specialist who will have conducted an appropriate up to date test.

Other types of disability

Some candidates with a **permanent physical disability/a medical condition or a recent injury** will not be able to write.

Appropriate evidence of need **must** be available at the centre for inspection. This may be a short and concise letter or file note, signed and dated on centre headed paper, from a member of centre staff, such as a specialist teacher, SENCO or learning support co-ordinator which confirms normal way of working within the centre and the precise reason for a scribe.

- 2.7.6 **A scribe will not be allowed in some papers or sections of papers testing writing, i.e. Modern Foreign Language writing papers, unless the candidate can dictate foreign words letter by letter.**

A candidate who would normally be eligible for a scribe, but is not permitted this arrangement in certain examinations, may be granted extra time of up to 50%. (Please see Chapter 2, section 2.2, page 7 on extra time over 25%).

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. In such circumstances, the centre may wish to allow the candidate extra time of up to 25%.

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

In other subjects testing written communication skills, including English, Irish and Welsh, a scribe will be allowed. The candidate will only be assessed though on those aspects of written communication which he or she can demonstrate independently, such as use of language and grammatical presentation. If separate marks are awarded for spelling and punctuation, these cannot be credited to a candidate using a scribe. Marks may be awarded for punctuation if this is dictated, and the fact is noted on the scribe cover sheet.

- 2.7.7 **A scribe will not be permitted to perform tasks which are part of the assessment objectives, which might include application of skills in ICT or graphic design.** For further information please consult the awarding body.

2.7.8 **The provision of a scribe should reflect the candidate's normal way of working within the centre**, except in cases where a temporary injury gives rise to the need for a scribe.

2.7.9 **Where a temporary injury at the time of the examination gives rise to the need for 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 regulations in **section 2.7**;
- ensure that the scribe cover sheet is completed and attached to the candidate's script.

Exception to the rule: Functional Skills English (Writing component)

Writing within Functional Skills English is defined as the independent construction of written text to communicate in a purposeful context. "Text" is defined as materials that include the use of words that are written, printed, on-screen or presented using Braille and which are presented in a way that is accessible for the intended audience.

Voice recognition technology (assistive technology) may be used in the Writing component of Functional Skills English where its use reflects the candidate's normal way of writing. The use of voice recognition technology (assistive technology) is acceptable since it allows the candidate to independently meet the requirements of the writing standards.

A 'human' scribe **cannot** be used to demonstrate the requirements of the standards as this does not meet the requirement for independence. As a last resort, an exemption from the Writing component can be requested for a disabled candidate who cannot use assistive technology.

Entry Level qualifications

For Entry Level qualifications – Entry Level Adult Literacy and Numeracy qualifications, Entry Level Certificate qualifications and Entry Level Functional Skills qualifications, the centre is not required to have each candidate individually assessed by a specialist.

The centre **must** determine the need for a scribe on the basis of how the candidate normally works in the classroom.

Key Skills Communication, Adult Literacy and Key Skills ICT

A scribe is only permitted at Levels 1 and 2.

Factors the centre must take into account

2.7.10 The centre is responsible for ensuring that a candidate dictating to a scribe cannot be overheard by, or distracts, other candidates. **If the candidate and scribe are accommodated separately, a separate invigilator will be required.**

The rules – the use of a scribe

- **must write or type** accurately, and at a reasonable speed, what the candidate has said, (except in an examination requiring word processing where a scribe will not be permitted);
- **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;
- **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 on 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 5, page 87.

Remember

For GCSE and GCE qualifications, a pre-populated scribe cover sheet **must** be printed from *Access arrangements online*.

For other qualification types, (aside from Entry Level qualifications) Form 2 (scribe cover sheet) **must** be printed from the JCQ website - http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams_office/forms/

For Entry Level qualifications, Form 13 **must** be printed from the JCQ website - http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams_office/forms/

The cover sheet **must** indicate whether graphs and diagrams were completed by the candidate or the scribe. The cover sheet **must** be signed by the scribe and countersigned by the head of centre or the examinations officer.

The cover sheet **must** be securely attached to the candidate's script.

A cover sheet **must** also be attached to any controlled assessment/coursework completed with the aid of a scribe and the work **must** be sent to the examiner/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. He can use a word processor, as a typewriter, to record his answers. The centre requests a scribe but this is refused because the candidate is proficient on a word processor. The centre 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 software because his speech is indistinct. It is too difficult for him to spell out each word letter by letter. He is permitted a scribe in all subjects except Modern Foreign Language writing papers where writing and spelling in the language is being tested.
- 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 provided that she dictates in the Spanish Writing examination by spelling out words letter by letter. In other subjects, she is permitted to use her voice activated computer without spelling out the words, unless they are uncommon ones. She will be awarded marks for those skills which she has demonstrated.
- A centre has ten candidates requiring scribes but does not have enough staff to cover both the scribing and the invigilation. They provide computer speech recognition software for those who have used it before and are taking literacy-based examinations such as History. They provide word processors for those who should be using one in preference to a 'human' scribe. They provide a scribe for those taking Science and Maths. They stagger the examination session, keeping the candidates under centre supervision, so that adequate numbers of staff can be available. They decide to enter some candidates at a later examination series.
- A centre compares a few lines of text written by a candidate with learning difficulties in the same period of time that a whole page of text can be produced when he dictates to a third party. The written text is of a standard typical of a much younger age range than the candidate's, but the text produced when the candidate dictates to a third party fits within the standard of his own age range. The difference in content of the written and spoken material is startling. The centre, having undertaken this assessment, processes an application for a scribe.

2.8 Word processor*

- 2.8.1 Centres are allowed to provide a word processor with the spell check/predictive text disabled to a candidate where it is their normal way of working within the centre. (This also extends to the use of electronic brailers.)

*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. (This also applies where a candidate is using a word processor on a temporary basis as a consequence of a temporary injury.)

- 2.8.2 Controlled assessment or coursework components can normally be completed on word processors unless prohibited by the specification.

- 2.8.3 For regulations on the use of word processors in written examinations, please see section 8.8, page 22 of the JCQ publication *Instructions for conducting examinations*

http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams_office/instructions_for_conducting_examinations/

In all cases a word processor cover sheet (Form 4) must be completed and attached to the completed script.

In Functional Skills English (Reading and Writing components) the use of a word processor with the spell check facility switched on is permitted for all candidates.

Examples - word processor

- A candidate who cannot write legibly because she has severe dyslexia 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 on the machine. Her centre 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 and this is granted by his centre in preference to the use of a transcript.
- A candidate wishes to use a word processor since this is her normal way of working. However, the candidate additionally wishes to use the spell check facility. Given that she does not meet the criteria for a scribe, the candidate cannot use the spell check facility. The centre allows her to use a word processor with all standard functionality switched off.
- A candidate taking an ICT paper wishes to use a word processor with a spell checker. The paper is testing his ability to proof-read a document. His centre refuses the use of the spell checker, but he can use the word processor without this facility because it is his normal way of producing written work within the centre.
- A candidate who has severe dyslexia 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 his centre because it allows for text to be corrected, answers to be properly sequenced and reflects his normal way of working.
- A blind candidate who always uses a word processor to produce text asks to use a word processor to record his answers in his examinations. He also requests the use of a screen reader to allow him to 'read' back and check the answers he has produced. These arrangements are permitted when using a word processor in his examinations. **However, if the candidate also wants to use predictive text and/or a spell checker the centre must apply for the use of a scribe.**

2.9 Transcript*

(This arrangement must only be used where a candidate cannot use a word processor.)

2.9.1 A transcript may be permitted by the centre where:

- a candidate's handwriting is illegible (**and the use of a word processor is not the normal way of working**) or
- spelling is so difficult to decipher that it would be beneficial for an examiner to be able to refer to a transcript of the candidate's work for clarification.

2.9.2 ***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.**

2.9.3 For regulations on the use of a transcript, please see section 8.7, page 21 of the JCQ publication *Instructions for conducting examinations*
http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams_office/instructions_for_conducting_examinations/

In all cases a transcript cover sheet (Form 5) must be completed and attached to the completed script.

Examples – transcripts

- A candidate with severe dyslexia writes in a very cramped style which is difficult for a stranger to read. His teachers are familiar with his writing. One of them writes a full transcript in a clean answer booklet which is then sent to the examiner with the original script.
- A candidate with dyslexia writes phonetically. The words are clear and understandable but it takes some time to decipher. The examiner is assisted by the fact that a full transcript is attached to the script. She marks the original but refers frequently to the transcript for clarification.
- A candidate writes some words illegibly. The centre makes a photocopy of the script and writes in the odd word over the top of the candidate's writing, but only on the photocopy.

2.10 Prompter*

2.10.1 *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.

2.10.2 A prompter may be permitted **where a candidate:**

- **has little or no sense of time, or**
- **loses concentration easily, or**
- **is affected by an obsessive-compulsive disorder which leads them to keep revising a question rather than moving onto other questions.**

In such instances a candidate may be assisted by a prompter who can keep the candidate focused on the need to answer a question and then move on to answering the next question.

2.10.3 **For regulations on the use of a prompter please see section 8.4, page 20 of the JCQ publication *Instructions for conducting examinations***
http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams_office/instructions_for_conducting_examinations/

Examples – prompters

- A candidate with Asperger's syndrome has no sense of time. The prompter sees that the candidate is doing nothing. She says "Mary, 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 have to be done in that time and tries to move on.
- A candidate with attention deficit disorder works for a few minutes then looks out of the window. As he is taking his examination under separate invigilation, the invigilator is able to call out his name to bring his attention back to his question paper.

2.11 Oral Language Modifier

- 2.11.1 For GCSE and GCE qualifications, an application **must** be submitted using *Access arrangements online* prior to the candidate's first examination, with appropriate evidence of need held on file.

For Entry Level Certificate (ELC qualifications) and Functional Skills qualifications please **see Chapter 6, pages 59-63**.

An Oral Language Modifier will not be allowed if a candidate's literacy difficulties are caused by their first language being a language other than English, BSL, Irish, ISL or Welsh.

- 2.11.2 **An Oral 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 Oral 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 and may constitute malpractice.
(See the rules – the use of an oral language modifier, page 27).

An Oral Language Modifier may also act as a reader (see section 2.5, page 10). A separate application for a reader is not required.

- 2.11.3 **The provision of an Oral Language Modifier should reflect the candidate's normal way of working within the centre and should be appropriate to the needs of the candidate.**
- 2.11.4 An Oral Language Modifier will **only** be allowed if **a candidate's reading comprehension** is shown to be **'below average'** when measured using an up to date nationally standardised test conducted by a specialist. **A standardised score of less than 85 in relation to reading comprehension is required (see Chapter 4, section 4.3.7.3 and section 4.3.8.2, pages 48-49).**
- 2.11.5 An Oral Language Modifier may be suitable for candidates with a range of educational needs such as those within the autistic spectrum and hearing and speech impaired candidates. **However, candidates must have a below average reading comprehension score.**
- 2.11.6 **An Oral Language Modifier will not be allowed to read questions or text in papers (or sections of papers) which test reading. A candidate who would normally be eligible for an Oral Language Modifier, but is not permitted this arrangement in certain examinations, may be granted extra time of up to 50%. (Please see section 2.2, page 7, on extra time over 25% and page 14, on the permitted use of readers in GCSE and GCE qualifications).**

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

Entry Level qualifications

For Entry Level Certificate qualifications and Entry Level Functional Skills qualifications, the centre is not required to have each candidate individually assessed by a specialist. The centre **must** determine the need for an oral language modifier on the basis of how the candidate normally works in the classroom.

Factors the centre must take into account

- 2.11.7 An Oral Language Modifier should have, at least, a basic knowledge of the subject being examined to ensure that any explanation he/she gives does not alter the meaning of the question. **An Oral Language Modifier must be able to recognise terms specific to the subject and must have an appropriate standard of English. It is recommended that an Oral Language Modifier receives appropriate training and accreditation where available.**
- 2.11.8 The candidate should be familiar with the Oral Language Modifier. Where this is not the case, the candidate must have the opportunity to familiarise him/herself with the Oral Language Modifier using a trial presentation. The candidate **must** be comfortable with the method of communication.
- 2.11.9 An examination for candidates using an Oral Language Modifier should take place in a separate room. **A separate invigilator will be required.**
- 2.11.10 Where possible, a separate Oral Language Modifier should be available for each candidate. Two candidates may share an Oral Language Modifier if the needs of each candidate are minimal. The number of candidates per Oral Language Modifier should **never exceed three**.
- 2.11.11 **Modified Language papers should always be requested for candidates who use an Oral Language Modifier. (Please see Chapter 3, section 3.5, page 42.)** These papers are usually produced by approved language specialists. They may reduce or even completely remove the need for an Oral Language Modifier.
- 2.11.12 **The paper may be opened up to one hour before the scheduled starting time of the examination to allow the Oral Language Modifier to identify and highlight technical or subject-specific terms and command words.** (Further copies of the paper should be made to assist the Oral Language Modifier.) The paper **must not** be discussed with or shown to any other person during this time as this would constitute malpractice. The task of the Oral Language Modifier is to respond solely to a request from the candidate. **He/she must not modify the language of the paper prior to the start of the examination in anticipation of a request from the candidate.**

Remember

For GCSE and GCE qualifications a pre-populated Oral Language Modifier cover sheet **must** be printed from *Access arrangements online* and when completed securely attached to the candidate's script. A photocopy of the completed cover sheet **must** also be faxed to the JCQ Office – fax number 020 7374 4343.

For Level 1 and 2 Functional Skills qualifications Form 6A (Oral Language Modifier cover sheet) **must** be printed from the JCQ website - http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams_office/forms/

For ELC qualifications and Entry Level Functional Skills qualifications Form 13 **must** be printed from the JCQ website - http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams_office/forms/

Form 6A or Form 13 **must** also be securely attached to the candidate's script. A photocopy of the completed cover sheet **must** also be faxed to the JCQ Office – fax number 020 7374 4343.

The rules – the use of an Oral Language Modifier

- **must** rephrase or explain the carrier language of a question paper when specifically asked to do so by a candidate;
- **must not** rephrase 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 when explaining 'command' words in questions such as *describe*, *explain* and *suggest* as their explanation may change the nature of the question and disadvantage the candidate;
- **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 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 coversheet notes of any re-phrasing or explaining. Where no rephrasing or explaining took place this **must** also be noted on the coversheet;
- **must** underline any words or phrases on the question paper which were re-phrased or explained for the candidate. 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 communication method used, **e.g. the use of BSL**, is made on the coversheet;
- **may** go through the instructions/rubric and read the questions to the candidate. (Where permitted, reading to candidates is part of the role of an Oral Language Modifier.)

A suggested memory aid for an oral language modifier can be found at Appendix 6, page 88.

Examples – Oral Language Modifiers

- A Teacher of the Deaf (ToD) applies for an Oral Language Modifier for a profoundly deaf candidate who uses both BSL and Sign Supported English (SSE) as her normal way of working. The candidate has a below average reading comprehension score and has the support of both an Oral Language Modifier and BSL Interpreter during the course. The Teacher of the Deaf decides that an Oral Language Modifier would provide the most suitable support for the candidate during her examinations because an Oral Language Modifier is permitted to use BSL.
- A candidate with severe and specific language impairment finds it hard to recognise and remember the meaning of everyday vocabulary. Text is rephrased for him during his lessons. An Oral Language Modifier who is familiar with the subjects is permitted for his examinations.
- A profoundly deaf candidate uses BSL and receives communication support. She has a below average reading comprehension score. Support during her course has been via BSL which was effective and her preference. The Teacher of the Deaf considers the use of an Oral Language Modifier during the examination, but a Sign Language Interpreter is her normal way of working and more appropriate to her needs.

2.12 Live speaker for pre-recorded examination components*

2.12.1 Centres are allowed to provide a live speaker for pre-recorded examination components to a candidate where it is their normal way of working within the centre.

***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.**

2.12.2 For aural tests, clear amplification may be necessary to improve the candidate's ability to hear, or a transcript of a test may be read to enable the candidate to also lip/speech-read (see Chapter 3, section 3.5.7, page 42 for further information on ordering transcripts of tests). The centre should consult a specialist teacher, for example a Teacher of the Deaf, to identify the most appropriate arrangement for a candidate with hearing loss.

2.12.3 In addition to speaking or reading aloud the contents of the tape in an aural test, the initial letters of words which are easily confused may be finger spelt e.g. deux fois and neuf fois.

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

2.12.5 Where CDs, audio-cassette tapes or transcripts of tests are used, the live speaker should be allowed access to the CD or tape or the transcript one hour before 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 candidates concerned. The candidates must be placed under centre supervision whilst the live speaker prepares for the examination.

2.12.6 Additional repetition is allowed, if necessary, to take into account loss of concentration on the content as a result of the candidate's effort to hear or to express answers orally or in writing.

2.12.7 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.

2.13 Sign Language Interpreter

- 2.13.1 For GCSE and GCE qualifications, an application **must** be submitted using *Access arrangements online* prior to the candidate's first examination. (For other qualification types, please see **Chapter 6, pages 59-63**).

No evidence is needed to support the arrangement.

- 2.13.2 **The use of a Sign Language Interpreter should reflect the candidate's normal way of working within the centre.**

- 2.13.3 **The role of a Sign Language Interpreter is to present the questions in a different language without:**

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

- 2.13.4 British Sign Language (BSL) and Irish Sign Language (ISL) are recognised as official languages of the United Kingdom and have the same status as Welsh and Gaelic. Welsh speakers who would like their question papers translated into Welsh are entitled to that facility irrespective of their ability to read and understand the English language. Users of BSL/ISL have the same entitlement.

Papers translated into Welsh are created at the same time as the English version and checked by the awarding body for accuracy and consistency of translation. Sign Language interpretation is done 'live' in the presence of the candidate during the examination in order to allow for the candidate's regional variations in BSL/ISL signs.

Consequently, sign language interpretation cannot be checked by the awarding body for accuracy. Great care **must** be taken not to disadvantage or advantage the candidate.

- 2.13.5 **Sign Language Interpreters can be used to sign the instructions and questions to candidates taking written papers. Technical terms or subject specific language must be finger-spelt and not signed by the Sign Language Interpreter.**

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.

- 2.13.6 The Sign Language Interpreter should be familiar with the subject being examined to ensure that the meaning of the question is not changed and that technical and subject specific terms are recognised and finger spelt.

- 2.13.7 **Sign Language Interpreters may repeat the translation if requested to do so by the candidate. An alternative translation 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.

- 2.13.8 **Candidates may only be permitted to sign their answers in question papers or in controlled assessment/coursework where it is possible to finger spell the answers or where the answers involve single words.**

- 2.13.9 **A Sign Language Interpreter is not a reader.** The same person may act as a reader and a Sign Language Interpreter, either reading aloud or silently reading the instructions and questions to a candidate taking written papers, and then signing. **Permission must have been given for the use of a reader and a Sign Language Interpreter. The regulations for the use of each arrangement must be strictly adhered to.**

Functional Skills English – Speaking, Listening and Communication

Sign Language (i.e. BSL, SSE) is permissible in the Speaking, listening and communication component, provided this is made accessible to all participants in the discussion. (It is recognised that BSL is a language in its own right and not a form of English. BSL is, however, permitted as an alternative to English for the assessment of Speaking, listening and communication where BSL is the candidate's normal way of communicating in the contexts described by the standards.)

ELC qualifications, Basic and Key Skills – Communication, Basic/Adult Literacy specifications

In English, Irish, Welsh Speaking and Listening Tests, Basic and Adult Literacy and Key Skills Communications specifications, a Sign Language Interpreter **must not** be used. Sign Language Interpreters 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 reading tests in English, Irish and Welsh, although no part of an assessment may be signed to a candidate, a candidate may use sign language expressively to show that he or she has read the passage correctly. Please consult the awarding body for advice.

Key Skills Application of Number and Adult Numeracy

Candidates must not sign responses at Levels 3 and 4.

- 2.13.10 The Sign Language Interpreter **must** be proficient in the use of the candidate's sign language. The Sign Language Interpreter should be familiar to the candidate and should work at the candidate's pace.
- 2.13.11 Candidates may need to be accommodated in another room in which case **a separate invigilator will be required.**
- 2.13.12 A modified language paper should be ordered for candidates using a Sign Language Interpreter (see Chapter 3, section 3.5, page 42). The paper may be opened **up to one hour before the scheduled starting time of the examination** to allow the Sign Language Interpreter to prepare. **The content of the paper must not be discussed with or shown to any other person during this time as this would constitute malpractice.**
- 2.13.13 **A Sign Language Interpreter can only sign the instructions/rubric, but not the questions, in Modern Foreign Languages or English, Irish or Welsh Language examinations. Texts/source material or literary extracts must not be signed.**

Remember

For GCSE and GCE qualifications, a pre-populated Sign Language Interpreter cover sheet **must** be printed from *Access arrangements online* and **must** be securely attached to the candidate's script.

For other qualification types, (aside from Entry Level qualifications) **Form 6** (Sign Language Interpreter cover sheet) **must** be printed from the JCQ website - http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams_office/forms/

For Entry Level qualifications, Form 13 must be printed from the JCQ website - http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams_office/forms/

Form 6 or Form 13 must also be securely attached to the candidate's script.

2.14 Practical assistant

- 2.14.1 For GCSE and GCE qualifications, an application **must** be submitted using *Access arrangements online* prior to the candidate's first examination. (For other qualification types, please see **Chapter 6, pages 59-63**).

Appropriate evidence of need must be held on the centre's files.

This may be a short and concise letter or file note, signed and dated on centre headed paper, from a member of centre staff, such as a specialist teacher, SENCO or learning support co-ordinator which confirms **normal way of working within the centre and the precise reason for a practical assistant.**

- 2.14.2 For GCSE and GCE qualifications *Access arrangements online* will process requests for the use of a practical assistant in **written papers. In practical assessments** *Access arrangements online* will refer requests to the relevant awarding body. **Detailed information must be provided listing the tasks which the practical assistant would perform.**

- 2.14.3 **The provision of a practical assistant should reflect the candidate's normal way of working within the centre,** except in cases where a temporary injury gives rise to the need for a practical assistant.

- 2.14.4 **A practical assistant will be allowed in certain subjects when a candidate cannot perform practical tasks independently due to significant difficulties resulting from impaired physical co-ordination or vision.**

- 2.14.5 **A practical assistant will not normally be allowed in assessments which test the ability to physically manipulate or perform,** such as **Music, Art and Design and Technology**, where the practical skill may be in itself the focus of the examination. Where only minimal assistance is required the awarding body should be informed and cases will be considered individually.

- 2.14.6 **A practical assistant is a responsible adult who carries out practical tasks at the instruction of the candidate.**
(See the rules – the use of a practical assistant, page 33).

In an examination this might be holding a ruler or turning the pages of the script. This would include guiding a severely visually impaired candidate's hand to the relevant page or section of text in a paper testing reading, where a reader is not permitted. **Care must be taken not to direct the candidate to the answer.**

In a practical assessment, the practical assistant may set up, hold or hand to the candidate the appropriate equipment.

In a Functional Skills ICT assessment, a practical assistant may switch on the computer and insert a disk at the candidate's instruction, but **must not** perform any skill for which marks will be credited.

The candidate **must not** be credited with marks for any skill which has been performed by the practical assistant. **This arrangement does not include facilitated communication, which is not approved by the Joint Council for Qualifications.**

Factors the centre must take into account

- 2.14.7 A practical assistant is not a reader or a scribe. The same person may act as a reader, a scribe and a practical assistant as long as permission has been given for the arrangement(s). **The regulations for the use of each arrangement must be strictly adhered to.**
- 2.14.8 Candidates using a practical assistant in externally set practical examinations may need to be accommodated separately, **in which case a separate invigilator will be required.**

The rules – the use of a practical assistant

- **must** perform practical tasks 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 regarding which questions to do, when to move on to the next question, or on the order in which questions should be answered;
- **may** ask the candidate to repeat instructions where these are not clear.

Remember

For GCSE and GCE qualifications a pre-populated Practical Assistant cover sheet **must** be printed from *Access arrangements online* and **must** be securely attached to the candidate's script.

For other qualifications, (aside from Entry Level qualifications) Form 3 (Practical Assistant cover sheet) **must** be printed from the JCQ website - http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams_office/forms/

For Entry Level qualifications, Form 13 **must** be printed from the JCQ website - http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams_office/forms/

Form 3 or Form 13 **must** also be securely attached to the candidate's script.

A cover sheet **must** also be attached to any controlled assessment/coursework completed with the aid of a practical assistant and 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 hemiplegia affecting his left side. He is right-handed. He only needs a practical assistant in GCSE Science to hold equipment still while he performs practical tasks. The practical assistant is acting as a second hand where two hands are needed. The candidate does not lose any marks for implementation because he performs by himself those skills which are being assessed.
- A candidate has severe cerebral palsy with no use of his hands. He wants to be included on a GCSE Design and 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 entering for the examinations.
- An A Level candidate who has a severe tremor in both hands cannot perform any science practical activity safely. The candidate requires a practical assistant. The practical assistant assembles the equipment and carries out the experiment. The candidate is credited with marks for planning, evaluation and analysis, but she cannot gain marks for implementation.
- A candidate wants to follow a GCSE Art course 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 he cannot fulfil and therefore he decides to follow the course for his education but does not enter for the examinations.
- A candidate studying GCSE Physical Education is a wheelchair user. She is able to 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.

2.15 Other Arrangements*

*For the access arrangements detailed below, 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.

Amplification equipment

Bilingual translation dictionaries (without extra time)

Braille

Closed circuit television (CCTV)

Colour naming by the invigilator for candidates who are Colour Blind

Coloured Overlays

Low vision aid/magnifier

Optical character reader (OCR) scanners

Separate invigilation within the centre

For further information please see **Chapter 8** of the Jcq publication *Instructions for conducting examinations* –

http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams_office/instructions_for_conducting_examinations/

2.16 Alternative Accommodation away from the centre

For GCSE and GCE qualifications an application **must** be submitted using *Access arrangements online* prior to the candidate's first examination, with appropriate evidence of need held on file. **(N.B This arrangement is different from transferred candidate arrangements, where a candidate transfers from one registered centre to another after the submission of examination entries.)**

For other qualification types, please see **Chapter 6, pages 59-63**.

- 2.16.1 **Alternative accommodation should only be requested for a candidate who either has emotional and behavioural difficulties, a medical condition or a psychological condition which prevents him/her from taking the paper in the centre. The candidate is considered medically fit to take the paper elsewhere, or the candidate is in hospital, in prison or at home.**
- 2.16.2 The head of centre is responsible for ensuring that the examination will be conducted in accordance with the Jcq document *Instructions for conducting examinations*
http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams_office/instructions_for_conducting_examinations/
- 2.16.3 Where permission is granted by *Access arrangements online* for alternative accommodation, centres are permitted to open question papers **up to one hour before the published starting time for the examination**. This is to allow for the paper(s) to be taken to an alternative venue.
- 2.16.4 It may be necessary to delay the examination by up to one hour after the published starting time in order to reach the venue.
- 2.16.5 Papers to be taken to another venue on the day of the examination **must** be securely packaged and kept under secure conditions at all times.
- 2.16.6 **Papers must not be opened on a date preceding the scheduled date of the examination.**
- 2.16.7 The script(s) should be despatched with the centre's other scripts and sent to the examiner/awarding body at the normal time. Medical information **must not** be enclosed with the script(s).

2.17 Bilingual translation dictionaries with up to a maximum of 25% extra time

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

However, **for the use of a bilingual translation dictionary with up to 25% extra time** an application **must** be submitted using *Access arrangements online* (for GCSE and GCE qualifications) prior to the candidate's first examination. Appropriate evidence of need must be held on file. (See **page 92 for suggested evidence of need**). For other qualification types, please see **Chapter 6, pages 59-63**.

- 2.17.1 Bilingual translation dictionaries may only be used in examinations by candidates whose first language is not English, Irish or Welsh. **However, such dictionaries must not be used in English Language, Irish Language or Welsh Language examinations or Modern Foreign Language examinations testing one of the languages of the dictionary or a similar language**, for example, a Portuguese dictionary in a Spanish examination. **The use of a bilingual translation dictionary should reflect the candidate's normal way of working within the centre.**

Exceptions to these rules are:

The Writing Test in GCSE Arabic, GCSE Bengali, GCSE Dutch, GCSE Greek, GCSE Gujarati, GCSE Japanese, GCSE Modern Hebrew, GCSE Panjabi, GCSE Persian, GCSE Polish, GCSE Portuguese, GCSE Russian and GCSE Turkish where the specification states that **all candidates must have access to a bilingual dictionary**.

Functional Skills English examinations – where the use of a bilingual dictionary is permitted.

- 2.17.2 **Electronic dictionaries, monolingual dictionaries (which define words and phrases) reading pens, translators, wordlists or glossaries must not be used.**
- 2.17.3 Dictionaries to be used in the examination **must** be held in the centre under secure conditions. They **must** be thoroughly checked to ensure that notes have not been enclosed within or written on the pages of the dictionary. This should include checking that no other unauthorised information is contained in the dictionary. A candidate using a dictionary which contains notes will lose their marks and their right to this access arrangement.
- 2.17.4 **Translation of either examination material or the candidate's answers into or from the candidate's first language will not be permitted.** The regulations for the use of bilingual translation dictionaries **must** be adhered to; failure to do so can lead to the disqualification of the candidate.
- 2.17.5 Candidates who are permitted to use bilingual translation dictionaries may also be allowed up to a maximum of 25% extra time, **depending on need, if they have been resident in the UK for less than two years at the time of the examination. Holiday periods are included in the two year rule.**

Centres are reminded that applications processed online will automatically give an 'application approved expiry date' 26 months from the date of the application and not the date of entry to the United Kingdom. It is the date of entry into the United Kingdom which must be adhered to.

- 2.17.6 **In subjects where a dictionary is not permitted, no extra time is available.** The candidate's need of the dictionary does **not** in itself justify allowing the candidate extra time, unless the candidate has to refer to the dictionary so often that examination time is used for this purpose delaying the answering of questions.
- 2.17.7 **The centre must determine the needs of the individual candidate. Not all candidates will need to use a dictionary and have extra time**, especially those who have one parent who is British born, who have been educated in an English speaking school abroad or who have entered for International GCSEs in a number of subjects, where English was the language used in the preparation for the examinations. **The candidate's need of the dictionary does not in itself justify allowing the candidate extra time.**

2.18 Early opening of papers

Where permission is granted by *Access arrangements online* (GCSE and GCE qualifications) for:

- **alternative accommodation/venue away from the centre;**
- **a computer reader;**
- **examination on coloured/enlarged paper;**
- **an oral language modifier;**
- **a sign language interpreter;**

centres are permitted to open question papers **up to one hour before the published starting time for the examination** in order to accommodate the arrangement.

Access to the content of the paper during this time must be restricted to exams office staff and where relevant, an oral language modifier or a sign language interpreter. The content of the paper must not be discussed with or shown to another person during this period as this would constitute malpractice.

For other qualification types, please **see Chapter 6, pages 59-63.**

2.19 Exemptions

An exemption is an agreement reached by an awarding body, before the examination, for a disabled candidate to miss a component or components. When an exemption is granted the candidate's performance on the components taken will be considered to be the performance on the full examination. An indication will be placed on the candidate's certificate to show that not all of the assessment objectives were accessible.

Access arrangements online does not include exemptions. However, it enables centres to refer individual applications to awarding bodies. **Centres in the first instance should select 'Other'.** This will result in an automatic rejection, which will then enable the centre to make a referral to the awarding body.

Applications **must** be submitted in line with the deadlines quoted on **page viii** of this document.

The JCQ regulations governing the use of exemptions are based on the document *Principles governing the use of exemptions* issued jointly by the qualifications regulators which may be found at <http://www.ofqual.org.uk/2138.aspx>

Exemptions should:

- compensate disabled candidates for skills they are unable to demonstrate;
- not undermine the integrity of the qualification;
- only be granted as a last resort when no other access arrangement(s) can be used;
- apply **only to whole components where the candidate cannot demonstrate any of the skills**;
- make up **no more than 50% of a qualification**. At least one A2 unit **must** be completed at A level;
- only apply in general qualifications.

An exemption will not be granted if an alternative and accessible route through a qualification is available to the candidate.

The JCQ form *Application for an Exemption* **must** also be completed and submitted to the awarding body concerned, along with any other paperwork requested by the awarding body.

In Functional Skills English, where barriers to access remain, awarding bodies must offer candidates with disabilities, as a last resort, exemptions from individual assessment components within the qualification. **Candidates can be exempted from up to two of the three assessed components.**

Such an arrangement does not apply to Functional Skills ICT and Mathematics qualifications, as these qualifications consist of only one component.

The awarding bodies and the regulators will work together to agree a certificate specification which will allow for the reporting of the level at which the qualification has been awarded and the level at which the assessment component(s) has/have been achieved.

Chapter 3

Modified Papers

3.1 Modified Papers – an overview of the process

In order to make provision as consistent and fair as possible across the different disability groups, the awarding bodies are working towards the modification of carrier language in all question papers. The aim is to make the standard paper suitable for all candidates with substantial comprehension difficulties, irrespective of the reason for the impairment. As papers are prepared well in advance of the actual examination series, this has to be a phased approach. Technical language and abstract concepts cannot be removed as these form part of the assessment objectives being tested. The aim is to remove unnecessary barriers to comprehension by removing complicated sentence structures where they are not essential to the question itself.

Modified papers must be applied for in advance of a specific examination series. They are individually prepared for candidates for whom other access arrangements 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 papers for candidates unless they intend to enter them for the relevant examination series.**

Access arrangements online allows centres to place orders for GCSE and GCE modified papers. There is a separate area within *Access arrangements online* which enables centres to place these orders.

Requests must be made online for GCSE and GCE qualifications.

For all other qualifications requests must be made using Form 7.

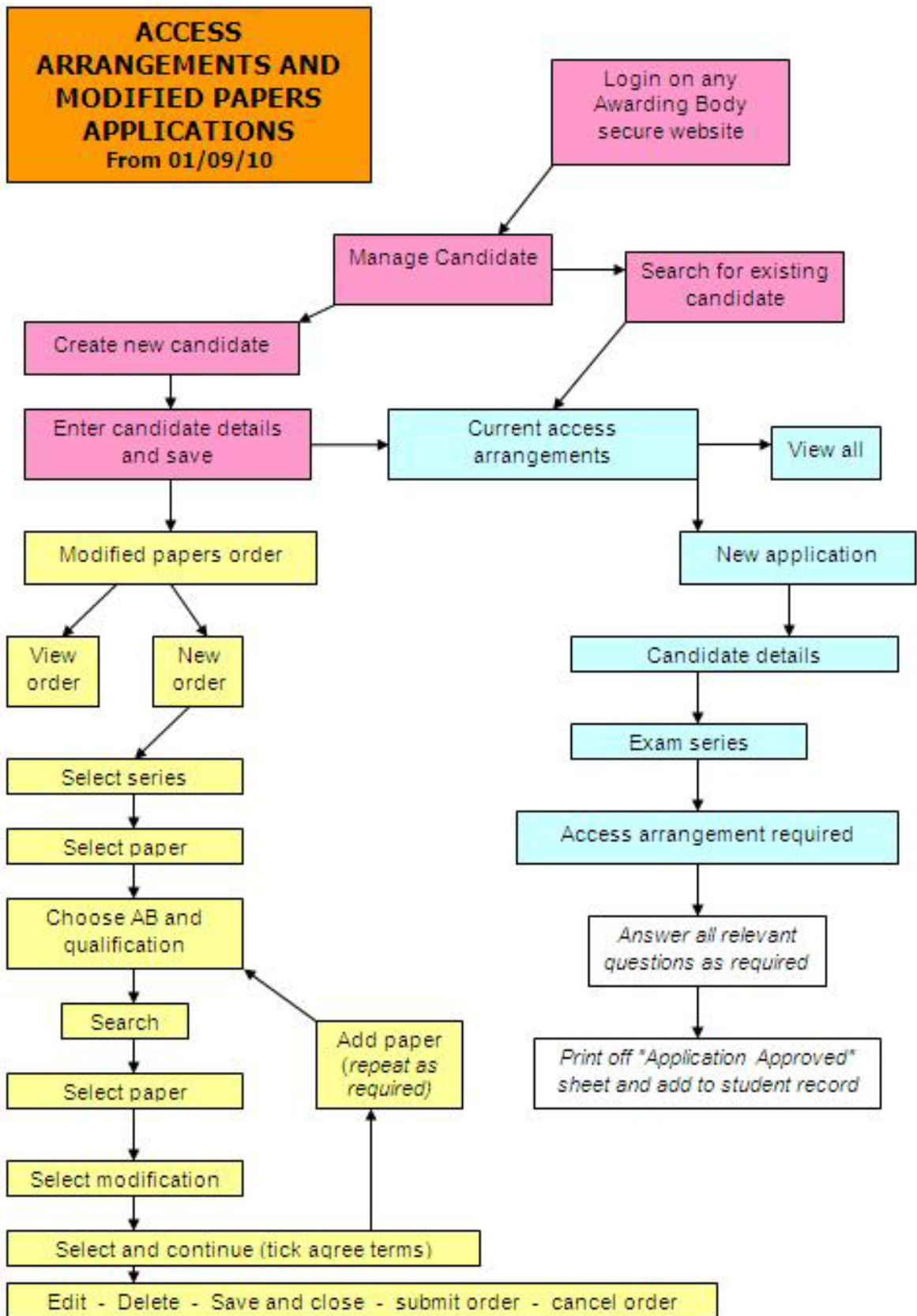
Formats available are:

- Coloured/enlarged paper
- A4 modified 18 point bold
- A3 modified 24 point bold
- Braille papers and tactile diagrams with Braille labels
- Modified language
- Tactile diagrams with print labels
- Transcript of listening test/video

Appropriate links:

www.aqa.org.uk
www.ccea.org.uk
www.edexcel.com
www.ocr.org.uk
www.wjec.co.uk

Access arrangements online is not however linked to awarding body entry systems. As requests for modified papers are made before the submission of examination entries, it is recommended that centres undertake a check to ensure that modified paper requests and actual entries made to an awarding body match.



Braille and large print papers are produced in line with the publication *Best Practice Guidance for the Modification and Production of Examination Papers for Candidates with a visual impairment*. This publication may be accessed from the RNIB website: www.rnib.org.uk.

Centres must ensure that candidates are familiar with the format of modified enlarged papers or Braille papers being requested for examinations.

3.2 Braille papers

- 3.2.1 **Papers are only produced when applications are made by the deadline and are not produced automatically. Awarding bodies do not require evidence of the candidate's visual impairment. Please see the deadlines on pages 43-45.**
- 3.2.2 The standard paper is modified prior to Braille by a teacher specialised in visual impairments once the awarding body has directed that this work is to be undertaken.
- 3.2.3 The modified paper is sent to a Braille agency to be produced in Grade 2 English Braille.
- 3.2.4 Tactile diagrams and graphs will be provided where necessary.
- 3.2.5 **Centres may be required to provide models in advance for certain types of questions.**
- 3.2.6 Videos or films used in assessments may be requested with audio description.

3.3 Modified enlarged papers

- 3.3.1 **Modified enlarged papers are only produced when applications are made by the deadline and are not produced automatically. Awarding bodies do not require evidence of the candidate's difficulties. Please see the deadlines on pages 43-45.**
- 3.3.2 Modified enlarged papers are intended for candidates who cannot read a standard examination paper. Pictures and certain diagrams may have been removed prior to enlargement.

3.4 Coloured/Enlarged paper (i.e. A3 unmodified enlarged papers)

- 3.4.1 **If a candidate does not require a modified paper and can see pictures, graphs and diagrams, the centre should request permission to produce an enlarged/coloured copy of the paper.**

Before a GCSE or GCE paper is photocopied onto coloured paper or enlarged, an application must be submitted using *Access arrangements online* prior to the candidate's first examination. No evidence is needed to support the application.

Where permission is granted by *Access arrangements online* for an examination on coloured/enlarged paper, **centres are permitted to open question papers up to one hour before the published starting time for the examination. This will enable centres to copy and enlarge the standard paper or, if necessary, a modified enlarged paper further to suit candidates' needs.** It also allows centres more flexibility for candidates with specific needs, such as those who require single sided print or those who would benefit from having a paper in a specific background colour.

For other qualification types, please see pages 59-63.

Centres should be aware that enlarging an examination question paper may affect questions relating to scale. This should be considered in your production process.

3.5 Arrangements suitable for candidates with learning or language difficulties (Modified Language Papers)

- 3.5.1 Where a paper has not been modified at source, (see 3.5.4) awarding bodies will accept an application for a modified language paper for a candidate who is deemed to have learning or language difficulties. **Awarding bodies do not require evidence of the candidate's difficulties.**
- 3.5.2 **Modified language papers are only produced for some specifications when applications are made by the deadline and are not produced automatically.**
- 3.5.3 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.
- 3.5.4 Some question papers are already language modified since language specialists have been involved in the question paper setting process.

In such circumstances the standard 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*.)

- 3.5.5 **Where a candidate is identified as requiring a Sign Language Interpreter, a modified language paper should be requested by the respective deadline.**
- 3.5.6 **Where a candidate is identified as requiring an oral language modifier, a modified language paper should be requested by the respective deadline.** A modified language paper may reduce or sometimes completely remove the need for an oral language modifier.
- 3.5.7 **In Modern Foreign Language Listening Tests, a transcript of the recording can be requested and read to the candidate, who speech-reads from a live speaker.** A transcript of a listening tape may also benefit those candidates who have 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 2, section 2.12, page 29, on the use of a live speaker in aural examination components.)**
- 3.5.8 Videos or films used in assessments may be requested with subtitles.

GCSE and GCE qualifications

3.6 Applying for modified papers

Failure to apply on time can lead to the rejection of the application as modified papers cannot be produced at short notice.

3.6.1 Applications must be made using *Access arrangements online*.

3.6.2 Applications must be made for each examination series, giving the correct unit numbers that the candidate is planning to enter, in that series, in each subject.

3.7 Final deadlines for making applications for modified papers to awarding bodies

Month of examination	Deadline
November 2011	20 September 2011
January 2012	4 October 2011
March 2012	30 November 2011
May/June 2012	21 February 2012

For those candidates who decide to re-sit units in June 2012, following the publication of January 2012 examination results, applications for modified papers must be received no later than 21 March 2012.

An awarding body may apply a financial penalty for any late applications.

Other qualifications

3.8 Entry Level qualifications

- 3.8.1 **Modified papers for timetabled written components within Entry Level Certificate (ELC) and Entry Level Functional Skills qualifications (i.e. secure question paper materials) must be applied for in advance of a specific examination series.**

Centres are required to inform the awarding bodies **no later than ten weeks before the date of the assessment** that a candidate will require a modified paper. Centres **must not** order papers for candidates unless they intend to enter them for the relevant examination series.

- 3.8.2 **A paper application must be sent to the individual awarding body using Form 7 – JCQ/Modified Papers.** The form is available electronically at http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams_office/forms/

Awarding bodies do not offer any further modifications other than those listed on Form 7. Centres must tick their preferred choice of format.

3.9 Functional Skills qualifications

- 3.9.1 **Modified papers for timetabled written components within Functional Skills qualifications (i.e. secure question paper materials) must be applied for in advance of a specific examination series.**

Centres are required to inform the awarding bodies **no later than ten weeks before the date of the assessment** that a candidate will require a modified paper. Centres **must not** order papers for candidates unless they intend to enter them for the relevant examination series.

- 3.9.2 **A paper application must be sent to the individual awarding body using Form 7 – JCQ/Modified Papers.** The form is available electronically at http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams_office/forms/

Awarding bodies do not offer any further modifications other than those listed on Form 7. Centres must tick their preferred choice of format.

3.10 Key Skills qualifications

- 3.10.1 It is not possible to provide a modified enlarged or enlarged version of a Key Skills paper because of the ongoing nature of the assessment and the frequency of examination series.

However, centres may apply for one hour early opening and enlarge the paper themselves (see Chapter 6, pages 59-60).

3.11 Principal Learning

- 3.11.1 **Modified papers for timetabled written Principal Learning units (i.e. secure question paper materials) must be applied for in advance of a specific examination series.**

Centres are required to inform the awarding bodies **no later than ten weeks before the date of the assessment** that a candidate will require a modified paper. Centres **must not** order papers for candidates unless they intend to enter them for the relevant examination series.

- 3.11.2 **A paper application must be sent to the individual awarding body using Form 7 – JCQ/Modified Papers.** The form is available electronically at http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams_office/forms/

Awarding bodies do not offer any further modifications other than those listed on Form 7. Centres must tick their preferred choice of format.

3.12 Vocational qualifications

- 3.12.1 To apply for modified enlarged papers, Braille 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.**

Centres or training providers may provide an A3 enlargement of non-secure materials without requesting the 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/forms/.

Chapter 4

Learning difficulties

(This section will be particularly useful for heads of centre, specialist teachers and qualified psychologists)

The range of learning difficulties is extensive and some of the implications for assessment are not always obvious, such as speed of processing and organisation of ideas. Candidates must therefore be assessed by a suitably qualified person. This ensures that the access arrangements approved allow the candidate to access the assessment, but do not result in the candidate gaining an unfair advantage.

It should be remembered that where assessment objectives (Chapter 5, page 52) would be compromised by an access arrangement, the assessment objectives will take precedence and will not be waived. This includes the demonstration of knowledge, understanding and skills required by the specification.

Candidates entered for a qualification **must** be able to demonstrate the assessment objectives laid down in the specification.

4.1 Accountabilities

- 4.1.1 **Staff within the JCQ and the awarding bodies cannot determine whether a candidate has a learning difficulty.** It is the responsibility of staff within the JCQ and the awarding bodies to give appropriate advice and information.
- 4.1.2 It is the responsibility of the specialist carrying out the assessment of the candidate's literacy and processing skills to give the results of any tests completed by the candidate which may indicate that the impairment has a significant effect on the candidate's performance. The status of the person **must** be specified.
- 4.1.3 **Form 8, Section A**, provides a suitable format for recording information about a candidate's background and history of support.

Form 8, Sections A, B and C are available to download from:
http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams_office/access_arrangements/forms/

The form can be downloaded in a format that can be typed into and saved onto a computer.

Section C of Form 8 is also available pre-populated with the candidate's details when an application is made through *Access arrangements online*.

One report can be used by different centres. A copy must be available for inspection purposes at each centre where the candidate has been entered for and will be sitting his/her examinations.

Form 8 or a centre devised equivalent which addresses the same key questions must be held on the centre's files where an application for an access arrangement has been processed using *Access arrangements online* and approved.

All centres will be inspected by a member of the JCQ Centre Inspection Service. Inspectors will expect to see appropriate documentation to substantiate the use of an access arrangement processed electronically.

All specialists should use Form 8 or a centre devised equivalent of Form 8 as good practice. The completion of Form 8 or a centre devised equivalent will enable the JCQ Centre Inspector to see clearly and concisely the candidate's evidence of need and their normal way of working within the centre.

- 4.1.4 It is the centre's responsibility to submit applications on time and to ensure that agreed access arrangements have been put in place before the candidate's first examination.

4.2 Appropriate adjustments for candidates with learning difficulties

Access arrangements are made on the basis of an individual candidate's needs. Consideration must be given as to whether the proposed access arrangement is effective and suitable for the candidate's particular learning difficulty. The arrangement must not affect the integrity of the assessment.

For example, if a candidate can complete a paper in the normal length of time and never uses the extra time which has been made available, then it is not an effective arrangement. It would not be appropriate to process an application for extra time. Similarly, if a candidate requests the use of a word processor but cannot type comprehensible prose, it is not an effective arrangement to give him or her. However, he or she may require a scribe.

4.3 Guidelines for the assessment of the candidate's learning difficulties

- 4.3.1 *Access arrangements online* allows the centre to manage its own data relating to its approved specialist teacher(s).

For GCSE and GCE qualifications, centres must use *Access arrangements online* to record the name of the specialist teacher.

Where a centre is simply entering candidates for Functional Skills, Key Skills and/or Principal Learning, Form 8A must be completed.

The centre must arrange for the candidate to be assessed preferably by a specialist teacher employed within the centre who is suitably qualified.

Before the candidate's assessment, the centre should complete those sections of the appropriate form (Form 8 - JCQ/AA/LD or a centre devised equivalent of Form 8) relating to the history of support.

Where a qualified psychologist, LA specialist, or a specialist teacher outside of the centre is assessing the candidate, he/she must complete Section C of Form 8 - JCQ/AA/LD or a centre devised equivalent of Part C of Form 8.

If Section C of Form 8 is merely used, it must be supplemented by a written or typed centre statement confirming normal way of working, relating to the history of support.

- 4.3.2 The specialist should carry out those tests which are relevant to support the application. **For instance, if the candidate requires a reader but does not have writing difficulties, there is no need to carry out tests on writing skills.**
- 4.3.3 Once the specialist has completed the tests and established that the candidate has learning difficulties, **Section B of Form 8 should be completed by the centre.** Section B should recommend the access arrangements which will be required on the basis of the information given by the specialist. The recommendation must take into account the requirements of the specifications and the candidate's normal way of working in the centre.
- 4.3.4 **It is advisable to consult with subject teachers about the objectives being assessed in the subject at the start of the course.** The centre may include a candidate on a course in the full knowledge that the candidate may not be able to fulfil all of the requirements of the assessment. It is important for the candidate and their parents/guardians/carers to 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 in a particular assessment and who may be unable to demonstrate the assessment objectives required by the specification.
- 4.3.5 **A centre whose candidate has been assessed at the beginning of the course must process access arrangements for GCSE and GCE qualifications using *Access arrangements online*.** Where approved, the arrangement(s) will cover controlled assessment/coursework and timetabled examination papers during the two year course.
- 4.3.6 **Form 8 – JCQ/AA/LD or a centre devised equivalent of Form 8** should be considered as a tool to encourage forward planning. It should be perceived as a '**passport to access arrangements**', which travels with the candidate throughout the duration of the course. The centre should begin to compile information relating to the candidate's needs and their normal way of working. The form and the assessments should be completed at the beginning of the GCSE course, with the application being processed using *Access arrangements online* in the autumn term. It is recommended that a copy of the report is sent to any new centre in the event of a candidate changing schools/colleges during a course of study. If the candidate continues in education, the specialist should see the candidate again at the beginning of the GCE AS/A-level course and the centre should apply once more.

An application for an oral language modifier, a reader, a scribe or extra time of more than 25% will last for up to 26 months from the date of the assessment.

4.3.7 Literacy Attainments

- 4.3.7.1 Please state within **Form 8** when/if learning difficulties affecting literacy were diagnosed and by whom.
- 4.3.7.2 **Recent editions of nationally standardised tests, available through test publishers, which produce standardised scores, must be used. The candidate's chronological age should be less than the 'ceiling' of the test.**
- 4.3.7.3 **Results must be given as standardised scores.** Standardised scores of 90-110 should be considered average (within normal limits), standardised scores of 85-89 described as 'low average' and **only those below 85 as 'below average'**.

***Access arrangements online* will not be able to process centres' applications for extra time of more than 25%, oral language modifiers and readers for candidates with learning difficulties unless a standardised score has been provided. Percentiles and reading ages are not acceptable.**

4.3.8 Reading Skills

- 4.3.8.1 **Reading accuracy:** reading accuracy must be assessed using an individually administered, untimed test of single word reading.
- 4.3.8.2 **Reading comprehension:** reading comprehension must be assessed using a recognised test of text or sentence comprehension.
- 4.3.8.3 **Reading speed:** candidates with a history of reading difficulties, whose reading accuracy (at single word level) is within normal limits for his/her age may, nevertheless, read slowly and/or need to re-read text many times in order to absorb its meaning. A timed test of reading which includes comprehension questions should therefore be administered to assess the candidate's need for extra time or a reader.
- 4.3.8.4 The provision of a reader will depend on whether the candidate's reading impairment in **accuracy or speed or comprehension** has a significant effect. **For examination purposes, this would be interpreted as those whose standardised scores in tests of accuracy or speed or comprehension fall in the below average range, i.e. a standardised score of less than 85.**

4.3.9 Writing Skills

- 4.3.9.1 A scribe will be allowed in certain subjects when a candidate's impairment has a significant effect. For examination purposes, this would be interpreted as those whose **spelling accuracy score is in the below average range or whose free writing cannot be read by others, or is grammatically incomprehensible or is produced so slowly that answers could not be fully recorded even with extra time allowed. The candidate's handwriting speed (words per minute) being in the below average range for their age.**
- 4.3.9.2 Please comment on the candidate's writing under timed conditions. **If a word processor is the candidate's normal way of working within the centre, then it must be used in examinations.**

4.3.10 Other relevant information

The specialist may wish to include additional information relating to the candidate's performance particularly when required to demonstrate attainment in stressful situations, and where extra time may be required by a candidate who has otherwise normal levels of literacy. This information may include cognitive processing difficulties in for example working memory, phonological processing or sequencing problems. The specialist teacher may refer complex cases to an educational psychologist.

4.3.11 Completing the report of the assessment

For extra time of more than 25%, an oral language modifier, a reader and a scribe the assessment must be completed by an appropriately qualified person within 26 months of the start of the examination series. The status of the person must be specified.

Specialist teachers and psychologists working outside of the centre must use Form 8 or a centre devised equivalent to enable the SENCO or examinations officer to process the application electronically.

Specialist teachers employed within the centre may enter the results of these assessments directly on to the *Access arrangements online* system for GCSE and GCE qualifications. They **must** keep on the centre's files the tests which were given **and ideally use Form 8 or a centre devised equivalent to record the scores and dates of the assessment.**

(For further information on evidence of need for candidates with learning difficulties or comprehension disorders, **see section 6.5, page 56.**)

4.4 Assessment by a qualified psychologist

4.4.1 Most assessments are carried out by educational psychologists. There are cases where a clinical or occupational psychologist may have been medically responsible for the candidate and their reports will be accepted.

4.4.2 If a psychologist is signing the form, assessments must have been carried out by him/her, or by another qualified psychologist whose work must be appropriately attributed by the psychologist signing the assessment.

4.4.3 **Psychologists must not sign off assessments carried out by a teacher.**

4.5 Assessment by a specialist teacher

4.5.1 **Teachers who assess candidates for access arrangements do not need prior JCQ approval for their specialist qualifications. The head of centre is responsible for the approval of specialist teachers.**

4.5.2 The specialist teacher is required to establish that the results of tests in reading and/or writing present evidence that the candidate has a learning difficulty because it is clear that he or she is performing in the below average band.

4.5.3 **If a specialist teacher is signing the form, he/she must have carried out the particular assessment(s).**

4.6 Approval of a specialist teacher by a head of centre

A head of centre must take reasonable steps to satisfy themselves that the teacher assessing candidates' needs has the required level of competence.

The head of centre is responsible for the quality of the access arrangements process within his or her centre, as he or she would be for the delivery of the curriculum and the appointment of teaching staff.

When a specialist teacher has been approved by the head of centre, the exams officer **must** enter their name into *Access arrangements online* to confirm their status. **Evidence of the specialist teacher's ability to meet the criteria set out in section 4.7, page 51, must be available in the centre for inspection purposes.**

4.7 Appropriate qualifications for the provision of supporting evidence on behalf of examination candidates with learning difficulties

A list of some appropriate qualifications is available from the Joint Council for Qualifications. These qualifications were deemed appropriate because the providers confirmed that they met most of the following criteria. **This is neither a mandatory nor exhaustive list.** Other qualifications accredited by institutions of FE or HE may also meet these criteria.

Heads may wish to use these criteria in satisfying themselves whether a teacher has the required level of competence, particularly where a teacher does not have one of the qualifications on the list. In addition, heads may wish to satisfy themselves about the suitability of the awarding institution, for example by checking whether it has been recognised by the qualifications regulators of England, Wales and Northern Ireland or is a recognised institute of higher education.

- The teacher must be able to teach and assess secondary aged or adult learners who have learning difficulties.
- The teacher must have the necessary knowledge and skill to carry out assessments in support of applications for access arrangements.
- This knowledge must include a thorough understanding of the current edition of the JCO publication *Access Arrangements, Reasonable Adjustments and Special Consideration* and the principles, procedures and accountabilities involved. **It should include familiarity with the Equality Act 2010.**
- The teacher must understand and be able to use nationally standardised tests which are appropriate for the age group being tested. This should include an understanding of the theoretical bases underlying the 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 significant discrepancy between scores (statistical); either standard error of measurement or confidence intervals for test scores.
- The teacher must be trained in and have experience of the objective administration of attainment tests which can be administered individually. This must include tests of reading accuracy, reading speed and comprehension, spelling, with appropriate test ceilings. Appropriate methods of assessing writing skills, including speed, should also be covered.
- Whilst it is not necessary to carry out cognitive testing in every case, teachers must be able to define when it is necessary to refer the candidate to an educational psychologist or other specialist and to understand the limitations of their own skills. Some cognitive tests are available to teachers. The specialist teacher should be trained in and have experience of the objective administration of tests of cognitive ability including tests of verbal and non-verbal ability.

The person undertaking the assessment should primarily be a named teacher employed within the centre who is suitably qualified. The **second choice** is a suitably qualified teacher employed at another centre. The **third choice** would be a LA assessor. **The fourth choice would be an assessor who has an established relationship with the centre.** If a centre is employing the services of a suitably qualified teacher who does not teach in the centre, they **must** also record the person on *Access arrangements online* if he/she is assessing GCSE and or GCE candidates. **This will include specialist peripatetic teachers working for local authorities who support schools, special educational needs students, deaf students and disabled students.** Centres **must** be responsible for the outside help they enlist.

For all other qualifications, the centre **must** list that person on **Form 8A** as contracted to work within the centre.

A head may find that their staff do not have enough time to assess a large number of candidates and may therefore be required to enlist additional help from a suitably qualified teacher who has already worked for the centre. However, the head of centre should identify appropriate staff and ensure the consistent use of such staff during the course of the academic year.

Chapter 5

Assessment Objectives

(This section will be particularly useful for heads of centre, specialist teachers and qualified psychologists)

- 5.1 In general qualifications, the candidate has to 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.

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, meaning that to be awarded a grade, the candidate must be able to demonstrate the level of competence or ability against the assessment objectives.**

- 5.2 Some types of impairment 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 should be sought from the awarding body. In some cases, a disabled candidate may have to be exempted from a component 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 assessment.

Examples are given **on page 53** to 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 assessment, unless it is felt that the impairment will not affect a significant proportion of the assessment.

Examples of how assessment objectives would impact on the availability of access arrangements:

- A GCSE candidate has a brain injury which affects his short term memory. He knows his work for a very short period of time. His long term memory is not affected. He follows unitised qualifications in order to learn units over a longer period of time so that he is not relying on recently learnt work. If this is not an effective adjustment, there can be no other adjustment to the assessment, as the assessment objective being tested is knowledge.
- 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 particular subject. As the assessment objectives are designing and making, no adjustment can be made.
- A candidate with severe dyslexia wants to take GCSE English and Spanish but cannot read or write adequately. As the assessment objectives being tested in these subjects include reading and writing, he cannot have an adjustment in the form of a reader in the reading papers. He cannot have a scribe in the writing paper for GCSE Spanish unless he is able to dictate each foreign word letter by letter. A decision is made as to whether to enter him for these subjects on the basis of how much he could complete independently.
- 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.
- A candidate taking a piano examination breaks her arm and cannot perform. The centre asks if her friend can play the piece for her. This is not permitted. The assessment objective being tested is playing the piano.

Chapter 6

Processing applications for access arrangements

GCSE and GCE qualifications

6.1 General Information

For GCSE and GCE qualifications, *Access arrangements online* enables centres to make a single online application for a candidate requiring access arrangements using any of the secure awarding body extranet sites. *Access arrangements online* will provide an instant response.

6.2 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 agreed, it **must** be put into effect in accordance with these JCQ regulations and without affecting the integrity of the qualification.

6.3 Temporary conditions (GCSE and GCE qualifications)

Access arrangements online must be used for GCSE/GCE candidates with a temporary illness or injury, such as a broken arm. These arrangements can be processed as the need arises. The centre **must** ensure that appropriate documentation is held on its files to support any arrangement made.

Examples of temporary access arrangements

Example 1

A Year 10 GCSE candidate recently fell off his bike and injured his writing hand. The candidate is unable to write or type and therefore the exams officer processes a temporary application for the use of a scribe using *Access arrangements online*. As the use of a scribe is not the candidate's normal way of working and he is not entirely comfortable or indeed conversant in dictating his responses to another person, an application for extra time of up to 25% is made using *Access arrangements online*.

The exams officer types a note to support the application for a scribe and extra time of up to 25% and with the approval sheet from *Access arrangements online*, retains on file for centre inspection purposes. Two days later, the candidate brings a note from his GP which confirms the injury to his hand and this is added to the exams officer's file.

Once recovered, the candidate will sign the data protection notice to confirm his consent for the arrangements being processed.

Example 2

A Year 12 GCE AS candidate has suffered a back injury playing rugby. The candidate is unable to come to school to sit his examinations and the exams officer therefore processes a temporary application for alternative accommodation/venue away from the centre. *Access arrangements online* approves the application and allows the centre to open the packet of question papers within one hour of the published starting time. In addition, the exams officer processes an application for supervised rest breaks as sitting for an extended period of time causes him significant discomfort.

The exams officer types a note to support the application for alternative accommodation and supervised rest breaks. The candidate will forward a note from his GP to confirm his back injury and will sign the data protection notice prior to sitting his first examination at home. The exams officer keeps the typed note and the approval sheet from *Access arrangements online* on file for inspection purposes.

The invigilator takes the question paper in a sealed envelope to the candidate's home and conducts the examination as per the JCQ publication *Instructions for conducting examinations*. However, during the course of 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 application for special consideration to the respective awarding body, having appropriate evidence to substantiate the request.

Example 3

A Year 11 GCSE candidate arrives in school on the first morning after the Whitsun half term break. He has had chicken pox. The candidate is clearly unwell and possibly contagious so he is sent home. The centre decides that it will arrange for the candidate to take his examinations at home.

The exams officer processes a temporary application for alternative accommodation/venue away from the centre. *Access arrangements online* approves the application and allows the centre to open the packet of question papers within one hour of the published starting time.

In addition, the exams officer processes an application for supervised rest breaks, as sitting for an extended period of time, whilst feeling unwell, may not be conducive to the candidate reaching his full potential.

The exams officer types a note to support the application for alternative accommodation and supervised rest breaks, and with the approval sheet from *Access arrangements online*, retains on file for centre inspection purposes.

As the candidate has had a contagious disease, the exams officer seeks medical guidance from one of their local GP surgeries, primarily with regard to the risk to others, in this case the invigilator. The exams officer also reads the advice in **section 5 of the JCQ publication *Instructions for conducting examinations***.

The risks are deemed to be minimal. The invigilator takes the question paper in a sealed envelope to the candidate's home and conducts the examination as per the JCQ publication *Instructions for conducting examinations*.

However, during the course of the examination, the candidate begins to feel unwell and is unable to continue with the paper 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 paper.

The exams officer, using the invigilator's incident log, submits an application for special consideration to the awarding body. The awarding body is informed that the candidate did not complete the paper.

The candidate is unable to sit any more examinations that week and the exams officer, with appropriate documentation, submits further applications for special consideration.

6.4 Cases which do not gain approval

Access arrangements online deals with over 95% of all applications made by centres in England, Wales and Northern Ireland, providing centres with a single automated response that in the majority of cases will be an approval **as long as the candidate meets the criteria for all of the arrangements requested.**

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.

If an application is not approved, 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 need for the arrangement being requested.

Example:

A candidate has requested the help of a reader and a scribe in her examinations. Her writing is totally illegible and she has used a scribe throughout the course. Her reading has improved during the year and she now achieves standardised scores of 90, 94 and 97 for reading accuracy, reading comprehension and reading speed on nationally standardised tests. The examinations officer keys into the online system a score of 90 for reading accuracy and also confirms that her writing is illegible. The application is not approved because she does not meet the criteria for one of the arrangements requested (a reader). The exams officer makes another application, this time only for a scribe. The application is approved. Before she keys in the next candidate, she checks the criteria to make sure this does not happen again.

If the candidate does have substantial needs which are not accommodated by the online system, it may be because they relate to reasonable adjustments which are not listed or to arrangements which may require further exploration in relation to the competence being tested in the specification(s). Centres should refer these cases to the relevant awarding body. This may be done via *Access arrangements online*. However, additional paperwork may be required in order to justify the request being made.

6.5 Evidence of need

Candidates with learning difficulties or comprehension disorders

- Diagnostic assessments of reading, comprehension, writing, spelling or cognitive processing as appropriate should have been given.
- Whilst specialist teachers **employed within the centre** may have entered the results of these assessments directly on to the system, they **must** keep on file in the centre the tests which were given and use **Form 8 or a centre devised equivalent** on which to record the scores and the dates of the assessment.
- Specialist teachers and psychologists **working outside of the centre must use Form 8 or a centre devised equivalent** in order to facilitate the keying of the application by the SENCO or examinations officer.
- The validity period of these assessments will vary, depending on the arrangement being requested.
- Where only 25% extra time is required, a Statement of Special Educational Need or a report **which relates to secondary/further education** will still be valid.

In all cases a history of difficulty and current evidence of need will be required.

Candidates with physical or visual impairments

- Evidence of need does not have to be produced, other than the information which would normally appear on **Form 1**, stating the nature of the impairment and the need(s) arising.

6.6 Pre-planning in advance of examination series

Applications processed and approved online can be recorded as a CSV file and using it in Excel, an instant list of candidates who have access arrangements 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 ahead and identify the number of additional rooms required within the centre to accommodate candidates with access arrangements, invigilation resources and the number of Oral Language Modifiers, practical assistants, readers, scribes and Sign Language Interpreters which are needed.

Access arrangements online will also enable centres to generate pre-populated cover sheets.

GCSE and GCE qualifications

Access arrangements that must be applied for on-line include:

- Alternative accommodation (away from centre)
- Bilingual dictionary with extra time of up to 25% (for the use of the dictionary)
- Computer reader
- Examination on coloured/enlarged paper
- Extra time of up to 25%
- Extra time over 25%
- Modified papers (please see Chapter 3, page 39)
- Oral Language Modifier
- Practical Assistant for practical assessments
- Practical Assistant for written papers
- Reader
- Scribe/voice activated computer system/voice input system
- Sign Language Interpreter

The following arrangements do not need to be processed online:

- Amplification equipment
- **Bilingual dictionary**
- Braille
- Closed Circuit Television (CCTV)
- Colour naming by the invigilator for candidates who are colour blind
- Coloured overlays
- **Live speaker for pre-recorded examination components**
- Low vision aid/magnifier
- Optical Character Reader (OCR) scanners
- Prompter
- Read Aloud
- Separate invigilation (within the centre)
- **Supervised rest breaks**
- **Transcript**
- Word Processor

How to access the *Access arrangements online* system

www.aqa.org.uk

www.ccea.org.uk

www.edexcel.com

www.ocr.org.uk

www.wjec.co.uk

6.7 How to use Access arrangements online

Getting started

Before logging in to *Access arrangements online* you will need:

- the candidate's consent (completed data protection notice) to record their personal data online;
- paperwork determining the candidate's needs;
- your log in details for one of the secure awarding body websites, e.g. eAQA.

Good practice

Keep detailed records of all the essential information about access arrangements on file, including a printed copy of the candidate's application and appropriate evidence of need, for inspection by JCO.

Quick guide to applying for access arrangements online for a long-term condition:

Step 1 Log in

Log in to an awarding body secure website, e.g. eAQA and navigate to *Access arrangements online*. Select the option **Create application** from the home page.

Step 2 Candidate details

Enter your candidate's details.

* denotes that input is mandatory. † denotes that input is required for only one of the four fields.

Step 3 The exam series

Select the academic year and first exam series in which the access arrangement(s) will be used.

Step 4 Qualification type and application duration

Select GCSE or GCE or both whichever is relevant to the candidate's application and select either:

- *Long-term condition = lasts duration of the 2-year course.*
- *Temporary condition = lasts duration of an exam series.*

Step 5 Access arrangements

Choose the access arrangement(s) required for the candidate from the list shown. You can select more than one but you must provide supporting evidence in each instance to secure approval.

Step 6 Evidence of need

Answer all of the questions about the evidence you have on file to support the application.

Step 7 Diagnostic report

Some applications require you to enter details from a report to substantiate the evidence of need. You must specify who carried out the assessment and when.

Step 8 Confirmation

Your submission is now complete.

Tick the **Confirmation** box to state that you have read and accept the legal statements and click **SUBMIT**.

Step 9 Outcome

The application outcome will now be displayed, along with the details of the application.

If your application has been refused, you may refer it to the relevant awarding body for consideration using the awarding body referral section. **However, you must always re-check the JCO regulations to see if the candidate does meet the criteria for the arrangement(s).**

Step 10 Save & Close

Your application has been saved and can be found at any time using the search facility. Click **SAVE & CLOSE** to return to the Home page.

Other qualifications

Candidates sitting Free Standing Mathematics qualifications (FSMQ), Functional Skills qualifications, Key Skills qualifications and Principal Learning alongside GCSE/GCE qualifications

6.8 Where a centre has approval from *Access arrangements online* for an access arrangement for a GCSE or GCE candidate, this permission extends to:

- Free Standing Mathematics qualifications (FSMQ);
- Functional Skills qualifications;
- Key Skills qualifications; and
- Principal Learning.

A separate application will need to be made to any awarding body that does not use *Access arrangements online*.

Examples:

An approved application for a reader and extra time of up to 25% for a GCSE candidate will be regarded as additionally applying to Functional Skills qualifications (where permitted by the specification – see Appendix 3, page 83).

An approved application for a scribe and extra time of up to 25% for a GCSE candidate will be regarded as additionally applying to Key Skills qualifications (where permitted by the specification – see Appendix 2, page 82).

An approved application for supervised rest breaks and extra time of up to 25% for a GCSE candidate will be regarded as additionally applying to Principal Learning components.

Candidates sitting Level 1 and Level 2 Functional Skills and Key Skills qualifications not alongside GCSE qualifications

6.9 The following arrangements apply where candidates are sitting Level 1 and Level 2 Functional Skills qualifications and Key Skills qualifications not alongside GCSE 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.

- Amplification equipment
- **Bilingual dictionary**
- Braille
- Closed Circuit Television (CCTV)
- Colour naming by the invigilator for candidates who are colour blind
- Coloured overlays
- **Live speaker for pre-recorded examination components**
- Low vision aid/magnifier
- Optical Character Reader (OCR) scanners
- Prompter
- Read Aloud
- Separate invigilation (within the centre)
- **Supervised rest breaks**
- **Transcript**
- Word Processor

The following arrangements may be granted by the centre without prior approval from an awarding body.

Form 9 – JCQ/CA must be completed and kept on the centre's files, (with appropriate evidence of need) for inspection purposes listing the names and numbers of candidates who were granted these arrangements.

- Bilingual dictionary with extra time of up to 25% (for the use of the dictionary)
- Extra time of up to 25%

For all other access arrangements (as detailed below) centres must apply to the relevant awarding body at least six weeks before the date of the series in which the examination is to be taken.

Form 1 – JCQ/AA or Form 8 – JCQ/AA/LD, as appropriate, must be sent to the awarding body.

- Alternative accommodation (away from centre)
- Computer reader
- Examination on coloured/enlarged paper
- Extra time over 25%
- Oral Language Modifier
- Practical Assistant for practical assessments
- Practical Assistant for written papers
- Reader
- Scribe/voice activated computer system/voice input system
- Sign Language Interpreter

Entry Level qualifications

Entry Level Adult Literacy and Numeracy qualifications

Entry Level Certificate (ELC) qualifications

Entry Level Functional Skills qualifications

6.10 The following arrangements apply to Entry Level qualifications.

Entry Level 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.

- Amplification equipment, taped questions and responses
- **Bilingual dictionary**
- Braille
- Braille of non secure assessment material
- Closed Circuit Television (CCTV)
- Colour naming by the invigilator for candidates who are colour blind
- Coloured overlays
- **Live speaker for pre-recorded examination components**
- Low vision aid/magnifier
- Optical Character Reader (OCR) scanners
- Prompter
- Read Aloud
- Separate invigilation (within the centre)
- **Supervised rest breaks**
- **Transcript**
- Word Processor

Entry Level qualifications

Where permitted by the specification, the following arrangements may be granted by the centre without prior approval from an awarding body.

Form 11 – JCQ/EL/NF must be completed and kept on the centre's files, listing the names and numbers of candidates who were granted these arrangements.

Form 11 – JCQ/EL/NF must be made available for inspection purposes.

- Bilingual dictionary with extra time of up to 25% (for the use of the dictionary)
- Extra time in timed components
- Oral language modifier
- Practical Assistant
- Reader
- Scribe
- Sign Language Interpreter for written questions and responses (but not in MFL oral examinations)

Timetabled Entry Level examinations

Question papers must always remain secure.

Form 12 – JCQ/EL/AA must be sent to the relevant awarding body at least six weeks before the date of the series in which the examination is to be taken. Form 12 must be completed where a centre wishes to open question papers up to one hour before the published starting time to:

- **enlarge or photocopy the question paper on to coloured paper**
- **enable an Oral Language Modifier or a Sign Language Interpreter to prepare for the examination**
- **conduct an examination at an alternative venue for an individual candidate, e.g. the candidate's home**

Where a centre has approval from *Access arrangements online* for Coloured/Enlarged paper, an Oral Language Modifier, a Sign Language Interpreter or Alternative Accommodation/Venue away from the centre for a GCSE candidate, this approval extends to Entry Level qualifications.

This will allow the centre to open Entry Level question papers up to one hour before the published starting time, without prior permission from the awarding body, in order to facilitate the required access arrangement.

Vocational qualifications (externally assessed units)

6.11 Centres or training providers who wish to apply for an access arrangement in a vocational qualification must make an application to the relevant awarding body at least six weeks before the date of the series in which the examination is to be taken. Form VQ/EA must be used.

Form VQ/EA is available electronically at http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams_office/forms/

It is the responsibility of the head of centre/Principal/CEO (or designated nominee) to ensure that any access arrangement implemented by the centre on behalf of the learner is based on firm evidence of a barrier to assessment.

Internally assessed units

Functional Skills and Principal Learning units Project qualifications (including the Extended Project) Vocational qualifications

6.12 For internally assessed Functional Skills and Principal Learning units and Project qualifications, centres do not need to apply to the individual awarding body concerned.

Access arrangements for internally assessed Functional Skills units must be in line with Ofqual's Functional Skills qualifications criteria.

Access arrangements 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 concerned.

6.13 For vocational qualifications which are internally assessed centres or training providers **do not** need to apply to the awarding body. However, centres or training providers **must** make arrangements which are in line with the awarding body's policies.

All arrangements made in relation to internal assessments **must** be recorded on **Form VQ/IA** and held on file for inspection purposes. (**Form VQ/IA** is available electronically at http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams_office/forms/).

Access arrangements 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.

The head of centre/Principal/CEO (or designated nominee) **must** ensure that any access arrangement implemented by the centre or training provider on behalf of the learner is based on firm evidence of a barrier to assessment.

It is recommended that centres discuss the application of access arrangements to internally assessed units with their external verifier for the unit(s) concerned and should inform them of any access arrangements given.

SECTION B - The Equality Act 2010

Chapter 7

General qualifications - information and guidance for centres

The Equality Act 2010 strengthens the duty to make reasonable adjustments, defines substantial disadvantage and places new duties on the qualifications regulator.

The awarding bodies have a duty not to discriminate against individuals in 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 addresses the duty upon awarding bodies to make reasonable adjustments and avoid unfavourable treatment towards disabled candidates.

7.1 Awarding bodies – general qualifications

Section 96 (s1-6) of the Equality Act 2010 states that awarding bodies must not discriminate, harass or victimise when conferring general qualifications and have a duty to make reasonable adjustments.

7.2 Duty to make a reasonable adjustment

The duty for an awarding body to make a reasonable adjustment (s20) will apply where a disabled person would be 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.

7.3 Definition of disability

Section 96 (s6) 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'.

7.4 The power of the regulator

Section 96 (s7-8) state 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 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 reasonably adjust, rather than saying precisely what should be reasonably adjusted.

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

- Certificate in Adult Literacy
- Certificate in Adult Numeracy
- Entry level certificate qualifications
- Essential Skills (Wales)
- Free Standing Mathematics qualifications
- Functional Skills
- General Certificate of Education (Advanced and Advanced Subsidiary levels)
- General Certificate of Secondary Education
- Key Skills
- Principal Learning and Project qualifications

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

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. The responsibility of an awarding body principally concerns permitting access arrangements for a candidate defined as disabled under the terms of the Equality Act 2010.

A reasonable adjustment required by a candidate will usually be an access arrangement for the assessment in question, as listed in Chapters 2 and 3 of this document. However, a reasonable adjustment may include other arrangements which are not listed in this document. Centres should apply for a reasonable adjustment in the same way as they would for an access arrangement.

Where a GCSE/GCE candidate has substantial needs which are not accommodated by *Access arrangements online*, the case should be referred to the relevant awarding body. This may be done via *Access arrangements online*. However, additional paperwork may be required in order to justify the request being made.

Awarding bodies may require more compelling evidence of need before approving an arrangement that would otherwise unfairly advantage the candidate. The requirement for evidence of need is important so as to maintain the rigour and standard of the examination system and to ensure that those using examination certificates can continue to have confidence in the awarding of qualification grades.

Whether it is reasonable for an awarding body to permit a particular adjustment will depend on a number of factors, such as its cost and effectiveness. **However, if an adjustment is one which is reasonable to make, then the awarding body will do so unless the assessment objectives being assessed are to be affected.** Where a disabled person is placed at a substantial disadvantage by an assessment objective, the awarding body is not under a duty to make reasonable adjustments.

Each application will be considered individually in light of the candidate's needs. The response will relate primarily to the effect the requested adjustment may have on the assessment objective being tested in the qualification.

Some adjustments may not be considered reasonable if they involve unreasonable costs, unreasonable timeframes or affect the security and integrity of the qualification. For example, Braille papers cannot be produced at short notice. Adjustments must not put in jeopardy the health and well being of any person, including the candidate.

SECTION C – The Equality Act 2010

Chapter 8

Vocational qualifications - information and guidance for centres

8.1 Which qualifications are covered?

This section relates specifically to vocational qualifications.

8.2 Awarding bodies – vocational qualifications

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

8.3 What are the Duties of Qualifications Bodies?

The duty for an awarding body to make a reasonable adjustment will apply where a disabled person would be 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.

8.4 Application of competence standards

Awarding bodies offering vocational qualifications are allowed to apply competence standards to a disabled person. **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).**

8.5 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 particular advice from the awarding body issuing the qualification.

In the majority of vocational qualifications, a wide range of reasonable adjustments will be available. The arrangements listed in **Chapters 2 and 3** 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. In particular, reasonable adjustments to vocational qualifications that carry a "licence to practise" need to be carefully considered so as not to invalidate 'the licence'.

8.6 Advising prospective candidates

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 should include the centre assessing each potential learner and making 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 assessment.

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

Centres are advised to 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 of the required assessments; and
- any restrictions on progression routes to the learner as a result of not achieving certain outcomes.

8.7 Vocational qualifications

Vocational qualifications accredit competence in the workplace against National Standards and an approved assessment strategy. Any reasonable adjustment **must** reflect the normal working practice of an employee working within the occupational area.

Learners may, however, use mechanical, electronic and other aids in order to demonstrate competence so long as the aids are generally commercially available and can feasibly be used on employers' premises. The following adaptations may be considered for the purposes of facilitating access, **as long as they do not impact on the competence standards being tested:**

- adaptation of the physical environment for access purposes;
- adaptation to equipment.

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

8.8 How can centres or training providers apply for reasonable adjustments for external assessments?

Centres or training providers should apply for a reasonable adjustment in the same way as they would for an access arrangement (see sections 6.11 and 6.13, page 63). An application **must** be to the relevant awarding body **at least six weeks before the date of the series in which the examination is to be taken**.

Each application will be considered individually and the response will relate primarily to the effect the requested adjustment might have on the competence or ability being tested in the qualification.

Some adjustments may not be considered reasonable if they involve unreasonable costs or 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.

Reasonable adjustments must not, however, affect the reliability or validity of assessment outcomes nor must they give the learner an assessment advantage over other learners undertaking the same or similar assessments.

It is recommended that centres discuss the application of reasonable adjustments to internally assessed units with their external verifier for the unit(s) concerned.

Section D: Post examination adjustments - special consideration (GCSE and GCE qualifications and Principal Learning)

Chapter 9

Which candidates will be eligible for special consideration?

Special consideration must be applied for following a specific examination series.

- 9.1 **Candidates will be eligible for special consideration if they have been fully prepared and have covered the whole course but performance in the examination or in the production of controlled assessment/coursework is affected by adverse circumstances beyond their control.** These include:
- 9.1.1 temporary illness or accident/injury **at the time of the assessment**;
 - 9.1.2 bereavement **at the time of the assessment** (where whole groups are affected, normally only those most closely involved will be eligible);
 - 9.1.3 domestic crisis arising **at the time of the assessment**;
 - 9.1.4 serious disturbance **during an examination**, particularly where recorded material is being used;
 - 9.1.5 other accidental events **at the time of the assessment** such as being given the wrong examination paper, being given a defective examination paper or tape, failure of practical equipment, failure of materials to arrive on time;
 - 9.1.6 participation in **sporting events/competitions at international level at the time of certification**;
 - 9.1.7 failure by the centre to implement **previously agreed access arrangements**.
- 9.2 When candidates have been fully prepared for the specification but the wrong texts have been chosen, special consideration may be given at the discretion of the awarding body. **Centres are advised that it is their responsibility to ensure that the correct texts are taught. Where this has not happened there can be no guarantee that a candidate will receive special consideration.** Such instances will be investigated on a case-by-case basis. **Where the wrong texts have been taught it is essential that the texts studied must have at least been examined in the current specification in a previous examination series.**
- 9.3 **Candidates will NOT be eligible for special consideration** if preparation for or performance in the examination is affected by:
- 9.3.1 long term illness or other difficulties during the course affecting revision time, **unless the illness or circumstances manifest themselves at the time of the assessment**;
 - 9.3.2 bereavement occurring more than six months before the assessment, **unless an anniversary has been reached at the time of the assessment or there are ongoing implications** such as an inquest or court case;
 - 9.3.3 domestic inconvenience, such as moving house, lack of facilities, taking holidays (**including school/exchange visits and field trips**) at the time of the assessment;

- 9.3.4 minor disturbance in the examination caused by another candidate, such as bad behaviour or a mobile phone ringing;
- 9.3.5 the consequences of committing a crime;
- 9.3.6 the consequences of taking alcohol or any other non-prescribed drugs;
- 9.3.7 the consequences of disobeying the centre's internal regulations;
- 9.3.8 the failure to prepare candidates properly for the examination for whatever reason;
- 9.3.9 staff shortages, building work or lack of facilities;
- 9.3.10 misreading the timetable and/or failing to attend at the right time and in the right place;
- 9.3.11 misreading the instructions of the question papers and answering the wrong questions;
- 9.3.12 making personal arrangements such as a wedding or holiday arrangements which conflict with the examination timetable;
- 9.3.13 submitting no controlled assessment/coursework at all, unless controlled assessment/coursework is scheduled for a restricted period of time, rather than during the course;
- 9.3.14 missing all examinations and internally assessed components/units;
- 9.3.15 failure to cover the course as a consequence of joining the class part way through;
- 9.3.16 permanent disability unless illness affects the candidate **at the time of the assessment;**
(Access arrangements exist for candidates with permanent disabilities, please see Chapters 2 and 3 of this document.)
- 9.3.17 failure without good excuse to process access arrangements on time.

Chapter 10

What is special consideration? - GCSE and GCE qualifications and Principal Learning

Special consideration is a post examination adjustment to a candidate's mark or grade to reflect temporary illness, temporary injury or other indisposition at the time of the examination.

Special consideration can only seek to go some way to assist a candidate affected by a potentially wide range of difficulties, emotional or physical, which may influence performance in examinations. Special consideration cannot remove the difficulty faced by the candidate. There will be situations where candidates should not be entered for an examination. Only minor adjustments can be made to the mark awarded because to do more than this would jeopardize the standard of the examination.

There are minimum requirements for enhanced grading in cases of acceptable absence (see section 10.3, pages 73 and 74).

All examinations are measuring what a candidate knows and can do. **The overall grades must reflect the level of attainment demonstrated in the examination.** The grades awarded do not necessarily reflect the candidate's true level of ability if attainment has been considerably affected over a long period of time. **It is not necessarily the case that the grade issued will match the estimated/forecast grade.** Where long term circumstances have prevented the candidate from reaching the competence standards it may not be possible to make an adjustment.

10.1 Candidates who are present for the assessment but disadvantaged

- 10.1.1 Special consideration will normally be given by applying an allowance of marks to each component affected within a specification. The size of the allowance depends on the timing, nature and extent of the illness or misfortune. The maximum allowance given will be 5% of the total raw marks available in the component concerned, including controlled assessment/coursework.
- 10.1.2 The decision made by the awarding body will be based on various factors which will be different from one subject to another. These may include the severity of the circumstances, the date of the examination in relation to the circumstances, the nature of the assessment, for instance whether the written papers are affected as opposed to controlled assessment/coursework, whether an oral or practical is involved.

The following circumstances must apply at the time of the assessment and be supported by appropriate and up to date evidence. Awarding bodies will not enter into discussion with candidates or their parents as to how much special consideration should be applied. The examples listed below are provided for illustrative purposes only.

5% This is the maximum allowance and will be reserved for the most exceptional cases, such as:

- terminal illness of the candidate;
- terminal illness of a parent/guardian/carer;
- very recent death of a member of the immediate family;
- very serious and disruptive domestic crisis leading to acute anxiety about the family.

4% Very serious problems such as:

- life-threatening illness of candidate or member of immediate family;
- major surgery at or near the time of the examination;
- severe disease;
- severe injury arising from a car accident;
- very recent death of member of extended family;
- severe or permanent bodily injury occurring at the time of the examinations;
- serious domestic crisis at time of examinations.

3% A more common category, (more cases will fall into this category) including:

- **recent** traumatic experience such as death of a close friend or distant relative;
- **recent** illness of a more serious nature;
- flare-up of severe congenital conditions such as epilepsy, diabetes, severe asthmatic attack;
- **recently** broken limbs;
- organ disease;
- physical assault trauma before an examination;
- recent domestic crisis;
- witnessing a distressing event on the day of the examination.

2% The most common category of allowance - the majority of cases will fall within this category:

- illness at the time of the assessment;
- broken limb on the mend;
- recent viral illness;
- concussion;
- effects of pregnancy (**not pregnancy per se**);
- hay fever on the day of an examination;
- extreme distress on day of examination;
- allowance on last paper taken in a day when a candidate has exceeded 5 hours 30 minutes at Level 1 or Level 2 (GCSE) or 6 hours at Level 3 (GCE).

1% Reserved for more minor problems:

- noise during examination which is more than momentary;
- illness of another candidate in the examination room;
- stress or anxiety for which medication has been prescribed;
- minor ailments;
- headache;
- minor upset arising from administrative problems, such as wrong time allocated.

0% Consideration was given but the addition of marks was considered inappropriate. (Where the request fails to meet the criteria, it will be rejected.)

10.2 Candidates who are absent from a time-tabled component/unit for acceptable reasons

10.2.1 When a candidate has missed a time-tabled component/unit for acceptable reasons and the centre is prepared to support an application for special consideration, an adjustment may be made to the terminal grade as long as the component/unit was missed in the terminal series and the minimum requirements of section 10.3 have been satisfied. **Awarding bodies cannot give advice as to whether a candidate is fit to take an examination. Centre staff should follow their internal procedures for dealing with candidates who feel unwell on the day of an examination.**

10.2.2 For unitised examinations taken in an examination series prior to certification, candidates should be re-entered for any missed units at the next assessment opportunity. Unless there are difficulties arising, e.g. group performances which cannot be repeated, special consideration will not be awarded.

This principle also applies where entire cohorts miss units due to adverse weather conditions or for any other reason, or where individual candidates miss units as a result of a change of centre.

10.3 Minimum requirements for enhanced grading in cases of acceptable absence

In all cases, candidates must have covered the whole course.

GCE: normally at least 50% of the total assessment must be completed.

- **AS three unit award:** two units out of three must have been completed. (**Partially completed units are not acceptable**).
- **AS two unit award:** one unit worth at least 50% or one externally assessed unit worth 40%.
- **Enhancement given at AS Level will be carried forward to A Level.**
- **A Level six unit award:** 50% of the total assessment completed with at least one A2 unit completed.
- **A Level four unit award:** 50% of the total assessment completed with at least one A2 unit completed.
- **An A Level award will not be issued on the basis of AS units alone.**

GCSE (new specifications): at least 50% of the total assessment must be completed.

Principal Learning: units which represent at least 50% of the total Guided Learning Hours must be completed.

Projects (including Extended Project): where the project is not completed, a grade cannot be issued.

GCSE Legacy specifications:

(English, English Language, English Literature, Gaeilge, Welsh First Language, Welsh Second Language, Welsh Literature, ICT, Mathematics and Sciences)

35% of the total assessment must be completed.

If the minimum requirement is not met in a GCSE legacy specification, (as above) an exceptional circumstances award may be made in the following circumstances:

- one component, usually coursework, **must** have been completed. **(Where a qualification consists of a single component, such as a GCSE Short Course specification, special consideration cannot be given where that single component has been missed);**
- alternative appropriate pre-existing evidence of attainment **must** be available in each of the components missed;
- this **must** have been produced by the candidate under controlled conditions;
- it **must** match the specification requirements regarding the content, at the appropriate tier of entry;
- it **must** reflect the nature of the component(s) missed;
- it **must** be accompanied by the required documentation and a copy of the question paper if available;
- it **must** be submitted, when requested by the awarding body;
- **if appropriate evidence is not available, an enhanced grade will not be issued.**

Where a candidate who has been entered for a specification has died before completing the minimum amount of assessment required, or has been entered and is terminally ill and unable to complete the minimum amount of assessment, the centre may request an honorary certificate from the awarding body. Where the minimum requirement is met, an award will be issued.

10.4 Controlled assessment/coursework extensions

Where a candidate meets the criteria for special consideration, i.e. **a temporary illness, temporary injury or other indisposition prior to the submission of their work**, it may be possible to allow a short extension to the deadline. An extension of no more than ten days to the deadline for the submission of coursework or controlled assessment may enable the candidate to complete his/her work. **The centre must contact the relevant awarding body to request this arrangement.**

Where a centre has been affected by circumstances beyond its control it may, **in exceptional cases**, be possible to grant a short extension of no more than ten days for a whole cohort of candidates. This is at the discretion of the awarding body and the centre **must** contact the awarding body as soon as possible to request such an arrangement.

10.5 Shortfall in work (controlled assessments/coursework)

If a candidate has been subject to an unforeseen prolonged illness or other misfortune during the period when the work was produced, it may, in some subjects, be possible to accept a reduced quantity of work without penalty, **as long as all of the assessment objectives have been covered at least once**. This will not be possible if the specification requires only one piece. Where several pieces of work are required, the reduction will be accepted only if those pieces are testing the same criteria. It will not be possible to give this consideration in every case, for example, if work has not been submitted or the assessment objectives have not been satisfied.

No adjustment to the marks should be made by the centre. **Form 10 – JCQ/SC** should be submitted to the awarding body, attached to a breakdown of marks across the assessment objectives. **Candidates must have been fully prepared for the course but unable to finish the work.** Awarding bodies will not normally agree a reduced amount of work in advance.

This arrangement does not apply when candidates join the course late.

10.6 Lost or damaged work

If a candidate's work has been **lost within the examination centre** and despite every effort it cannot be found, or it has been accidentally destroyed, the circumstances should be reported immediately to the awarding body using **Form 15 – JCQ/LCW**. This form is available on the JCQ website – http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams_office/forms/

The awarding body will consider whether it is appropriate to accept a mark for which there is no available evidence of attainment. This may occur in the following circumstances:

- The centre **must** be able to verify that the work was done and that it was monitored whilst it was in progress.
- The loss **is not** the consequence of negligence on the part of the candidate, for example work being left on a bus.
- **If only part of the work is lost and part of the work is available**, further guidance must be sought from the awarding body.
- **If the work was marked before it was lost or damaged**, marks should be submitted in the usual way. **Form 15 - JCQ/LCW must** be submitted both to the moderator and the awarding body by the deadline for the submission of internally assessed marks or by the date by which the work should be despatched for moderation. **No marks will be accepted after the issue of results.**
- **If the work was not marked before it was lost or damaged**, an estimated mark may be submitted on **Form 15 - JCQ/LCW**, based on the teacher's knowledge of the work up to the point where it was lost. Estimates **must not** include any supposition as to what the candidate may have achieved if the work had been finished. Estimates **must not** be submitted on mark sheets, only on **Form 15 - JCQ/LCW**. **No estimated marks will be accepted after the issue of results.**

10.7 Other Problems

10.7.1 There are circumstances which arise by accident and where specialist input may be required. Such circumstances may involve examination papers, when an incorrect paper has been handed to the candidate or a paper is defective in some way, with perhaps an incorrectly printed page. These cases are given special consideration by other means than those quoted so far. They may need to be referred to a subject officer or a senior examiner for a subject specific decision as to how the special consideration should be awarded. This means that the results may not immediately show the enhancement, but an adjustment of marks may have been done to take into account the problem which has arisen.

10.7.2 Centres may not realise that the candidate has been given the incorrect paper. Awarding bodies will notify centres of any discrepancies. If the centre is aware of the error at the time of the examination the candidate should, where possible, be given the correct paper as long as he or she is still under supervised conditions and is able to continue with the examination. A special consideration form (**Form 10 – JCQ/SC**) should be sent to the awarding body both when the incorrect paper has been taken and when the incorrect paper has been replaced by the correct paper and the candidate has taken both. There are circumstances where it is not possible for an awarding body to grant special consideration to candidates who have attempted an incorrect paper.

10.7.3 Where candidates have taken the wrong controlled assessment assignment, the centre may submit an application for special consideration using **Form 10 – JCQ/SC** if it is not possible to enter candidates at the next assessment opportunity.

Chapter 11:

Processing applications for special consideration (GCSE and GCE qualifications)

- 11.1 Applications for special consideration should be submitted on **Form 10 - JCQ/SC**. One form should be submitted by the head of centre/examinations officer per candidate per subject and sent to the relevant awarding body conducting the examination(s). **Applications will not be accepted if submitted directly by parents or candidates.**
- 11.2 Applications should be submitted within seven days of the last examination in the series in each subject. Late applications may be accepted at the discretion of the awarding body. After the publication of results, late applications may be accepted only in the most exceptional circumstances and **only if submitted before the deadline for enquiries about results for the respective examination series.**
- 11.3 Forms should be completed in all cases. It may be appropriate for heads of centre or examination officers to attach a letter of explanation to the form where the circumstances are unusual or the form is not adequate for the particular circumstances which have arisen. In some circumstances, it is appropriate to submit one form and attach to it a list of candidates affected with a covering letter.
- 11.4 It is not possible for all letters to receive an individual reply. It is more important to process the applications before the issue of results. Awarding bodies may be unable to respond personally to each individual application. Letters will not be sent to candidates and/or parents/guardians/carers, whose cases must be dealt with by the centre.

Online applications for special consideration with AQA and Edexcel

- Applications for special consideration in respect of AQA and Edexcel GCSE and GCE qualifications must be made online.
- Online applications must be made for timetabled written examinations. Paper forms will not be accepted.
- Online applications for special consideration are made through e-AQA and Edexcel Online.
- In the majority of cases the online system will provide an instant decision.
- Centres should continue to make paper applications where there are problems with internally assessed components/units such as controlled assessments or coursework, and in cases involving groups of candidates.
- For candidates who have taken examinations but who have been disadvantaged as a consequence of illness or other misfortune, a single application can be made for all affected components once the exams are over or once the candidate has recovered, whichever occurs first. It is not necessary to make separate applications for individual subjects.
- Where candidates have missed examinations it is necessary to make a separate application for each day on which examinations are missed.
- A proportion of cases are sampled for quality control purposes. Where an application is selected for sampling the centre concerned may be asked to submit evidence in support of their application. In all other cases the centre must retain any evidence on file until after the publication of results.

Some examples of special consideration

Example 1

A candidate is sitting a number of GCE AS units in January 2012, but is not seeking AS qualification awards. He sat a handful of AS units in the previous June examination series. The candidate is unable to attend for his AS examinations (Chemistry, Economics and History) for two days due to ill health. As this is not his final examination series and he is not seeking an AS award in the subjects which he has missed, special consideration is not applied for. His centre will re-enter him for the missed AS units at the next available assessment opportunity – June 2012.

Example 2

A candidate misses two GCSE units in one day - Religious Studies in the morning and Geography in the afternoon, due to ill health. It is her final examination series before progressing to GCE AS and A2 studies. In light of this, and the fact that she meets the minimum requirements for a GCSE award in June 2012, having completed 50% of the total assessment in both GCSE subjects, her centre applies for special consideration. As the centre knows that the candidate has been struggling with her health over the past few days, there is no need for them to ask the candidate to produce a letter from her GP. The centre can write a supporting letter to substantiate her absence from the two GCSE units.

Example 3

A candidate sits a GCE A2 General Studies examination on Friday afternoon. He is known to be struggling, yet is adamant that he must sit his examination and this is clearly evident to the invigilation team. However, the candidate is unable to attend his GCE A2 Government & Politics examination on Monday morning. It is his final examination series and he meets the minimum requirements for a GCE award in June 2012 since he has already sat an A2 Government & Politics unit in January 2012. The centre is in a position to write a statement supporting the application for special consideration since they know he was falling ill prior to his absence from Monday morning's examination.

Example 4

A candidate sits a GCSE Russian exam on Tuesday afternoon. There were no known problems during Tuesday's examination. However, she does not attend for her GCSE D&T Food Technology examination on Wednesday afternoon. Her mother contacts the school office on the day of the examination to report her absence. Medical evidence is not available to substantiate the request. The centre advises the parent to complete the relevant part of **Form 14 – JCQ/ME** which is then brought into the school office. The centre having received **Form 14** feels able to support the application and submits Forms 10 and 14 to the awarding body.

Example 5

A candidate sits a GCE A2 Psychology examination on Monday. He is undergoing treatment for a serious illness. The candidate has recently been prescribed medication which is causing serious side effects. The candidate sits his GCE A2 Psychology examination as scheduled, but is unable to sit his remaining GCE A2 Economics and Mathematics units later that week. This is the candidate's final examination series before going to University. He can satisfy the rules for special consideration since he has completed 50% of the specification in both GCE A level Economics and Mathematics, with banked GCE AS and A2 units. The candidate visits his GP who, on account of her knowledge of her patient and his condition, is more than willing to produce a note for the school. Similarly, his school is willing to write a supporting statement.

Section E

Chapter 12

Post examination adjustments – special consideration (Vocational qualifications)

12.1 What is special consideration?

Special consideration is an adjustment to the mark or outcome of an assessment for a learner who was prepared for and present at an assessment but who may have been disadvantaged by temporary illness, injury or adverse circumstances **that have arisen at or near to the time of an assessment**.

It is important to note that it may not be possible to apply special consideration where:

- **an assessment requires the demonstration of a practical competence;**
- **the assessment criteria have to be fully met;**
- **units/qualifications confer Licence to Practise.**

Where an assessment has been missed or is in the form of an on demand test, such as an electronic test set and marked by a computer, the centre should offer the learner an opportunity to take the assessment at a later series/date.

Special consideration cannot give the learner an unfair advantage. Additionally, the application of special consideration must not cause the user of a certificate to be misled regarding a learner's achievements. The learner's results must reflect their actual achievement in assessments; not their potential ability. Examinations and assessments are measuring what a candidate can do. Only minor adjustments can therefore be made to the mark awarded because to do more than this would jeopardize the standard.

An awarding body's decision to award special consideration will be based on various factors, which may vary from learner to learner and from one assessment to another. These factors may include the severity of the circumstances, the date of the assessment and the nature of the assessment.

12.2 Who is eligible for special consideration?

A learner who is fully prepared and present for a scheduled assessment may be eligible for special consideration if:

- performance in an assessment was affected by circumstances beyond the control of the learner, e.g. recent personal illness, accident, bereavement, serious disturbance during the assessment;
- alternative assessment arrangements, which were agreed in advance of the assessment, proved inappropriate or inadequate.

The following are examples of circumstances arising at the time of the examination which may lead to an application for special consideration:

- terminal illness of the learner;
- terminal illness of a parent/carer/guardian;
- very recent bereavement of a member of the immediate family;
- very serious and disruptive domestic crisis leading to acute anxiety about the family;
- life threatening illness of the learner or member of immediate family;
- severe injury arising from a car accident;
- recent traumatic experience such as death of a close friend or distant relative; (In the case of the former, where whole class groups are involved, normally only the most closely involved friends will be eligible for special consideration.)
- flare-up of severe congenital conditions such as epilepsy, diabetes, severe asthmatic attack;
- recent physical assault;
- temporary accident, illness or injury at the time of the assessment;
- broken limb on the mend;
- serious disturbance during an examination;
- failure by the centre to implement previously agreed access arrangements.

Unlike access arrangements, there are **no** circumstances whereby a centre may apply its own special consideration. Applications **must** be made to the relevant awarding body.

12.3 When will learners not be eligible for special consideration?

A learner **will not** be eligible for special consideration where:

- evidence is not supplied by the centre that the learner has been affected at the time of the assessment by a particular condition;
- any part of the assessment is missed;
- preparation for a component is affected by difficulties during the course such as disturbances through building work, lack of proper facilities, changes in or shortages of staff or industrial disputes.

Additionally, learners **will not** be eligible for special consideration if preparation for the assessment is affected by:

- long term illness or other difficulties during the course affecting preparation for assessments or revision time, **unless the illness or circumstances manifest themselves at the time of the assessment**;
- bereavement occurring more than six months before the assessment, **unless an anniversary has been reached at the time of the assessment or there are ongoing implications** such as an inquest or court case;
- domestic inconvenience, such as moving house, lack of facilities, taking holidays (**including school/exchange visits and field trips**) at the time of the assessment;
- minor disturbance in the examination room caused by another candidate, such as bad behaviour or a mobile phone ringing;
- the consequences of committing a crime;
- the consequences of taking alcohol or any other non-prescribed drugs;
- the consequences of disobeying the centre's internal regulations;
- the failure to prepare candidates properly for the assessment for whatever reason;
- misreading the timetable for an external assessment and/or failing to attend at the right time and in the right place;
- misreading the instructions of an external assessment and answering the wrong questions;
- making personal arrangements such as a wedding or holiday arrangements which conflict with an assessment;
- submitting no portfolios for assessment at all, unless the submission of portfolios is scheduled for a restricted period of time, rather than during the course;
- missing all internally and externally assessed components;

- failure to cover the course as a consequence of joining the class part way through;
- permanent disability unless illness affects the candidate **at the time of the assessment**; (**Access arrangements exist for candidates with permanent disabilities, please see Chapters 2 and 3 of this document.**)
- failure without good excuse to request access arrangements on time.

12.4 Applying for special consideration in vocational qualifications

Applications for special consideration **must** be made on a case by case basis and thus separate applications **must** be made for each learner. The only exception to this is where a group of learners have been affected by a similar circumstance during an assessment, such as a fire alarm. A list of learners affected **must** always be attached to the application.

Applications for special consideration should be submitted to the relevant awarding body using **Form VQ/SC**. (This form is available electronically at www.jcq.org.uk/.) To ensure effective processing of applications centres **must** additionally submit:

- evidence to support the application such as a statement from a member of centre staff, a statement from the invigilator (if relevant), or any other appropriate information;
- applications to Edexcel should also include the learner's Student Report Form (SRF).

The head of centre/Principal/CEO **must** authorize all applications for special consideration. Applications **must** be submitted to the awarding body concerned within seven days of the assessment having taken place.

It is important for awarding bodies to process applications for special consideration before the issuing of results and it may not be possible therefore, to respond personally to each request. During the processing of an application, awarding bodies will only liaise with the centre making an application for special consideration on behalf of a learner.

Special consideration **will not** be considered once learner achievement has been claimed and certificated.

12.5 Lost or damaged work

When a learner's work has been lost or damaged, an awarding body may consider an application for special consideration. In all cases, the centre **must** be able to verify that the work was done and that it was monitored whilst it was in progress.

For competence based qualifications, the centre has a requirement to maintain assessment records independently of the candidate's portfolio. In the case of a lost portfolio, these records, together with fully documented question and answer sessions or written statements, as appropriate, can be used to confirm a candidate's competence. A portfolio re-created because evidence has been lost should be internally verified and the external verifier informed.

Data Protection Notice

So that we can process your application for access arrangements electronically via the *Access arrangements online* system we need your consent to share some of your personal data with a number of organisations. In some cases, we may need to provide more detailed personal information to support the application for access arrangements being made on your behalf.

These organisations are the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) and the participating awarding bodies (currently AQA, CCEA, Edexcel, OCR and WJEC).

Your application will be processed in line with the common standards, regulations and guidance developed for GCSE and GCE qualifications by the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ).

If you are happy for us to share your data please provide your consent by completing the declaration below. We will not use your data for any other purpose without your consent (unless authorised to do so by law).

Declaration

For the purpose of processing my access arrangement application, I consent to the use of my name, date of birth and other relevant data as set out above. I understand that this information will not be used for any other purpose without my consent unless authorised by law.

Signed Date

Print Name.....

Basic and Key Skills qualifications

The access arrangements which can be considered for Basic and Key Skills qualifications are listed in the summary tables below. The access arrangements detailed may be appropriate for candidates with disabilities, but this is not an exhaustive list. Reasonable adjustments which may be appropriate for candidates with disabilities have not been listed; applications should be made on an individual basis to awarding bodies. Applications received will be considered in the context of the competence standards which must be met in each specification and the evidence of need.

Qualification	Access arrangements permitted for tests	Access arrangements permitted for portfolios
Application of Number/ Basic Numeracy/ Adult Numeracy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • extra time • sign language interpreter (candidates must not sign responses at Levels 3-4) • Braille papers • scribe • reader • word processor • large size scientific calculators (Levels 3-4) • transcript • bilingual dictionary 	<p>Candidates may have access to all the equipment that they use in the workplace/centre. However, evidence produced must meet the requirements of the specifications regardless of process or method used and must be evident and accessible to assessors and verifiers/moderators.</p> <p>In Application of Number there may be instances when the interpretation of symbols or numbers is being assessed, in which case readers would need to avoid inadvertently, giving the answer to the question.</p>
Communication/ Basic Literacy/ Adult Literacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • extra time • Braille papers • scribe for Levels 1-2 only • word processor without grammar/spell checker • transcript 	<p>Candidates may have access to all the equipment that they use in the workplace/centre. However, evidence produced must meet the requirements of the specifications regardless of process or method used and must be evident and accessible to assessors and verifiers/moderators.</p>
ICT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • extra time • sign language interpreter • Braille papers • scribe at Levels 1-2 only • reader • word processor • bilingual dictionary 	<p>Candidates may have access to all the equipment that they use in the workplace/centre. However, evidence produced must meet the requirements of the specifications regardless of process or method used and must be evident and accessible to assessors and verifiers/moderators.</p>

Information on the above arrangements can be found within Chapter 2, pages 4-38 of this document.

The wider Key Skills, Improving own learning, Problem solving, Working with others

Portfolio assessment

Candidates may have access to all the equipment that they use in the workplace/centre. However, evidence produced must meet the requirements of the specifications regardless of process or method used and must be evident and accessible to assessors and verifiers/moderators.

Functional Skills qualifications

Ofqual, together with its regulatory partners in Wales (DCELLS) and Northern Ireland (CCEA), published the Functional Skills qualifications criteria in November 2009. The specific criteria for the individual Functional Skills in English, Mathematics and ICT were also published at the same time.

The information published applies to all levels of Functional Skills English, ICT and Mathematics qualifications.

Functional Skills English (Reading)

Access Arrangement	Yes/No	Type of assessment
Extra time	Yes	
Dictionaries and bilingual dictionaries	Yes	The use of a dictionary or a bilingual dictionary is permitted for all candidates .
Reader	No	
Computer/screen reader	Yes	
Oral Language Modifier	No	
Sign Language Interpreter	N/A	
Scribe	Yes	
Voice recognition technology (assistive technology)	Yes	
Word Processor	Yes	The use of a word processor with the spell check facility switched on is permitted for all candidates .
Transcript	Yes	
Practical Assistant	Yes	
Modified Question Papers (including Braille)	Yes	
Models, visual/tactile aids, speaking scales	Yes	
External device to load personal settings	Yes	Permitted as a reasonable adjustment provided that this does not compromise the assessment or give the candidate any advantage not available to other candidates.

Functional Skills English (Speaking, Listening and Communication)

Sign Language (i.e. BSL, SSE) is permissible in the Speaking, Listening and Communication component, provided this is made accessible to all participants in the discussion. (It is recognised that BSL is a language in its own right and not a form of English. BSL is, however, permitted as an alternative to English for the assessment of Speaking, Listening and Communication where BSL is the candidate's normal way of communicating in the contexts described by the standards.) **No other languages are permitted as alternatives to English.**

Similarly, access to augmentative speech equipment is permissible where it reflects the candidate's normal way of working.

As a last resort, candidates who are disabled under the terms of the **Equality Act 2010** and have no accessible means of communication may request an exemption from the Speaking, Listening and Communication component.

Functional Skills English (Writing)

Access Arrangement	Yes/No	Type of assessment
Extra time	Yes	
Dictionaries and bilingual dictionaries	Yes	The use of a dictionary or a bilingual dictionary is permitted for all candidates .
Reader	Yes	
Computer/screen reader	Yes	
Oral Language Modifier	Yes	
Sign Language Interpreter	Yes	
Scribe	No	
Voice recognition technology (assistive technology)	Yes	
Word Processor	Yes	The use of a word processor with the spell check facility switched on is permitted for all candidates .
Transcript	Yes	
Practical Assistant	Yes	
Modified Question Papers (including Braille)	Yes	
Models, visual/tactile aids, speaking scales	Yes	
External device to load personal settings	Yes	Permitted as a reasonable adjustment provided that this does not compromise the assessment or give the candidate any advantage not available to other candidates.

Functional Skills Mathematics

Candidates can have access to all forms of equipment, software and practical assistance, such as a reader or a scribe that reflect their normal way of working, provided that these do not affect the reliability or validity of assessment outcomes or give the candidate an assessment advantage over other candidates undertaking the same or similar assessments.

Access Arrangement	Yes/No	Type of assessment
Extra time	Yes	
Reader	Yes	
Oral Language Modifier	Yes	
Sign Language Interpreter	Yes	
Scribe	Yes	
Word Processor	Yes	
Transcript	Yes	
Practical Assistant	Yes	
Modified Question Papers (including Braille)	Yes	
Models, visual/tactile aids, speaking scales	Yes	

Functional Skills ICT

Candidates can have access to all forms of equipment, software and practical assistance, such as a reader or a scribe that reflect their normal way of working, provided that these do not affect the reliability or validity of assessment outcomes or give the candidate an assessment advantage over other candidates undertaking the same or similar assessments.

Access Arrangement	Yes/No	Type of assessment
Extra time	Yes	
Reader/screen reader	Yes	
Oral Language Modifier	Yes	
Sign Language Interpreter	Yes	
Scribe	Yes	
Word Processor	Yes	
Transcript	Yes	
Practical Assistant	Yes	<p>A practical assistant may switch on the computer and insert a disk at the candidate's instruction but must not perform any skill for which marks will be credited.</p> <p>A practical assistant may be used in written examinations.</p>
Modified Question Papers (including Braille)	Yes	
External device to load personal settings	Yes	Permitted as a reasonable adjustment provided that this does not compromise the assessment or give the candidate any advantage not available to other candidates.

A memory aid for a reader

I am here to read for you in your examination

I can only read the instructions and the questions

I can repeat instructions, but only if you ask me

**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

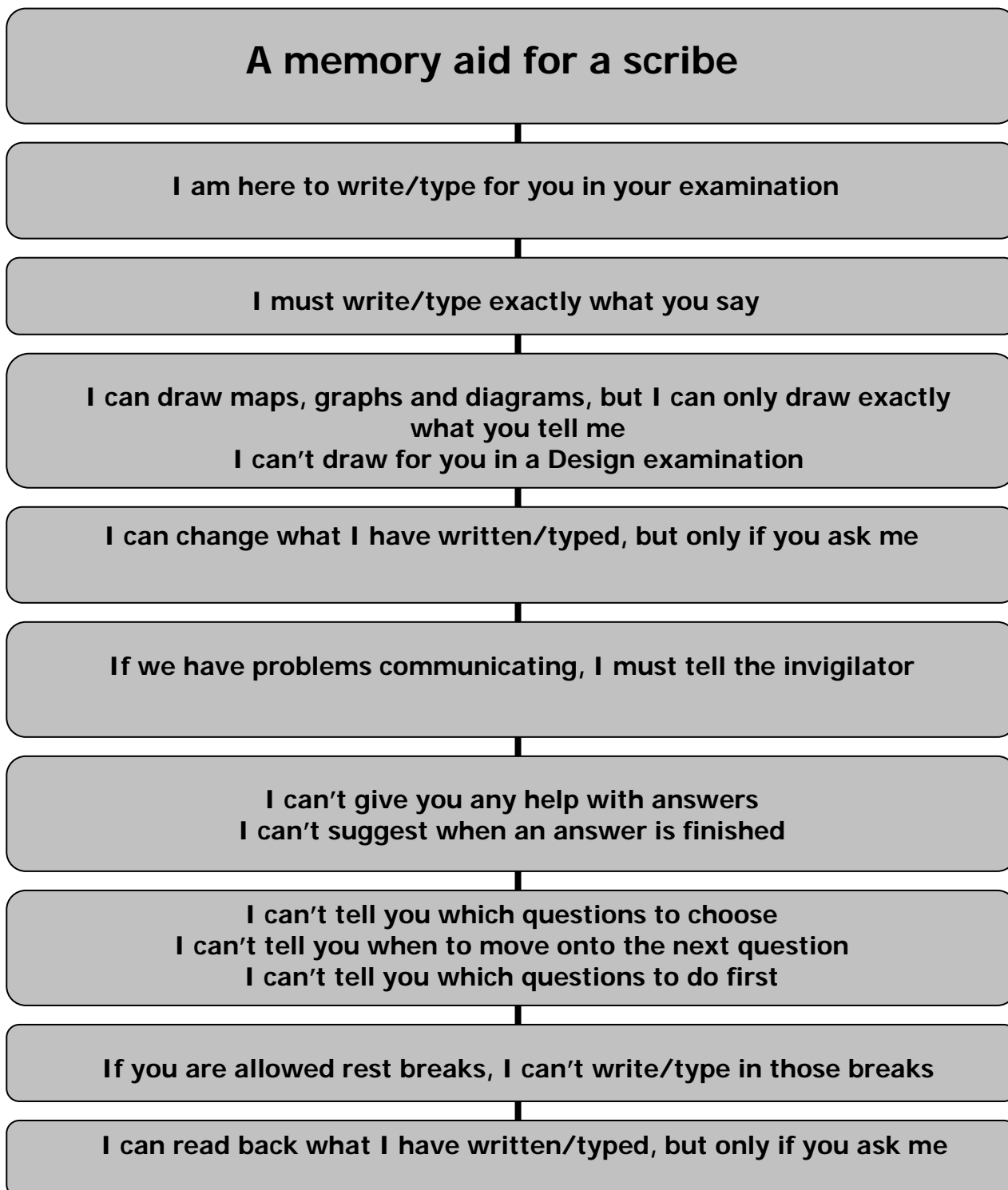
I can read back your answer, but only if you ask me

GCSE English examinations:

I can read the questions in the writing section of this 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 familiar with the rules as detailed on page 12.

It is recommended 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.



Centres must ensure that both invigilators and those acting as a scribe are familiar with the rules as detailed on page 20.

It is recommended 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.

Memory aid for an Oral Language Modifier

I am here to change words, phrases or sentences that you don't understand

I can't change words or phrases that the examiner thinks you should have learnt

I can't change anything the examiner didn't write (e.g. text from a book, maps, tables, etc.)

I can only make changes if you ask me

I can speak, write or sign any changes

I can read for you if you ask me

GCSE English examinations

I can read or change words, phrases and sentences in the writing section of the paper but I can't read or change anything in the reading section

Centres must ensure that both invigilators and those acting as an oral language modifier are familiar with the rules as detailed on page 27.

It is recommended that the candidate is made aware of what an oral language modifier can and cannot do in advance of their first examination, e.g. internal school tests or mock exams.

Memory aid for a Sign Language Interpreter

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 examinations

I can sign words, phrases and sentences in the writing part of the paper but I can't sign anything in the reading part

Centres must ensure that both invigilators and those acting as a sign language interpreter are familiar with section 2.13, page 30.

It is recommended that the candidate is made aware of what a sign language interpreter can and cannot do in advance of their first examination, e.g. internal school tests or mock exams.

GCSE & GCE access arrangements questions

Question

Does an extra time assessment written by a specialist teacher in the secondary school period remain current in Years 12 and 13 as these assessments do not apparently expire after 26 months?

Answer

Yes – **reports written during secondary education for extra time of up to 25% are valid throughout secondary/further/adult education**, but the specialist teacher should really have some additional evidence that extra time is still needed. For example, evidence that extra time was used in GCSE examinations, comments from teachers that the candidate works slowly or the results from recent timed standardised tests.

As a side issue, some centres think that where a candidate is granted a reader or a scribe that there is an automatic entitlement to extra time of up to 25%. **This is not the case**. For example, if a centre has processed an application for extra time and a scribe, an inspector will be looking for additional evidence to justify the need for extra time in addition to the use of a scribe.

Question

Which categories of access arrangements have an end date and which do not?

Answer

AAO (Access arrangements online) will only allow a maximum of 26 months for any arrangement. However, most arrangements can be applied for again after 26 months without a major update of the evidence. **Four arrangements must have a report from a specialist dated within 26 months of the final exam – reader, scribe, oral language modifier and more than 25% extra time**.

Question

Can a list be provided which indicates access arrangements requiring reports from a specialist and those which do not?

Answer

Detailed requirements are given in this document, **(Chapters 2 and 4)** with a quick guide on **page ix**.

In addition, extra time up to 25% needs a specialist assessment identifying a learning difficulty, preferably using Form 8 or a centre devised equivalent which addresses the same key questions. A report written by a specialist during the candidate's secondary education, confirming the need for extra time as a consequence of a learning difficulty would be enough. **(Please see page 5 for more information.)**

Question

Should we routinely use JCQ Form 8 or just part C?

Answer

JCQ strongly recommends that specialists record their evidence on **Form 8, including the background information in section A**. However, there is a mixed approach to this amongst centres and the JCQ cannot enforce the use of Form 8. Form 8 is ideal as it enables the centre to record the background information within section A. Some centres will create their own version of Form 8 which addresses the same key questions; some centres simply use Part C of Form 8. This is acceptable, provided the centre has produced a typed or written statement which confirms that the arrangement reflects the candidate's normal way of working within the centre. In essence, there is a history of provision.

A few centres use the 'diagnostic report' within AAO. The centre should always have an accompanying typed or written statement which confirms the candidate's normal way of working. **Spreadsheets or e-mail messages are not acceptable. Additionally, the supporting documentation should be in hard copy format.**

Question

Should there be a standard certificate which states what a candidate's requirements are, supplied by a qualified person

Answer

See previous answer

Question

What are the minimum requirements for assessment of candidates for access arrangements?

Answer

This depends on the specific access arrangement required – detailed requirements are given in this document, **(Chapters 2 and 4)** with a quick guide on **page ix**.

Question

Does the evidence have to be signed, such as a psychological assessment?

Answer

Unsigned assessments cannot be accepted as appropriate evidence. The signature acts as confirmation that the specialist has completed the assessment and supports the recommendations made.

Question

What is an "appropriately qualified teacher?"

Answer

An appropriately qualified teacher is someone who is able to meet the criteria as set out on **page 51** of this document. There should be evidence that a named specialist teacher meets the criteria as set out on **page 51** of this document – the examinations officer is agreeing that this is the case when he/she enters a name on to AAO. An inspector can ask to see evidence of the specialist teacher's qualifications. **A copy of their certificate and a statement from the head of centre outlining the rationale for the appointment of the specialist teacher should be held on file.** The head of centre **must** justify the appointment of the specialist teacher as per **section 4.7, page 51**.

Question

Should a Statement of Special Educational Needs be made available and should it be up to date even though it is reviewed annually?

Answer

Where the candidate is subject to an annual review, there is no need to produce a new Statement if the candidate's requirements remain the same. An annual review can simply state that the candidate's needs are as before provided the supporting evidence is also available.

Question

Must students sign the data protection notice?

Answer

Yes, the centre should be presenting to the inspector the **downloaded approval sheet from AAO, the accompanying evidence to support the access arrangement(s) (where required) and a signed data protection notice.** If the signed data protection notice is missing, then the inspector will remind the centre that they must ask candidates to sign a data protection notice or a Fair Processing Notice which specifically makes reference to AAO.

Question

What is the validity of privately commissioned reports supplied to a centre as evidence of need?

Answer

If a centre has accepted a privately commissioned report from a psychologist or a specialist teacher, then there **must** be a statement on file explaining why. **This is not a job for the examinations officer**, but for a member of the senior leadership team. **A member of the senior leadership team must decide whether or not to accept the report** and if he/she does accept the report the rationale for doing so **must** be stated.

Question

I have processed an application for a reader and a scribe inputting standardised scores of less than 85. I have keyed in '<85' and the applications have been rejected.

Answer

Access arrangements online will not accept '<85'. The symbol '<' must never be input onto the online system. If a specialist has written <85 or <70 you should type in 84 or 69.

The specialist should however, be providing you with a specific standardised score.

Question

For the use of a bilingual dictionary, how does the centre show evidence that the candidate has been in the country for less than 2 years?

Answer

The two year rule only applies to the use of a bilingual dictionary with up to 25% extra time – **candidates can use a bilingual dictionary without extra time for as long as they need to.**

Essentially this must be down to the centre's judgement. The evidence will vary from centre to centre. Evidence may be a typed or written statement which simply states that the candidate arrived from 'X' country and that 'Y' is his or her first language. As the candidate is learning the English Language and is making frequent use of a bilingual dictionary, as part of his/her normal way of working within the centre, extra time is needed.

Alternatively, some centres present a form for inspection which they have asked the candidate and his/her parents to complete. This may contain some or all of the following: when they arrived in the UK; was the candidate educated in an International school where some or the entire curriculum was delivered in English; was the candidate prepared for or entered for IGCSE examinations where the question papers were set in English; is at least one or more parent British born. The centre would thus present a pro-forma with 'NO' to these questions, with a statement confirming normal way of working within the centre.

Question

What procedures should there be for unexpected situations on exam days?

Answer

This is covered in **Chapter 6, section 6.3, pages 54-55** of this document.

Again, this comes down to centre judgement. If the centre can verify the circumstances or is of the opinion that the injury is genuine, then the arrangement should be granted to the candidate. There may also be evidence such as a note from the GP or a hospital consultant. The inspector will be aware that the examinations officer may not have had time to process the application, particularly if it has arisen immediately before the start of the exam. The examinations officer should process the application as soon as it is realistically possible to do so.

References, extracts and acknowledgement

You may:

- refer to the materials in this publication;
- quote non-substantial extracts of the materials (in terms of quantity and quality) in your own materials.

Such references and/or extracts must be accurate, not misleading and they must all be accompanied by a written acknowledgement of JCQ's ownership of the copyright in such materials and where the extracts have been taken from.

You must not:

- amend any of the materials in this publication or remove or alter any copyright, trade mark or other proprietary notice;
- commercially exploit any of the materials or any part of them contained within this publication, without the prior written consent of JCQ.