



Joint Council  
for Qualifications

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

### **General and Vocational Qualifications**

**With effect from  
1 September 2008 to 31 August 2009**

Produced on behalf of:



## **Statement**

**It is the responsibility of the head of centre and the examination officer at the centre to familiarise themselves with the contents of this booklet.**

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## Changes for the academic year 2008/9

### 1 *Access arrangements online* – Important information

#### 1.1 General Information

The NAA, JCQ awarding bodies and centre representatives have been working together to create an online system which enables centres to process all applications for access arrangements quickly and efficiently.

**The new system will enable centres to make a single online application for a candidate requiring access arrangements using any of the secure awarding body extranet sites. It will provide an instant response and has been designed to simplify and replace the previous paper based process for applying for access arrangements.**

The awarding bodies will honour existing applications approved until their date of expiry and centres will not need to re-apply using *Access arrangements online*.

#### 1.2 JCQ Regulations and NAA support

The NAA website [www.naa.org.uk/aao](http://www.naa.org.uk/aao) provides centres with a training version of the new system, a PowerPoint user training guide, a short online tutorial and a list of frequently asked questions. Additionally, centres will be supported by their Centre Support Officer and the NAA helpline.

Whilst the NAA training materials will provide information on how to make an application, they will not give details of the JCQ regulations or how these are to be applied. It is advisable for centres to use the two documents in conjunction with one another. 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.

#### 1.3 Previous Centre Delegated Access Arrangements online tool

The part of this system which centres used to record details of centre delegated access arrangements has been superseded by *Access arrangements online*. The new tool enables centres to make all applications for access arrangements online.

**The distinction between centre delegated and awarding body approved access arrangements is effectively removed as the system will be able to make decisions in all cases where there is evidence of need and the relevant criteria can be met.**

#### 1.4 Modified Papers

The Modified Papers site has **not** been incorporated within *Access arrangements online* and **must** be used separately. It should be accessed via the website of the relevant awarding body. Further information can be found in **Chapter 6, pages 37-39**, of these regulations.

The deadlines for the receipt of modified paper requests as published within these regulations **must** be adhered to if papers are to be produced in time for the examinations in each series.

#### 1.5 Temporary conditions

*Access arrangements online* can accommodate applications required when a candidate suffers a temporary illness or injury, such as a broken arm. These arrangements can be applied for as the need arises but **must** be before the first affected examination is taken. However, the centre **must** ensure that appropriate medical documentation is held on its files to support any arrangement made.

## 1.6 Cases which do not gain approval

It is anticipated that *Access arrangements online* will deal with at least 80%-90% 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 should consider whether this is because the candidate does not meet the criteria for one of the arrangements requested and does not have a substantial need for an arrangement being requested.**

As an 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 a standardised score of 92 on a nationally standardised reading test. The examinations officer puts into the online system a score of 92 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. The examinations officer makes another application, this time only for a scribe. The application is approved. Before he keys in the next candidate, he 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 might require further exploration in relation to the competence standards 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.

## 1.7 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.
- Specialist teachers **employed within the centre** may have entered the results of these assessments directly on to the system, but should keep on file in the centre the tests which were given and preferably use the diagnostic report or Form 8 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 the diagnostic report in order to facilitate the keying of the application by the examinations officer or SENCO.
- The validity of these assessments will vary, depending on whether up to 25% extra time is being requested or a reader or a scribe is needed.
- Where only 25% extra time is required, a Statement of Special Educational Need or a diagnostic report which relates to the secondary school period will still be valid.

### 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.

## 1.8 Centre inspections

A JCQ Centre Inspector **will** ask for evidence of need in relation to access arrangements during a centre inspection. He or she **will** also ask for evidence of need relating to temporary conditions. **In all cases**, learning difficulties, comprehension disorders, physical impairments, visual impairments and temporary conditions, centres **must** ensure that documentation is kept on file and made available when requested by a JCQ Centre Inspector.

Centres should be aware of the consequences of making false representations. These are described in the JCQ publication *Suspected Malpractice in Examinations and Assessments – Policies and Procedures*.

## 1.9 Deadlines

Deadlines for the submission of requests for access arrangements, such as applications for readers, scribes and word processors have been amended to reflect the fact that an online system does not require the processing of applications by an individual awarding body. The deadlines have subsequently been changed to reflect the entry deadlines for GCSE and GCE/AEA qualifications, which are later.

However, centres **must** ensure that where online approval is given for an access arrangement, appropriate evidence to substantiate the arrangement is held on the centre's files and is available for inspection purposes.

Centres should note that appropriate arrangements for candidates with complex needs should be considered at the beginning of the two year course and not just before the candidate's first examination is due to take place. If an application cannot be dealt with by *Access arrangements online*, sufficient time must be allowed for an awarding body to consider the circumstances.

## 1.10 Candidate consent

Centres should obtain candidates' written consent to provide personal information when processing applications electronically via *Access arrangements online*.

A suggested form for centres to use is included as **Appendix 2, Page 67**.

## 1.11 Qualifications not within the scope of *Access arrangements online*

Basic Skills, Entry Level, Functional Skills, Key Skills, Principal Learning units within a Diploma, Project Qualifications (including the Extended Project), National Vocational Qualifications and Vocationally Related Qualifications **are not** within the scope of the online system. **Centres must continue to make paper applications to the individual awarding body responsible for the qualification using the appropriate form available on the JCQ website [www.jcq.org.uk](http://www.jcq.org.uk).**

## 1.12 Applications for special consideration

The online system has not been designed to enable centres to process applications for special consideration relating to unforeseen circumstances affecting the candidate's performance at the time of the examinations, such as illness or bereavement. Paper applications on JCQ/SC – Form 10 **must** continue to be sent to the individual awarding body concerned.

## 2. Vocationally Related Qualifications (VRQs) and National Vocational Qualifications (NVOs) as offered by JCQ awarding body members

- 2.1 To allow for the inclusion of Vocationally Related Qualifications (VRQs) and National Vocational Qualifications (NVOs) as offered by JCQ awarding body members, the booklet has been re-structured.

(These qualifications are not within the scope of *Access arrangements online*. Paper applications will need to be submitted, as appropriate, please see Chapter 11.)

**Section C** provides information and guidance to schools and colleges regarding reasonable adjustments in Vocationally Related Qualifications (VRQs) and National Vocational Qualifications (NVOs).

**Section D** relates to the special consideration process (General Qualifications); post examination adjustments to reflect temporary illness, injury or indisposition at the time of the examination/assessment.

**Section E** relates to the special consideration process for Vocational and Vocationally Related Qualifications.

## 3. Changes to specific Access Arrangements

- 3.1 Centres **must** read carefully the sections relating to:

- early opening of question papers;
- Oral Language Modifiers;
- Prompters;
- Readers;
- Sign Language Interpreters;

as changes have been made to the regulations this year governing the use of these arrangements.

- 3.2 A Permissions table for the use of readers in GCSE, GCE, Functional Skills and Key Skills qualifications is provided within **Appendix 1, Pages 65 and 66**.

## 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 2008 January 2009	Modified papers	30 September 2008
November 2008	All other access arrangements (apart from modified papers)	4 October 2008
January 2009	All other access arrangements (apart from modified papers)	21 October 2008
March 2009	Modified papers	30 November 2008
March 2009	All other access arrangements (apart from modified papers)	21 January 2009
May/June 2009	Modified papers	31 January 2009*
May/June 2009 (GCSE examinations)	All other access arrangements (apart from modified papers)	21 February 2009
May/June 2009 (GCE/AEA examinations)	All other access arrangements (apart from modified papers)	21 March 2009

**\*For those candidates who decide to re-sit units in June 2009, following the publication of January 2009 examination results, applications for modified papers must be received by 21 March 2009.**

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

Where a candidate has a temporary injury at the time of the examination which gives rise to the need for an emergency access arrangement, centres **must** process the arrangement (e.g. agreement for the use of a word processor) using *Access arrangements online* and **must** ensure that appropriate medical documentation is held on the centre's files to substantiate the arrangement.

## Synopsis of Access Arrangements and Eligibility and/or Evidence Requirement

The following synopsis of access arrangements has been produced to help guide you through the regulations and to see with ease the main arrangements available. It is not an exhaustive list and candidates may require a range of arrangements.

	Access Arrangement	Eligibility and/or evidence requirement	Chapter/ section
1	<b>Additional tapes/CD</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Deaf/hearing impairment</li> <li>▪ Candidates requiring extra time</li> </ul>	Chapter 2, section 2.1.6
2	<b>Alternative accommodation/venue away from the centre</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Medical/Psychological report demonstrating the need for an alternative venue</li> <li>▪ Candidate is in hospital, in prison or at home</li> <li>▪ Candidate <b>is not</b> attending, or transferring to, a registered centre</li> </ul>	Chapter 1, section 1.5.4 / Chapter 2, section 2.16
3	<b>Amplification equipment</b>	Normal way of working	Chapter 2, section 2.27
4	<b>Bi-lingual translation dictionary</b>	Candidate's first language is not English, Irish or Welsh and use of a bi-lingual dictionary reflects candidate's normal way of working	Chapter 2, section 2.17
5	<b>Bi-lingual dictionary &amp; up to a maximum of 25% extra time</b>	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, one or more parents is not British born and the candidate has not been educated in an English speaking school abroad. The use of a bi-lingual dictionary reflects the candidate's normal way of working	Chapter 2, section 2.17
6	<b>Braille question papers</b>	Normal way of working	Chapter 6, section 6.2
7	<b>Closed Circuit Television Vision (CCTV)</b>	Normal way of working	Chapter 2, section 2.27
8	<b>Colour naming by the invigilator for candidates who are colour blind</b>	Normal way of working for candidates who are colour blind	Chapter 2, section 2.19
9	<b>Coloured overlays</b>	Normal way of working	Chapter 2, section 2.20
10	<b>Early opening of question papers up to one hour before scheduled start time</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Alternative accommodation/venue away from centre</li> <li>▪ Modified print papers</li> <li>▪ Sign Language Interpreter</li> <li>▪ Photocopy to enlarge or provide coloured paper</li> <li>▪ Scanning papers for voice output software</li> </ul>	Chapter 2, section 2.23
11	<b>Examination on coloured paper</b>	Normal way of working and coloured overlays or tinted lenses are not appropriate	Chapter 2, section 2.21

12	<b>Extra time Up to a maximum of 25% (N.B. for many candidates a smaller allowance, such as 10% may be appropriate)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Statement of Special Education Needs relating to secondary education</li> <li>▪ Psychological assessment carried out by a qualified psychologist, or specialist assessment carried out by a specialist teacher</li> <li>▪ Medical report</li> </ul>	Chapter 1, sections 1.5.1, 1.5.2, 1.5.3, 1.5.4 / Chapter 2, section 2.1
13	<b>Extra time over 25% and up to a maximum of 100%</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Psychological assessment carried out by a qualified psychologist, or specialist assessment carried out by a specialist teacher confirming substantially below average speed of processing</li> <li>▪ Medical/physical/psychological requirement</li> </ul>	Chapter 1, sections 1.5.1, 1.5.2, 1.5.3, 1.5.4 / Chapter 2, section 2.2
14	<b>Live speaker for pre-recorded examination components</b>	Lip reader and normal way of working	Chapter 2, section 2.12 / Chapter 6, section 6.4.8
15	<b>Low vision aid</b>	Visual impairment – normal way of working	Chapter 2, section 2.27
16	<b>Modified enlarged A4 (18-point bold)</b>	Visual impairment – normal way of working	Chapter 6, section 6.3
17	<b>Modified enlarged A4-A3 (24-point bold)</b>	Visual impairment – normal way of working	Chapter 6, section 6.3
18	<b>Modified language paper</b>	Substantial comprehension difficulties	Chapter 6, section 6.4
19	<b>Optical Character Reader (OCR) scanners</b>	Visual impairment – normal way of working	Chapter 2, section 2.27
20	<b>Oral Language Modifier</b>	Psychological assessment carried out by a qualified psychologist, or specialist assessment carried out by a specialist teacher confirming below average reading comprehension	Chapter 1, sections 1.5.1, 1.5.3 / Chapter 2, section 2.11
21	<b>Practical assistant (for written papers only)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Physically disabled candidate</li> <li>▪ Visually impaired candidate using modified enlarged examination question papers or Braille examination question papers</li> <li>▪ Temporary physical injury</li> </ul>	Chapter 1, section 1.5.3 / Chapter 2, section 2.14
22	<b>Practical assistant (for practical assessments)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Physically disabled candidate</li> <li>▪ Visually impaired candidate</li> <li>▪ Temporary physical injury</li> </ul>	Chapter 1, section 1.5.3 / Chapter 2, section 2.14
23	<b>Prompter</b>	Normal way of working	Chapter 2, section 2.10
24	<b>Read aloud</b>	Normal way of working	Chapter 2, section 2.6
25	<b>Reader/Computer reader</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Visual impairment</li> <li>▪ Psychological assessment carried out by a qualified psychologist, or specialist assessment carried out by a specialist teacher confirming reading/comprehension difficulties</li> </ul>	Chapter 1, section 1.5.2, 1.5.3, 1.5.4 / Chapter 2, section 2.5.2, 2.5.3

26	<b>Scribe/Voice input systems</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Physical disability</li> <li>▪ Psychological assessment carried out by a qualified psychologist, or specialist assessment carried out by a specialist teacher confirming learning difficulty affecting writing</li> <li>▪ Temporary medical condition affecting writing</li> </ul>	Chapter 1 section 1.5.1 to 1.5.4 / Chapter 2, section 2.7.2 , 2.7.4
27	<b>Separate invigilation within the centre</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Use of live speaker, oral language modifier, practical assistant, prompter, read aloud, reader/computer reader, scribe/voice input system, sign language interpreter or word processor</li> <li>▪ Medical report or other circumstances confirming the need for separate invigilation</li> </ul>	Chapter 1, section 1.5.4 / Chapter 2, section 2.26
28	<b>Sign Language Interpreter</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Normal means of communication</li> </ul>	Chapter 1, section 1.5.1, 1.5.3 / Chapter 2, section 2.13
29	<b>Supervised rest breaks</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Medical reasons</li> <li>▪ Physical disability</li> <li>▪ Psychological requirement</li> </ul>	Chapter 1, section 1.5.4 / Chapter 2, section 2.4
30	<b>Tactile diagrams</b>	Visual impairment – normal way of working	Chapter 6, section 6.2.4
31	<b>Transcript</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Handwriting difficult to decipher</li> <li>▪ Braille scripts</li> </ul>	Chapter 2, section 2.9
32	<b>Transcript of recording</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Deaf/hearing impairment</li> <li>▪ Candidates who have difficulty in following speech at normal speed</li> </ul>	Chapter 6, section 6.4.8
33	<b>Unmodified A3 question paper</b>	Visual impairment – normal way of working	Chapter 6, section 6.3.5
34	<b>Voice activated computer</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Physical disability</li> <li>▪ Psychological assessment carried out by a qualified psychologist, or specialist assessment carried out by a specialist teacher confirming learning difficulty affecting writing (eligible for a scribe)</li> </ul>	Chapter 2, section 2.7.4
35	<b>Word processor</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Psychological Assessment carried out by a qualified psychologist, or specialist assessment carried out by a specialist teacher confirming learning difficulty affecting writing</li> <li>▪ Permanent physical disability</li> <li>▪ Visual impairment</li> <li>▪ Quality of language is improved by the use of a word processor</li> <li>▪ Temporary physical condition affecting writing</li> </ul>	Chapter 1, sections 1.5.1, 1.5.2, 1.5.3, 1.5.4 / Chapter 2, section 2.8

## SECTION A: Pre examination adjustments – Access Arrangements

### Chapter 1

#### Which candidates will be eligible for access arrangements?

- 1.1 Access arrangements may cover the entire course and for GCSE and GCE qualifications **must** be processed using *Access arrangements online* as early as possible to ensure that appropriate specifications are chosen. Arrangements must be approved before an examination or assessment and are intended to allow attainment to be demonstrated.

A candidate does not necessarily have to be disabled (as defined by the DDA 1995) to be allowed an access arrangement.

Any reasonable adjustment required by a candidate will usually be an access arrangement for the assessment in question but may include other adjustments which are not listed in this booklet.

The process for granting an access arrangement and the evidence required will vary according to the assessment, as well as the nature of the access arrangement and the reason for seeking it. Access arrangements are intended to increase access to assessments but cannot be granted where they will directly affect performance in the skills that are the focus of the assessment.

- 1.2 Access arrangements are not there to give candidates an unfair advantage, but to give all candidates a level playing field in which to demonstrate their skills, knowledge and understanding. In order to ensure this, the JCQ awarding bodies require that evidence of need **must** always be obtained by centres to support an access arrangement. Where an arrangement has been processed online and approval granted, the evidence of need **must** be made available for inspection by the JCQ Centre Inspection Service. Centres **must** ensure that appropriate evidence is on file to substantiate an access arrangement granted to a candidate.
- 1.3 **Centres are requested to identify the candidate's needs at an early stage and seek advice.**
- 1.4 Where a candidate has a temporary difficulty, such as a broken arm, which gives rise to the need for an access arrangement, (e.g. agreement for the use of a word processor) it would be appropriate in most cases for the access arrangement to be made. Centres **must** process the access arrangement using *Access arrangements online* and ensure that medical evidence is on file, as appropriate, to support the arrangement. Special consideration could 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 allowed.

## 1.5 Managing the needs of candidates

Some candidates are likely to have a number of the needs set out in paragraphs 1.5.1 – 1.5.4, which means that they are likely to require a range of access arrangements. **The exemplars given are therefore not exhaustive.**

### 1.5.1 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, have the assistance of a scribe to write for them (**please see Chapter 2, pages 4-26** for details of these arrangements). They may require the use of an oral language modifier or a Sign Language Interpreter (**please see Chapter 2, sections 2.11 and 2.13 pages 17 and 20**).

### 1.5.2 Cognition and Learning

Candidates with learning difficulties may require extra time for timed examinations and assessments. In appropriate cases, they may also need reading or writing assistance (**please see Chapter 2, pages 4-26**, for details of these arrangements).

### 1.5.3 Sensory and Physical Needs

Candidates with sensory and physical needs might require extra time, an oral language modifier, a reader, a Sign Language Interpreter, a word processor, and/or a scribe. They may require papers with modified print or modified language (certain restrictions currently apply). They may require a practical assistant; subject to restrictions relating to the assessment objectives (**please see Chapter 2, pages 4-26**).

### 1.5.4 Behavioural, Emotional and Social Needs

Candidates with behavioural, emotional and social needs might 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 scribe (**please see Chapter 2, pages 4-26**).

## 1.6 Principles for Centres

- 1.6.1 Access arrangements will not be permitted if they compromise the assessment objectives of the specification in question (please see Chapter 4, page 32, on assessment objectives).
- 1.6.2 **Centres are advised to consult awarding bodies at the beginning of the course to ensure that the access arrangements will be appropriate before they undertake to enter the candidate for examinations which require skills to be demonstrated which are beyond the scope of the candidate.**
- 1.6.3 Candidates and centres need to be able to make informed choices about the qualification routes they choose. This means that candidates need to be aware if they are choosing a course where they may not be able to demonstrate attainment in all parts of the assessment and consequently may be unable to gain credit in all parts of the assessment. A candidate may still decide to proceed with studying a particular subject and not be entered for all or part of the assessment. The centre should ensure that candidates are aware of the range of subject options open to them and in which they can cover the course and demonstrate attainment across the whole of the assessment.
- 1.6.4 Candidates might not require the same access arrangements in each specification. Subjects and their methods of assessments may vary, leading to different demands of the candidate.
- 1.6.5 Centres should make use of specialist advice in order to determine the individual needs of the candidate.
- 1.6.6 All applications must be made by the centre, be endorsed by the head of centre and, for GCSE and GCE qualifications, processed using *Access arrangements online* by the due date(s).
- 1.6.7 Centres must ensure that in coursework marked by teachers, credit is given only for skills demonstrated by the candidate working independently and that access arrangements do not affect assessment requirements.
- 1.6.8 Centres should request access arrangements which reflect the candidate's normal way of working and for which there is evidence of need (e.g. use of a word processor), unless such arrangements would affect the integrity of the assessment.
- 1.6.9 Failure to comply with the regulations contained in this document has the potential to constitute malpractice which may impact on the candidate's result. 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.
- 1.6.10 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 comments.

## Chapter 2

### Access Arrangements Available for GCSE and GCE qualifications

#### 2.1 Extra time of up to 25%

2.1.1 An application **must** be submitted using *Access arrangements online* prior to the candidate's first examination.

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 examinations:

- a Statement of Special Educational Needs relating to **secondary education** and which has reached the stage where an assessment has been carried out by the LA educational psychologist;
- a Psychological Assessment carried out by a qualified psychologist confirming learning disability during the **secondary school period**;
- an assessment confirming learning disability during the **secondary school period** carried out by a specialist teacher;
- **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.**

**N.B It is only for access arrangements such as Oral Language Modifiers, readers, scribes and word processors that an assessment must be carried out within 26 months of the start of the examination series.**

2.1.3 In other circumstances, such as **a medical, physical or psychological requirement**, appropriate evidence of need **must** be available at the centre for inspection.

2.1.4 The centre must also take into account evidence of need in the normal working arrangements made for the candidate and performance in internal assessments, such as mock examinations. It should also take account of any history of difficulties and any residual effects there may be from those difficulties. It may be appropriate to grant less than 25% extra time.

2.1.5 If the centre makes an arrangement 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 may not be appropriate in practical examinations where there is a minimum of writing. 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.

## 2.2 Extra time of up to 100%

2.2.1 An application **must** be submitted using *Access arrangements online* prior to the candidate's first examination, with appropriate evidence of need held on file.

2.2.2 It can be applied for in the following circumstances.

- The candidate is eligible for reading or writing assistance but requires more time in a subject testing reading or writing, where such assistance is not permitted;
- The candidate has substantially below average speed of processing (reading, comprehension, writing, spelling or cognitive processing as appropriate);
- Extra time of up to 25% is insufficient in light of the candidate's needs.

## 2.3 Extra time of over 100%

2.3.1 If in exceptional circumstances a candidate requires more than 100% extra time in order to manage a substantial impairment, the online system will enable the centre to refer the application to the relevant awarding body.

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.

### Examples of how access arrangements for extra time would apply:

- A candidate was diagnosed as mildly dyslexic in Y7. He has made good progress with his reading and writing, which are now within the normal range for his age. He does make spelling mistakes, but these are minor and do not affect the ability of the examiner to read and understand his scripts. He is allowed 10% extra time in written papers [but not multiple choice papers] to allow for any residual difficulties.
- A candidate has a moderate dyslexic condition affecting speed of processing. She may be allowed up to a maximum of 25% extra time, depending on her need, to finish writing her papers.
- A candidate has substantial learning disabilities. He is permitted up to a maximum of 25% extra time, depending on his need, in his History examinations. He is also entered for Drama. He cannot have extra time in the 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 manages multiple-choice papers within 25% extra time. He cannot word process History answers in that amount of time and 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 History and there are many diagrams and tables in Science. She is permitted 100% extra time to complete her examinations in these subjects.
- A candidate has significant learning difficulties which impair his reading and writing processes. He is allowed a reader and scribe to help him. He no longer needs more than 25% extra time in History to complete the examination because the assistance has reduced the effect of the impairment. In English, Irish or Welsh reading papers he is permitted 50% extra time because his reader cannot help him in these subjects.

## 2.4 Supervised rest breaks

- 2.4.1 An application **must** be submitted using *Access arrangements online* prior to the candidate's first examination, with appropriate evidence of need held on file.

**Supervised rest breaks may be considered as an alternative or addition to any 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.**

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 medical condition. 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 Readers / Computer readers

2.5.1 An application **must** be submitted using *Access arrangements online* prior to the candidate's first examination, with appropriate evidence of need held on file.

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

2.5.2 A reader is a responsible adult who reads 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.

2.5.3 Computer software which reads out a scanned paper but does not decode it or interpret it may be used as a reader. **Subject to an application being approved, early opening of papers up to 1 hour before the scheduled starting time of the examination as published in the timetable will be permitted.** Any infringement has the potential to constitute malpractice. **Reading pens are not permitted.**

2.5.4 A reader is not a scribe but the same person may act as both reader and scribe as long as permission has been given for both arrangements.

2.5.5 A reader will be allowed in certain subjects where a candidate has a more significant impairment. For visually impaired candidates, this means those who cannot read a Braille or enlarged paper independently, or those whose impairment is result of a temporary injury. Candidates with a severe visual impairment may need a practical assistant in written examination components to work at the candidate's instruction to guide their hands to the requested page and section, but not to the correct answer. **Please see Chapter 2, section 2.14, page 21, on practical assistants.**

For candidates with other types of disability or impairment, it means where the candidate's reading skills (accuracy or speed or comprehension) have been measured in a test conducted by a specialist and the standardised score is in the **below average** range. Below average is a technical definition which means 1 standard deviation below the mean of an up-to-date, nationally standardised test, which would be a **standardised score of less than 85**. It does not mean below average standard in a particular centre (**please see Chapter 3, section 3.3.7.3 and section 3.3.8, page 29** for more detail).

2.5.6 **A reader or computer reader will not be allowed in 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 an additional time allowance. **Please see Chapter 2, section 2.2, Page 5, on extra time over 25% and Appendix 1, Pages 65-66, on the permitted use of readers in GCSE and GCE qualifications.**

2.5.7 The reader is responsible to the head of centre/examinations officer and **must** be a person acceptable to the head of centre, capable of reading the material involved.

2.5.8 The reader should not normally be the candidate's own subject teacher and **must not** be a relative, friend or peer of the candidate.

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

2.5.10 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 by their presence. **If the candidate and reader are accommodated separately, a separate invigilator will be required.**

2.5.11 Readers may work with more than one candidate, but **must not** read the same 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.**

2.5.12 Centres whose candidates are not permitted a reader may wish to accommodate candidates separately so that they may read aloud to themselves.

### 2.5.13 A reader:

- **must** read accurately;
- **must** only **read** the instructions of the question paper(s) and questions and **must not** explain or clarify;
- **must** repeat instructions given on the question paper only when specifically requested to do so by the candidate;
- **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 at the point of 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 has been written in the answer;
- **may**, if requested, give the spelling of a word which appears on the paper but otherwise spellings **must not** be given.

#### Examples of how access arrangements for readers would apply:

- 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. Understanding is part of the examination and is one of the assessment objectives.
- A candidate with a visual impairment requests a modified enlarged paper, which is provided. The condition is a deteriorating one. By the time of the examinations, the candidate has virtually no sight left. A reader reads all examination papers except for those where a reader is not permitted.
- 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 on a WRAT 4 test of single word reading accuracy. 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 and 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.

## 2.6 Read Aloud

- 2.6.1 An application **must** be submitted using *Access arrangements online* prior to the candidate's first examination. (No evidence is needed to support the arrangement.)

Centres with a candidate who is not permitted a reader may wish to accommodate the candidate separately so that he/she may read aloud to himself/herself, particularly where this is their normal way of working.

## 2.7 Scribes / Voice input systems

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

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

- 2.7.2 A scribe is a responsible adult who, in coursework and/or in an examination **but not in orals**, writes down or word processes a candidate's dictated answers to the questions. If a candidate dictates answers on to a tape, the centre **must** produce a transcript (**please see Chapter 2, section 2.9, page 15**). **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 but the same person may act as both scribe and reader as long as permission has been given for both arrangements.
- 2.7.4 Computer software which produces a hard copy of the candidate's dictated speech can be used as a scribe.

Computer software which produces speech can be used to dictate to a scribe. Computer software which produces hard copy with predictive text when the candidate uses a word processor may be used as a scribe.

Computer software (screen readers) which read back a candidate's typed script may be used instead of a scribe but under scribe regulations.

- 2.7.5 A scribe will be allowed in certain subjects when a candidate's impairment has a significant effect. For visually impaired candidates, this means those who cannot record their answers independently through handwriting, touch typing, Braille input or other appropriate means. **Scribes should only be requested for candidates who cannot produce written communication by any other means e.g. by word processor.** For examination purposes, this would be interpreted as those whose spelling accuracy score is in the below average category, whose free writing cannot be read by others, is grammatically incomprehensible or is produced so slowly that answers could not be fully recorded even with the extra time allowed. The candidate's handwriting speed (words per minute) being in the below average range for their age. Some candidates with a permanent physical disability or a recent injury will not be able to write.
- 2.7.6 **A scribe will not be allowed in subjects testing writing, such as Modern Foreign Language writing papers, unless the candidate can dictate foreign words letter by letter.**

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. 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, but the candidate will be assessed only on those aspects of written communication which he or she can demonstrate independently, such as use of language, effective 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 The scribe is responsible to the head of centre/examinations officer and **must** be a person acceptable to the head of centre, capable of recording the material involved.
- 2.7.8 **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.
- 2.7.9 The scribe should not normally be the candidate's subject teacher and **must not** be a relative, friend or peer of the candidate.
- 2.7.10 **The provision of a scribe should reflect the candidate's normal way of working,** except in cases where temporary injury gives rise to the need for a scribe.
- 2.7.11 The centre is responsible for ensuring that a candidate dictating to a scribe cannot be overheard by, or distract, other candidates. **If the candidate and scribe are accommodated separately, a separate invigilator will be required.**
- 2.7.12 The candidate may require the scribe to read back part of what has been written but no comment must be made about any part of the answer given.
- 2.7.13 A scribe:

- **must** write down or word process accurately what the candidate has said, except in an examination requiring word processing, in which case, 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 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;
- **must not** expect to write throughout the examination if supervised rest breaks have been permitted;
- **may**, at the candidate's request, read back what has been recorded.

- 2.7.14 A pre-populated Scribe Cover Sheet can be printed from *Access arrangements online* and **must** be securely attached to the script.

For arrangements agreed prior to September 2008 a copy of the awarding body's letter **must** also be attached.

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.

- 2.7.15 **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 medical 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.

### **Examples of how access arrangements for scribes would apply:**

- A candidate, who has significant learning difficulties, cannot write legibly but he can word process his answers. The centre requests a scribe but this is refused because the candidate is proficient on a word processor. The word processor represents a suitable access arrangement and, in addition, the candidate can work independently. The word processor is permitted.
- 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 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 her chosen Modern Foreign Language letter by letter. She is permitted a scribe provided that she dictates in the Modern Foreign Language examinations by spelling out words letter by letter. In other subjects, she is permitted simply to dictate without spelling out the words, unless they are uncommon ones. Her marks are credited for those skills 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 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 modular candidates for 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, feels it may be appropriate to apply for the candidate to have a scribe, where the subject allows.

## 2.8 Word processors

2.8.1 An application **must** be submitted using *Access arrangements online* prior to the candidate's first examination, with appropriate evidence of need held on file.

2.8.2 These regulations relate to the use of word processors in written examinations. **Coursework components can normally be completed on word processors unless prohibited by the specification.**

2.8.3 A word processor:

- **must** only be used by a candidate who, as a result of impairment, has hand writing that is illegible, incomprehensible, produced at below average speed for their age as evidenced by a diagnostic or medical report or where the quality of language is improved by the use of a word processor;
- **must** be used as a type-writer, not as a database, although standard formatting software is acceptable;
- **must** have been cleared of any previously stored data, as must any portable storage medium used. A memory stick **must not** be used by a candidate, but can be used by an examinations officer to take the completed work to a printer;
- **must** reflect the candidate's normal way of managing an impairment to produce written work except in cases where temporary injury gives rise to the need for a word processor;
- **must** be in good working order at the time of the examination;
- **must** be accommodated in such a way that other candidates are not disturbed and cannot read the screen. **Where a candidate using a word processor is accommodated separately, a separate invigilator will be required;**
- **must** either be connected to a printer so that a script can be printed off or have the facility to print from a portable storage medium. This may be done after the examination is over, not in the extra time. The candidate should be present to verify that the work printed is his or her own. Word processed scripts must be attached to any answer booklet which contains some of the answers;
- **must** be connected to mains electricity;
- **must** be used to produce scripts under secure conditions, otherwise they may be refused;

- **must not** be used without prior permission;
- **must not** have any predictive text software or automatic spell checking unless the candidate has been permitted a scribe and the script has a scribe cover sheet attached (**please see Chapter 2, section 2.7.4, page 10**);
- **must not** give the candidate access to other applications such as calculators, spreadsheets etc;
- **must not** include graphic packages or computer aided design software unless permission has been given to use these;
- **must not** include voice-activated software unless the candidate has permission to use a scribe or relevant software (**please see Chapter 2 section 2.7.4, page 10**);
- **must not** be used to perform skills which are being assessed;
- **must not** be used on the candidate's behalf by a third party unless the candidate has permission to use a scribe (**please see Chapter 2, section 2.7, page 10**);
- **must not** be connected to an Intranet or any other means of communication.

2.8.4 A pre-populated Word Processor Cover Sheet can be printed from *Access arrangements online* and **must** be securely attached to the script.

For arrangements agreed prior to September 2008 a copy of the awarding body's letter **must** also be attached.

#### **Examples of how access arrangements for word processors would apply:**

- A candidate who has always used a word processor at home feels that his presentation will be more attractive and his writing speed much faster if he uses a word processor in the examination. This is not his normal way of producing written work as his writing is clear and legible. He has very mild dyslexia, but when assessed he was not found to require any specific assistance with writing. The word processor is refused and he is required to handwrite his scripts.
- A candidate who cannot write legibly because she has severe dyslexia applies to use a word processor in examinations. It is her normal means of producing written work because her teachers cannot read her writing. She is very proficient on the machine. She is allowed to use a word processor.
- A candidate taking a Design paper wants to use a word processor. Most of the paper involves drawing original designs by hand. Computer aided design packages are not allowed in this particular paper. The word processor is refused.
- 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. The spell checker is refused but he can use the word processor without this facility because it is his normal way of producing written work.
- 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 because it allows for text to be corrected, answers to be correctly sequenced and reflects his normal way of working.

## 2.9 Transcripts

- 2.9.1 An application **must** be submitted using *Access arrangements online* prior to the candidate's first examination. (No evidence is needed to support the arrangement.) A transcript may be permitted where as a result of impairment a candidate's handwriting is illegible or so difficult to read 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 **A transcript is a copy of the candidate's script which is made after the examination has taken place and without the participation of the candidate.** For those candidates whose difficulties are so significant that a transcript cannot be produced, please see the regulations on the use of scribes in **Chapter 2, section 2.7, page 10** and the use of word processors in **Chapter 2, section 2.8, page 13**.
- 2.9.3 A transcript may be a full copy written on a spare answer booklet or a partial copy where only certain words need clarification. In this case, the original script must be photocopied and the words written clearly above the candidate's writing but not in red, green or purple ink or pencil. It may be helpful to enlarge the photocopy to A3.
- 2.9.4 The transcript may be handwritten or word processed.
- 2.9.5 **All Braille scripts must be transcribed by the centre.**
- 2.9.6 The transcript **must** be produced by a member of the centre's staff, which may include the candidate's subject teacher, who is familiar with the candidate's handwriting or is fully competent in the Braille code for the subject concerned.
- 2.9.7 A pre-populated Transcript Cover Sheet can be printed from *Access arrangements online* and **must** be securely attached to the candidate's transcript. The candidate's original script **must** also be attached. A cover sheet **must** also be attached to any coursework/portfolio work transcribed, together with the original work produced by the candidate.
- 2.9.8 The transcript **must** be word for word, an exact copy of the candidate's script. The purpose is to produce a legible version of what the candidate has written. Where a candidate has spelt or brailled a non-technical word incorrectly, the transcriber may write it correctly in the transcript, but **must not** insert or omit any words, nor alter their order. Technical terms **must not** be corrected.
- 2.9.9 The production of the transcript **must not** delay the despatch of scripts to the examiner/awarding body. Additional information should not be sent to the examiner/awarding body.

### Examples of how access arrangements for transcripts would apply:

- 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 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 Prompters

- 2.10.1 An application **must** be submitted using *Access arrangements online* prior to the candidate's first examination. (No evidence is needed to support the arrangement.) 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 focussed on the need to answer a question and then move on to answering the next question.
- 2.10.2 A prompter is a responsible adult who may sit beside the candidate in order to keep his or her attention on the task in hand.
- 2.10.3 A prompter is not a reader, a scribe or a practical assistant but the same person may act as such, as long as permission has been given for any or all of these arrangements.
- 2.10.4 The prompter is responsible to the head of centre/examinations officer, **must** be a person acceptable to the head of centre and a person who is known to the candidate.
- 2.10.5 The prompter should not normally be the candidate's own subject teacher and **must not** be a relative, friend or peer of the candidate.
- 2.10.6 **The provision of a prompter should reflect the candidate's normal way of working.**
- 2.10.7 The invigilator may act as a prompter. If the prompter is acting as a reader or scribe, different invigilation arrangements will apply.
- 2.10.8 A prompter:
- **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, or on the order in which questions should be answered;
  - **must not** give factual help or offer any suggestions or communicate in any way other than those listed below;
  - **may** use the following prompts either vocally or written on a flash card:  
"focus on the question"; "move onto the next question"; "there are X minutes left";
  - **may** tap on the desk or on the candidate's arm, depending on what is normal practice, in order to remind the candidate that he or she must pay attention to the question;
  - **may** use the candidate's name as an appropriate prompt during the examination.

### Examples of how access arrangements for prompters would apply:

- 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 An application **must** be submitted using *Access arrangements online* prior to the candidate's first examination, with appropriate evidence of need held on file.

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

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, **but must not explain the technical terms**. If such terms are explained to the candidate then the demands of the question will have been compromised and may constitute malpractice. An Oral Language Modifier may also act as a reader. (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 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. 'Below average' is a technical term which means that the achieved score is at least one standard deviation below the mean, i.e. a standardised score of less than 85 (please see **Chapter 3, section 3.3.7.3** and **section 3.3.8, Page 29**).

2.11.5 An Oral Language Modifier would 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.

2.11.6 **An Oral Language Modifier will not be allowed in papers or sections of papers which test reading**. A candidate with below average reading skills may be granted additional time in such papers. (Please see **Section 2.2, page 5, on extra time over 25% and Appendix 1, Pages 65-66, on the permitted use of readers in GCSE and GCE qualifications**).

2.11.7 An Oral Language Modifier is responsible to the head of centre/examinations officer and **must** be acceptable to the head of centre.

2.11.8 An Oral Language Modifier should have, at least, a basic knowledge of the subject of the examination paper and must be able to demonstrate a minimum standard of English equivalent to GCE A level.

2.11.9 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 by means of a trial presentation.

2.11.10 An examination for candidates using an Oral Language Modifier should take place in a separate room and therefore **a separate invigilator will be required**.

2.11.11 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**.

2.11.12 A language modified version of the examination paper should always be requested for candidates who use an Oral Language Modifier. (Please see **Chapter 6, section 6.4, page 38**, for provision of modified language papers.) These papers are usually produced by specialist language modifiers approved by BATOD. They may reduce or sometimes completely remove the need for an Oral Language Modifier for a candidate.

2.11.13 One hour early opening of the paper **is not** permitted. **The task of the Oral Language Modifier is to respond solely to a request from the candidate and not to modify the language of the paper prior to the start of the examination in anticipation of a request from the candidate.**

2.11.14 A pre-populated Oral Language Modifier cover sheet can be printed from *Access arrangements online* and when completed **must** be securely attached to the script. A photocopy of the completed cover sheet **must** also be sent to the JCQ Office, Veritas House, 125 Finsbury Pavement, London EC2A 1NQ.

2.11.15 An Oral Language Modifier

- **must** re-phrase or explain the carrier language of a question paper when specifically asked to do so by a candidate;
- **must not** re-phrase or explain technical language 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. Such 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 means of communication used reflects the way the candidate is normally taught. This may include saying the word or phrase, manually coded English, i.e. fingerspelling, Cued Speech or SSE, or the use of writing to explain the meaning of a word or phrase;
- **must** record on the coversheet notes of all the re-phrasing or explaining used. Where no re-phrasing or explaining has been given this **must** also be noted on the coversheet;
- **must** underline any words or phrases on the question paper which were re-phased 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 is made on the coversheet;
- **may** go through the rubric and read the questions to the candidate. (Reading to candidates is part of the role of an Oral Language Modifier.)

**Examples of how access arrangements for an Oral Language Modifier would apply:**

- A Teacher of the Deaf (ToD) applies for an Oral Language Modifier for a profoundly deaf candidate who uses British Sign Language (BSL). The ToD knows that the candidate would not benefit from a Sign Language Interpreter (SLI) because his reading comprehension score is below average and has received the support of an Oral Language Modifier during the course. The ToD knows that the examination is English-based and that the candidate needs the support that an Oral Language Modifier can give.
- A candidate with severe and specific language impairment finds it hard to recognise and remember the meaning of everyday vocabulary. Support staff are accustomed to rephrasing text for him during his lessons. An Oral Language Modifier is permitted for his examinations.
- A profoundly deaf candidate uses BSL and receives communication support. She has an average reading comprehension score. Support during her course has been via BSL which was her preference. The Teacher of the Deaf considers the use of an Oral Language Modifier but her reading comprehension score means that she is not eligible. A Sign Language Interpreter is her normal way of working and appropriate to her needs.

## 2.12 Live speaker for pre-recorded examination components

- 2.12.1 An application **must** be submitted using *Access arrangements online* prior to the candidate's first examination, with appropriate evidence of need held on file.
- 2.12.2 The live speaker presenting the aural component **must** be appointed by the head of centre.
- 2.12.3 **The use of a Live Speaker in pre-recorded examination components should reflect the candidate's normal way of working.**
- 2.12.4 For aural tests, clear amplification may be necessary to improve the candidate's ability to hear, or transcripts of tests may be read to enable candidates to lip-read (**see Chapter 6, section 6.4.8, page 39** for further information on ordering transcripts of tests).
- 2.12.5 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.
- 2.12.6 **Ideally a live speaker should work with one or two candidates.** The centre should consider the abilities of the candidates as lip 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.
- 2.12.7 Where audio-cassette tapes or CDs are used, the live speaker should be allowed access to the tapes or CDs one hour before the examination. This is to allow time for the preparation necessary for adequate communication. In order to comply with security requirements, it may be necessary to delay the start of the examinations for the candidates concerned and to place them under centre supervision whilst preparation takes place.
- 2.12.8 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.
- 2.12.9 If the recording involves the use of two or more characters, if possible, a separate live speaker should be used for each role. If this is not feasible then adequate alternative arrangements will have to be made.

## 2.13 Use of Sign Language Interpreters

- 2.13.1 An application **must** be submitted using *Access arrangements online* prior to the candidate's first examination, with appropriate evidence of need held on file.
- 2.13.2 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.
- 2.13.3 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.
- Whereas 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, the Sign Language interpretation is done 'live' in the presence of the candidate during the examination to allow for the candidate's regional variations in BSL/ISL signs. Consequently, the Sign Language Interpreter cannot be checked by the awarding body for accuracy. Therefore, great care **must** be taken neither to disadvantage or advantage the candidate.
- 2.13.4 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 ability to recognise and understand the English version of the technical or subject specific terms within a subject is part of the assessment.
- 2.13.5 Sign Language Interpreters may repeat the translation if requested to do so by the candidate but an alternative translation should not be given as this would be considered to be an explanation of the question which would be giving the candidate an unfair advantage.
- 2.13.6 **Candidates may only be permitted to sign their answers in question papers or in coursework where it is possible to finger spell the answers or where the answers involve single words.**
- 2.13.7 The Sign Language Interpreter **must** be a responsible adult who is acceptable to the head of centre/examinations officer, who is proficient in the use of the candidate's sign language and the subject being examined. The Sign Language Interpreter should work at the candidate's pace and should be familiar to the candidate.
- 2.13.8 Candidates may need to be accommodated in another room in which case **a separate invigilator will be required.**
- 2.13.9 A language modified version of the examination paper should be ordered for candidates using a Sign Language Interpreter (please **see Chapter 6, section 6.4, page 38**). 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.**
- 2.13.10 **Sign Language interpretation will not be permitted in any Modern Foreign Language or English, Irish or Welsh Language examinations.** In English Literature examinations, use of signing **must** be restricted to the signing of instructions and questions: texts/source material or literary extracts **must not** be signed.
- 2.13.11A pre-populated Sign Language Interpreter Cover Sheet can be printed from *Access arrangements online* and **must** be securely attached to the script.

For arrangements agreed prior to September 2008 a copy of the awarding body's letter **must** also be attached.

## 2.14 Practical assistants for written components

2.14.1 An application **must** be submitted using *Access arrangements online* prior to the candidate's first examination, with appropriate evidence of need held on file.

*Access arrangements online* will process requests for a Practical Assistant in written papers and allow the centre to refer to the relevant awarding body requests for practical assistants in practical assessments.

2.14.2 **Advice must be sought at the beginning of the course. Detailed information must be provided listing the tasks which the practical assistant would perform.**

2.14.3 A practical assistant is a responsible adult who, in coursework, practical assessments and/or in an examination **where approved**, carries out practical tasks at the instruction of the candidate. In an examination this might be holding a ruler or turning the pages of the script. In practical assessments, the practical assistant might set up, hold or hand to the candidate the appropriate equipment. 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.

2.14.4 A practical assistant must ensure the safety of the candidate and those around him or her.

2.14.5 A practical assistant is not a reader or scribe but the same person may act as reader, scribe and practical assistant as long as permission has been given for the arrangement(s).

2.14.6 The candidate may require the practical assistant, who may also be acting as a reader and/or scribe, to read back part of what has been written but no comment must be made about any part of the answer given.

2.14.7 A practical assistant will be allowed in certain subjects when a candidate's impairment has a significant adverse effect; the candidate cannot perform practical tasks independently because his or her manual dexterity or physical co-ordination are at levels below what is normal for most people. 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.

2.14.8 **A practical assistant will not be allowed in subjects testing design or artistic skills**, such as Music, Art, Design and Technology, Computing/ICT, where the practical skill is in itself the focus of the examination. Where minimal assistance only is required the awarding body should be informed.

2.14.9 The practical assistant is responsible to the head of centre/examinations officer and **must** be a person acceptable to the head of centre, capable of carrying out the tasks involved.

2.14.10 The practical assistant should not normally be the candidate's own subject teacher and **must not** be a relative, friend or peer of the candidate.

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

2.14.12 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.

2.14.13A 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 unless 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 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.

2.14.14A pre-populated Practical Assistant Cover Sheet can be printed from *Access arrangements online* and must be securely attached to the script.

A cover sheet **must** also be attached to any coursework/portfolio work 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.

For arrangements agreed prior to September 2008 a copy of the awarding body's letter **must** also be attached.

**Examples of how access arrangements for practical assistants would apply:**

- A candidate has hemiplegia affecting his left side. He is right-handed. He needs a practical assistant in GCSE Science only to hold equipment still while he performs practical tasks. The practical assistant is acting only 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 Design and Technology course but cannot perform any design or 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. She applies for a practical assistant. The practical assistant holds the equipment steady. She is credited with marks for planning, evaluation and analysis. She cannot gain marks for implementation.
- A candidate wants to follow an 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 also cannot fulfil and therefore he decides to follow the course for his education but does not enter for the examinations.

## 2.15 Other Arrangements

The following arrangements are also available to candidates, which **must** be processed using *Access arrangements online* prior to the candidate's first examination. Centres should note the evidence requirements for each arrangement.

### 2.16 Alternative Accommodation away from the centre

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.)** Each awarding body will deal with the despatch of question papers and scripts in a slightly different way and enquiries should be made initially as to the procedures that should be followed. *Access arrangements online* **does not** order separate packages of question papers.

- 2.16.1 Alternative accommodation should be requested only for those candidates who **either** have a psychological or medical condition which prevents them from taking the paper in the centre **but** are considered medically fit to take it elsewhere, **or** the candidate is in hospital, in prison or at home.
- 2.16.2 The head of centre/examinations officer **must** be satisfied that papers will be kept in secure conditions by a named responsible adult at the other venue. This named responsible adult **must** ensure that the examination is conducted in accordance with the JCQ document *Instructions for conducting examinations* ([www.jcq.org.uk/](http://www.jcq.org.uk/)).
- 2.16.3 Permission **must** be requested as far in advance of the examination as possible, especially if separately packaged papers have to be sent to a hospital in a different part of the country. Awarding bodies cannot guarantee to be able to meet late requests.
- 2.16.4 Permission **must** be requested to open papers up to one hour before the scheduled start of the examination, especially when emergency medical situations arise at the last minute and papers have to be taken to another venue. Centres **must** process such arrangements using *Access arrangements online*. Papers **must not** be opened more than one hour before the scheduled starting time under any circumstances.
- 2.16.5 It may be necessary to delay the examination by up to one hour in order to reach the venue. In any other circumstances, the awarding body should be contacted.
- 2.16.6 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.
- 2.16.7 Papers **must not** be opened on a date preceding the scheduled date of the examination.
- 2.16.8 Scripts should be despatched with the centre's other scripts and sent to the examiner/awarding body at the normal time. Where scripts have to be despatched separately from a distant venue, instructions for the despatch will be sent to the host venue. Medical information **must not** be enclosed with scripts.

## 2.17 Bi-lingual translation dictionaries

An application **must** be submitted using *Access arrangements online* prior to the candidate's first examination, with appropriate evidence of need held on file.

2.17.1 Bi-lingual 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, Irish 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. Enquiries relating to other Modern Foreign Language examinations should be referred to the appropriate awarding body. **The use of a bi-lingual translation dictionary should reflect the candidate's normal way of working within the centre.**

2.17.2 Candidates who are permitted to use bi-lingual translation dictionaries may also be allowed up to a maximum of 25% extra examination 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.**

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 instead of answering the questions.

Centres **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.

**Electronic dictionaries, 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 and 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 these access arrangements.

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 bi-lingual translation dictionaries **must** be adhered to; failure to do so can lead to the disqualification of the candidate.

## 2.18 Brailers

An application **must** be submitted using *Access arrangements online* prior to the candidate's first examination. The arrangement should reflect the candidate's normal way of working.

All Brailled answers **must** be transcribed.

## 2.19 Colour naming by the invigilator for candidates who are Colour Blind

An application **must** be submitted using *Access arrangements online* prior to the candidate's first examination, with appropriate evidence of need held on file.

No other information or explanation can be given. If the candidate has been using a colour chart, he or she will be permitted to do so in written examinations or practical examinations. The centre **must** confirm that this is the normal way of working for a candidate who cannot distinguish colours.

## 2.20 Coloured Overlays

An application **must** be submitted using *Access arrangements online* prior to the candidate's first examination, with appropriate evidence of need held on file.

## 2.21 Coloured Paper

An application **must** be submitted using *Access arrangements online* prior to the candidate's first examination, with appropriate evidence of need held on file.

Centres should request permission to open papers up to one hour before the scheduled starting time of the examination and photocopy/enlarge on to coloured paper. Such an arrangement should reflect the candidate's normal way of working and where the use of coloured overlays or tinted lenses is not appropriate, given the candidate's individual needs. Centres are reminded that they are responsible for the supply of the coloured paper and the photocopying of examination papers. The candidate should be allowed access to the original examination paper as well as the one printed on coloured paper.

## 2.22 Coursework Extension

Since coursework may be undertaken at any time throughout the course, arrangements should be such as to make requests under this heading extremely rare. **A centre may, however, submit a request to the appropriate department at each awarding body for an extension to the deadline for the submission of coursework marks.** This might apply in the case of long-term illness of an individual candidate who has not been able to complete coursework at the normal time but would not be appropriate for an entire teaching group.

## 2.23 Early opening of papers

An application **must** be submitted using *Access arrangements online* prior to the candidate's first examination, with appropriate evidence of need held on file.

Where an individual candidate requires one of the following access arrangements: alternative accommodation/venue away from the centre, Sign Language Interpreter, photocopy a question paper on coloured paper or scanning papers for voice output software prior approval **must** be sought for the opening of question papers up to one hour before the scheduled starting time of the examination, as published in the final timetable. **The contents of the paper must not be shown to or discussed with any person during the early opening period. Any infringement has the potential to constitute malpractice.**

## 2.24 Exemptions

*Access arrangements online* does not include exemptions. However, it enables centres to refer individual applications to awarding bodies. A decision will be conveyed to the centre depending on the needs of the candidate and the competence standards being tested. A certificate indication may appear on the certificate.

## 2.25 Modified Papers

**Please see Chapter 6, pages 37-39, for information on modified papers.**

## 2.26 Separate invigilation within the centre

An application **must** be submitted using *Access arrangements online* prior to the candidate's first examination, with appropriate evidence of need held on file.

**Centres may permit a candidate to take examinations under separate invigilation within the centre if there is a pressing need to do so.** Centres must judge the appropriateness of this arrangement in the light of their available resources.

## 2.27 Closed circuit television (CCTV), low vision aid, optical character reader (OCR) scanners, amplification equipment

An application **must** be submitted using *Access arrangements online* prior to the candidate's first examination, with appropriate evidence of need held on file. The arrangement should reflect the candidate's normal way of working.

This does **not** include reading pens which read to the candidate and define the word, electronic translators or any other computer software for which permission has not been granted. Centres **must** consult awarding bodies about any new technology which might invalidate the assessment objectives.

## 2.28 Where a candidate has a temporary injury which gives rise to the need for an access arrangement the centre must:

- process the access arrangement using *Access arrangements online*;
- abide by the regulations;
- ensure that the appropriate pre-populated cover sheet is attached to the script.

## Chapter 3

### Learning difficulties

The range of learning difficulties is extensive and some of the implications for assessment are not obvious, such as speed of processing and organisation of ideas. Therefore, awarding bodies require candidates to be assessed by a suitably qualified person to ensure that the access arrangements that are approved provide the candidate with the necessary assistance to access the assessment but do not result in the candidate gaining an unfair advantage.

**It should be remembered that where assessment objectives (Chapter 4, page 32) would be compromised by any adjustment made to take account of the impairment, the assessment objectives will take precedence and will not be waived. This includes the demonstration of knowledge, understanding and skills required by the specification.**

#### 3.1 Accountabilities

3.1.1 Staff within the JCQ awarding bodies are not in a position to determine whether a candidate has a substantial learning difficulty. It is the responsibility of staff within the JCQ awarding bodies to give appropriate information, ensuring that the arrangement would not undermine the integrity of the qualification. Candidates entered for a qualification **must** be able to demonstrate the assessment objectives laid down in the specification and any application where marks might be credited for skills which have not been demonstrated independently by the candidate will be rejected.

3.1.2 It is the responsibility of the person carrying out the assessment of the candidate's literacy and processing skills to give the results of any tests completed by the candidate which might indicate that the impairment has a significant effect on the candidate's performance. The status of the person **must** be specified.

3.1.3 The diagnostic report or Form 8 should 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 and inspectors **will** expect to see appropriate documentation to substantiate the use of an access arrangement processed electronically. **A specialist teacher working inside the centre** should use the diagnostic report or Form 8 as good practice. The completion of the diagnostic assessment or Form 8 will enable the JCQ Centre Inspector to see clearly and concisely the candidate's evidence of need and their normal way of working. It is the responsibility of the centre to seek advice at the beginning of a two year course to establish whether the candidate will be able to demonstrate all the assessment objectives required. In doing this, the centre should ask the awarding body what access arrangements may be available.

3.1.4 **It is the centre's responsibility to submit applications on time and to ensure that agreed access arrangements have been put in place.**

#### 3.2 Appropriate Adjustments for Candidates with Learning Difficulties

Access arrangements are made on the basis of an individual candidate's needs. Consideration must be given to whether the proposed access arrangement is effective and suitable for the candidate's particular learning difficulty, but the arrangement must not affect the integrity of the assessment. If a candidate can complete a paper in the normal length of time and never uses the extra time which has been made available, it is not an effective adjustment and therefore would not be an appropriate one to request. Similarly, if a candidate requests the use of a word processor but cannot type comprehensible prose, it is not an effective adjustment to give him or her. But he or she might require a different arrangement.

### 3.3 Guidelines for the Assessment of the Candidate's Learning Difficulties

- 3.3.1 *Access arrangements online* allows the centre to manage its own data relating to its approved specialist teacher(s). The exams officer should follow the NAA training materials to record the name of the specialist teacher on the site.

For GCSE and GCE qualifications, centres **must** use *Access arrangements online* to record the name of the specialist teacher on the site. For all other qualifications (Basic Skills, Functional Skills, Key Skills and 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** or by a qualified psychologist or LA specialist. The JCQ web site [www.jcq.org.uk/](http://www.jcq.org.uk/) contains a list of some of the appropriate qualifications for specialist teachers. Before assessing the candidate, the specialist teacher within the centre should complete those sections of the appropriate form (the diagnostic report or **JCQ/AA/LD - Form 8**) relating to the history of need and the history of provision. (Where a qualified psychologist, LA specialist, or a specialist teacher **outside of the centre** is assessing the candidate, the centre **must** complete those sections of the appropriate form (**JCQ/AA/LD - Form 8** or the diagnostic report) relating to the history of need and the history of provision.)

- 3.3.2 The specialist should then carry out those tests which are relevant to support the application. For instance, if the candidate requires reading assistance but does not have writing problems, there is no need to carry out tests on writing skills.
- 3.3.3 Once the specialist has completed the tests and established that the candidate has learning difficulties, Section B of the form should be completed by the centre, recommending the arrangements which will be required on the basis of the information given by the specialist and taking into account the requirements of the specifications in the subjects being entered and the normal working practice of the candidate in the centre.
- 3.3.4 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.
- 3.3.5 **A centre whose candidate has been assessed at the beginning of the course can process access arrangements for GCSE and GCE qualifications using *Access arrangements online*. Where approved, the arrangement(s) will cover modules, coursework and terminal papers during the two year course.**
- 3.3.6 The diagnostic report or **Form 8 – JCQ/AA/LD** has been designed to encourage forward planning. It should be perceived as a '**passport to access arrangements**', which travels with the candidate. The centre should begin to compile information relating to the candidate's needs and their normal way of working, complete the form and its assessments at the beginning of the GCSE course and process the application using *Access arrangements online* in the autumn term. If the candidate continues in education, the specialist should see the candidate again at the beginning of the advanced course and the centre should apply once more.

The application will last for up to 26 months from the date of the assessment.

**This does not apply in the case of requests for modified papers which must be requested according to the timetable in the front of these regulations (page ix).**

### 3.3.7 Literacy Attainments

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

***Access arrangements online will not be able to process centres' applications unless a standardised score has been provided.***

### 3.3.8 Reading Skills

- 3.3.8.1 Reading accuracy: reading accuracy must be assessed using an individually administered, untimed test of single word reading.
- 3.3.8.2 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.
- 3.3.8.3 The provision of a reader will depend on whether the candidate's reading impairment in accuracy, speed or comprehension has a substantial effect on his or her ability to read the questions. The effect will be considered substantial if the candidate's standardised scores in tests of accuracy, speed or comprehension fall in the **below average** (not low average) band as defined in 3.3.7.3.

### 3.3.9 Writing Skills

- 3.3.9.1 A scribe will be allowed in certain subjects when a candidate's impairment has a significant effect. **Scribes should only be requested for candidates who cannot produce written communication by any other means e.g. by word processor.** For examination purposes, this would be interpreted as those whose spelling accuracy score is in the below average category, whose free writing cannot be read by others, is grammatically incomprehensible or is produced so slowly that answers could not be fully recorded even with the extra time allowed. The candidate's handwriting speed (words per minute) being in the below average range for their age.
- 3.3.9.2 Please comment on the candidate's free writing under timed conditions. **If using a word processor is the candidate's normal way of working, this should be the arrangement requested.**

### 3.3.10 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 deficits in for example working memory, phonological processing, sequencing problems etc. The specialist teacher may refer complex cases to an educational psychologist.

### 3.3.11 **Completing the Report of the Assessment**

For certain arrangements the assessment must be completed and the report signed 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 employed within the centre** may enter the results of these assessments directly on to the *Access arrangements online* system for GCSE and GCE qualifications, but **must** keep on the centre's files the tests which were given and ideally use the diagnostic report or **Form 8** to record the scores and dates of the assessment.

## 3.4 **Psychological Assessment by a Qualified Psychologist**

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

3.4.2 **Specialist teachers and psychologists working outside of the centre must** use Form 8 or the diagnostic report in order to enable the examinations officer or SENCO to process the application electronically.

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

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

## 3.5 **Assessment by a Specialist Teacher**

3.5.1 Teachers who assess candidates for access arrangements do not need prior JCQ approval for their specialist qualifications. Instead, the head of centre will be responsible for the approval of specialist teachers.

3.5.2 The specialist teacher is required to establish that the results of tests in reading and 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.

3.5.3 If a specialist teacher is signing the form, assessments must have been carried out by the specialist teacher signing the assessment.

## 3.6 **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.**

### 3.7 **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 in the National Qualifications Framework by institutions of FE or HE may also meet these criteria.

Heads might 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 Code of Practice following amendments made to the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 to include general qualifications:

[www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/publicationsandresources/Disability/Pages/Education.aspx](http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/publicationsandresources/Disability/Pages/Education.aspx)

- 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 as found in the Wide Range Intelligence Test and Ravens Standard Progressive Matrices with Mill Hill Vocabulary Scale.

**The person undertaking the assessment should primarily be named teachers employed within the centre who are suitably qualified.** The **second choice** is a suitably qualified teacher employed at another centre. The **third choice** would be the LA Psychologist and the **fourth choice** a private Psychologist. Most centres should be able to submit their own reports in this way. If a centre is employing the services of a suitably qualified teacher who does not teach in the centre, they **must** record the person on *Access arrangements online* if he/she is assessing GCSE and or GCE candidates. For all other qualifications, the centre **must** list that person on Form 8A as contracted to work within the centre. 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.

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 4

### Assessment Objectives

- 4.1 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.

- 4.2 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 as to how to approach the subject. 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 below 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 candidate has a brain injury which affects short term memory. He knows his work for a very short period of time. His long term memory is not affected. He is advised to follow unitised qualifications without synoptic assessment to try to learn modules 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 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 whole qualification, she decides not to enter for this particular subject. The assessment objectives are designing and making so no adjustment can be made.
- A candidate with severe dyslexia wants to take English Language and Modern Foreign Language examinations 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 Modern Foreign Languages. 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 Art examinations in painting. 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 5

### Making applications for access arrangements in GCSE and GCE qualifications

#### 5.1 General Information

The NAA, JCQ awarding bodies and centre representatives have been working together to create an online system which enables centres to process applications for all access arrangements quickly and efficiently.

**The new system will enable centres to make a single online application for a candidate requiring access arrangements using any of the secure awarding body extranet sites. It will provide an instant response and has been designed to simplify and replace the previous paper based process for applying for access arrangements.**

The awarding bodies will honour existing applications approved until their date of expiry and centres will not need to re-apply using *Access arrangements online*.

#### 5.2 JCQ Regulations and NAA support

The NAA website [www.naa.org.uk/aao](http://www.naa.org.uk/aao) provides centres with a training version of the new system, a PowerPoint user training guide, a short online tutorial and a list of frequently asked questions. Additionally, centres will be supported by their Centre Support Officer and the NAA helpline.

Whilst the NAA training materials will provide information on how to make an application, they will not give details of the JCQ regulations or how these are to be applied. It is advisable for centres to use the two documents in conjunction with one another. 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.

#### 5.3 Previous Centre Delegated Access Arrangements online tool

The part of this system which centres used to record details of centre delegated access arrangements has been superseded by *Access arrangements online*. The new tool enables centres to make all applications for access arrangements online.

**The distinction between centre delegated and awarding body approved access arrangements is effectively removed as the system will be able to make decisions in all cases where there is evidence of need and the relevant criteria can be met.**

#### 5.4 Modified Papers

The Modified Papers site has **not** been incorporated within *Access arrangements online* and **must** be used separately. It should be accessed via the website of the relevant awarding body. Further information can be found in **Chapter 6, pages 37-39**, of these regulations.

The deadlines for the receipt of modified paper requests as published within these regulations **must** be adhered to if papers are to be produced in time for the examinations in each series.

#### 5.5 Temporary conditions

*Access arrangements online* can accommodate applications required when a candidate suffers a temporary illness or injury, such as a broken arm. These arrangements can be applied for as the need arises but **must** be before the first affected examination is taken. However, the centre **must** ensure that appropriate medical documentation is held on its files to support any arrangement made.

## 5.6 Cases which do not gain approval

It is anticipated that *Access arrangements online* will deal with at least 80%-90% 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 should consider whether this is because the candidate does not meet the criteria for one of the arrangements requested and does not have a substantial need for an arrangement being requested.**

As an 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 a standardised score of 92 on a nationally standardised reading test. The examinations officer puts into the online system a score of 92 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. The examinations officer makes another application, this time only for a scribe. The application is approved. Before he keys in the next candidate, he 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 might require further exploration in relation to the competence standards 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.

## 5.7 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.
- Specialist teachers **employed within the centre** may have entered the results of these assessments directly on to the system, but should keep on file in the centre the tests which were given and preferably use the diagnostic report or Form 8 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 the diagnostic report in order to facilitate the keying of the application by the examinations officer or SENCO.
- The validity of these assessments will vary, depending on whether up to 25% extra time is being requested or a reader or a scribe is needed.
- Where only 25% extra time is required, a Statement of Special Educational Need or a diagnostic report which relates to the secondary school period will still be valid.

### 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.

## 5.8 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, the number of laptops/word processors required, invigilation resources and the number of Oral Language Modifiers, practical assistants, prompters, readers, scribes and Sign Language Interpreters which are needed.

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

### Access Arrangements that can be made on-line include:

- Alternative accommodation (away from centre)
- Amplification equipment
- Bilingual dictionary
- Bilingual dictionary with extra time of up to 25%
- Braille machine
- CCTV
- Colour naming (by the invigilator)
- Coloured overlays
- Computer reader
- Examination on coloured paper and early opening of question papers
- Extra time of up to 25%
- Extra time of up to 25% with supervised rest breaks
- Extra time over 25%
- Live speaker
- Low vision aid
- Oral Language Modifier
- Practical Assistant (for written papers only)
- Prompter
- Read aloud
- Reader
- Scanners
- Scribe/voice activated computer system/voice input system
- Separate invigilation within the centre
- Sign Language Interpreter
- Supervised rest breaks
- Transcript
- Word processor

### How to access the *Access arrangements online* system

[www.aqa.org.uk](http://www.aqa.org.uk)  
[www.ccea.org.uk](http://www.ccea.org.uk)  
[www.edexcel.org.uk](http://www.edexcel.org.uk)  
[www.ocr.org.uk](http://www.ocr.org.uk)  
[www.wjec.co.uk](http://www.wjec.co.uk)

### Training and support for the *Access arrangements online* system

[www.naa.org.uk/aao](http://www.naa.org.uk/aao)

## 5.9 Deadlines for access arrangements and modified papers

Unless modified papers are requested, applications should be made at the beginning of the course. **All applications must be received by the published deadlines but, unless modified papers are required, it is strongly recommended to make applications at the start of the course.**

**All deadlines for making applications for access arrangements and modified papers can be found in the JCQ Notice *Key Dates in the Examination Cycle 2008/2009* on the JCQ website ([www.jcq.org.uk/](http://www.jcq.org.uk/)). Also available is the Key Dates Calendar which is a web tool with key examination dates from JCQ and AQA, CCEA, Edexcel, OCR and WJEC. It produces a calendar which can be searched, filtered, downloaded and printed by users ([www.modernisationonline.com/compkeydates/](http://www.modernisationonline.com/compkeydates/)).**

Centres may also find the dates for submitting access arrangements and modified papers on **Page ix** of this booklet.

## Chapter 6

### Modified Papers

#### 6.1 Modified Papers – an overview of the process

In order to make provision as consistent and fair as possible across the different disability groups, awarding bodies are working towards the modification of carrier language in all question papers, so that the standard paper should be 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. Some papers however, have already been modified prior to being produced as the standard paper for all candidates. 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.

Several technological developments are currently under way, such as adapting modified papers to be read on screen. Small scale pilots have recently taken place and the JCQ awarding bodies are continuing to pursue the use of technology in enabling more candidates to access question papers on-screen.

Modified papers **must** be applied for in advance of a specific examination series and 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.**

The Modified Papers tool, developed by NAA (National Assessment Agency) in collaboration with awarding bodies, to enable centres to order modified papers on-line **must** be used. The electronic submission of modified paper requests to awarding bodies can be accessed via an awarding body's extranet site and users can build up a list of all papers across awarding bodies relevant to an individual candidate.

#### Requests that can be made using the Modified Papers tool include:

- A3 unmodified
- A4 modified 18 point bold
- A3 enlargement of A4 modified paper (approximately 24 point)
- Braille papers
- Modified language
- Tactile diagrams
- Transcript of listening test/video

#### Appropriate links:

[www.aqa.org.uk](http://www.aqa.org.uk)  
[www.ccea.org.uk](http://www.ccea.org.uk)  
[www.edexcel.org.uk](http://www.edexcel.org.uk)  
[www.ocr.org.uk](http://www.ocr.org.uk)  
[www.wjec.co.uk](http://www.wjec.co.uk)

Centres should contact their NAA Centre Support Officer for training in use of the site.

[www.naa.org.uk](http://www.naa.org.uk)

**(Please note that this tool can only be used to request modified papers.)**

The NAA tool 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. Centres must contact the awarding body if entry amendments have been made.

*Access arrangements online* **does not** include permission for early opening of modified papers. Centres who require this permission must contact the individual awarding bodies with a justification for the request.

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](http://www.rnib.org.uk) .

## 6.2 Braille Papers

- 6.2.1 Papers are only produced when applications are made by the deadline and are not produced automatically.
- 6.2.2 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.
- 6.2.3 The modified paper is sent to a Braille agency to be produced in Grade 2 English Braille.
- 6.2.4 Tactile diagrams and graphs may also be provided.
- 6.2.5 Centres may be required to provide 3D models in advance for certain types of questions.
- 6.2.6 Videos or films used in assessments may be requested with audio description.

## 6.3 Modified Enlarged Papers and Unmodified Enlarged Papers

- 6.3.1 Enlarged papers are only produced when applications are made by the deadline and are not produced automatically.
- 6.3.2 Modified enlarged papers are intended for candidates who have a severe visual impairment which cannot be corrected by spectacles. Pictures and certain diagrams may have been removed prior to enlargement.
- 6.3.3 Once the awarding body has directed that the work is to be undertaken, the paper will be modified by a teacher specialised in visual impairments and is then produced in 18 point bold print. This is a standard size.
- 6.3.4 The awarding body will also produce, on request, an A3 enlargement of the A4 modified paper (approximately 24 point).
- 6.3.5 If the candidate does not require a modified paper and can see pictures, graphs and diagrams, the centre should request an A3 enlargement without modification. This is the type of paper normally used in centres by candidates with moderately poor vision.

## 6.4 Arrangements suitable for candidates with substantial comprehension difficulties (Modified Language Papers)

- 6.4.1 Where a paper has not been modified at source, awarding bodies will accept an application for a modified language paper for a candidate who is deemed to have substantial comprehension difficulties. Awarding bodies **do not** require evidence of the candidate's comprehension difficulties.
- 6.4.2 Modified language papers are only produced for some specifications when applications are made by the deadline and are not produced automatically.
- 6.4.3 Once the awarding body has directed that the work is to be undertaken, papers are modified by teachers who are specialised in language modification.
- 6.4.4 Only the carrier language is modified. The meaning of the questions remains the same and will require the same answers as the standard paper. Any technical and subject specific language will remain unchanged.

- 6.4.5 Some question papers do not require modification, as specialist teachers are involved in the question paper setting process. Awarding bodies hope to invite more language specialists to attend at this stage of the process, depending on the availability of teachers specialised in this field.
- 6.4.6 Candidates who require BSL support as part of their normal way of working within the centre may benefit from using a modified language paper.
- 6.4.7 Where a candidate is identified as requiring an oral language modifier, a modified language paper should be requested by the respective deadline as a modified language paper may reduce or sometimes completely remove the need for the oral language modifier.
- 6.4.8 In Modern Foreign Language Listening Tests, a transcript of the recording can be requested and read to the candidate, who lip-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 19**, on the use of a live speaker in aural examination components).
- 6.4.9 Videos or films used in assessments may be requested with subtitles.

## 6.5 Applying for modified papers

Papers have to go through many processes before they arrive on the candidate's desk. In order to produce a modified paper, using all the external agencies involved, as well as passing the paper through all the internal procedures, each awarding body **must** receive applications by the set deadlines. **Failure to apply on time can lead to the rejection of the application as modified papers simply cannot be produced at short notice.**

- 6.5.1 Applications **must** be made using the NAA modified papers site.
- 6.5.2 Applications **must** be made for each examination series, giving the correct unit/component numbers that the candidate is planning to enter, in that series, in each subject.

## 6.6 Deadlines for making applications for modified papers to awarding bodies:

Month of examination	Deadline
November 2008 December 2008 January 2009	30 September 2008
February 2009 March 2009 April 2009	30 November 2008
May/June 2009	31 January 2009

**All deadlines for making applications for access arrangements and modified papers may be found in the JCQ Notice *Key Dates in the Examination Cycle 2008/2009* on the JCQ website ([www.jcq.org.uk/](http://www.jcq.org.uk/)). Also available is the Key Dates Calendar which is a web tool with key examination dates from JCQ and AQA, CCEA, Edexcel, OCR and WJEC. It produces a calendar which can be searched, filtered, downloaded and printed by users ([www.modernisationonline.com/compkeydates/](http://www.modernisationonline.com/compkeydates/)).**

## Chapter 7

### Basic and Key Skills

7.1 The access arrangements which can be considered for Key Skills levels 1-4, Adult Literacy and Adult Numeracy Levels 1 and 2 are listed in the summary tables below. Due to the nature of ongoing tests, centres should contact the respective awarding body **at least six weeks before the start of the test** to discuss access arrangements. 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"> <li>• extra time</li> <li>• sign language interpreter (candidates must not sign responses at Levels 3-4)</li> <li>• Braille papers</li> <li>• scribe</li> <li>• reader</li> <li>• word processor</li> <li>• large size scientific calculators (Levels 3-4)</li> <li>• transcript</li> <li>• bilingual dictionary</li> </ul>	<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. Please consult the relevant awarding body for further guidance.</p>
Communication/ Basic Literacy/ Adult Literacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• extra time</li> <li>• Braille papers</li> <li>• scribe for Levels 1-2 only</li> <li>• word processor without grammar/spell checker</li> <li>• transcript</li> </ul>	<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"> <li>• extra time</li> <li>• sign language interpreter</li> <li>• Braille papers</li> <li>• scribe at Levels 1-2 only</li> <li>• reader</li> <li>• word processor</li> <li>• bilingual dictionary</li> </ul>	<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>

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

### 7.2.1 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.

**Please note:**

**It is presently 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, the JCQ awarding bodies and the regulators are currently working together to review the provision of modified papers for Key Skills examinations.**

Applications for access arrangements in Basic and Key Skills assessments cannot presently be processed electronically using *Access arrangements online*. **A paper application must be sent to the individual awarding body responsible for the qualification, using either Form 1 – JCQ/AA or Form 8 – JCQ/AA/LD.** The appropriate cover sheet **must** be used at the time of the assessment.

Requests for Braille question papers **must** be made by paper using **Form 7 – JCQ/Modified Papers**.

All forms for Basic and Key Skills assessments are available electronically at [www.jcq.org.uk/](http://www.jcq.org.uk/).

**In the case of learning difficulties, evidence of need should be confirmed by a history of provision during the course within the centre, supported by one or more of the following:**

- a report from a specialist teacher (defined here as a teacher or tutor who is employed or contracted by a secondary school or college or college of further education to carry out assessments) completed less than two years before the candidate takes the test;
- a report from a qualified psychologist giving evidence of a history of literacy difficulty completed less than two years before the candidate takes the test.

If neither of the above is available e.g. in the case of a learner in the workplace, the head of centre should send the awarding body written evidence of initial assessment which proved the justification for access arrangements throughout the programme and in tests/assessments. Details of the arrangements made for the candidate during the programme **must** also be included. If the candidate has a letter from a psychologist or specialist teacher, a copy must also be kept.

**Centres should contact the respective awarding body for further advice, if required.**

## 7.3 Functional Skills in English, Mathematics and ICT

7.3.1 Access arrangements for Functional Skills qualifications should be based on the arrangements which apply to Basic and Key Skills assessments as detailed in Sections 7.1 and 7.2. The arrangements for Functional Skills in English are the same as those for Adult Literacy and Key Skills Communication. The competence standards include an assessment of the candidate's ability to 'read'. A candidate will be assessed on his or her ability to interpret/decode printed or Braille texts and therefore a reader is not permitted.

7.3.2 Centres are advised to consult with the individual awarding body concerned in relation to access arrangements for Functional Skills qualifications. Awarding bodies will consider applications for access arrangements; however, they must ensure that the arrangements requested do not undermine the integrity of the qualification.

## Chapter 8

### Entry Level Qualifications

Entry Level qualifications are designed for people who may not be able to demonstrate attainment at the level required for GCSE, which makes greater demands on the candidate. It is assumed that many candidates entering for Entry Level examinations will require arrangements to be made to give them access to the examinations.

The principles which have been outlined in this booklet apply also to Entry Level qualifications in that 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.

There are two major differences in dealing with requests for adjustments to be made for Entry Level qualifications as opposed to GCSE examinations.

8.1 The centre is not required to have every candidate individually assessed by a specialist. The centre is required to have determined the needs of the candidate within the classroom situation and in the light of those arrangements which have to be made as part of the normal working practices.

8.2 The centre is permitted to allow more access arrangements at Entry Level than at GCSE, without the prior permission of the awarding body. **Please see the notes in sections 8.4–8.6.** These include:

- **Amplification, taped questions and responses;**
- **Bi-lingual translation dictionaries with/without an allowance of extra time;**
- **Braille of non-secure assessment material;**
- **Extra time in timed components;**
- **Low vision aids, overlays;**
- **Supervised rest breaks;**
- **Timetable variations involving overnight supervision. No examination must be taken before the scheduled date;**
- **Transcription of a candidate's written responses;**
- **Use of an oral language modifier;**
- **Use of a practical assistant;**
- **Use of a prompter;**
- **Use of a reader;**
- **Use of a scribe;**
- **Use of a Sign Language Interpreter for written questions and responses, but not for Modern Foreign Language orals;**
- **Use of word processor.**

The centre **must** report access arrangements used on a notification form by **31 July** each year (JCQ/EL/NF Form 11).

Where oral language modifiers, practical assistants, readers, scribes or Sign Language Interpreters are used please attach a cover sheet (JCQ/EL/CS Form 13) to scripts, coursework or portfolios completed with these arrangements.

8.3 Some access arrangements require an application to be made to the individual awarding body responsible for the qualification. These relate to timetabled examinations which must remain secure. They include:

- **Braille or large print examination papers;**
- **Early opening of question papers up to one hour before the scheduled start time to enlarge or photocopy the question paper on to coloured paper or for Sign Language Interpreters to prepare.**

**Applications for these access arrangements should be made on form JCQ/EL/AA Form 12, by the deadlines given at the front of this booklet.**

**It is presently not possible to submit these arrangements using *Access arrangements online*.**

## 8.4 Entry Level arrangements

### 8.4.1 Readers

A reader is required to read, on request, all or part of the question paper or any part of the candidate's responses. A reader must read accurately and at a reasonable rate. A reader may repeat as necessary any instructions given on the question paper, as well as the questions and answers already recorded. A reader may assist a visually impaired candidate using tactile diagrams, graphs and tables to obtain the information which the printed paper would give to a sighted candidate. A reader must, if required, spell out any word which occurs in the question paper. A reader must be prepared for periods of inactivity. **In English, Irish, Welsh, Modern Foreign Languages and Adult Literacy specifications, a reader must not be used for any Reading Test, unless specifically permitted at certain levels by the specification.**

### 8.4.2 Scribes

A scribe is required to write out answers dictated by the candidate. A scribe must be able to write legibly, at a reasonable speed and should have a working knowledge of the subject. A scribe must write down the answers exactly as they are dictated. A scribe must draw or add to diagrams strictly in accordance with the candidate's instructions. The candidate will not be expected to dictate spellings. A scribe should work at the candidate's pace. **In English, Irish, Welsh or Adult Literacy specifications, a scribe must not be used for any writing test, unless specifically permitted at certain levels by the specification. In Modern Foreign Languages, a scribe must not be used in the writing paper unless the candidate dictates spellings letter by letter.**

### 8.4.3 Sign Language Interpreters

A Sign Language Interpreter is required to communicate questions to the candidate upon request. **A Sign Language Interpreter is not an oral language modifier or a reader.** A Sign Language Interpreter should give the essence of the candidate's signed response on the examination paper without inferring any meaning that was not clear in the signed response. Candidates who are signing their responses must not be in a position to see other candidates' signed responses. A Sign Language Interpreter should work at the candidate's pace.

**In English, Irish, Welsh Speaking and Listening Tests and Adult Literacy 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.

### 8.4.4 Practical assistants

A practical assistant is required to help a candidate in practical assessments, to carry out tasks at the candidate's instruction and ensure the safety of the candidate. This support **must not** give the candidate an unfair advantage. A practical assistant **must** work strictly in accordance with the candidate's instructions and should not perform tasks independently of the candidate. A practical assistant **is not** permitted to carry out tasks which are the focus of the assessment, such as art work, designing or making artefacts.

#### 8.4.5 Oral Language Modifiers

An oral language modifier may be required by a candidate during an examination to clarify language in a question paper that he/she cannot understand. The oral language modifier is permitted to explain/re-phrase the carrier language in a paper, but any technical terms must **not** be explained or re-phrased.

Candidates who use an oral language modifier are required to demonstrate the same subject skills, knowledge and concepts as other candidates. This includes an understanding of the technical terms used in the subject. If such terms are explained to the candidate, then the demand of the question will be compromised. This may constitute malpractice which could impact on the candidate's result.

**Oral language modifiers will not be permitted in those parts of examination components testing reading. Please consult the awarding body for advice.**

#### 8.5 Oral Language Modifiers, practical assistants, readers, scribes and Sign Language Interpreters

When a candidate is assisted by an oral language modifier, a practical assistant, a reader, a scribe or a Sign Language Interpreter, help **must not** be given with the subject matter being assessed. This support **must not** give the candidate an unfair advantage or disadvantage. It **must not** invalidate the assessment. Additional time may also be available and a separate room may be necessary if the candidate is to dictate responses, in which case a separate invigilator will be required.

The head of centre/examinations officer should ensure that oral language modifiers, practical assistants, readers, scribes and Sign Language Interpreters are acceptable and responsible adults, familiar with the subject matter being tested and have worked with the candidate before the examination. A relative of the candidate **must not** act as an oral language modifier, a practical assistant, a reader, a scribe or a Sign Language Interpreter.

#### 8.6 Use of bi-lingual translation dictionaries

For guidance relating to the use of appropriate bi-lingual translation dictionaries in Modern Foreign Language examinations, **please refer to Chapter 2, section 2.17, page 24.**

## Chapter 9

### Diploma Administration

Applications for access arrangements should be made by the home centre who is best placed to understand the learner and their needs. Where the learner is taking GCSE and or GCE qualifications, which constitute Additional and Specialist learning, applications **must** be made using *Access arrangements online*.

**Principal learning, Functional Skills and Project qualifications, including the Extended Project, are not yet covered by *Access arrangements online*.**

Access arrangements are normally associated with timetabled written examinations. However, access arrangements may also be appropriate for other types of assessment such as controlled assessments. Examination officers should consult with the relevant member of teaching staff or other member of centre staff responsible for curriculum delivery to ensure that the access arrangement identified can be applied effectively. Certain access arrangements may not be possible depending on the specific skills, knowledge and understanding which the component is testing. As an example, where a paper is testing the candidate's independent reading abilities, a reader will not be allowed.

Where a centre is acting as an assessment centre, accommodating learners registered at another centre within the consortium, they must be aware of the access arrangements in place for those learners. The assessment centre must be aware of the regulations which surround the access arrangement. In the most commonly used access arrangements, such as readers, scribes and word processors, exam officers will be familiar with the regulations that apply. The onus is on the home centre to ensure, especially for less commonly used access arrangements, that the assessment centre understands the access arrangement(s), the conditions of use and any expertise which may be needed.

In the event that a home centre and an assessment centre share responsibility for a learner, it should be decided locally who provides the access arrangement. Sometimes a decision may not be needed; extra time will be provided via the invigilator or assessor. Elsewhere the decision will often be easy to make on a common sense basis, with a bias towards the home centre providing any resources needed such as readers, scribes, word processors or practical assistants since they are more likely to understand the learners' real needs.

#### 9.1 Access arrangements for internally assessed Principal Learning units and Project qualifications

For internally assessed Principal Learning units and Project qualifications, including the Extended Project, centres **do not** need to apply to the individual awarding body concerned. Centres **must** however permit access arrangements which are in line with the awarding body's policies. Access arrangements made in relation to internal assessments **must** be recorded using **Form 9 – JCQ/Diploma** and held on file within the centre for inspection purposes.

**Form 9 – JCQ/Diploma** is available electronically at [www.jcq.org.uk/](http://www.jcq.org.uk/).

**Access arrangements 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 the awarding body concerned.

## 9.2 Access arrangements for timetabled Principal Learning components

Centres are allowed by awarding bodies to permit certain arrangements without prior consultation with the awarding body.

**The following arrangements may be permitted by the centre:**

- Bi-lingual translation dictionaries with/without extra time;
- Brailers;
- Coloured overlays, low vision aids, Braille machines, closed circuit television (CCTV), optical character (OCR) scanners, amplification equipment;
- Prompts;
- Read Aloud;
- Separate invigilation within the centre;
- Supervised rest breaks;
- Transcripts;
- Up to a maximum of 25% Extra Time.

Information on these arrangements can be found within **Chapter 2, pages 4-26** of this booklet.

**Form 9 – JCQ/Diploma must** be completed once a year and returned to the awarding body conducting the examination by **11 May 2009 for June 2009 examinations or before the start of the January 2009 series** as appropriate, listing the names and numbers of candidates who were granted access arrangements as delegated to centres.

**For all other access arrangements**, centres **must** apply to the individual awarding body concerned by the dates published at the front of this booklet.

**A paper application must be sent to the individual awarding body, using either Form 1 – JCQ/AA or Form 8 – JCQ/AA/LD.** The appropriate cover sheet **must** be used at the time of the assessment. Forms are available electronically at [www.jcq.org.uk/](http://www.jcq.org.uk/).

Awarding bodies will consider each application individually and the response will relate to the effect the access arrangement might have on the competence or ability being tested.

## 9.3 Modified Papers

Modified papers for Principal Learning units **must** be applied for in advance of a specific examination series and are individually prepared for candidates for whom other access arrangements are unsuitable. The modification process 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.

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

Further information on modified papers may be found within **Chapter 6, pages 37-39**, of this booklet.

## SECTION B - The Disability Discrimination Act 1995

### Chapter 10

#### Information and guidance for examination centres

##### 10.1 The Meaning of Disability

This section is included to aid understanding about who is covered by the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA 1995). A Government publication *Guidance on matters to be taken into account in determining questions relating to the definition of disability* was published in March 2008 and is available from The Stationery Office, ISBN 13: 9780337090509.

##### 10.2 Frequently asked questions

###### 10.2.1 Which qualifications are covered by the amendments to the DDA 1995?

The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 has been amended in England, Scotland and Wales to include general qualifications, which include the following qualifications offered by JCQ member awarding bodies: AEA, Entry Level, Free Standing Mathematics Qualifications, GCE, GCSE, Basic Skills, Key Skills, Certificate in Adult Literacy, (Entry Levels 1, 2 and 3); Certificate in Adult Numeracy, (Entry Levels 1, 2 and 3); the National Qualifications framework in Scotland and the Welsh Baccalaureate Qualification. Similar legislation arrangements are being established in Northern Ireland.

###### 10.2.2 Who is protected under the DDA 1995?

The Act will protect those people who can establish that they are disabled, under the terms of the DDA 1995.

For further information on which candidates are protected under the DDA 1995, centres should consult the *Guidance on matters to be taken into account in determining questions relating to the definition of disability*.

###### 10.2.3 What are the Duties of the General Qualifications Bodies?

The Equality and Human Rights Commission has published on its website the Revised Code of Practice: Trade Organisations, Qualification Bodies and General Qualification Bodies - [www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/publicationsandresources/Disability/Pages/Education.aspx](http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/publicationsandresources/Disability/Pages/Education.aspx)

Chapter 9 interprets the legislation as it applies to General Qualifications Bodies. The main issues relate to direct discrimination, disability related discrimination, reasonable adjustments and competence standards. Centres should take note of the extracts quoted from the following sections:

9.27 Treatment of a disabled person amounts to direct discrimination if:

- it is on the ground of his disability;
- the treatment is less favourable than the way in which a person not having that particular disability is (or would be) treated; and
- the relevant circumstances, including the abilities, of the person with whom the comparison is made are the same as, or not materially different from, those of the disabled person.

9.29 Less favourable treatment of a disabled person may be unlawful under the Act even if it does not amount to direct discrimination. This will be the case if it amounts to disability-related discrimination instead.

9.30 As explained at paragraph 4.25, this is treatment of a disabled person by a general qualifications body which amounts to unlawful discrimination if:

- it is for a reason related to the person's disability;
- the treatment is less favourable than the way in which the general qualifications body treats (or would treat) others to whom that reason does not (or would not) apply; and
- the body cannot show that the treatment is justified.

9.38 A general qualifications body owes the duty to make reasonable adjustments to a disabled applicant or potential applicant for a relevant general qualification and to a disabled person who holds a relevant general qualification conferred by it.

9.42 It should be noted that the duty to make reasonable adjustments does not apply at all to competence standards. However, in respect of relevant general qualifications, the process of assessing the competence standard is in most cases subject to the duty, where the process is not part of the knowledge, skills and understanding being tested.

9.57 **[s 31AB(9)]** The Act says that a competence standard is an academic, medical, or other standard applied by or on behalf of a general qualifications body for the purpose of determining whether or not a person has a particular level of competence or ability.

9.58 General qualifications bodies are likely to impose various requirements and conditions upon the conferment of a relevant general qualification.

9.68 To the extent that it does not amount to direct discrimination, the Act says that, where the application of a competence standard to a disabled person amounts to less favourable treatment of him for a reason which relates to his disability, that treatment is justified if, but only if, the general qualifications body can show that:

- the standard is (or would be) applied equally to people who do not have his particular disability, and
- its application is a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim.

#### 10.2.4 **How can centres apply for reasonable adjustments for candidates defined as disabled under the terms of the DDA 1995?**

**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 to the assessment itself for a candidate defined as disabled under the terms of the DDA 1995.

Any reasonable adjustment required by a candidate will usually be an access arrangement for the assessment in question but may include other adjustments which are not listed in this booklet. Centres should apply for reasonable adjustments in the same way as they apply for access arrangements.

Where a candidate has substantial needs which are not accommodated by *Access arrangements online*, such a 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 arrangements 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 or competencies being assessed are to be affected. Where a disabled person is placed at a substantial disadvantage by an assessment objective or competency, 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 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, unreasonable timeframes or affect the security and integrity of the qualification itself. For example, Braille papers cannot be produced at short notice. Adjustments must not put in jeopardy the health and well being of any person, including the candidate. (See Code of Practice section 5.17.)

#### 10.2.5 How does the JCQ understand "competence standards" in general qualifications?

The assessment objectives define the competencies being tested by the specification. These test knowledge, understanding, skills and their application. The regulator defines the assessment objectives and they are given in the Subject Criteria. The awarding bodies design specifications for each subject using the regulator's Subject Criteria as a template. The assessment objectives for each subject will therefore be common across different awarding bodies' specifications. The assessment objectives are also identified in each specification issued by the awarding bodies.

## SECTION C

### Chapter 11

#### Reasonable Adjustments in Vocationally Related Qualifications (VRQs) and National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs) to allow access to assessments

##### Information and guidance for examination centres

###### 11.1 Which qualifications are covered?

This section relates specifically to vocationally related qualifications (VRQs) and National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs).

###### 11.2 Who is protected under the DDA 1995?

The Act will protect those people who can establish that they are disabled under the terms of the DDA 1995.

For further information on which candidates are protected under the DDA 1995, centres should consult the *Guidance on matters to be taken into account in determining questions relating to the definition of disability*, published in March 2008 and available from The Stationery Office, ISBN 13: 9780337090509.

Candidates who are not disabled under the terms of the Act may still be eligible for access arrangements.

###### 11.3 What are the Duties of Qualifications Bodies?

The Equality and Human Rights Commission has published on its website the Revised Code of Practice: Trade Organisations, Qualification Bodies and General Qualification Bodies - [www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/publicationsandresources/Disability/Pages/Education.aspx](http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/publicationsandresources/Disability/Pages/Education.aspx)

Chapter 8 interprets the legislation as it applies to Qualifications Bodies. The main issues relate to direct discrimination, disability related discrimination, reasonable adjustments and competence standards. Centres should take note of the extracts quoted from the following sections:

*8.10* Treatment of a disabled person amounts to **direct discrimination** if:

- it is on the grounds of his disability;
- the treatment is less favourable than the way in which a person not having that particular disability is (or would be) treated; and
- the relevant circumstances, including the abilities, of the person with whom the comparison is made are the same as, or not materially different from, those of the disabled person.

- 8.11 Less favourable treatment of a disabled person may be unlawful under the Act even if it does not amount to direct discrimination. This will be the case if it amounts to **disability – related discrimination** instead. As explained at paragraph 4.25, this is less favourable treatment which is for a reason related to the person's disability. However, unlike treatment which amounts to direct discrimination (and which is therefore incapable of justification) a qualifications body's treatment of a disabled person does not amount to disability-related discrimination if the body can show that it is justified. The general circumstances in which this may be possible are explained in Chapter 6. However, special rules apply in respect of justification of less favourable treatment in the application of a competence standard (see paragraphs 8.35 to 8.40).
- 8.27 **[s14A (5)]** The Act says that a competence standard is an academic, medical, or other standard applied by or on behalf of a qualifications body for the purpose of determining whether or not a person has a particular level of competence or ability.
- 8.28 Qualification bodies are likely to impose various requirements and conditions upon the conferment of a professional or trade qualification.
- 8.32 Special rules apply in relation to the application of a competence standard to a disabled person by or on behalf of a qualifications body. The effect of the Act is that:
- there is no duty to make reasonable adjustments in respect of the application of a competence standard; and
  - in the limited circumstances in which less favourable treatment of a disabled person in the application of such a standard may be justified, justification is assessed by reference to a special statutory test (see paragraph 8.36).
- 8.36 **[s14A (3)]b** To the extent that it does not amount to direct discrimination, the Act says that, where the application of a competence standard to a disabled person amounts to less favourable treatment of him for a reason which relates to his disability, that treatment is justified if, but only if, the qualifications body can show that:
- the standard is (or would be) applied equally to people who do not have his particular disability; and
  - its application is a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim.

#### 11.4 Taking Advice from the Awarding Body about Competence Standards

There are subject specific issues relating to VRQs and NVQs where the centre may need to seek particular advice from the awarding body issuing the qualification.

In the majority of qualifications, a wide range of reasonable adjustments will be available. The arrangements listed in **Chapter 2, pages 4 - 26**, for GCSE/GCE qualifications may be relevant for some candidates entering for VRQs and NVQs. However, there are some important exceptions where the competence standards would be invalidated if an adjustment was made. In particular, reasonable adjustments to VRQs and NVQs that carry a "licence to practise" need to be considered so as not to invalidate 'the licence'.

#### 11.5 Advising prospective candidates

**It is vital that centres recruit with integrity onto VRQ and NVQ qualifications.** Centres must ensure that learners have the correct information and advice on their selected qualifications and that the qualifications 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.

## 11.6 National Vocational Qualifications

NVQs 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 might 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.

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

Centres or training providers who wish to apply for a reasonable adjustment in VRQs or NVQs should 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.**

To apply for modified enlarged papers, Braille papers, modified language papers or papers adapted for the purpose of using a recording, please submit **Form VRQ/VQ/EA no later than ten weeks before the date of the assessment.** Centres 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 permission. (**Form VRQ/VQ/EA** is available electronically at [www.jcq.org.uk/](http://www.jcq.org.uk/).)

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. (See Code of Practice section 5.17.)

### 11.8 Applying reasonable adjustments to internal assessment

For qualifications which are internally assessed centres **do not** need to apply to the awarding body. However, centres **must** make reasonable adjustments which are in line with the awarding body's policies. All reasonable adjustments made in relation to internal assessments **must** be recorded on **Form VRQ/VQ/IA** and held on file within the centre for inspection purposes. (**Form VRQ/VQ/IA** is available electronically at [www.jcq.org.uk/](http://www.jcq.org.uk/).)

**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.

### 11.9 Candidates who are not covered by the DDA

Reasonable adjustments are available for those who are disabled under the terms of the DDA 1995. There may be other candidates, with less substantial difficulties, for instance, who may not be covered by the Act but who may need an access arrangement.

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. If further clarification is required in relation to the application of a reasonable adjustment you should contact the respective awarding body.

## Section D: Post examination adjustments

### Special Consideration in GCSE and GCE qualifications

#### Chapter 12

#### Which candidates will be eligible for special consideration?

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

12.1 **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 coursework is affected by adverse circumstances beyond their control. These include:

- 12.1.1 temporary illness or accident/injury at the time of the assessment;
- 12.1.2 bereavement at the time of the assessment (where whole groups are affected, normally only those most closely involved will be eligible);
- 12.1.3 domestic crisis arising at the time of the assessment;
- 12.1.4 serious disturbance during an examination, particularly where recorded material is being used;
- 12.1.5 other accidental events 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; (see 13.2.2, page 58).
- 12.1.6 participation in sporting events at international level at the time of certification;
- 12.1.7 failure by the centre or awarding body to implement previously agreed access arrangements.

When candidates have been prepared to meet the assessment objectives 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 and where this has not happened there can be no guarantee that a candidate will receive special consideration. However, such instances will be investigated on a case-by-case basis with the objective of minimising the potential for an adverse outcome for the candidate. Where the wrong texts had been taught it would be essential that the candidate had covered the skills being assessed in the specification if special consideration were to be granted. In other words, the texts studied must at least have been examined in the current specification in a previous examination series.

12.2 **Candidates will NOT be eligible for special consideration** if preparation for or performance in the examination is affected by:

- 12.2.1 long term illness or other difficulties during the course affecting revision time, unless the illness or circumstances manifest themselves also during the assessment;
- 12.2.2 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 inquests or court cases;
- 12.2.3 domestic inconvenience, such as moving house, lack of facilities, taking holidays at the time of the assessment;
- 12.2.4 minor disturbance in the examination caused by candidates, such as bad behaviour, mobile phones etc;
- 12.2.5 the consequences of committing a crime;

- 12.2.6 the consequences of taking alcohol or any other non-prescribed drugs;
- 12.2.7 the consequences of disobeying the centre's internal regulations;
- 12.2.8 the failure to prepare candidates properly for the examination for whatever reason;
- 12.2.9 staff shortages, building work or lack of facilities;
- 12.2.10 misreading the timetable and/or failing to attend at the right time and in the right place;
- 12.2.11 misreading the instructions of the question papers and answering the wrong questions;
- 12.2.12 making personal arrangements such as a wedding or holiday arrangements which conflict with the examination timetable;
- 12.2.13 submitting no coursework at all, unless coursework/controlled assessment is scheduled for a restricted period of time, rather than during the course;
- 12.2.14 missing all examination and coursework components;
- 12.2.15 failure to cover the course as a consequence of joining the class part way through;
- 12.2.16 permanent disability unless illness affects the candidate at the time of the assessment;  
(Access arrangements exist to make adjustments in such cases, please see Chapters A and B of this booklet.)
- 12.2.17 failure without good excuse to request access arrangements on time;
- 12.2.18 adverse weather conditions, except in extreme circumstances.

## Chapter 13

### What is special consideration? - GCSE and GCE qualifications

Special consideration is a **post examination adjustment** to the marks or grades of a candidate who is eligible for consideration. Special consideration can only seek to go some way to assist the 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 because they are not in a fit state to cope with the assessment. Only minor adjustments can be made to the mark awarded because to do more than this would jeopardise the standard of the examination.

**There are minimum requirements for enhanced grading in cases of acceptable absence (which are detailed in Section 13.3).**

**For GCE 50% of the total assessment must normally be completed before enhanced grading may be considered in cases of acceptable absence.**

**For GCSE 35% of the total assessment must be completed.**

All examinations are measuring what a candidate knows and can do. The overall grades must reflect the level of attainment demonstrated in the examination. They do not necessarily reflect the candidate's potential 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 forecast grade. Where long term circumstances have prevented the candidate from reaching the competence standards it may not be possible to make an adjustment.

#### 13.1 Candidates who are present for the assessment but disadvantaged

13.1.1 Special consideration will normally be given by applying an allowance of marks to each component affected in a particular scheme of assessment. 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 coursework.

13.1.2 The decision made by the awarding body will be based on various factors which will be different from one subject to another. These might 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 the coursework, whether an oral or practical is involved. Each case is assessed individually.

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 crises 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, many more cases will fall into this group, 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% Probably the most common category of allowance. The majority of cases might 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 administration 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.)

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

13.2.1 When a candidate has missed a time-tabled component/unit for acceptable reasons and can produce evidence that he or she was unfit to take the paper, 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 13.3 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.**

13.2.2 For modular examinations taken in examination series prior to certification, candidates should re-enter any missed units at a later date unless there are difficulties arising, e.g. group performances, which cannot be repeated. Awarding bodies should be consulted immediately in such cases.

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

### 13.3 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.**

**AEA: Where the component is not completed, a grade cannot be issued.**

**Extended Project: Where the project is not completed, a grade cannot be issued.**

**GCSE: 35% of the total assessment must be completed.**

If the minimum requirement is not met in GCSE, 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 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 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 had been met an award would be issued as set out above.

#### 13.4 Shortfall in coursework

If a candidate has been subject to an unforeseen illness or other misfortune during the period when coursework was produced, it may, in some subjects, be possible to accept a reduced quantity of coursework 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 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 coursework has not been submitted or the assessment objectives have not been satisfied.

No adjustment to the marks should be made by the centre. A special consideration form should be submitted to the awarding body/ies, attached to a breakdown of marks across the assessment objectives. Candidates should always attempt the required coursework. Awarding bodies will not normally agree reduced coursework in advance.

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

#### 13.5 Lost or damaged coursework

When coursework has been lost or damaged, consideration may involve accepting a mark for which there is no available evidence of attainment. This might 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 **must not** be the consequence of negligence on the part of the candidate, for example coursework being left on a bus;
- **If the work was marked before it was lost or damaged**, marks will be accepted in the usual way. A lost coursework form (**JCQ/LCW - Form 15**) must be submitted both to the moderator and the awarding body by the deadline for the submission of coursework marks. **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 the lost coursework form, 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 might have achieved if the work had been finished. Estimates must not be submitted on mark sheets, only on the lost coursework form. **No estimated marks will be accepted after the issue of results;**
- **If only part of the work was lost and part of the work is available**, further guidance must be sought from the awarding body.

## 13.6 Other Problems

- 13.6.1 There are circumstances which arise by accident and where a 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 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 account of the problem which has arisen.
- 13.6.2 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 (**JCQ/SC - Form 10**) should be sent to the awarding body both when the incorrect paper has been sat 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.

## Chapter 14:

### Making applications for special consideration (GCSE and GCE qualifications)

- 14.1 Applications for special consideration should be submitted on **Form JCQ/SC - Form 10**. 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 examinations. **Applications will not be acceptable if submitted directly by parents or candidates.**
- 14.2 Applications must 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.**
- 14.3 Forms should be completed in all cases. It may be appropriate for heads of centre or examinations officers to attach a letter of explanation to the form where 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 and a covering letter.
- 14.4 It is not possible for all letters to receive an individual reply. It is more important to process the application before the issue of results and therefore 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.
- 14.5 For cases of lost/damaged coursework, **Form JCQ/LCW - Form 15** should be submitted by the examinations officer.
- 14.6 For cases of shortfall in coursework or any other request for special consideration, **Form JCQ/SC - Form 10** should be submitted by the examinations officer.
- 14.7 **Form JCQ/SC – Form 10** and **Form JCQ/LCW – Form 15** are available electronically at [www.jcq.org.uk/](http://www.jcq.org.uk/)

## Section E

### Chapter 15

#### Post examination adjustments – Special Consideration (Vocational and Vocationally Related Qualifications)

##### 15.1 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.**

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.

##### 15.2 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 reasonable adjustments, there are **no** circumstances whereby a centre may apply its own special consideration. Applications **must** be made to the relevant awarding body.

### 15.3 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, unless the illness manifests itself also during the assessment or during the months leading up to 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;
- minor disturbance in the examination room caused by another candidate, such as bad behaviour or a mobile phone ringing;
- the consequences of taking alcohol or any other non-prescribed drugs;
- the consequences of disobeying the centre's internal regulations;
- misreading the timetable for an external assessment and/or failing to attend at the right time and in the right place;
- misreading the rubrics and answering the wrong questions;
- permanent disability;
- failure without good excuse to request reasonable adjustments on time.

#### 15.4 **Applying for special consideration in Vocational and Vocationally Related 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 VRO/NVO/SC**. (This form is available electronically at [www.jcq.org.uk/](http://www.jcq.org.uk/).) To ensure effective processing of applications centres **must** additionally submit:

- evidence to support the application such as a medical certificate, a doctor's letter, 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.

#### 15.5 **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.

## APPENDIX 1

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'	Reader allowed	
A level English language	x	✓	For A level English, '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	x	✓	Assessing response to literature and texts rather than reading, so a reader would be permitted.
A level English Language and Literature	x	✓	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	x	✓	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	✓	x for 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	✓	x	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 Language	✓	x for components that assess 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	x	✓	Reading is not being assessed in GCSE English Literature and so a reader would be permitted
GCSE Welsh first language	✓	x for 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.
GCSE Welsh literature	x	✓	In GCSE Welsh Literature candidate are required to extract literary meaning. A reader would be permitted.

GCSE Welsh second language	✓	x for 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	✓	x	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)	✓	x	The arrangements for the Functional Skills pilot are the same as for Adult Literacy and Key Skills Communication. 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. 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.
Key skills Communication and Adult literacy at all levels	✓	x	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.

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These organisations are the participating awarding bodies (currently AQA, CCEA, Edexcel, OCR and WJEC) and the National Assessment Agency (NAA).

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.....

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