

2022/23 Update to:

Assessing the need for Access Arrangements in Examinations

A Practical Guide – Sixth Edition, by Lia Castiglione

Introduction

This document provides a brief commentary on the changes to the JCQ regulations “**Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments**” since publication in 2021 of “Assessing the need for Access Arrangements”. It covers essential changes made within the 2022/23 JCQ regulations.

The 6th edition of the book itself, which was fully updated in 2021, provides much greater detail on the more fundamental aspects of access arrangements work including, for example, the range of skills to be investigated, tests to be used, interpretation of results, and discussion of the wider issues involved. **Please note** that this update should be read in conjunction with the book, which is available to purchase on the Patoss website: www.patoss-dyslexia.org/Books

However, it is also **imperative** that all professionals familiarise themselves with the JCQ regulations directly and in full as the Guide and these notes are intended to support, but in no way replace, the regulations.

Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments (AARA)

The JCQ publishes a revised AARA document in the late summer each year, setting out its regulations and guidance on access arrangements for the forthcoming academic year, which take effect from 1st September. The document is available to download from the JCQ website and for schools and colleges as an interactive document through the Centre Admin Portal (CAP). CAP can be accessed through any of the awarding bodies’ secure extranet sites, such as AQA Centre Services or Edexcel Online.

AAO Candidate Consent Form and Privacy Notice

An updated document comprising the 'candidate personal data consent form' and Privacy Notice has been introduced by the JCQ. For all applications made from 1st September 2022, the candidate is required to have signed page 3 and dated page 7 of the updated form before an application for access arrangements is made using Access Arrangements Online (AAO).

There is now a separate form, 'Data protection confirmation by the examinations officer or SENCo'. This form, which was previously contained within the candidate personal data consent form, has a confirmation statement which must be acknowledged before an application is processed online.

The forms can be downloaded from the JCQ website:

[CAP \(Centre Admin Portal\) - JCQ Joint Council for Qualifications](#)

Once completed, the forms should be kept in the candidate's file in hard copy or electronic format for inspection purposes.

Introduction to the AARA document

To reinforce the importance of the regulations and the SENCo's leading role in the access arrangements process within the centre, a paragraph has been added to the Introduction. This states that, "The head of centre must ensure that the SENCo has sufficient time to both manage the access arrangements process within the centre and familiarise him/herself with the JCQ publication Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments."

Deadline for AAO applications

The deadline for processing applications for access arrangements via AAO for the June 2023 series is 21st March. This has been brought forward by ten days from the previous deadline of 31st March to allow more time for the JCQ Centre Inspection Service to plan for its summer inspection visits.

Adults in a supporting role

Adults in a supporting role include those acting as a reader, a scribe, a communication professional, a prompter, a practical assistant and a language modifier. The person facilitating these access arrangements must not normally be the candidate's own subject teacher or their usual teaching assistant.

In some circumstances, it may be necessary for the candidate's own teacher or teaching assistant to act in the supporting role. For example, for a candidate with an autism spectrum disorder, the continuity of support from a known adult may be of primary importance for the arrangement to be used successfully. Where the candidate and the adult in a supporting role are accommodated in a separate room away from the main exam room, an invigilator must be present throughout the examination.

Assessor qualifications

Before an assessor is able to carry out assessments for evidence within Form 8 Part 2, the centre must hold on file evidence of the assessor's qualification. In addition, where a Form 8 is rolled forward from one centre to another, the new centre must obtain evidence of the assessor's qualification.

In addition to a copy of the assessor's qualification certificate, screenshots can be used as evidence that the assessor is suitable qualified. These include:

- A screenshot of the specialist teacher assessor's SASC listing showing the APC number and expiry date: www.sasc.org.uk/Assessors.asp
- A screenshot of the psychologist's HCPC listing showing the unique registration number: www.hcpc-uk.org/check-the-register
- A screenshot of the Level 7 assessor's listing, showing the certificate number, for example:
 - Patoss AAA certificate holders: www.patoss-dyslexia.org/AAA-Certificate-Holders
 - PAPAA graduates: www.include-ed.org.uk/papaa-course/graduates
 - CPT3A certificate holders
 - ETAAC holders

Supervised rest breaks and 25% extra time

For candidates with conditions other than learning difficulties, the SENCo should have explored and trialled the use of supervised rest breaks before making an application for 25% extra time. This is because a break from the examination may be more appropriate than extra time for a candidate with a medical condition or substantial needs. In some cases, a candidate may require both supervised rest breaks and 25% extra time.

The way to explore this option is to provide rest breaks in internal timed tests, such as end of topic tests and annual internal exams, or during mock exams. If rest breaks are found to be inappropriate or insufficient in meeting the candidate's needs, 25% extra time can then be trialled. When documenting the centre-based information for 25% extra time on the

Detailed File Note, the SENCo should outline that supervised rest breaks have been explored and trialled and a brief reason as to why they are not appropriate or sufficient.

Supervised rest breaks

The AARA document contains a reminder that the purpose of a supervised rest break is for the candidate to have 'time out' from the examination and is not to allow for the candidate to have extra thinking time. During the break, the candidate cannot have access to the exam paper and, in many cases, will benefit from being taken out of the exam room under supervision to allow for a genuine break.

25% extra time for candidates with learning difficulties (without an EHCP, Statement or IDP)

Samples of additional evidence to accompany Form 8 are now only needed in certain circumstances. Note: Samples of evidence were previously termed the 'detailed picture of need' by the JCQ.

Additional samples of evidence are no longer required where the candidate's assessment evidence in Form 8 Part 2 meets the standard expected categories for 25% extra time:

- two below average scores (SS 84 or less) relating to two different areas of speed of working, or
- one below average score and one low average score (SS 85 to 89) relating to two different areas of speed of working.

Where the candidate's assessment evidence in Form 8 Part 2 is two or more low average scores (SS 85 to 89) relating to two different areas of speed of working, additional samples of evidence of one type are required.

Where the candidate's assessment evidence in Form 8 Part 2 is a cluster of at least three standard scores between 90 and 94 relating to three different areas of speed of working, a diagnostic assessment report from no earlier than Year 9 confirming a significant learning difficulty or disability and additional samples of evidence of all three types are required.

The additional samples of evidence can be drawn from the following three sources:

- a sample of internal tests or mock exam papers across relevant subjects showing the application of extra time;
- an IEP/ILP referring to the need for extra time;
- comments and observations from teaching staff in relevant subjects as to why the candidate needs extra time and how the extra time is used.

Centre-delegated arrangements

Three new arrangements have been delegated to the centre:

- fidget toys and stress balls;
- non-electronic ear defenders and ear plugs;
- squared paper for candidates with visual spatial difficulties.

These arrangements can be provided to candidates according to their needs and normal way of working in the centre. No formal evidence is required and an online application does not need to be made. These arrangements are not subject to inspection.

The access arrangement '**separate invigilation**' has been re-named, 'separate invigilation within the centre (sitting the examination outside of the main exam hall/room, e.g. a room for a smaller group of candidates)'. The regulations state that nervousness, low-level anxiety or being worried about examinations is not sufficient grounds for separate invigilation within the centre.

These additions to the wording are to help centres to manage the increased demand for separate invigilation following the Covid-19 pandemic. This arrangement should only be considered where there is a genuine need and where the candidate's difficulties are established within the centre. See the blog produced by the JCQ for more information:

www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/blogs/understanding-the-requirements-for-separate-invigilation/

Word processor

The JCQ has clarified within the AARA document that the centre's policy on the use of word processors must be produced by a member of the centre's senior leadership team and be specific to the centre. It needs to detail the criteria the centre uses to award and allocate word processors for examinations. The policy is subject to inspection.

Computer reader/reader

Where Form 8 is being used for a candidate with learning difficulties requiring extra time and/or a scribe, the evidence for a computer reader/reader is now recorded within Form 8 Part 1. As well as benefiting the SENCo, who will now record all the centre-based evidence on one document, this will also help the assessor to determine which tests to use to gain the assessment evidence for Part 2. (The evidence for extra time for a candidate using a computer reader/reader cannot come from a measure of text reading speed.)

For all other candidates, including those with conditions other than learning difficulties, the short concise file note continues to be used to record the evidence for a computer reader/reader.

Note: standardised scores are still not needed for any candidate requiring a computer reader/reader.

See the table below (and JCQ AARA 5.5.5 for more details).

| Access need | Form 8 Part 1 | Short Concise File Note |
|--|----------------------|---|
| Learning difficulties <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No EHCP • Needs ET/Scribe | Yes | No |
| Learning difficulties, where a candidate progresses from GCSE to GCE <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Existing Form 8, fully completed • Continues to need computer reader/reader in addition to ET/Scribe | No | Yes N.B. The short concise file note may be produced on the same document as the updated centre-based evidence for 25% extra time and/or scribe. |
| Learning difficulties <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EHCP • Needs ET/Scribe | No | Yes N.B. The short concise file note may be produced on the same document as the centre-based evidence for 25% extra time and/or scribe. |
| Learning difficulties <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No ET/Scribe needed | No | Yes |
| Communication & Interaction Needs Medical condition Sensory & Physical Needs Social Emotional & Mental Health Needs Speech, Language & Communication Needs | No | Yes N.B. The short concise file note may be produced on the same document as the centre-based evidence for 25% extra time and/or scribe, where these arrangements are also needed. |

JCQ Form 8

JCQ Form 8 has been revised for the 2022-23 academic year, as follows:

Part 1:

- The 3 key areas to address have been reworded to help clarify the information to record in each box.
- Evidence for a computer reader/reader has been added to Part 1.

Part 2:

- The types of cognitive processing measure to be used in an assessment for extra time have been added to the form. This will assist assessors in recording the type of processing measured by a test or subtest.
- The information to address for a spelling assessment has been reformatted as two separate questions. Both questions require a 'yes' answer to meet the assessment evidence for a scribe. The questions are:
 - Is the candidate's spelling accuracy in the below average range (a standardised score of 84 or less)?
 - Does the candidate's spelling assessment include unrecognisable spelling attempts?

Part 3:

- The list of arrangements to be applied for through AAO has been added to Part 3.
- A new box has been added to Part 3 where centre-delegated access arrangements can be recorded, such as supervised rest breaks, separate invigilation, a prompter. This is optional information which may help centres with planning for exams and ensuring that the correct arrangements are provided to the candidate.

Please see the updated Form 8 Guidance Sheet which has been added to the book's downloadable resources.

Updated resources to accompany the 6th Edition

A number of updated resources in line with the 2022-23 regulations are available to download from the reference provided in the 6th Edition (Appendix 2). These include a list of over 160 measures to use in an assessment for extra time to update Chapter 10.

Update by Lia Castiglione and Nick Lait

Note: No responsibility is taken by Patoss, or contributing authors, for any misunderstandings or failures to comply with the JCQ regulations during this or subsequent years.
