

Access Arrangements for Examinations

Guidance on Policies Processes and Procedures 2025-2026

TYPE: Policy

PURPOSE: To inform staff and students of the actions that need to be taken to ensure reasonable adjustments and Access Arrangements for Exams are planned for students with Additional Needs (AN).

SCOPE: This policy applies to all further education students

RESPONSIBILITY: The Vice Principal HR & Student Services is responsible for this policy.

The Director Student Services is responsible for the monitoring of the policy.

LEGAL CONTEXT: Equality Act 2010, SEND Code of Practice (2014) and JCQ Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments (2025-26)

Scope

For the purpose of this process students must be identified as having Special Educational Needs and/or a Disability - as defined by the Equality Act 2010 and the SEND Code of Practice (2014), to be eligible for consideration for Access Arrangements for Exams (AA).

AA for Exams are provided as part of the support offered to students who are assessed for additional learning support.

Access Arrangements (AA) are identified and planned for as part of the support offer.

AA for Exams are based on the individual needs of each candidate and must be conducive with encouraging independence; must not adversely affect the academic standard of the assessment and be effective use of college resources, to this end AA for Exams are not stand-alone additional learning support and are provided in addition to other planned support.

Purpose

This document explains the actions that need to be taken to ensure reasonable adjustments are planned for students with Additional Needs (AN).

Solihull College and University Centre, Stratford Upon Avon College campuses and sites used for learning and assessment are known as the Centre within this and other documents related to AA for Exams.

NB: The phrase 'Additional Need' (AN) is an umbrella term, used to incorporate ALL students **known** to have a disability, medical condition or learning need, which is formally assessed.

What are Access Arrangements for Exams?

Access Arrangements for Exams are a range of additional learning support strategies that are implemented after initial assessment and determining support for learning as part of an ISP. AAs (Access Arrangements) cannot be put in place for exams until 'normal way of working' in the classroom is established. This is to ensure that a learner is not disadvantaged during exams and timed assessments but must 'mirror' support in class. Access Arrangements are intended to give candidates with a Disability, Learning Difficulty, or medical condition equal opportunity to demonstrate their skills, knowledge and understanding, however, they are not automatic and have to be approved by the exam board/validating body. Access Arrangements should not take away the candidate's ability to be as independent as possible in timed assessments and exams.

Procedures and practices are governed by the Centre's statutory duty to make reasonable adjustments under guidelines produced by the Joint Council for Qualification - JCQ^{CIC}.

(<https://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/general-regulations/>).

Some arrangements do not require formal approval or evidence of processing scores but will require evidence of 'normal way of working' (NWOW) at the Centre (within college) and individual learning needs reported accurately, with additional information i.e., medical note; ISP; Diagnosis Report or EHCP used to determine support is appropriate.

Approval for Access Arrangements for controlled/timed assessments will be planned and implemented where there is documented evidence that learners' needs significantly affect their performance and the arrangements are in line with individual Exam Board and validating bodies policies and practices.

Access Arrangements are applied for annually, although they can be approved for up to 2 academic years, as a Centre, we ensure that they are appropriate and relate to differences to NWOW by updating supporting information annually, usually at the start of the new academic year.

It is not permissible to transfer AA for Exams from other centres, as AA for Exams must be NWOW at this Centre. Historically, there has been confusion over transferring AA for Exams from school, other centres and between subject areas at the Centre, therefore, each application is considered on its merit, taking in to account the candidate's needs and academic rigour of the exam/assessment and cannot be considered in any way as automatic.

Overview

- The Senior Leadership Team are responsible for the whole college SEND provision including AA for Exams.
- To maintain standards of good practice and protect academic standard the Centre refers to the current JCQ^{CIC} Regulations and Policy(s) in the first instance.
- The AN Tutor/Dyslexia Support Tutor will inform the Exams Access Arrangements Coordinator (Nominated SENCo) and report when AA for Exams are to be planned for.
- Personal Tutors/subject teachers and learning support staff can make recommendations via a referral to the Additional Needs Team and David Wedgbury – AN Manager.
- The Exams Access Arrangements Coordinator (Nominated SENCo) will ensure there is appropriate evidence for a candidate's AA request to be made.
- Submitting completed AA applications to the awarding bodies for approval is the responsibility of the Exams Officer.
- Rooming and Invigilation for AA candidates will be arranged by the Exams Officer (but cannot be arranged for mock exams or in class timed assessments without prior planning).

Access Arrangements for Exams:

Scribe (S): a trained member of staff who writes for the student. The student will dictate their answers. The scribe will write exactly what they say. A Scribe is not provided for online or MC exams or where the candidates ability to write English is being assessed. The Candidate may be expected to spell technical or vocationally specific vocabulary. The Scribe must complete a Scribe Cover Sheet after every exam, detailing what information was scribed and what information was the candidates own work. In some instances, UOWP (see below) will be recommended rather than a Scribe, this is to encourage independence and to replicate NWOW in the classroom, as very few students have a notetaker in class.

Reader (R): a trained member of staff who will read the question and any relevant written text. The student will then write the answer/s themselves. A Reader is not provided for online or MC exams or where the candidates ability to read English is being assessed. On occasions the use of an Exam Reading Pen or Reading Software is recommended in place of a Reader, as very few students have LSA support in class for reading.

Computer Reading Software (R&W): Read Aloud add on in Microsoft Edge is used to replace a human reader in exams. The software may not be compatible with software for some online exams, however. PDF question papers are available for most exams, and this can also include some online exams to enable the use of R&W.

Use of a Word Processor (UOWP): access to a computer for an exam so the student can word process answers. Spelling and grammar checks may have to be disabled, however where students 'qualify' for a scribe in exams, spellchecker is enabled.

Extra Time (ET): students may be entitled to an allowance of up to 25% extra time. The Centre Exams Access Arrangements Coordinator (Nominated SENCo) is required to consider SRBs in place of extra time.

In some exceptional circumstances students may be entitled to an allowance of up to 50%, this is automatically rejected when applying to an exam board. The application will need to be resubmitted with robust and detailed evidence of significant need, including - evidence of the candidate's current difficulties and how they very substantially impact on teaching and learning in the classroom; indicate the maximum amount of extra time required; provide evidence of how the amount of extra time required has been determined; show the involvement of teaching staff in determining the amount of extra time required;

Supervised Rest Breaks (SRB): where students are permitted to stop for short break/s during the exam and the time stopped is added to the finish time. SRB are not available for 'short' Multiple Choice online exams. A candidate awarded SRB can take up to three in a exam, each SRB being up to 10 minutes in length. The SRB may be taken at the desk or in a movement break is required, outside the exam room, whilst supervised. A toilet break is not an SRB (unless for evidenced medical reasons).

Prompter (P): where a student has little sense of time or loses concentration easily, a trained member of staff can prompt the student by tapping the desk; getting eye contact or with a permitted phrase to refocus, no other support is permitted such as to advise the student to move on to the next question or indicate how much time is left. Prompters are not available for 'short' Multiple Choice online exams.

Practical Assistant (PA) for candidates with a physical disability or impaired vision, in exceptional circumstances and where the student has support in class to access learning. As per JCQ regulations, detailed information must be provided listing the tasks which the practical assistant would perform. This will allow the awarding body to ensure that the assessment objectives are not compromised, particularly in subjects such as Geography, Mathematics and the Sciences.

Alternative Rooming (AR): can be arranged for students with a medical or psychological condition or who are assigned a scribe/reader/use of WP or prompter and their use may disrupt other candidates. This is not a sole occupancy room. Alternative rooming is outside the main exam hall. Specifically, alternative rooming - up to 8 candidates - is considered for those who may need support, e.g. group reader, or due to their disability/impairment/medical condition, e.g. ASD, require a considerably smaller rooming setting.

Sole Occupancy Room (SO): In exceptional circumstances, some candidates can be adversely affected by or sensitive to their surroundings to the extent that they may be significantly disadvantaged in a room with other candidates. Alternatively, the behaviours of a candidate may be such that they would adversely affect other candidates, thus sole occupancy for such a candidate (e.g. with severe movement and/or vocal tics) is a reasonable adjustment. For sole occupancy, evidence of evidence of the candidate's current difficulties and how they very substantially impact on teaching and learning in the classroom is required.

*Nervousness, low level anxiety or being worried about examinations is **not** sufficient grounds for separate invigilation within the centre.*

*The use of an alternative room with one-to-one invigilation **must only** apply where the candidate has a serious medical condition, such as frequent seizures, Tourette's or significant behavioural issues which would disturb other candidates in the examination room. (AARA 5.16)*

Adapted Paper: coloured paper, enlarged text, Braille or Language Modified paper may be provided for students not able to access the assigned exam format. A modified (PDF) exam paper is required where Reader software is used.

Professional Communication Support - BSL/SSE Interpreter: for deaf students whose normal way of working is with the support of BSL/SSE support. BSL support can only sign the instructions and not the exam paper for parts of exams testing English reading and comprehension. In other exam situations, the Professional Communication Support can include reading all of the exam materials and translating to BSL/SSE – this requires a formal request for AAs to the exam board for approval.

Reading Pen, Coloured overlays and Read Aloud are also available and are identified as suitable if a Reader is not the candidates NWOW.

Access to a mobile phone for medical purposes: A Form 9 must be completed confirming the candidate's medical condition and the need to access their mobile phone during an examination, which can only be accessed with 1:1 supervision by the invigilator in the exam room. Formal evidence must be available to confirm the candidate's medical condition.

Listening to music/white noise due to a substantial impairment: A Form 9 must be completed for a candidate with social, emotional and mental health needs or a candidate with a sensory impairment, such as tinnitus or misophonia. Formal evidence must be available to confirm the candidate's medical condition. The candidate must use a device which cannot be connected to the internet. The music playlist must be checked to ensure an advantage is not conferred to the candidate, which will be provided to the Exams team in mp3 format. The provided mp3 file should not be more than 40 minutes in length, and it can be played on loop during the exam via wired earphones.

For other exam access arrangements, see JCQ ^{CIC} Regulations 2025-2026:

- https://www.jcq.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2025/08/JCQ-AARA-2025_FINAL.pdf

The Assessment Process

Assessments are carried out by assessor(appointed by the head of centre. The assessors are appropriately qualified as required by JCQ regulations in AARA 7.3.

The qualification(s) of the current assessor(s)

M. Scott: current SpLD Assessment Practising Certificate

F. Franklin: access arrangements assessor who has successfully completed a postgraduate course at or equivalent to Level 7, including at least 100 hours relating to individual specialist assessment

Appointment of Assessors

At the point an assessor is engaged/employed in the centre, evidence of the assessor's qualification is obtained and checked against the current requirements in AARA. This process is carried out prior to the assessor undertaking any assessment of a candidate.

Evidence of the assessor's qualification(s) are held on file for inspection purposes and are available to be presented to the JCQ Centre Inspector by the Exam Access Arrangements Coordinator / Nominated SENCo. (AARA 7.3)

Process for the assessment

Where a candidate is considered to have a compelling picture of need, the candidate will be invited by the centre's appointed assessor for assessment.

Guidelines for the assessment of the candidate's learning difficulties by an assessor (AARA 7.5) are adhered to, as well as completing form 8 – JCQ/AA/LD, profile of learning difficulties (AARA 7.6). That is to say the correct procedures are followed as detailed in Chapter 7 of the JCQ document Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments for the assessment of a candidate's learning difficulties by an assessor.

Picture of need/normal way of working

It is confirmed that before the candidate's assessment, the Access Arrangements Coordinator / Nominated SENCo appointed in the centre must provide the assessor with background information, i.e. a picture of need has been painted, as required in Part 1 of Form 8. The centre and the assessor must work together to ensure a joined-up and consistent process. (AARA 7.5)

Processing access arrangements and adjustments

Arrangements/adjustments requiring awarding body approval

Access arrangements online (AAO) is used to apply for approval of arrangements/adjustments for the qualifications listed within the JCQ document Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments.

AAO is accessed through the JCQ Centre Admin Portal (CAP) by using any of the awarding body secure extranet sites. A single application for approval is required for each candidate regardless of the awarding body used.

Deadlines apply for each examination series for submitting applications for approval using AAO.

Online applications **must** only be processed where they are supported by the centre **and** the candidate meets the published criteria for the arrangement(s) with the full supporting evidence in place

Centre delegated arrangements/adjustments

Decisions relating to the approval of centre delegated arrangements/adjustments are made by:

- James Early – Exam Access Arrangements Coordinator / Nominated SENCo

Appropriate evidence, where required by the arrangement, is held on file by:

- The Exams Team

The use of a word processor

The Word Processor Policy details the criteria specifically used to award and allocate word processors for examinations and assessments.

Alternative rooming arrangements

‘Alternative Rooming Arrangements – Outside Main Exam Hall’ details the criteria used to award alternative rooming arrangements, e.g. a room for a smaller group of candidates with similar needs or an alternative room with one-to-one invigilation.

When might a student be given approved Access Arrangements?

Scribe May not be appropriate in 'short online or multiple-choice exam'	Where there is a physical impairment or where the candidate's writing is illegible and may hamper ability to be understood or after a Specialist Assessor assesses and reports a standardised score of 84 or below in a test approved by JCQ (100 is the average)
Reader May not be appropriate in 'short online or multiple-choice exam'	Where a candidate has a sensory impairment or processing difficulty, i.e. is blind or visually impaired or there is significant evidence that the candidate struggles to engage with written materials without support in class
Use of Word Processor (UOWP)	Where there is a physical or processing impairment and handwriting is illegible and may hamper the candidate's ability to be understood or writing speed affects the ability to complete the exam in the allotted time. If a WP is to be used in place of a Scribe, then assessment must show a standardised score of 84 or below in a test delivered by a Specialist Assessor (100 is the average). See also the Word Processor Policy 2025-2026.
Extra time 25% May not be appropriate in 'short online or multiple-choice exam'	Where a student's ability to process information is slower than average, Assessment must show a standardised score of 84 or below in a test delivered by a Specialist Assessor (100 is the average). Requests for 50% ET are automatically rejected on application by JCQ, so this arrangement will require considerable evidence, including 2 separate processing assessment scores of below 69 reported by a Specialist Assessor. Specific evidence in an EHCP or DSA report must be accompanied by a letter from the Exams Access Arrangements Coordinator (Nominated SENCo) justifying the request. In 2021-2022 JCQ advised that 50% ET is to be considered an 'Exceptional Arrangement and ALL candidates must be assessed and show 2 scores of 69 or below for 2 different areas of the assessment.
Supervised Rest Breaks (SRBs) May not be appropriate in 'short online or multiple-choice exam'	Up to three 10-minute Supervised Rest Breaks are available where a student has significant problems concentrating or performing tasks for extended periods of time; to relieve anxiety or fatigue. Time Out procedures are indicative evidence of 'normal way of working' NWOW. SRBs are not planned for 'short online or multiple-choice exams'.
Prompter May not be appropriate in 'short online or multiple-choice exam'	For a student who loses concentration/focus, and is not aware of time, a Prompter may be appropriate, however in most cases they are not provided for 'short or online' or 'multiple choice exam'
Use of ICT Computer Reading software/ Reading Pens /Magnifier etc.	Provided as normal way of working and where a Reader or Scribe is not permitted or where a candidate opts to not use a Reader or Scribe. Evidence of NWOW must be available for approval for use in exams.
Support for Deaf Students	Students whose usual way of working in the classroom requires a BSL/SSE Interpreter a formal request for AA for exams is still required for exams.
Use of Bilingual Dictionary	Requests from students whose first language is not English, who wish to use a bilingual dictionary, must be made directly to the Exams Access Arrangements Coordinator (Nominated SENCo) .

How is a student identified for consideration for Access Arrangements?

- EHC Plan indicating a history of need **and** normal way of working in class
- Initial assessment with an AN/Dyslexia Support Tutor following a referral from Personal Tutor/tutor **and** normal way of working in class
- Dyslexia Assessment/ Screening identifying a possible learning difficulty such as Dyslexia/SpLD **and** normal way of working in class
- DSA recommendations (for HE students only) **and** normal way of working in class
- Evidence of a significant medical/MH condition or LD/D affecting performance in timed assessments **and** normal way of working in class
- Sudden illness/injury likely to affect performance in timed assessments (must provide medical evidence but usually not a GP letter) **and** normal way of working in class

How do tutors, students and parents know when Access Arrangements have been requested and approved?

- Tutors and students have a copy of the Individual Support Plan (ISP) which indicates support and confirms in class support which is identified as Normal Way of Working (NWOW)
- The Exam Team update Resolution where approval is given
- Additional Needs and Dyslexia Support Tutors will have details and will discuss with students

Please be aware that referral to the Additional Needs Team/Manager is for the allocation of a Support Tutor for an Initial Assessment and Interview for in class support and differentiation of learning - requests for Access Arrangements will not be accepted.

Malpractice Noncompliance and Regulations

It is considered malpractice or maladministration for AA for Exams to be provided without assessing need, planning for and seeking approval prior to the exam(s), failure to comply can result in sanctions for the Centre, staff involved and disqualification for the candidate.

All staff – Invigilators, Readers, Scribes and other staff providing support in exams must have undertaken updated (annual) JCQ approved training, be briefed and understand their specific role and comply with AA for Exams policies, practise and processes.

Subject teaching staff cannot support individuals in an exam where the candidate is undergoing assessment in that specialist subject, i.e. a GCSE English tutor cannot support a candidate as a Reader or Scribe for GCSE English exams.

What are the current date deadlines for requests?

Deadlines for applications are published by JCQ^{CIC} but for other exams the Centre usually require at least **8 weeks' notice before the exam due date**, therefore it is essential that requests are reported as soon as possible.

For 'Short courses or 'Fast Track Functional Skills' discretion is given, however staff must have discussed in class support and referred the student for Additional Needs Support, as part of the selection/interview process to enable resources to be available for exams.

Updated September 2025

Exams & Series	Details	College Deadline	JCQ Deadline
November 2025 GCSE Resits	Final date <u>for requesting modified papers</u>	20 th September 2025	20th September 2025
November 2025 GCSE Resits	Final date <u>for requesting ALL other AAs</u>	23 rd October 2025	1st November 2025
January 2026 Series	Final date for <u>all applications for AAs for BTEC and OCR</u>	20 th October 2025	21st October 2025
June 2026 GCSE exams	Final date <u>for requesting modified papers</u> for GCSE exams	16 th January 2026	31st January 2026
June 2026 GCSE exams	Final date <u>for ALL other AAs</u> for GCSE exams	20 rd February 2026	21st March 2026
Online and other exams or assessments taken throughout the year	including C&G/OCR/VTCT/AAT etc.	8 weeks prior to exam date	as published by the various Boards
All Access Arrangements must be evidenced as the candidate's Normal Way of Working at this Centre			

Internal process for AA for Exams

The E-Folder Process for AA Applications 2025-2026 FLOW CHART

AAs are identified at Initial Assessment and Interview



History of need evidence:

- **Previous school Form 8**
- **Previous -SENCo Notes**
- **and letters from professionals etc.**

Evidence of need:

- **Medical evidence**
- **Diagnosis reports**
- **EHCP/S139 etc**
- **ISP**



Create Student e-folder

STUDENT ID name surname i.e.

TES1234567Tommy Tester

When all evidence is saved - **Move each e-folder to AA for SENCo for processing.**

Decline of AA for Exams Students may decline AA for Exams for either each exam or all exams,

Essential Evidence:

External evidence for the e-folder is saved as a pdf. All other documents are to be in .docx (Microsoft Office word) format. All Support Tutors are advised to add:

Front Cover Sheet for All Candidates - must be completed, signed, and dated by the Support Tutor

ISP – for all candidates

DPN. (for new students only) A typed student name can replace the signature temporarily and is currently acceptable. Save in the E-folder in .docx format and submit hand signed copy as a PDF later date, but must be signed before we can make an application

Then complete either a **Detailed Centre Note** (see template)

Or a **JCQ Form 8 & Short Concise File Note**

or just a **Short Concise File Note**



FORM 8 - Support Tutor to complete Part 1 only – save the Form 8 as .docx in the E-folder, and submit **EAA referral form** via Microsoft Teams to Exams

Access Arrangements Coordinator (Nominated SENCo) to advise that a specialist assessment is needed. The Form 8 will be sent for processing by the Specialist Assessor.. **Part 2** is completed and **Part 3** - is signed/dated by the Exams Access Arrangements Coordinator (Nominated SENCo) , who will check content and save-as a PDF – before returning the Form 8 to the E-Folder



FORM 9 - Support Tutor to complete – add to the E-folder and submit **EAA referral form** via Microsoft Teams to Exams Access Arrangements Coordinator (Nominated SENCo)

Requests for AA for Exams will be processed by the EXAMS ACCESS ARRANGEMENTS COORDINATOR (NOMINATED SENCO) and moved to AA Applications TEAMS/SharePoint to Stage 3 for the Exams Office to process. The student's E-folder is then saved in **Stage 5** of the **AA Applications** and Exams confirm AAs in ProSolution for the academic year.

AA Applications 2025-2026 SharePoint/Teams Process

AA Packs, now called **E-folders** are checked by the Exams Access Arrangements Coordinator (Nominated SENCo) and finalised within the Exams Team, who also process Approvals and update central data (ProSolution).

The Front Cover and other evidence are saved to the **E-folders** for individual candidates and all AA evidence is stored electronically.

Each E-Folder is saved as [Student ID] and [Student Name] and Support Tutors ensure that the E-folder is available for processing by returning the E-folder for the Exams Access Arrangements Coordinator (Nominated SENCo) to process.

The E-folder will be recorded on the AA Applications Spreadsheet and moved to Stage 2 to the appropriate folder ready for the Exams Access Arrangements Coordinator (Nominated SENCo) , once checked and processed by the Exams Access Arrangements Coordinator (Nominated SENCo) the student's E-Folder will be recorded on the AA Spreadsheet and signed off. The E-folder is then moved to Stage 3 of the Applications for Exams channel ready for seeking approval.

Screenshot of the AA Applications Teams/SharePoint Folders

The screenshot shows the SharePoint interface for the 'AA Applications' private group. The left sidebar contains navigation options: Home, Conversations, Documents (selected), Shared with us, Notebook, Pages, Site contents, Recycle bin, and Edit. The main content area displays a list of folders under the path 'Documents > General > Stage 2-Applications ready for SENCO sign off'. The folders are listed in a table with columns for Name, Modified, Modified By, File Size, and notes.

Name	Modified	Modified By	File Size	notes
AA advice needed for pr...	October 15	Julie Barson	2 items	
AAT New Students	October 12	Claire Senior	1 item	
AAT Returners	October 12	Claire Senior	1 item	
BTEC New Students	October 12	Claire Senior	17 items	
BTEC Returners	October 12	Claire Senior	25 items	
C&G New Students	October 12	Claire Senior	4 items	
C&G Returners	October 12	Claire Senior	2 items	
GCSE New Students	October 12	Claire Senior	3 items	

AA for Exams Access Arrangements Coordinator (Nominated SENCo): Teams/SharePoint Process

This SharePoint/TEAMS folder can be found in Additional Needs Support Team folder.

This process is for all applications including returning students.

Stage 0 ALL E-folders for possible re-enrolling students are copied here - **returning students' folders are stored in Stage 1**

Stage 1 Returning Students 2025-2026 Application e-Folders contains the folders ready for Support Tutor to move, edit and process and on completion return to **the AA Teams/SharePoint**

Exams Access Arrangements Coordinator (Nominated SENCo) will check evidence and sign off and move to **Stage 3 in AA Applications.**

NB: This process may be adapted from time to time – Support Tutors will be informed via email.

TEAMS & SharePoint AA Application Process

This is a private Teams SharePoint for Applications for AAs.

Student E-folders are checked and processed through these stages:

- Stage 0** AA Approved Student e-folders for all from 2023-2024
- Stage 1** AA e-folders for re-enrolled/returning students
- Stage 2** AA e-folders awaiting processing by Exams Access Arrangements Coordinator (Nominated SENCo)
- Stage 3** AA e-folders moved by Exams Access Arrangements Coordinator (Nominated SENCo) for processing by Exams Team
- Stage 4** AA e-folder queries from Exams to Exams Access Arrangements Coordinator (Nominated SENCo)
- Stage 5** AA E-folders stored up to end of the current academic year then they are moved to Stage 0 for the following year for updating.

When the Students' e-folder is in Stage 5 it is approved and ready for planning AAs and for inspections and audits

Stage 5 E-folders are moved to Stage 0 at the start of each new academic year.

Re-enrolled and returning student E-folders are made available for the Support Tutor and Exams Access Arrangements Coordinator (Nominated SENCo) to update, check evidence meets criteria and process the Returner E-folder or the New Student E-folder for the new academic year.

Guidance on Internal Subject Specific Tests, Internally Validated Tests and Timed Classroom Assessments (BTEC; Access to HE and HE Exams and Assessments)

Access Arrangements for internal subject specific tests and timed classroom assessments must mirror the support that is usually given to the student in the classroom. This is commonly referred to as 'Normal Way of Working' (NWOW).

A minimum of 8 weeks notice must be given for an assessment and application for AAs to be requested. Please be aware that late requests can be rejected.

Meeting the Definition of Disability – Equality Act 2010

Disability, Learning Difficulty, significant MH needs, and people with medical conditions who meet the definition of 'disability' within the Equality Act (2010), may need Reasonable Adjustments, differentiation in the classroom and therefore AA for Exams for in-class assessments must be considered, indeed we are duty bound to make these reasonable adjustments under the Act.

History of Need

In some instances, students report a history of need, where they have received approval for AA at other institutions. History of need alone does not entitle the student to receive newly approved AA at this Centre. Secondly, regulations may have changed, and this Centre has to comply with current regulations, for further guidance please contact the Exams Access Arrangements Coordinator (Nominated SENCo) or refer to the JCQCIC Regulations for Access Arrangements for Exams (2025-2026).

Normal Way of Working at this Centre

An ISP is available and highlights NWOW, the ISP is used as evidence to establish differentiation and arrangements for exams for the student

Use of a Word Processor PC or Laptop

(See also Word Processor Policy for Exams 2025-2026)

Some students may need to use of a word processor during examinations. For example:

- diagnosed & documented learning difficulty which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to write legibly.
- diagnosed & documented medical condition restricting upper body movement associated with handwriting tasks.
- diagnosed & documented physical disability restricting handwriting tasks.
- diagnosed & documented sensory impairment restricting access to handwriting tasks.
- planning and organisational problems when writing by hand, evidenced by subject/support tutors of *Solihull College & University Centre or Stratford Upon Avon College*, and documented in college *Individual Support Plan (ISP)*.
- poor handwriting resulting in a diagnosed & documented impairment NOT a deficit of writing skills.

The use of a word processor will not be granted to a candidate solely because the candidate prefers to type, works faster on a keyboard, or because they use a laptop/PC at home.

In all cases the use of a word processor must reflect the candidate's NWOW within the Centre and be appropriate to the candidate's needs and be planned for, in line with processes for exam access arrangements.

Internal Subject Specific Tests, Internally Validated Tests and Timed Classroom Assessments & Mock Examinations

Student/ Curriculum Team	AN/Dyslexia Support Tutor	Exams Access Arrangements Coordinator (Nominated SENCo)	Centre Exams Officer
<p>Discuss need at earliest opportunity, i.e. at selection interview</p> <p>Provide documentary evidence of need</p> <p>Refer student to the Additional Needs Manager for in class support assessment *</p>	<p>Ensure AAs are discussed for in-class and timed assessments and where needed are recorded for processing</p> <p>Check AAs are appropriate for the identified need and exam/test or assessment</p>	<p>Check AAs requests meet JCQ^{CIC} Regulations</p> <p>Request Update of Processing Scores or other evidence where appropriate</p> <p>Determine appropriate AA for Exams in line with the given assessment, exam criteria and JCQ^{CIC} Regulations</p> <p>Process the AA Pack and forward documentary evidence to the Exams Team</p> <p>Exam Resource Allocation - Ensure resources are requested for AA and implemented to meet need</p> <p>Liaise with tutors and others on Regulations and criteria for AA for Exams</p> <p>Provide appropriate training and awareness of AA for Exams across the Centre and for staff providing support in exams</p> <p>Monitor and make recommendations for future planning</p> <p>Process "Decline of AA for Exams" as appropriate and inform others of actions taken</p> <p>Review process for AAs</p>	<p>Check documentary evidence and seek approval for AAs,</p> <p>Monitor and make recommendations for future planning of AA</p> <p>NB: Usually, the Exams Officer and Team do not provide rooms or invigilation for in class, mock or classroom timed assessments.</p>
<p>Personal/subject Tutor</p> <p>Check AAs have been considered and requested via the AN Support Tutor when planning or arranging timed assessments</p> <p>Inform AN Support Tutor of any changes</p>	<p>Ensure documentary evidence is forwarded to the Exams Access Arrangements Coordinator (Nominated SENCo) for processing</p> <p>Inform Personal Tutor and student when AAs approved/arranged</p>		
<p>Subject Tutor</p> <p>Provide Invigilators and plan rooming etc for mock exams and in class assessments</p> <p>Liaise with Exams Access Arrangements Coordinator (Nominated SENCo) regarding allocating Readers/Scribes etc for planned mock exams and in class assessments</p> <p>Inform Exams Access Arrangements Coordinator (Nominated SENCo) of any concerns</p>	<p>Review normal way of working and check AAs still appropriate.</p> <p>Complete Decline of AA Form as appropriate and send to the Exams Access Arrangements Coordinator (Nominated SENCo)</p>		

* Assessment cannot be solely for the purpose of AA for Exams

Special Consideration, Appeals, Complaints and Concerns

In the unusual situation that expected arrangements have not been provided, are inadequate or unforeseen events impact negatively on the candidate's performance in the exam, then concerns must be timely reported.

To enable the Centre to make requests to Exam Boards for Special Consideration (See also Special Considerations Policy) or to report events that have impacted on the candidate in the exam the Invigilator must be informed during or at the end of the exam.

For concerns raised after the day of the exam, then it should be reported directly to the appropriate member of staff via email usually:

- Support Tutor
- Exams Access Arrangements Coordinator (Nominated SENCo)
- Exams Officer

so that immediate and appropriate actions can be taken.

Appropriate processes are also in place via the usual Complaints and Appeals Procedure to enable concerns to be raised by candidates and/or parents.

NB: the Centre has been advised that parents are no longer permitted to contact JCQ^{CIC} directly but must liaise with the Centre's Exams Officer.

Confirmation of Approval for AA for Exams

Approval will be detailed on ProSolutions for each candidate. Staff will need to check they are advising students and parents correctly, as misinformation can cause distress. Please be aware that not all AA for exams are relevant to each subject area. Readers are not permitted for some exams, scribes are not permitted for others and Supervised Rest Breaks are not provided for short, on-line or multiple-choice exams.

Data Protection and Confidentiality

Student information for AA for Exams is stored and shared in line with the Centre's Policy and JCQ^{CIC} Regulations for Access Arrangements for Exams (2025-2026).

Appendix 1.

Alternative Rooming Arrangements – Outside Main Exam Hall

At Solihull College and Stratford-Upon-Avon College, candidates with **both** evidence of Disability/Impairment/Medical Condition (*barriers to learning define the student as disabled within the meaning of the Equality Act, 2010*) **and** evidence of Normal Way of Working (NWoW), can be eligible for *Alternative Rooming*, (previously known as *Separate Invigilation*), which is available as three options outside a main exam hall:

- alternative rooming (more than 8 candidates) *
- alternative rooming (up to 8 candidates) *
- sole occupancy (1:1 invigilation) *‡

A candidate's Disability/Impairment/Medical Condition and Normal Way of Working will be known to the Additional Needs Support Tutor, who will request, in conjunction with the Access Arrangements Co-ordinator/ Nominated SENCo, the most appropriate alternative rooming arrangement for the candidate.

At Solihull College and Stratford-Upon-Avon College, there are purpose-built exam rooms with partitioned desks for online exams, which take place throughout the year. These rooms are classified as alternative rooming.

* 'Nervousness, low level anxiety or being worried about examinations is not sufficient grounds for separate invigilation within the centre' (pg. 84, JCQ AARA; 2024).

‡ Sole occupancy for examinations (1:1 invigilation) requires substantial evidence of need and Normal Way of Working (pg. 84, JCQ AARA; 2024).

Other Documents Relevant to Exams and Access Arrangements:

Disability Statement: Statement of Our Commitment to Students with Learning Difficulties and Disabilities - <i>Equality Act 2014</i>	Disability Policy (Exams) – JCQ^{CIC} Regulations 2025-2026
Exams Policy - JCQ^{CIC} Regulations 2025-2026	Word Processor Policy (Exams) JCQ^{CIC} Regulations 2025-2026
Special Consideration Policy - JCQ^{CIC} Regulations 2025-2026	Adjustments for candidates with disabilities and learning difficulties - JCQ^{CIC} Regulations 2025-2026

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