



TITLE		REF	VERSION
Procedure for the Assessment of Exam Access Arrangements		LSPRO028	3
DEPARTMENT	Group Learning Support		
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PROCEDURE FOR THE ASSESSMENT OF EXAM ACCESS ARRANGEMENTS

Procedure Statement

This procedure outlines the process in Activate Learning for the assessment of learners requiring an Exam Access Arrangement (EAA) so that this adheres to the JCQ guidelines and ensures that Activate Learning complies with its duty to provide reasonable adjustments under the Equality Act 2010.

The JCQ, *Adjustments for candidates with disabilities and learning difficulties 2025-2026*, page 13 states that: "Access arrangements are agreed before an assessment. They allow candidates with specific needs, such as special educational needs, disabilities or temporary injuries to access the assessment and show what they know and can do without changing the demands of the assessment. The intention behind an access arrangement is to meet the needs of an individual candidate without affecting the integrity of the assessment. Access arrangements are the principal way in which awarding bodies comply with the duty under the Equality Act 2010 to make 'reasonable adjustments'.

The Equality Act 2010 requires an awarding body to make reasonable adjustments where a candidate who is disabled within the meaning of the Equality Act 2010, would be at a 'substantial disadvantage in comparison to someone who is not disabled'.

A variety of reasonable adjustments are available to candidates, for example, rest breaks, extra time, readers, scribes, the use of assistive technology and modified papers.

Scope

Every programme which uses examinations as an assessment tool falls into scope. GCSEs, GCEs, BTECs and other qualifications are regulated by the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ); other awarding organisations have their own EAA procedure.

Exam Access Arrangements are pre-examination adjustments for candidates based on a history of need and evidence of 'normal way of working' for the student during face-to-face or online teaching, learning and internal/mock assessments and tests. They cannot be put in place simply for an examination.

Access Arrangements fall into two distinct categories: some arrangements such as rest breaks, are centre delegated; others require prior JCQ awarding body approval. Details of the exam access arrangements are in the JCQ book *Adjustments for candidates with disabilities and learning difficulties*.

Identification

Learners and teachers are given multiple opportunities to refer for an exam access arrangement.

1. At the application stage - any learner who identifies that they have had an EAA at a previous institution will be asked to bring in their previous evidence and offered an assessment if required.
2. At 'offer' events, [such as a New Student Welcome Day](#) - any learner who identifies that they have had an EAA at a previous institution will be offered an assessment if required.
3. At enrolment - any learner who identifies they have had an EAA at a previous institution will be offered an assessment if required.
4. On programme - a learner can be referred to the specialist assessment team. Each campus assessment team has its own e-mail address.

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Staff	Stacie Cousart	Laura Partridge Laura Green Sam Chapman-Jones	Sandra Ortiz Martinez
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Assessments and evidence (Further Education)

Guidelines and rules about the type of assessment, evidence and paperwork required for each Exam Access Arrangement (EAA) is set out in the JCQ book, "Adjustments for candidates with disabilities and learning difficulties: Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments". This book is updated regularly. Specialist assessors follow these JCQ regulations.

The candidate will usually meet with the specialist assessor for a discussion about proposed exam access arrangements and for a specialised assessment. This may be in person, but in some cases can be online.

Some candidates will have had exam access arrangements at school. In these cases, specialist assessors will seek previous documentation, which might be handed over by the candidate or sent to Activate Learning by the school or previous education provider. All the documentation from schools or previous education providers must be checked to ensure that it meets the JCQ criteria. The JCQ states that schools should cooperate with Further Education Colleges in this regard.

Some students may not have had exam access arrangements in the past, whilst other students' paperwork might not meet the JCQ criteria. In these instances, the specialist assessor will meet with the student to discuss and assess their needs. If the student has an EHCP or diagnosed medical condition, then specialist evidence, such as an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP), or a letter or report from CAMHS, an HCPC registered psychologist, a medical consultant or psychiatrist, must be provided by the candidate to support the application.

For a candidate with a learning difficulty or need, the specialist assessor will use standardised and valid psychometric assessments. If the student meets the JCQ published criteria, then relevant access arrangements that meet their needs will be discussed and the application for EAA will be submitted to the JCQ by the Exams Team.

In all cases, evidence from staff must be provided to demonstrate that the candidate uses reasonable adjustments as their normal way of working in the classroom. Evidence can be provided via timed tasks, topic tests, timed assessments, mock tests and examinations, as well as a commentary of the observed needs of the student and what reasonable adjustments have been trialled and tested by staff. In the case of extra time, the evidence must show this is the student's normal way of working and that the extra time improves the quality and / or quantity of their work (via teacher's comments). Activate Learning staff will seek to follow the JCQ's regulations and guidance regarding evidential requirements.

Who assesses for EAA?

Within Activate Learning, specialist assessors carry out the assessment for EAA. Staff must have the relevant

qualifications and experience to meet the requirements of the JCQ. This usually means they are qualified specialist teachers, with a relevant postgraduate qualification, of which at least 100 hours relates to individual specialist assessment, at or equivalent to Level 7. Some specialist assessors might have a current SpLD Assessment Practising Certificate.

Appointment with a specialist assessor

Learners requiring an assessment or review or new exam access arrangement will receive an appointment with a specialist assessor. Learners with a medical need or EHCP will be invited to an appointment as required.

The usual process is that:

1. Candidates will receive an invitation advising the date, time and location of the meeting. Staff will use a number of different methods of communication including e-mail, phone, text and visiting lessons where appropriate.
2. Teachers will be included in communications to aid the facilitation of the appointment.
3. Where a candidate fails to attend three appointments, the candidate and their teacher will be contacted explaining that the candidate has been removed from the active list. The candidate can still have an appointment, but they will need to make contact to arrange this.

In certain circumstances, e.g., for student taking an online course, the meeting/assessment may take place online. Note that there are very few approved digital tools available for specialist assessors to use which limits the possibility of online assessment for candidates. Any digital tools and stimulus materials would only be used following guidelines set up by SASC and the agreements provided by the publishing companies of the assessment tools.

All documentation, including any new and previous forms, medical evidence and information to support the application, is kept in an e-folder specific to the candidate on a secure digital platform.

The exam team's involvement

Once a learner has been assessed for an EAA, and has accepted the recommendations, the Exam Office will access the documentation in that candidate's e-folder, which will be held on a secure digital platform.

The role of the exam team is to:

1. Check the compliance of the application, for example that all the required documentation is present and signed.
2. Make the application for EAA to the JCQ or other awarding body's website for approval. This process will depend upon their examination a candidate is taking. A learner will not receive an EAA in an exam until this approval has been granted.
3. Liaise with the specialist assessors if additional information is required, e.g. for a candidate who requires extra time of up to 50%
4. Upload any approved documentation into the student's e-folder on the secure digital platform.
5. Approved EAA will be viewed on a report issued by the Exams Office.

Teacher's involvement

An assessor's report is one part of the necessary evidence required for an EAA. It must also be backed up by evidence that this is the candidate's normal way of working.

1. Teachers must collect and submit evidence of the learner's normal way of working. Methods of collecting normal way of working could be via an online form, ProMonitor comments and reviews as well as examples of work produced in class or in mock tests and mock examinations as outlined in the section **Assessments and Evidence** above.
2. The assessment window for EAA is short, opening in September and usually closing in mid-March. The dates are set annually by the JCQ.
3. For those learners who identified on programme, referrals must be made by the date agreed at the start of the academic year, to guarantee that the EAA is processed on time.

GDPR

Digital signatures are acceptable on EAA documentation. EAA folders are kept on a secure digital platform. Access to the documentation is limited, significantly increasing security of EAA paperwork. Any other paperwork e.g. hard copies of test assessment materials are kept in a locked filing cabinet or locked cupboard in a secure office. Access to these cabinets, cupboards and officers is limited.

References

Joint Council for Qualification (JCQ)

<https://www.jcq.org.uk/>

The JCQ's book: *Adjustments for candidates with disabilities and learning difficulties.*

[JCQ Access arrangements, reasonable adjustments and special consideration](#)

Other related policies and procedures include:

[Higher Education - Reasonable Adjustments Policy](#)

Relevant legislation

Equality Act 2010

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15>

