



Exam Access Arrangement & Reasonable Adjustments Policy and Procedures

V7 – February 2026

Exam Access and Reasonable Adjustments Policy and Procedures

2025 / 26

Contents

| | |
|--|-----------|
| 1. Policy Aims | 3 |
| 2. Key Staff involved in the assessment process..... | 4 |
| Checking the qualifications of the assessors..... | 4 |
| Assessor qualifications | 4 |
| 3. Key Changes for 2025/26..... | 4 |
| 4. Assessment of Need | 5 |
| How the assessment process is administered | 5 |
| Recording evidence of need..... | 6 |
| Gathering evidence to support normal way of working..... | 7 |
| 5. Processing Access Arrangements Requiring Awarding Body Approval..... | 7 |
| 6. Centre Delegated Access Arrangements (CDAA) | 7 |
| Use of a word processor | 8 |
| Separate or quiet (shared) room invigilation..... | 8 |
| Supervised rest breaks..... | 8 |
| | |
| Appendix 1: Use of a Word Processor in Examinations..... | 9 |
| Appendix 2: Alternative Rooming Arrangements | 11 |
| Appendix 3: Supervised Rest Breaks..... | 12 |
| Appendix 4: Nescot Roles and Responsibilities | 13 |

1. Policy Aims

1. Policy Aims and Scope

The purpose of this policy is to confirm that the Centre complies with its obligation to identify the need for, request approval for, and implement exam access arrangements, in line with a candidate's normal way of working.

This policy is reviewed and updated annually on the publication of updated JCQ regulations and guidance on access arrangements and JCQ Instructions for Conducting Examinations (ICE).

References in this policy to AARA and ICE relate to/are directly taken from the [Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments 2025-2026](#) and [Instructions for conducting examinations 2025-2026](#) publications.

This policy is communicated to all relevant Centre staff and is available electronically via the SharePoint and on the Nescot website.

Access arrangements

*“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 particular 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’.”*
[JCQ AARA, Definitions page 13]

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 reasonable adjustment for a particular person may be unique to that individual and may not be included in the list of available Access Arrangements.”

“Whether an adjustment will be considered reasonable will depend on several factors which will include, but are not limited to:

the needs of the disabled candidate;

the effectiveness of the adjustment;

*the cost of the adjustment; **and***

the likely impact of the adjustment upon the candidate and other candidates.

*An adjustment **will not** be approved if it:*

involves unreasonable costs to the awarding body;

*involves unreasonable timeframes; **or***

affects the security and integrity of the assessment.

This is because the adjustment is not ‘reasonable’. [JCQ AARA, Definitions, page 13]

2. Key Nescot Staff Involved in the Assessment Process

| ROLE | NAME |
|--|----------------|
| Exam Access Arrangements Assessor | Val Mason |
| Exam Access Arrangements Assessor | Kiron Patel |
| Exam Access Arrangements Administrator | Hayley Goodson |
| Exams Manager | Holly Farmer |
| Assistant Principal | Lisa Moynihan |
| Head of Centre | Andy Cowan |

Checking the qualifications of the assessor

The head of centre is responsible for:

*the quality of the access arrangements/reasonable adjustments process within the centre; **and***

the appointment of assessors, checking the qualifications of those assessing candidates (e.g. photocopy of certificate or printout of screenshot of HCPC or SASC registration). [JCQ AARA 7.3.1]

'...Evidence of the assessor's qualification(s) must be held on file for inspection purposes and be presented to the JCQ Centre Inspector by the SENCo.' [JCQ AARA 7.3.4]

Assessor qualifications

The Specialist Assessors currently employed by the Centre hold the following qualifications:

- IQ Level 7 Organisation Postgraduate Award of Proficiency in Assessment for Access Arrangements (PAPAA)
- Level 7 Postgraduate Diploma in Teaching Adults with Specific Learning Difficulties (Dyslexia) – London Metropolitan University
- Post Graduate Certificate of Education

3. Key Changes for 2025/26

JCQ have placed importance on SENCOs considering and, where appropriate, implementing access arrangements that will **prepare candidates for the workplace**.

Signed candidate personal data consent forms and Data protection confirmation forms are no longer required. Instead, the centre must inform candidates that their application will be processed using Access Arrangements Online in compliance with UK GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018.

Evidence Requirements for 25% Extra Time - centres must hold a sample of internal tests or mock exam papers showing a clear change in pen colour (or font for word processor users) when the extra time begins to demonstrate its effectiveness. Form 8s must include detailed teacher feedback and a history of the normal way of working. Comments from parents cannot be recorded within Part 1 of Form 8 or Form 9.

When a student's needs require coloured paper, alternative ways of working should be explored, such as the **use of a coloured overlay** or the candidate wearing coloured glasses.

4. Assessment of Need

How the assessment process is administered at Nescot

Candidates with a history of access arrangements are assessed by the Specialist Assessor in their first year of study. Further education colleges may require additional time to conduct the appropriate assessments in order to build a comprehensive record of evidence of need to satisfy regulations.

The JCQ deadline for applications for access arrangements for external assessment is prioritised and strictly adhered to as laid out in JCQ publication *Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments*.

- Following either disclosure of learning needs at enrolment, student self-referral, or referral by teaching staff, the Exam Access Arrangements Team makes the arrangement for individual candidates to be assessed by the Specialist Assessor.
- Computerised literacy screening (GL Assessment Lucid Exact) for referred candidates is overseen by the Specialist Assessor.
- The Specialist Assessor liaises with tutors, learning support staff and Heads of Department in order to provide supplementary information and a history of need for each candidate and help paint a comprehensive picture of a candidate's needs in Section A of JCQ Form 8.
- If learning needs that meet the criteria for access arrangements are identified by testing and supported by tutor referral, the Specialist Assessor completes the JCQ Form 8 and submits it to the Exams Office.
- The Specialist Assessor personally conducts the assessments and carries out testing relevant to support the application, using recent editions of nationally standardised tests, reporting standardised scores and ensuring that the candidate's chronological age is less than the "ceiling" of the test.
- If a learning need is not identified from testing, the Specialist Assessor completes an in centre (LS3) Record Form which is kept on file by the Exam Access Arrangements Team for Centre use only.
- The SEND Team Lead works closely with the Specialist Assessor and external agencies to arrange assessment for learners with physical and sensory needs.

Recording evidence of need

Evidence to paint a picture of need for Section A of Form 8 is drawn from:

- The Learner Services database (EBS) which shows self-disclosed access arrangements received by students at their previous school, and self-reported information from learners and parents. The database is updated throughout the academic year using signed student record forms from enrolment, and new or further information and documentation from students, tutors, support staff, and Student Services (which includes the College Nurse, Mental Health Advisor and Student Welfare Officer).
- Documentation evidencing Special Educational Needs or Disability (SEND) provided by educational and other relevant professionals who have been working with a student since Year 9 of secondary school.
- External, privately commissioned reports from Specialist Assessors for learning needs and JCQ Form 8s from secondary schools - these are used to inform a history of need for students, and to inform teaching staff.
- Computerised literacy screening test results (GL Assessment, Lucid Exact) overseen by the Specialist Assessor.
- Notes recorded by learning support staff on the Learning Support Department database (Promonitor) for individual learners; all learners with a disclosed history of need have access to regular learning support sessions through which their normal way of working is monitored and supported; student dialogue and self-reporting is also recorded by support staff.
- Centre devised evidence forms used by subject tutors to record observations and provision for learners with SEND.
- Comments from college tracking data relating to relevant difficulties.
- Notes from telephone liaison between the Exam Access Arrangements Team/SEND Team Leader and previous schools.

For candidates who meet the criteria for applications for *'rare and exceptional'* reasons, a very detailed picture of need is evidenced, in close liaison with subject tutors; evidenced from analysis of mock examinations, formal assessments and progression examinations in each subject.

*A privately commissioned assessment, where the centre has not been involved, **cannot** be used to award access arrangements and **cannot** be used to process an application using Access arrangements online. This would be where the assessor has not contacted the centre, has not liaised with the centre, has not been approved by the head of centre and has not received a completed Part 1 of Form 8 from the SENCo.*

*As a privately commissioned report, or an assessment from an external professional, **cannot** be used to award access arrangements, the head of centre or a member of the senior leadership team should provide a written rationale supporting their decision to the parent/carer. [JCQ AARA 7.3.6]*

Gathering evidence to support normal way of working

“The arrangement(s) put in place must reflect the support given to the candidate in the centre, for example:

- *in the classroom (where appropriate);*
- *working in small groups for reading and/or writing;*
- *support lessons;*
- *intervention strategies;*
- *in internal tests/examinations;*
- *mock examinations.*

This is commonly referred to as ‘normal way of working’. For candidates with learning difficulties, this is typically the background information recorded within Part 1 of Form 8 by the SENCo or the assessor working within the centre. [JCQ AARA 4.2.5]

5. Processing Access Arrangements Requiring Awarding Body Approval

- The Exam Access Arrangements Administrator is responsible for processing applications for access arrangements. The resulting approval or rejection notice for the candidate is retained with the original Form 8.
- The Exam Access Arrangements Administrator records application approval on the college database (EBS) where it can be accessed by the exams team and course tutors.
- The Exam Access Arrangements Administrator is responsible for completing awarding body referrals where necessary, and for explaining the outcomes of a referral to the tutor and Specialist Assessor when a referral has not been approved.

6. Centre Delegated Access Arrangements (CDAA)

There is not a requirement to process an application using Access Arrangements Online for JCQ/Awarding Body approval for the following arrangements. The college must be satisfied:

- The student has an impairment which has a substantial and long term adverse effect, giving rise to persistent and significant difficulties; and the candidate is disabled within the meaning of the Equality Act.
- Or the student has a need on a temporary basis as a consequence of a temporary injury.
- That there is a genuine need and that there is written evidence available confirming the student has established difficulties, and that the arrangement reflects the student’s normal way of working within the Centre. This must be available to a JCQ Inspector on request. In the case of a temporary arrangement due to temporary injury, the evidence should take the form of a medical note on the database from the college nurse or a letter from a GP or treatment centre.
- The Specialist Assessor completes an internal form (LS11) based on relevant tutor evidence and testing where required. The LS11 is kept on file and approved centre delegated access arrangements are recorded on EBS.

Use of a word processor

'..a word processor cannot simply be granted to a candidate because he/she now wants to type rather than write in examinations or can work faster on a keyboard, or because he/she uses a laptop at home'.

The use of a word processor must reflect the candidate's normal way of working within the centre.'

[JCQ AARA 5.8.4]

- This arrangement will be subject to approval by the Specialist Support Team.

Please see [Appendix 1 Use of a Word Processor in Examinations](#) for more information.

Alternative rooming arrangements – Quiet Room/Separate room

*'In the case of alternative rooming arrangements, the candidate's disability is **established within the centre**. This means it is known to a Form Tutor, a Head of Year, the SENCo or a senior member of staff with pastoral responsibilities. For example, a long-term medical condition which has a substantial and adverse effect.*

*Alternative rooming arrangements **must** reflect the candidate's normal and current way of working in internal school/college tests and mock examinations.*

*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.'* [JCQ AARA 5.16]

- This arrangement will be subject to approval by the Specialist Support Team.

Please see [Appendix 2 Alternative Rooming Arrangements - Separate or Quiet \(Shared\) Room Invigilation](#) for more information.

Supervised Rest Breaks

*'The SENCo **must** confirm the nature of the candidate's impairment and that supervised rest breaks reflect their normal way of working within the centre. '*

*'Where a candidate has an impairment other than a learning difficulty, the SENCo **must** have tried and exhausted the option of supervised rest breaks through timed internal tests and/or mock examinations before making an application for 25% extra time.'* [JCQ AARA 5.1]

'.. There will be some constraints on timing if the candidate has more than one examination to take each day. [JCQ AARA 5.1.3]

'Centres must seek medical advice in cases of serious illness on whether the candidate is fit to take the examination.' [JCQ AARA 5.1.3]

- This arrangement will be subject to approval by the Specialist Support Team.

Please see [Appendix 3 Supervised Rest Breaks](#) for more information.

Appendix 1

Use of a Word Processor in Examinations

Use of a word processor with the spelling and grammar check facility/predictive text either switched off/switched on (where permitted) **must reflect the candidate's normal way of working within the centre** and be appropriate to the candidate's needs.

Nescot College must be satisfied that the candidate has an impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect, giving rise to persistent and significant difficulties.

Candidates who may use a word processor are those with:

- A learning difficulty which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to write legibly
- A medical condition
- A physical disability
- A sensory impairment
- Planning and organisational problems when writing by hand
- Poor handwriting

Use of a word processor may be granted providing the candidate meets at least one of the above criteria. Evidence could include an example of the candidate's written work; a completed Tutor evidence form or results from a speed of handwriting test.

The use of a word processor will not be granted to a candidate due to a personal preference, the ability to work faster when using a keyboard or because a laptop/PC is used at home.

The Specialist Assessor will submit an application for this access arrangement that clearly identifies whether the spelling and grammar check facility is switched on/off.

The candidate must sign a Nescot waiver form if the word processor arrangement is no longer required or declined. The waiver form will be kept on file by the Exam Access Arrangements Team for the duration of the candidate's studies at the College.

Additionally the use of a word processor would be considered for a candidate in the event of a temporary injury or impairment, such as a broken arm.

On the day of the exam

A candidate using a word processor will be accommodated in a classroom or exam pod with a desktop computer or laptop.

The Exams team will provide an offline assessment account with access to a word processor, with the spelling and grammar check and predictive text switched off (unless approved for it to be switched on).

The candidate is reminded to ensure that their centre number, candidate number and the unit or component code appear on each page as a header or footer.

Each page of the typed script must be numbered (eg. Page 1 of 6).

Invigilators to instruct the candidate to use a minimum of 12pt font and double spacing to make marking easier for examiners.

Invigilators ensure the candidate is reminded to save their work at regular intervals and again when they have finished the exam.

At the end of the exam, the script will be printed by the Exams team, before being checked and signed by the candidate on each page, to verify the work is their own and no work is missing from the printed copy.

If a candidate omits to insert the required header or footer, they are instructed to handwrite the details as a header or footer; the candidate is supervised throughout this process to ensure that they are solely performing this task and not re-reading their answers or amending their work in any way.

The centre may retain electronic copies of word-processed scripts as the electronic copy of a word-processed script may be accepted by an awarding body where the printed copy has been lost.

The centre will ensure the word processor:

- *is not used to perform skills which are being assessed*
- *is in good working order at the time of the exam*
- *is accommodated in such a way that other candidates are not disturbed and cannot read the screen*
- *is used as a typewriter, not as a database*
- *is cleared of any previously stored data*
- *does not give the candidate access to other applications such as a calculator (where prohibited in the examination), e-mail, the Internet, social media sites or spreadsheets*
- *does not have any predictive text software or an automatic spelling and grammar check enabled, unless the candidate has approval*
- *does not include computer reading (text to speech) software unless the candidate has permission to use a computer reader*
- *does not include AI tools*
- *is not used on the candidate's behalf by a third party unless the candidate has permission to use a scribe (a scribe cover sheet must be completed) [JCQ ICE 14.25]*

Appendix 2

Alternative Rooming Arrangements - Separate or Quiet (Shared) Room

*'Alternative rooming arrangements **must** reflect the candidate's normal and current way of working in internal school/college tests and mock examinations.*

*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.'* [JCQ AARA 5.16]

At Nescot, we use 'Quiet Room' to refer to a smaller shared room, usually the size of a regular classroom.

'Separate Room' is used to refer to a room where a candidate requires 1:1 Invigilation. In line with JCQ guidelines, this is only approved under exceptional circumstances.

In both cases, this rooming arrangement should reflect the candidate's normal way of working in lessons, internal tests and mock examinations, and be appropriate to the candidate's needs.

The College must be satisfied that the candidate is at a substantial disadvantage when compared with other candidates undertaking the assessment and it would be reasonable in all the circumstances to provide alternate rooming. The only exception to this would be a temporary illness, a temporary injury or other temporary indisposition that is clearly evidenced. Candidates who present on or near to the day of an exam, will be treated with emergency measures that may or may not include separate invigilation, within the limitations of available resources at Nescot.

The Exam Access Arrangements Team will gather supporting information for separate or quiet (shared) room invigilation at Nescot from, if available, but not limited to:

- Documentation provided by qualified external specialists currently treating a candidate for a medical or mental health condition.
- Subject Tutors
- Learning Support and Teaching Assistants
- Head of SEN
- Learning Support Coordinators
- College Mentors/Counsellors
- Student Welfare Officer
- Personal Development Coach
- College Nurse
- Social, emotional and mental health information logged on the Learning Support database

The information is considered by the Assessors and if need is evidenced, an application is written by the Exam Access Arrangements Team to evidence the application of alternative rooming.

Please note if a candidate received a separate room with 1:1 invigilation at a previous setting, this is not guaranteed at Nescot.

Appendix 3

Supervised Rest Breaks

Supervised rest breaks will be centre approved at Nescot once a for a candidate where it is their normal way of working and there is a genuine need for the access arrangement.

Nescot College must be satisfied that the candidate has an impairment, which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect, giving rise to persistent and significant difficulties; and the candidate is disabled within the meaning of the Equality Act.

Supervised rest breaks will be centre approved on account of:

- Cognition and learning needs;
- Communication and interaction needs;
- A medical condition;
- Sensory and physical needs;
- Social, mental and emotional needs.

In addition, the candidate's difficulties must be established and evidenced at Nescot and thus known to the relevant staff at Nescot, e.g. subject tutor, Personal Development Coach, the Exam Access Arrangements Team and/or learning support and teaching assistant staff.

The supporting information is collated by the Specialist Assessor and an application is submitted to the Exams Office to evidence the request of the access arrangement.

There is no maximum time set for supervised rest breaks at Nescot.

Rest breaks, taken either inside or outside of the examination room, will be supervised by an invigilator.

Exam Access Arrangements Nescot: Roles & Responsibilities

| | Which people are responsible for carrying out each of these tasks? | Director of Learning Support | Exams Team | Heads of Departments | Head of SEN | EAA Assessors | EAA Administrator | Tutors and LSAs | Candidate & Parents/Carers |
|----|--|------------------------------|------------|----------------------|-------------|---------------|-------------------|-----------------|----------------------------|
| 1 | Draw up and implement a Centre Access Arrangements Policy to include the correct implementation of current JCQ regulations and guidance | | ✓ | | | ✓ | | | |
| 2 | Identify candidates who may need Access Arrangements and provide evidence of a student's current difficulties in class | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ |
| 3 | Ensure candidates receive appropriate arrangements | | | | | ✓ | | | |
| 4 | Ensure SEN students are following the most appropriate courses | | | ✓ | | | | | |
| 5 | Alert the SEND Lead to any concerns about a particular candidate | | | ✓ | | | | ✓ | |
| 6 | Carry out a formal diagnostic assessment and present a report on each candidate (where appropriate using Section C of Form JCQ/AA/LD Form 8) * Tutors must provide evidence of a learner's normal way of working in class. | | | | | ✓ | | ✓* | |
| 7 | Make applications for arrangements and modified papers through the Access Arrangements Online system | | ✓ | | | | ✓ | | |
| 8 | Liaise with Awarding Bodies where applications are not approved and a referral is needed | | ✓ | | | | ✓ | | |
| 9 | Maintain information on students to provide evidence of need for JCQ inspectors | | ✓ | | | ✓ | ✓ | | |
| 10 | Organise Access Arrangements timetable for candidates and 'supporting adults' | | ✓ | | | | | | |
| 11 | Arrange training on the regulations for Access Arrangements for supporting adults and invigilators - external = Exams Officer, Internal = Learning Support | | ✓ | | | ✓ | ✓ | | |
| 12 | Implement Access Arrangements, complete relevant cover sheets with and complete feedback sheets for SEND officer where required (Scribes, Word Processor, Special Considerations) | | ✓ | | | | | | |
| 13 | Agree a system for the collection and return of exam papers of candidates having Access Arrangements | | ✓ | | | | | | |
| 14 | Keep up-to-date with JCQ regulations and guidance and understand their implications, e.g. know current range of Access Arrangements | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | |

| | |
|---------------------------|---------------|
| Version | V7 |
| Policy Originator: | Head of Exams |
| Equality Impact Assessed: | |
| Approved by: | |
| Date Approved: | |
| Review Interval: | 1 Year |
| Last Review Date: | February 2026 |
| Next Review Date: | February 2027 |
| Audience: | Public |
| Entered on SP | February 2026 |
| Entered on website | February 2026 |