

JCQ EXAMINATION ACCESS ARRANGEMENTS 2015 – 2016 WHAT'S NEW?

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Access Arrangements 2015-2016

These notes are taken from the document:

Adjustments for candidates with disabilities and learning difficulties

Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments

General and Vocational qualifications

With effect from 1st September 2015 to 31 August 2016

available at www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/access-arrangements-and-special-consideration/regulations-and-guidance/access-arrangements-and-reasonable-adjustments-2015-2016

Principal Changes 2015-2016

The following have also been referred to:

- ❑ *Dyslexia: Assessing the need for Access Arrangements during Examinations A Practical Guide Fourth Edition (ed) Anwen Jones, Patoss, in association with the JCQ*
- ❑ *2015/16 update to the above book, ibid.*
- ❑ *2015/16 update - A Guide to Extra Time, ibid.*
- ❑ *Principal changes to the JCQ publication [above named] - for the attention of SENCos and specialist assessors*

NB: Please note that the regulations are best studied in tandem with a copy of the **2015/16 Form 8**.

Structure of Document

2013-2014 saw some major changes to JCQ regulations, which were finalised in last year's (2014-2015) regulations. This year sees further *consolidation* rather than changes: this year's additions being shown in **blue**.

The JCQ document now focuses solely on access arrangements:

- ❑ [Separate on-line document for special consideration procedures]
- ❑ Chaps 1 – 4: disability & the Equality Act 2010;
- ❑ Chaps 5 & 6: detail the available access arrangements & evidence requirements one by one;
- ❑ Chap 7: lists accountabilities, including specialist assessor skills & qualifications; guidelines to assessment;
- ❑ Chap 8: covers processing arrangements.

Principles for centres 1 [JCQ p17]

- ❑ Purpose of an access arrangement that '***barriers to assessment are removed***'. [4.2.1]
- ❑ '***integrity of the assessment is maintained***'
- ❑ EAAs 'cannot be granted where they will ***compromise the assessment objectives***' e.g. practical assistant where practical skills being tested. [4.2.2]
- ❑ Candidates may not require the same [EAAs] in each specification... need for [EAAs] should be considered on a ***subject-by-subject basis***'. [4.2.3]
- ❑ [EAAs] 'should ***always be processed at the start of the course***'. [4.2.4]
- ❑ 'Arrangement/s **must reflect the support given to the candidate in the centre**, [4.2.5]

Principles for centres 2

- 'If a candidate has **never** made use of an [EAA] granted... then it is not normal way of [4.2.8] N.B. monitoring implications.
- **'Failure to comply ...has the potential to constitute malpractice which may impact on the candidate's results. [4.2.11] i.e. putting in place unapproved EAAs &/or permitting EAAs not supported by appropriate evidence.**
- **The JCQ & Awarding Bodies can only enter into discussions over EAAs with the centre and not parents/carers. [4.2.12]**
- Evidence **must** be made available to JCQ inspectors **in hard copy format**, including the **Data Protection Notice**.
- **Documentation must be presented to the JCQ Centre Inspector by the SENCo [p19, 4.2.14]:**

Documentation to be **presented** to JCQ Inspection Team

- ☐ Complete stapled Form 8s hand signed by specialist assessor;
- ☐ Hard copy evidence of normal way of working in class, tests and internal examinations;
- ☐ Hard copy of application approved notice from AAO (NB date of approval by 21-03-2016);
- ☐ Signed pupil data protection notice (including new permission for AAO submission);
- ☐ Specialist assessor qualification certificates.

Principal Changes for 2015-2016

Chap 4

4.21 Principles for Centres:

P19 - documentation to supports Access Arrangements (AAs) must be *presented* to JCQ Inspector by the SENCo.

5.1 Supervised rest breaks:

P21 – the SENCo must produce *written* evidence that the need for rest breaks is well-established & represents candidate's normal way of working.

Principal Changes 2

5.2 25% Extra time:

- ❑ P26 – reminder that if a candidate's difficulties are related to a *medical, psychological or sensory impairment*, there is no need to complete a Form 8. See p26 for required centre-based evidence.
- ❑ SENCos reminded that *EHCPs* as well as current *Statements of SEN* are acceptable evidence & no need for Form 8. Such documentation must be supplemented by centre-based evidence.

Principal Changes 3

5.5 Computer Reader/Reader:

- ❑ P33 question paper can now be opened **90 minutes** in advance of published starting time of exam.
- ❑ P34 – another reminder re. *medical, psychological etc* impairment, & no need to complete Form 8. See p35 for required centre-based evidence.
- ❑ SENCos reminded that *EHCPs* as well as current *Statements of SEN* are acceptable evidence & no need for Form 8. Such documentation must be supplemented by centre-based evidence.

Principal Changes 4

5.7 Scribe/Speech recognition technology:

- ❑ P47 – a further reminder re. *medical, psychological etc* impairment, & no need to complete Form 8. See p48 for required centre-based evidence.
- ❑ SENCos reminded that *EHCPs* as well as current *Statements of SEN* are acceptable evidence & no need for Form 8. Such documentation must be supplemented by centre-based evidence.

Evidence of need for Conditions other than SpLD e.g. medical, psychological.

- ☐ Candidate continues to have 'persistent' & 'significant' difficulties and is 'disabled within the meaning of the 2010 Equality Act';
- ☐ Evidence of current difficulties & how they substantially impact on teaching & learning within the classroom;
- ☐ Demonstrate active involvement of teaching staff in determining the need for EAAs;
- ☐ Confirm that without the EAA/s candidate would be at a substantial disadvantage compared with non-disabled peers;
- ☐ Arrangement/s continues to be candidate's 'normal way of working' as a consequence.

Note additional clarification regarding ADHD

- ❑ A specialist medical diagnosis (GP not sufficient) may not include explicit reference to difficulties which impact on examinations &/or a need for extra time.
- ❑ Centres are thus advised to consider and additionally to assess for likely difficulties such as:
 - Processing speed;
 - Concentration and focus;
 - Literacy requirements, e.g. sustained text reading.

Principal Changes 5

5.8 Word processor:

P55 - 2 examples given of word processor being given in conjunction with 25% extra time: 1 only for handwritten subjects e.g. maths; the other across the board in all subjects – *this needs studying*.

5.11 Oral Language Modifier:

P58 - Note substantially revised arrangements for OLMs.

- ☐ Seen as *an arrangement of 'last resort'* where all other arrangements have proved unworkable.
- ☐ ***Standardised Score of 69 or below*** (2 SDs below mean) for *reading comprehension or vocabulary* now required (previously 77), & *clear picture of need*.
- ☐ Application still processed through AAO, which will automatically reject it – centre *must make on-line referral to awarding body/ies*.

Principal Changes 6

5.15 Alternative site for the conduct of examinations away from the centre:

- ❑ P68 - this arrangement has now been merged with an alternative site arrangement, where the alternative site is not a registered centre, e.g. hospital, home.
- ❑ Note revised arrangements: apply using **JCQ Alternative Site** form (not AAO).
- ❑ SENCo or pastoral staff must produce *written evidence requirements* of this need for a JCQ Inspector.

Principal Changes 7

5.18 Bilingual translation dictionaries with up to a maximum of 25% extra time:

P71-73- Please note significant changes:

- ☐ Use is *now prohibited* in GCSE subjects where Spelling, Punctuation & Grammar is being assessed (see lists p71).
- ☐ Use *restricted to* Entry Level qualifications & Levels 1 & 2 Functional Skills qualifications.
- ☐ *Evidence* to support use of dictionary with extra time must be compiled by EAL Coordinator or SENCo.

Note exceptions for languages listed on p71.

Principal Changes 8

Chap 7 – Learning difficulties

Pp 81-88 - SENCos & specialist assessors must familiarise themselves with the entire contents of chap. 7.

All assessors must:

- ☐ Provide **evidence of their qualification/s**, which *must represent a PG qualification (Level 7 or equivalent) in individual specialist assessment.* **(inc CCET+AAC=CPT3A)**
- ☐ Use *age-appropriate, nationally standardised, up-to-date tests.*
- ☐ Only sign off *their own assessments.*
- ☐ Must use **Form 8** & must **date and sign by hand.** MUST staple Form 8 pgs together p87.

NB: **no** centre equivalent. © Dyslexia Action 2015

Changes cont. 9

- ❑ Further emphasis on roles & responsibilities of **SENCoS & specialist assessors**, with support of Heads, SMT, **Heads of Year**, teaching, **pastoral** & support staff [not Exams Officers – admin role];
- ❑ **Application deadlines** are no longer ‘soft’ but ‘hard’: the deadlines on p2 must be met;
- ❑ Where assessment is required, this must be **no earlier than the start of Year 9** [JCQ 5.2.2 p22]
- ❑ Guidelines for **progression from GCSE to GCE**: ‘a **fully completed Form 8** (Sections A, B and C) **may roll forward from GCSE to GCE qualifications.**’ [JCQ p23]

Changes cont. 10

- ❑ Stronger clarification & guidelines for a **joint approach** between **SENCo & 'specialist assessor'** [JCQ p24]
- ❑ Definition of 'core' evidence: quantitative data from the specialist assessor's report (**Section C of Form 8**) & 'supplementary' evidence: painting the picture of need (**Section A of Form 8**) [JCQ p25]
- ❑ **Form 8 now compulsory**: guidelines for completion [JCQ p87-88] – see also new Section A of Form 8.
- ❑ Clearer guidelines re. candidates with complex needs i.e. medical evidence exists: 'In these specific cases Form 8 is not required.' [JCQ p26 5.2.3]

EAs permitted by Centres with *no requirement to process using AAO*:

- ❑ ***Supervised rest breaks*** [5.1 p21] **Candidate's difficulties must be established within the centre & thus known to a Form Tutor, Head of Year, SENCo &/or SMT with pastoral responsibilities.**
- ❑ ***Read aloud and/or the use of examination reading pen*** ([5.6 p44] (e.g. 'Exampen' www.exampen.com, 'C-Pen ExamReader' www.examreader.co.uk) - 'normal way of working'.
- ❑ ***Word processor*** [with *spell check disabled*] [5.8 p54] – 'normal way of working and is appropriate to their needs'.
- ❑ ***Transcript*** [5.9 p56] N.B. **not appropriate for maths & science 'must only be used in exceptional circumstances'** e.g. cannot dictate to scribe, use of WP 'not appropriate' (e.g. science)

EAAAs permitted by Centres with *no requirement to process using AAO*:

- ❑ **Prompter** [5.10 p57] permitted where candidate has ‘...persistent distractibility or significant difficulty in concentrating’; little or no sense of time e.g. **candidates with ADHD or ASD**
- ❑ **Live speaker for pre-recorded exam. components** [without extra time][5.12 p61] e.g. MFL for hearing impaired
- ❑ **Sign Language Interpreter** [5.13 p62] [without extra time]
- ❑ **Other arrangements** e.g. coloured overlays, brailers, low vision aids, etc. [5.16 p71] **NB: candidates are only entitled to the above [p69] if ‘they are disabled within the meaning of the Equality Act’.**
- ❑ **Electronic bilingual dictionary** [with no extra time] [5.18 p71] **Note subject exceptions.**

EAAAs requiring application:

- ❑ **25% extra time** [5.2 p22-27] **NB:** ‘...must not be awarded only for examinations and controlled assessments’.
- ❑ **Extra time of up to 50%** [5.3 p28-29] **‘Extra time of up to 50% is an exceptional arrangement.’** NB: AAO will automatically reject applications for ET of up to 50% - separate applications needed to awarding bodies. **‘Each application will be considered individually’, score of 69 or less, ‘assessed...within 26 months of the final examination.’**
- ❑ **Extra time of over 50%** [5.4 p30] **‘in very exceptional circumstances.’**

EAAAs requiring application cont.

- ❑ **Computer reader/Reader** [5.5 p33-40] **'...a computer reader should always be considered'**. N.B. permissions subject by subject p41-43.
- ❑ **Scribe/Speech recognition technology** [5.7 p45-53]
- ❑ **Oral Language Modifier** [5.11 p58-60] **'rare and exceptional arrangement'** **'adjustment of last resort'** **standardised score of 69 or less**, assessed...within 26 months of the final examination.
- ❑ **Practical assistant** [5.14 p64-67]
- ❑ **Bilingual dictionary with extra time** [5.18 p71-73] **Evidence must be compiled by EAL Co-ordinator or SENCo. NB: due to SPaG now subjects where not permissible. [Note EXCEPTION SUBJECTS p71] Not allowed at AS & A level.**
- ❑ **Modified Papers** [chap 6 p74-80] N.B. **DEADLINES**

Current arrangements with **26 month rule for evidence**

- ☐ Between 26 & 50% extra time;
- ☐ Oral language Modifier;
- ☐ More than 50% extra time.

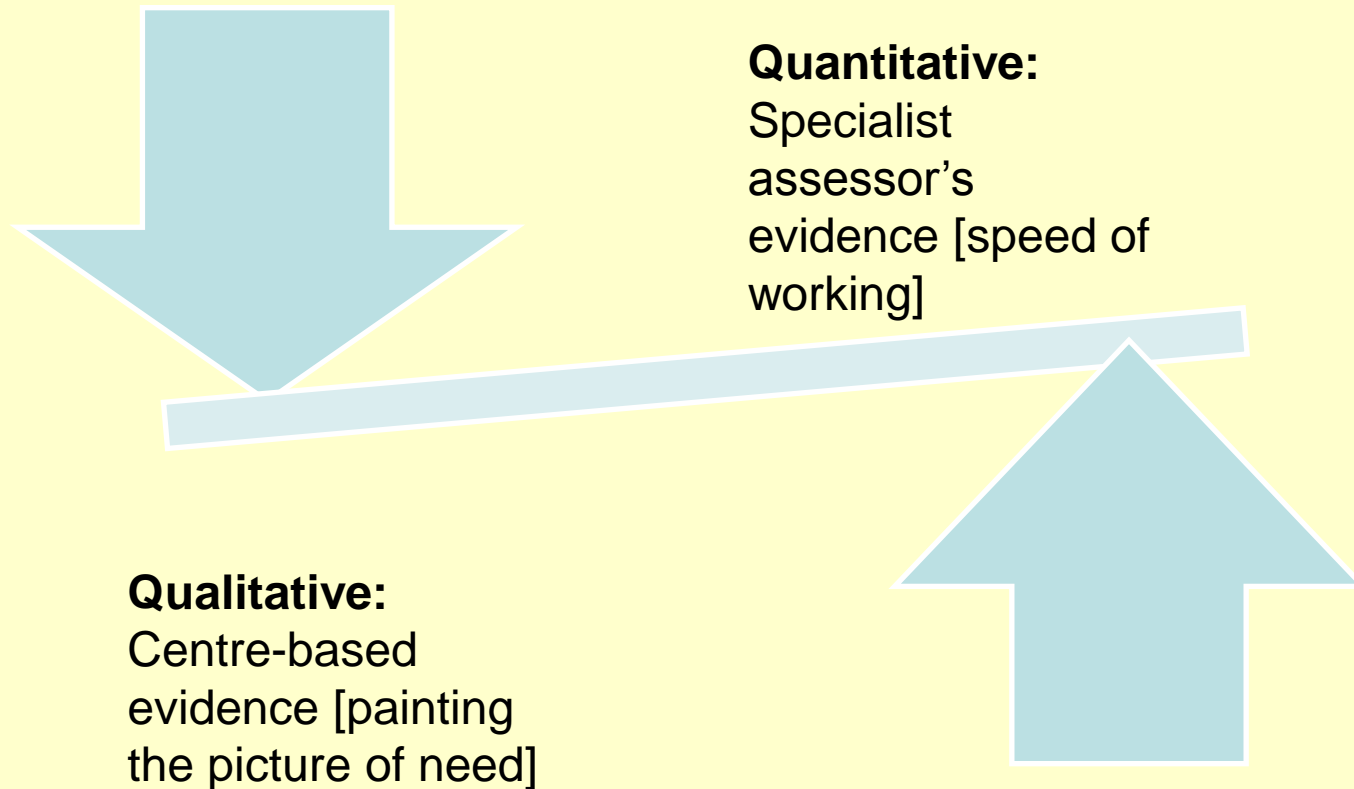
Timing implications:

Assess from the start of Year 9, **apply** as late as possible, as **permission** lasts 26 months from **date of application**.

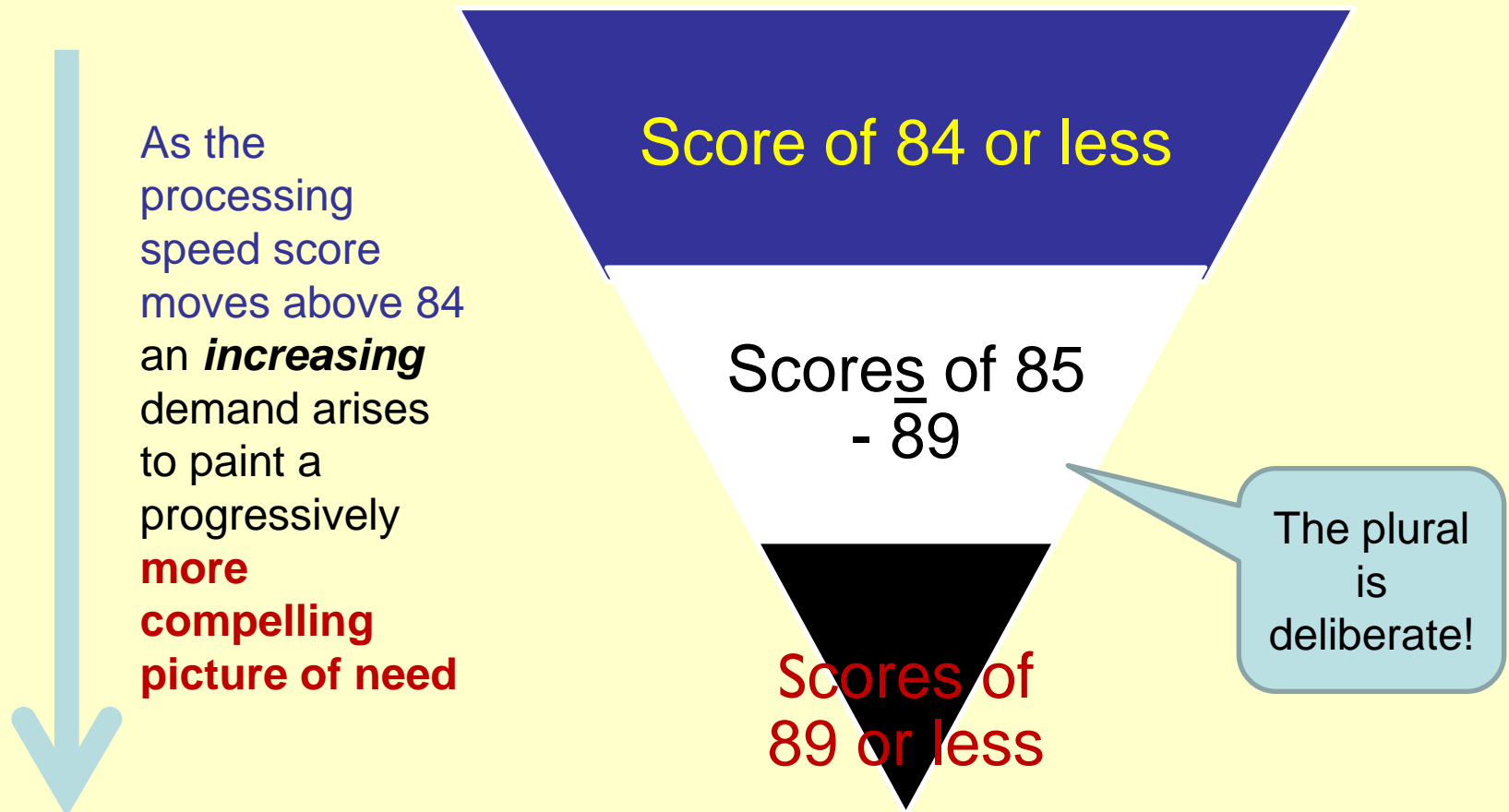
NB: The 26 month rule for core evidence for Reader, Scribe & 25% extra time no longer applies.

'25% extra time – being dyslexic is still not enough'

'Painting a picture of need – balance is the key' [Nick Lait, JCQ]



Specialist assessor's core evidence



Supplementary evidence:

painting the picture of need - centre

Examples of increasing evidence to paint a compelling picture of need

Evidence of normal way of working within the centre

Evidence of normal way of working within the centre **&** internal tests/mock exam papers showing the application of extra time **or** IEP/ILP making reference to the need for extra time **&** Comments and observations from teaching staff on the need for & use of extra time

Evidence of normal way of working within the centre showing **an extensive history of need**
A cluster of standardised scores relating to speed of processing just within the average range - 90 to 94
Formal diagnosis of a significant difficulty; and evidence of a clear, measurable and **substantial long term adverse effect** on performance and speed of working

Centre evidence:

- ❑ Unfinished internal test or exam. papers (normal time allowance);
- ❑ Internal test or exam papers with 25% extra time (**different colour pen**);
- ❑ Significant improvement in legibility and/or content with ET;
- ❑ IEP stating need and evidencing “normal way of working”; or Learning Plan;
- ❑ Results of CATs/MIDYis, screening tests, etc. as supplementary evidence;
- ❑ Compiled comments from a range of teaching staff, supporting TAs, Head of Year, SENCo, specialist teacher/tutor, etc.

A Specialist Assessor is: [7.3 p82]

- ❑ A specialist teacher with a **current** SpLD Assessment Practising Certificate; or
- ❑ An 'appropriately qualified psychologist registered with the Health & Care Professions Council'.

In addition to these categories, other educational professionals may conduct access arrangements assessments if they meet the following criteria.

They must:

- Hold a post-graduate qualification in individual specialist assessment or equivalent to Level 7 which must include training in all of the following:
 - The theoretical basis underlying psychometric 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 statistically significant discrepancies between scores; standard error of measurement and confidence intervals;
 - The appropriate use of nationally standardised tests for the age group being tested;

They must:

- The objective administration of attainment tests which can be administered individually. This must include tests of reading accuracy, reading speed, reading comprehension and spelling. Appropriate methods of assessing writing skills, including speed, must also be covered;
- The appropriate selection and objective use of cognitive tests including tests of verbal and non-verbal ability and wider cognitive processing skills;
- The ethical administration of testing including the ability to understand the limitation of their own skills and experience, and to define when it is necessary to refer the candidate to an alternative professional.

All specialist assessors must:

- **Have a thorough understanding of the current edition of the JCQ publication *Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments* and the principles, procedures and accountabilities involved;**
- **Be familiar with the Equality Act 2010 (although it is not their role to determine what is a “reasonable adjustment”, but rather to help identify access arrangements that might assist the candidate);**
- **Hold an appropriate qualification to teach and make recommendations for secondary aged or adult learners who have learning difficulties. [7.3.4 p83]**

- **The specialist assessor should ideally be employed within the centre.**
- **The second choice is a specialist assessor employed at another centre;**
- **The third choice would be a Local Authority specialist assessor;**
- **The fourth choice would be an external specialist assessor ‘who has an established relationship with the centre or, before an assessment, establishes a relationship with the centre’. [7.3.5 p83]**

Note also 7.5 p84: new guidelines re. independent assessor asking centre for evidence of ‘normal way of working & relevant background information ... before the candidate is assessed.

Note the following:

7.3.6 p83:

- ❑ 'The SENCo and/or a member of [SMT] must provide a detailed statement supporting the decision to accept a privately commissioned assessment (Section C of Form 8)'
- ❑ 'Where a privately commissioned report, or a report from an external professional, is rejected by a centre, the head of centre or a member of the senior leadership team should provide written rationale supporting their decision to the parent/carer.'

Form 8 changes:

Section A – answer the three key statements

Provide relevant information/evidence of the candidate's **persistent and significant difficulties**.



Show how the candidate's disability/difficulty has impacted on teaching and learning in the classroom.

Provide evidence of feedback from teachers.



Detail the candidate's normal way of working within the centre, the support given and how this relates to the proposed arrangement(s). For example have teaching staff recorded any support regularly provided in the classroom?



1. Provide relevant information of the candidate's **persistent and significant difficulties**

In this section you need to provide evidence of a candidate's history of **persistent and significant difficulties**.

Examples of this include:

- ☐ Information from primary school - e.g. Access Arrangements for KS2 tests
- ☐ Primary school SEN register
- ☐ Previous assessments/diagnosis (including those from privately commissioned reports)
- ☐ Current Statement/HCP
- ☐ Screening test results (Years 7 – 9) – e.g. MidYIS, CATS; Lucid, DAST
- ☐ Pupil tracking data e.g. NC levels, subject teachers' monitoring

2. Show how the candidate's disability/difficulty has impacted on teaching and learning in the classroom. **Provide evidence of feedback from teachers.**

In this section you need to provide evidence of the candidate's **current difficulties**. Note the requirement to include **evidence** of feedback from subject teachers.

Examples of this include:

- ☐ support for reading and/or writing (peers, teachers, teaching assistants)
- ☐ reading and/or writing intervention strategies (Toe by Toe, Alpha to Omega, etc)
- ☐ IEPs/ILPs, support plans
- ☐ teachers have reported the candidate regularly running out of time during internal tests and examinations (specify subjects)
- ☐ teachers' comments in school reports – *evidence required*
- ☐ questionnaires from subject teachers which confirm and support the need for extra time, reader, scribe, etc.
- ☐ feedback confirms the need for extra time in subjects requiring the reading of extended text and/or extended writing

3. Detail the candidate's normal way of working within the centre, the support given and how this relates to the proposed arrangement(s)? For example, have teaching staff recorded any support regularly provided in the classroom?

In this section you need to say what the candidate's normal way of working is, in timed classroom tasks, internal school tests, mock examinations:

e.g.

- ☐ regular learning support provision, such as TA help with reading/scribing, practical assistant.
- ☐ Assistive technology, such as regular use of laptop/tablet in school (with/without spellcheck) and software such as text-to-speech, speech-to-text.

Use of a centre form to record the above is desirable.

Writing skills

3. Accuracy & legibility

Is the candidate's spelling accuracy in the **below average range** – i.e. a standardised score of 84 or less, with errors unrecognisable as the target word?

YES ☐ NO ☐

Does the candidate's spelling and/or handwriting render his or her free writing largely illegible to someone who is not familiar with it?

YES ☐ NO ☐

Is the candidate's free writing incomprehensible to someone who is not familiar with it?

YES ☐ NO ☐

Please give the results of a spelling assessment on a nationally standardised test.



Name of test	<input type="text"/>
Test ceiling	<input type="text"/>
Date of administration	<input type="text"/>
Spelling standardised score	<input type="text"/>



4. Does the candidate express him/herself in written form so slowly that answers could not be fully recorded in the time allowed? Is the candidate's free writing speed, as a standardised score on a nationally standardised test, in the below average range for their age? – (i.e. at least 1 standard deviation below the mean on a nationally standardised test, a standardised score of 84 or less)

YES ☐ NO ☐

Name of test	<input type="text"/>
Test ceiling	<input type="text"/>
Date of administration	<input type="text"/>
Free writing speed standardised score	<input type="text"/>
*Please name the subtest you are quoting where appropriate	<input type="text"/>
Quality of language when free writing	<input type="text"/>

6. Name of the specialist assessor who carried out all of the tests recorded in Section C

(Please print)

Are you:

an appropriately qualified psychologist registered with the Health & Care Professions Council? YES ☐ NO ☐

Unique registration number

a specialist assessor with a **current** SpLD Assessment Practising Certificate? YES ☐ NO ☐

APC number

a specialist assessor approved by the head of centre who holds **a post-graduate qualification in individual specialist assessment at or equivalent to Level 7?**

YES ☐ NO ☐

(Please see Chapter 7 of the JCQ publication *Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments* for more information about who can be a specialist assessor.)