



Joint Council for Qualifications

Principal changes to the JCQ publication *Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments* for the academic year 2015/16

For the attention of SENCoS and specialist assessors

This document must be forwarded to the SENCo or the specialist assessor working within the centre.

The principal changes for 2015/16 are as follows:

Chapter 4

Section 4.2, Principles for centres

Page 19 – the documentation to support GCSE and GCE access arrangements **must** be presented to the JCQ Centre Inspector by the SENCo.

Section 5.1, Supervised rest breaks

Page 21 – for GCSE and GCE qualifications the SENCo **must** produce written evidence confirming that the need for supervised rest breaks is well-established and represents the candidate's normal way of working.

Section 5.2, 25% extra time

Page 26 - SENCoS are reminded that if the candidate's difficulties are related to a medical, psychological or sensory impairment, **there is no need to complete Form 8**. SENCoS should study the required centre based evidence as detailed on **page 26** of the regulations.

SENCoS are additionally reminded that Education, Health and Care Plans are acceptable evidence, as are any current Statements of special educational needs. However, such documentation **must** be supplemented by centre-based evidence (see **page 26**). If these formal statements exist, **there is no need to complete Form 8**.

Section 5.5, Computer Reader/Reader

Page 33 – where an application for a computer reader is approved by Access Arrangements Online, the centre is permitted to open the question paper packet in the secure room within 90 minutes of the published starting time for the examination.

Page 34 - SENCOs are reminded that if the candidate's difficulties are related to a medical, psychological or sensory impairment, **there is no need to complete Form 8**. SENCOs should study the required centre based evidence as detailed on **page 35** of the regulations.

SENCOs are additionally reminded that Education, Health and Care Plans are acceptable evidence, as are any current Statements of special educational needs. However, such documentation **must** be supplemented by centre-based evidence (see **page 35**). If these formal statements exist, **there is no need to complete Form 8**.

Section 5.7, Scribe/Speech recognition technology

Page 47 - SENCOs are reminded that if the candidate's difficulties are related to a medical, psychological or sensory impairment, **there is no need to complete Form 8**. SENCOs should study the required centre based evidence as detailed on **page 48** of the regulations.

SENCOs are additionally reminded that Education, Health and Care Plans are acceptable evidence, as are any current Statements of special educational needs. However, such documentation **must** be supplemented by centre-based evidence (see **page 48**). If these formal statements exist, **there is no need to complete Form 8**.

Section 5.8, Word processor

Page 55 – two examples have been added of a word processor being used in conjunction with 25% extra time.

Section 5.11, Oral Language Modifier

Page 58 – SENCOs **must** note the revised arrangements for an Oral Language Modifier. Principally, this is an arrangement of the 'last resort' when other options have proved unworkable for the candidate. **A standardised score of 69 or less relating to a test of reading comprehension or vocabulary is now required, in addition to a clear picture of need.** Whilst an application must still be processed through Access Arrangements Online, the system will automatically reject it and the centre must make an on-line referral to the relevant awarding body/bodies.

Section 5.15, Alternative site for the conduct of examinations

Page 68 – the access arrangement alternative accommodation/venue away from the centre has now been withdrawn and merged with an alternative site arrangement for the conduct of examinations. SENCOs should carefully note the revised arrangements as detailed on page 68.

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

Pages 71 to 73 – significant changes have been made for the academic year 2015/16. These include:

- prohibiting the use of a bilingual translation dictionary in GCSE subjects where Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar is being assessed;
- restricting the use of a bilingual translation dictionary with up to a maximum of 25% extra time to Entry Level qualifications, GCSE qualifications and Level 1 & Level 2 Functional Skills qualifications;
- evidence to support a bilingual translation dictionary with up to a maximum of 25% extra time **must** be compiled by the EAL Co-ordinator or the SENCo.

Section 6.2, Braille papers

Page 76 – the correct Braille papers must be ordered, either SEB or UEB papers, as appropriate to the candidate's normal way of working and the particular subjects being studied.

Section 6.5, Coloured/enlarged paper

Page 77 – where permission is granted by Access Arrangements Online for a coloured/enlarged paper, the centre is permitted to open the question paper packet in the secure room within 90 minutes of the published starting time for the examination.

Chapter 7, Learning difficulties

Pages 81 to 88 – SENCos and specialist assessors must familiarise themselves with the entire contents of Chapter 7. In particular, the importance of the SENCo and the specialist assessor working together. Section A of Form 8 **must** be completed **prior** to the assessment to help the assessor understand the candidate's normal way of working and plan the assessment.

Additionally, all specialist assessors **must**:

- provide evidence of their qualification, which represents a post-graduate qualification (Level 7 or equivalent) in individual specialist assessment;
- use age appropriate, nationally standardised, up-to-date tests;
- only sign off their own assessments;
- follow the centre's reporting policy and **must** use JCQ Form 8. The form **must** be dated and signed by hand.

This notice has been produced on behalf of:

AQA, City & Guilds, CCEA, OCR, Pearson and WJEC

Notice to Centres

Responsibility of heads of centre to report malpractice

The JCQ would like to take this opportunity to remind heads of centres that they have a responsibility, under the regulators' *GCSE, GCE, Principal Learning and Project Code of Practice* to report to the relevant awarding body any suspected cases of malpractice involving candidates, teachers, invigilators or other administrative staff (*Code of Practice, Section 8, page 49*).

This responsibility is set out in detail in the JCQ publication *Suspected Malpractice in Examinations and Assessments: Policies and Procedures*, which states:

Heads of centres must report to the appropriate awarding body at the earliest opportunity, all suspicions or actual incidents of malpractice. The only exception to this is malpractice discovered in controlled assessments or coursework before the authentication forms have been signed by the candidate.

This document details the procedures to be followed when malpractice is suspected, lists examples of malpractice and the penalties for infringements of examination regulations.

It further states that failing to report an instance of suspected malpractice in examinations or assessments to the appropriate awarding body as soon as possible after such an instance occurs, or is discovered is in itself malpractice. This may result in sanctions being applied against the head of centre and/or the centre.

Awarding bodies appreciate the co-operation of all centres in reporting suspected malpractice. This co-operation is essential in guaranteeing the fairness of the public examinations system for all.

The above JCQ publication can be downloaded from the JCQ website at:
<http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/malpractice>