



A Parent Guide to Exam Access Arrangements

25th September 2025

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10 things you need to know

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One:



**Exam Access Arrangements are enshrined by
the Equality Act 2010**



One:



Access Arrangements are the principal way in which awarding bodies comply with duty under the Equality Act 2010 to make 'reasonable adjustments' where assessment arrangements would put a candidate at a substantial disadvantage compared to a candidate who is not disabled.

JCQ 2022-2023, p.7/ 11



Two:



Exam Access Arrangements exist to create a 'level playing field' and enable candidates to 'show what they know'



Two:



- Access arrangements allow students with specific needs, such as special educational needs and disabilities to access an exam.
- They allow students to show what they know and can do without changing the demands of the exam.



Three:



Exam Access Arrangements are awarded on the basis of current need and 'normal way of working'



Three:



- Parents/ carers should let the SENDCO/ Senior LSA know as soon as possible if they think their child has additional needs which may require access arrangements
- The SENDCO/ Senior LSA will work with the student and teachers to identify possible arrangements. Any approved arrangements must reflect the support given to the candidate in the centre
- The arrangement must be relevant and appropriate to the learners' needs, including on a subject by subject basis. A student may not have the same arrangements for every subject.



Three:



- Additional needs or a diagnosis alone do not entitle a student to access arrangements.
- Not all students with additional needs will require access arrangements. It depends on whether their difficulty affects their access to exams and whether there is sufficient evidence from teachers/testing to warrant an arrangement.



Four:



Many Access Arrangements are centre delegated



Four:



- Bilingual dictionary
- Coloured overlays
- Fidget toys/ stress balls
- Modified papers
- Non-electronic ear defenders/ ear plugs
- Prompt
- Read aloud/ Examination reading pen
- Separate (smaller group) invigilation within the centre
- Supervised rest breaks
- Word processor (SPaG disabled)

Four:

- Read aloud/ Examination reading pen
As an examination reading pen may be used in papers (or sections of papers) testing reading, candidates cannot additionally be granted extra time in place of a reader
- Separate (smaller group) invigilation within the centre
Evidence of diagnosis or significant evidence from Pastoral Team
- Word processor (SPaG disabled)
Demonstrable evidence of need and not because the candidate simply prefers using a word processor



Five:



All other Access Arrangements must be applied for through the centre



Five:



- Bilingual dictionary + 10% extra time (EAL)
- *Computer reader/* human reader
- 25% extra time
- More than 25% extra time
- Scribe/ speech recognition technology/ word processor with spellcheck enabled
- Language modifier



Five:



- **Computer reader/ human reader**

A reader will not be allowed to read questions or text in papers (or sections of papers) testing reading. A candidate who would normally be eligible for a reader but is not permitted this arrangement in a paper (or a section of a paper) testing reading may be granted up to a maximum of 50% extra time.

- **25% extra time**

Where a candidate has an impairment other than a learning difficulty, the SENDCo should have explored and trialled the option of supervised rest breaks before making an application for 25% extra time.

Extra time not usually awarded where testing is subject to timed conditions e.g. PE, Food Technology

Extra time not usually awarded in Art/ practical subjects



Five:



- **Scribe/ speech recognition technology**

The candidate will not have access to marks awarded for spelling, punctuation and/or grammar unless he/she has independently dictated spelling, punctuation and/or grammar, and this has been recorded on the scribe cover sheet.

- **Word processor with spellcheck enabled**

The candidate will not have access to marks awarded for spelling, punctuation and grammar.

Not permitted in Modern Foreign Languages

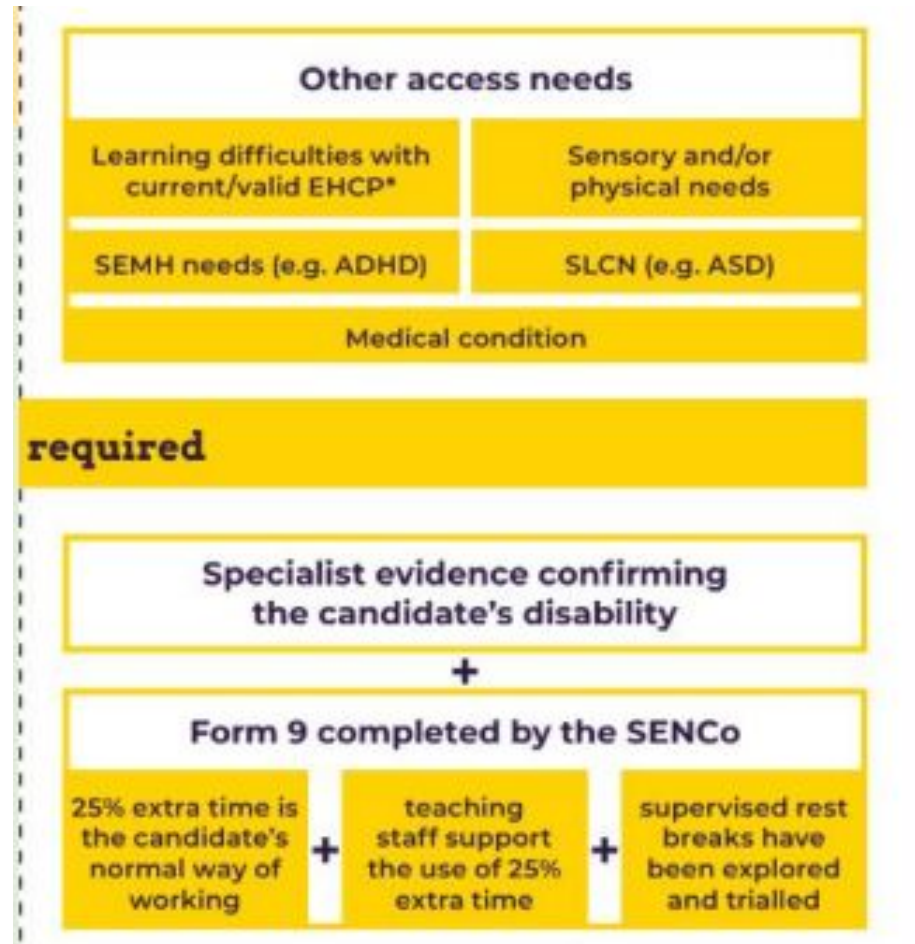
Six:

Candidates with the following diagnosed conditions or an EHC Plan do not always require additional assessment however significant evidence of need is still required:

- **Medical condition**
 - **ADHD**
 - **ASD**
- **Other sensory/physical diagnosis**

**For 25% extra
time, a scribe/
SRT
or Language
Modifier:**

Six:



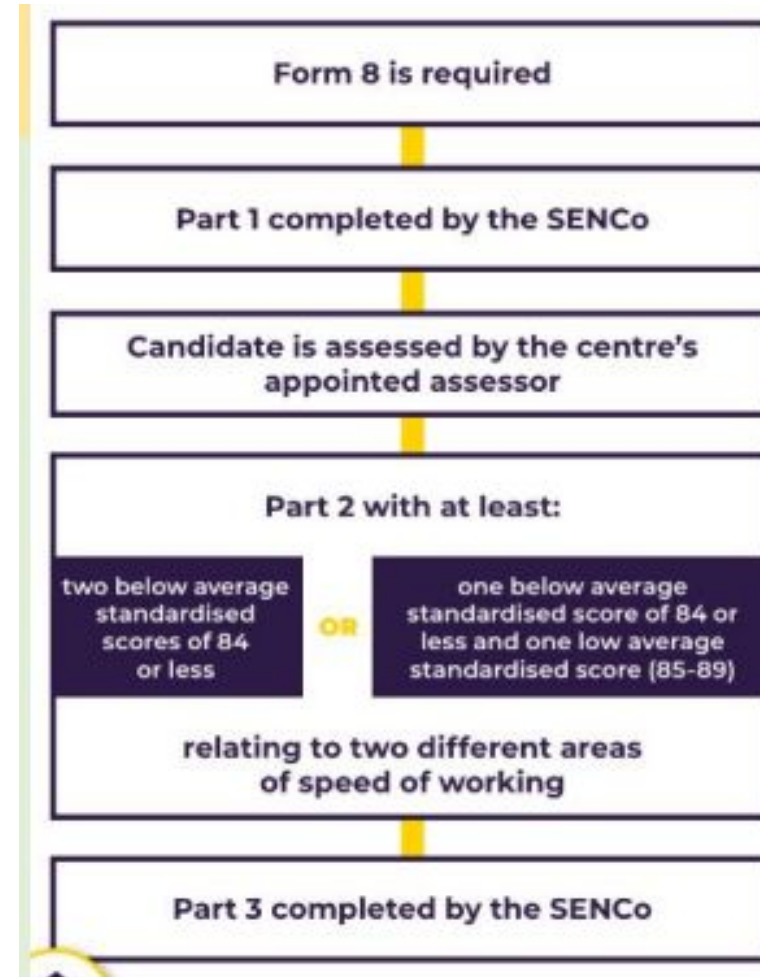
Seven:



Candidates with cognition and learning difficulties and no EHCP must use JCQ Form 8 or Form 9

**For Extra Time, a
scribe/SRT
or Language
Modifier:**

Seven:



Eight:



Some Access Arrangements can be rolled forward from GCSE to GCE provided that they continue to reflect current need and normal way of working

Eight:



- The Access Arrangement must remain appropriate, reasonable and practicable
- Access Arrangements provided for school/ college examinations cannot be rolled forward to university

Nine: Timeline of process

Year 7 - Year 10 inclusive: Internal arrangements for BETs as agreed by the SENDCo/ Senior LSA



Year 11 Autumn Term: Formal arrangements confirmed (where not already in Year 10)



Yes

Access Arrangements
for mock GCSE and
formal GCSE



No

'Normal' examination
conditions apply

Moving on: Copy of EAA in GCSE results pack to pass on to next provider.

Nine: Internal Access Arrangements



Replicate the likely GCSE arrangements as much as possible given the constraints of the timetable

- Based in the classroom (except for a very small minority of students who will have a 1:1 or 1:2 room for GCSE)
- Rest breaks and prompts will be given by the class teacher
- Not for every internal assessment

Nine: Key Dates



JCQ Modified papers deadline: 31st January 2026

JCQ All other arrangements deadline: 21st March 2026

Nine: How can I help at home?



Communicate with the SEND Team at the earliest opportunity if you believe your child has additional needs which may require Access Arrangements at GCSE

- If your child may be awarded a word processor Access Arrangement:
Provide a wireless keyboard for their iPad
Practice touch typing with them at home e.g. BBC Bitesize DanceMat
- Practice their Access Arrangements with them at home e.g. act as a reader, remind them to use their overlay, give a timed rest break, where they have a homework piece
- Make sure to go through their BET/GCSE timetable with them carefully

Contact details:



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