

Access Arrangements Policy

Name of Policy:	Access Arrangements Policy
Last Approved:	December 2022
Approved By:	Standards Committee
Consultation	Leadership Team (LT)
LT Owner:	Steve Dann
To be reviewed	Annually

1. Purpose of this Policy

- 1.1. The purpose of this policy is to describe the key policies and procedures in place at Long Road Sixth Form College in order to fulfil the ‘... *obligation to identify the need for, request, and implementing access arrangements...*’ [JCQ ‘General Regulations for approved Centres’ 5.5]
- 1.2. This policy covers the assessment of need processes and related issues and is reviewed annually with reference to the current edition of the **JCQ publication** ‘*Adjustments for candidates with disabilities and learning difficulties - Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments*’.
- 1.3. This policy is available electronically via our website.
- 1.4. Failure to comply with the regulations contained in this document have the potential to constitute malpractice which may impact on the candidate’s result(s).
Examples of failure to comply include:
 - putting in place access arrangements/adjustments that are not approved;
 - failing to consider putting in place access arrangements (which may be a failure to comply with the duty to make reasonable adjustments);
 - arrangements/adjustments within the centre which are not supported by appropriate evidence; or
 - charging a fee for providing reasonable adjustments to disabled candidates.

2. Associated Policies

- 2.1. **Disability Policy** (Exams) covers staff roles and responsibilities in identifying the need for, requesting, and implementing access arrangements and the conduct of exams. The Disability Policy (Exams) is Appendix 1 of the **Examinations Policy**.
- 2.2. **Assessment Policy**. Outlines the college’s overall approach to assessment including compliance with awarding body regulations.

3. What are Access Arrangements?

- 3.1. Access Arrangements allow candidates/learners with special educational needs, disabilities or temporary injuries to access an assessment without changing the demands of that assessment. In this way Awarding Bodies comply with the duty of the Equality Act 2010 to make ‘reasonable adjustments’.
- 3.2. Access arrangements are for students who experience ‘**substantial disadvantage**’ and ‘**persistent and significant difficulties**’ in accessing examinations. (*Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ): Adjustments for candidates with disabilities and learning difficulties*)

- 3.3. Access Arrangements fall into two distinct categories: (a) arrangements that are **delegated to centres**, and (b) arrangements that require **prior JCQ awarding body approval**. (see sections 11 and 12)
- 3.4. **Appendix 5** summarises types of access arrangements and whether they need to be applied for or are at the discretion of the college. The list is not exhaustive, and the centre must make an online referral to the relevant awarding body/bodies for any requests not listed.

4. Which assessments can have access arrangements applied?

- 4.1. Any assessment can have access arrangements, but the *type* of access arrangement applied may depend on the nature of the assessment, and the assessment objectives. For example, a student may be entitled to a reader for a Geography exam, because slow reading speed (the educational need) is disadvantaging the student in being able to demonstrate the geographical knowledge (the assessment objective) being assessed in a timed written exam (the assessment method). The same access arrangement may not apply in an English exam where reading is the assessment objective being assessed.
- 4.2. A student awarded extra-time in **written exams**, will not have extra-time in **coursework (NEA)** as there are no time constraints within that assessment method, providing deadlines are reasonable and sufficient notice is given to students. Students requiring an extension must request in writing, with reasons, to the Course Team Leader in the first instance.
- 4.3. **Controlled assessments** (for example in Criminology) are typically carried out in class and have **levels of control** that may also result in different access arrangements compared to exams. (the Assessment Policy covers Controlled Assessments).

5. 'Normal way of working' and 'Evidence of need'

- 5.1. Access arrangements are not an entitlement only used at times of formal exams, but a reflection of the arrangements made for a student '*day to day*'. The arrangements must reflect the student's *normal way of working*.
- 5.2. Access Arrangements are applied according to clear and recognised criteria that demonstrate that the candidate would be disadvantaged in an assessment *unless* the adjustment was made. The documentation required to demonstrate that these criteria are met is called *Evidence of Need*.
- 5.3. A disability itself does not automatically confer Access Arrangements. It is the *learning need* that results from a disability that is mitigated.
- 5.4. A student who does not have adjustments as their normal way of working may not be entitled to adjustments for exams.
- 5.5. A student who works in a particular *preferred* way but does not have evidence of need may not get access arrangements.
- 5.6. If a candidate has never made use of the arrangement granted to him/her, e.g. 25% extra time or supervised rest breaks, then it is not his/her normal way of working. The College may consider withdrawing the arrangement, provided the candidate will not be placed at a substantial disadvantage.

6. Examples of need and reasonable arrangements (from JCQ):

1. A candidate with Dyslexia needs to use a coloured overlay, a word processor and requires 25% extra time. The use of a yellow-coloured overlay is a reasonable adjustment for the candidate since it helps him to improve his reading accuracy. The use of a word processor is a reasonable adjustment since it is his normal means of producing written work within the centre and is appropriate to his needs. The candidate has been assessed by the centre's appointed assessor using current nationally standardised tests. The assessment shows that the candidate has a substantial and long-term impairment as his working memory and speed of reading are in the below average range. The candidate has standardised scores of 79 and 81. Prior to the candidate being assessed, the SENCo completed Part 1 of Form 8. The application of 25% extra time is a reasonable adjustment and the SENCo processes an online application using *Access arrangements online*.

2. A candidate has ASD which is formally confirmed by a letter from a consultant paediatrician. He has persistent and significant difficulties with his handwriting which is poor but not illegible. He is unable to complete mock Geography and Religious Studies papers within the time allowed. In other subjects he finishes the mock papers before the end of the test. The SENCo processes an online application for 25% extra time on account of his impairment which is having a substantial and adverse effect in those GCE subjects with extended writing. Without the application of 25% extra time in those subjects the candidate would be at a substantial disadvantage.

7. Assessment of Evidence Need

- 7.1. Assessments are carried out by a Specialist Teacher appointed by the Head of Academic Support and Welfare (ASAW). Specialist Teachers are appropriately qualified as required by *JCQ regulations [JCQAA 7.3]*
- 7.2. **Checking the qualification(s) of the assessor(s)** Long Road Sixth Form College Human Resources Department (HR) checks the paper qualifications of the Specialist Teacher before confirming appointment. A copy of the Specialist Teachers' qualification is kept on file by the HR for presentation to the JCQ Centre Inspector during an Access Arrangements Inspection. *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.* [AA 7.3]
- 7.3. The Head of ASAW checks that:
 - 7.3.1. the Specialist Teacher can confirm at the start of each academic year that they have a thorough understanding of the current edition of the JCQ publication *Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments* and the principles, procedures and accountabilities involved.
 - 7.3.2. the Specialist Teacher is familiar with the Equality Act and uses this knowledge to identify access arrangements that might assist a candidate.
 - 7.3.3. the Specialist Teacher has successfully completed a post-graduate course equivalent to Level 7, including at least 100 hours relating to individual specialist assessment, which includes all relevant training in psychometric tests, the use of nationally standardised

tests for the age group, objective administration of attainment tests including reading accuracy, reading speed, reading comprehension and spelling.

8. How the assessment of need is administered

8.1. Students with previous access arrangements

- 8.1.1.** Students who arrive at college with an EHC plan, Professional Diagnosis e.g., of ADHD, ASD etc. or a Form 8 from a partner school which meets the requirements of the JCQ regulations, can have their access arrangements rolled over.
- 8.1.2.** If the students enrolment exceeds two years, the access arrangements may lapse and require re-application.
- 8.1.3.** Students whose evidence does not meet the requirements of the JCQ regulations will be assessed by a Specialist Teacher in their first year of study and an application to cover the next two years of study will be made to JCQ if the need is still evidenced.
- 8.1.4.** 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*.
- 8.1.5.** Ideally access arrangements will be applied for at the start of a two-year course, however, formal agreement for access arrangements may not be in place in time for all internal assessments during the first year.

8.2. Students without previously identified needs

- 8.2.1.** Following either disclosure of a learning need at enrolment, student/parent referral, or referral by teaching staff, the Head of ASAW will instruct the Administrator of ASAW to seek further evidence to build up a picture of need and following this (if appropriate) to set up an appointment for the student to be assessed by a Specialist Teacher.
- 8.2.2.** The Head of ASAW works closely with the Specialist Teacher to provide descriptions of current support and the history of need of each student, recorded in Part 1 of JCQ Form 8, and directs the required testing in relation to an individual's study programme.
- 8.2.3.** The Specialist Teacher conducts the assessments and carries out testing relevant to support the application, using recent editions of nationally standardised tests and reporting standardised scores, and ensuring that the candidate's chronological age is less than the "ceiling" of the test.
- 8.2.4.** If a learning need that meets criteria for access arrangements is identified by testing, the Specialist Teacher completes Part 2 of JCQ Form 8 and provides feedback to the Head of ASAW, who then checks this information and signs off the report. A feedback form with recommendations for learning is sent to the teacher. Details of the access arrangements recommended is emailed to parents and recorded on the college system which teachers are alerted to.
- 8.2.5.** If a learning need is not identified from testing, the Specialist Teacher records the outcome on the colleges Pro-monitor system informing teachers and adding any recommendations for learning.
- 8.2.6.** Hard copies of assessments and outcomes are kept on file in the administrator's office for each student.

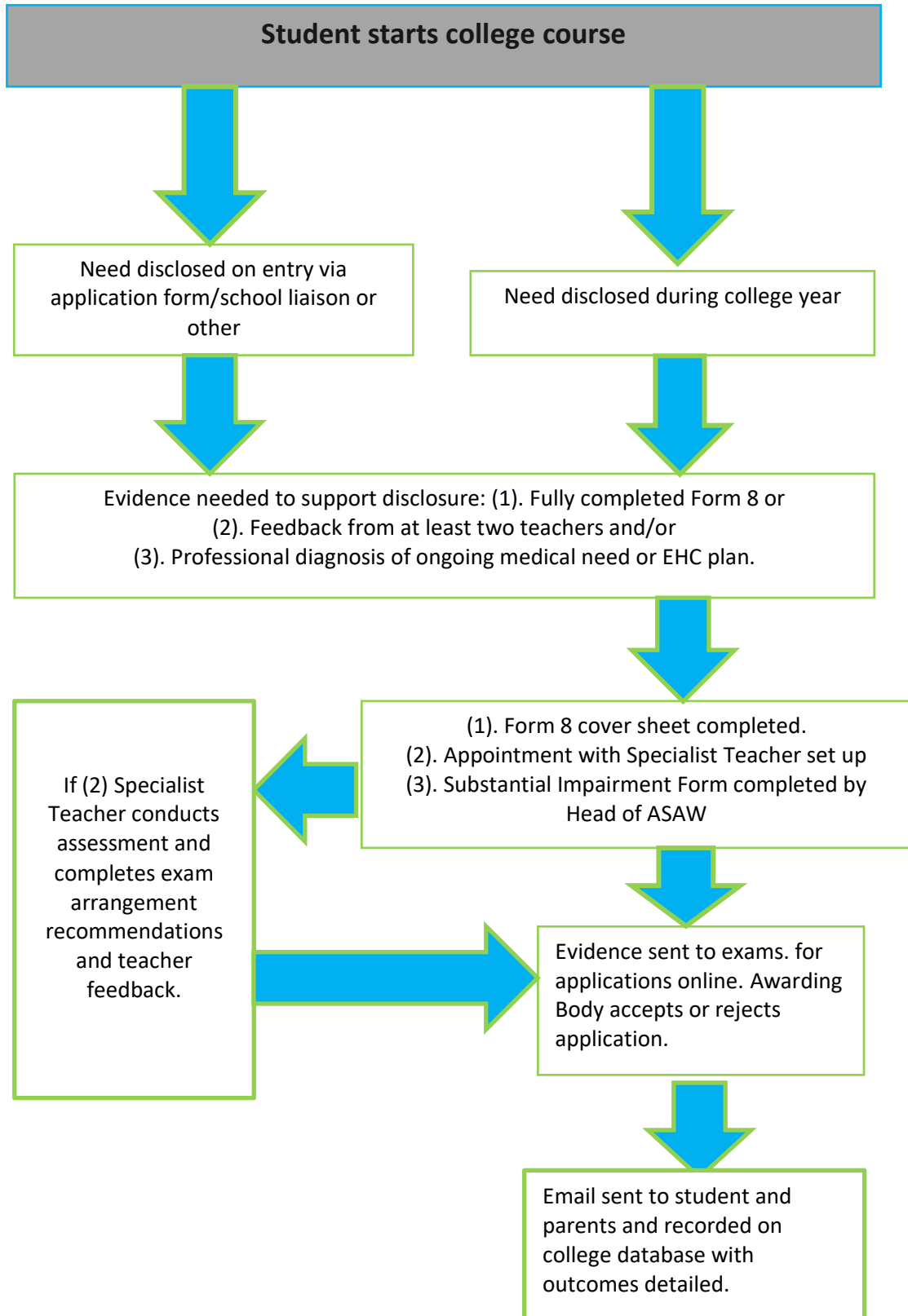
9. Evidence of need documentation

- 9.1.** The Learning Support database holds records of access arrangements disclosed by students or parents and/or recommendations from partner schools. The database is updated throughout the academic year using information gathered from enrolment, and with new or further information and documentation. This information enables the college to put in place the most appropriate support for a student to progress in their studies.

- 9.2. Evidence can include:
- 9.2.1. Information supplied by students, parents, teachers, support staff and other support services (which includes Wellbeing Assistant, Progress Coaches, Directors of Learning and Safeguarding personnel).
 - 9.2.2. Documentation evidencing Special Educational Needs or Disability (SEND) provided by educational professionals who have been working with a student since year 9 of secondary school.
 - 9.2.3. Documentation from other relevant professionals such as from medical and therapeutic professions.
 - 9.2.4. JCQ Form 8's from secondary schools (which may be rolled over to provide assess arrangements for the students Level 3 course - see 1.4) used to inform a history of need for students and recorded on our college system to inform teachers.
 - 9.2.5. Notes recorded by learning support staff on Pro-monitor in the form of comments, or academic support meeting notes, for individual students; all students 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.
 - 9.2.6. Centre devised feedback forms used by subject teachers to record observations and provision for students with SEND or suspected SEND.
 - 9.2.7. Comments from Progress Review data (tracking data) relating to relevant difficulties.
10. **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:*
- 10.1. in the classroom (where appropriate)
 - 10.2. in internal tests/examinations
 - 10.3. mock examinations
11. **Arrangements requiring awarding body approval**
- 11.1. The Head of ASAW signs off all information and assessment findings in relation to JCQ criteria, before passing to the Examinations Office who make an **application for access arrangements** with the appropriate exam boards.
 - 11.2. The Examinations Officer is responsible for processing applications for access arrangements. The resulting approval or rejection notice for the candidate is retained with a summary cover sheet detailing the outcomes of the Form 8. The original Form 8 is kept in the students hard file in the administrator's office.
 - 11.3. The Examinations officer is responsible for completing awarding body referrals where necessary.
 - 11.4. The Specialist Teacher is responsible for explaining the outcomes of a referral to a candidate, including when a referral has not been approved.
12. **Centre Delegated Access Arrangements (CDAA)** In awarding access arrangements in this category the college must be satisfied that one or more of the following applies:
- 12.1. 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. There is documented evidence available confirming the student has established difficulties. The arrangement must reflect the **student's normal way of working** within the centre. This documented evidence must be available to a JCQ Inspector on request.
 - 12.2. The student has a need on a temporary basis as a consequence of a **temporary injury**. In the case of a temporary arrangement due to temporary injury, the evidence

should take the form of a medical note/letter on the database from a GP or treatment centre.

Process for Assessment of Need



APPENDIX ONE

USE OF A WORD PROCESSOR STATEMENT

'Centres are allowed to provide a word processor with the spelling and grammar check facility/predictive text disabled (switched off) to a candidate where it is their normal way of working within the centre and is appropriate to their needs.' [5.8.1 AA]

The use of a Word Processor will be considered for students with:

- A learning difficulty which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to write legibly
- A medical condition that impacts on the legibility and/or speed of handwriting
- A physical disability that impacts on the legibility and/or speed of handwriting
- A sensory impairment that impacts on handwriting due to visual stress or requirement to read work in a larger font size
- Poor handwriting that doesn't improve with targeted help - making writing illegible or incomprehensible to anyone unfamiliar with it
- Planning and organisational problems that impact on the legibility and/or speed of handwriting

In all cases, the use of a word processor must reflect the candidate's normal way of working within the centre and be appropriate to the candidate's needs.

- This arrangement is allocated by the Head of ASAW when fully evidenced and appropriate to the student's needs.
 - This may mean that it is not a suitable arrangement for all subjects eg Mathematics, Physics, and short answer subjects or those with graphs and diagrams
- The arrangement is made on the understanding that, if it is not used for the full range of assessments, within a subject, taken by the student during the two-year course, it may not be made available for the final summer external exams at the end of the two-year period of study.
- Dependent on need candidates may use a mixture of writing and typing for an examination – the Specialist Teacher will discuss this fully with the candidate during assessment for this access arrangement.
- This statement is produced and approved by the Head of ASAW and Examinations Officer

There is an internal deadline of the first week of November for January Exams, and first week of March for Summer Exams for referral, assessment, and evidence of need.

APPENDIX TWO

SEPARATE INVIGILATION

[Note: see JCQ AA 5.16 in addition to centre-determined criteria]

....note that candidates are only entitled to the above arrangement if they are disabled within the meaning of the Equality Act. The candidate is at a substantial disadvantage when compared with other non-disabled candidates undertaking the assessment and it would be reasonable in all the circumstances to provide the arrangement. (The only exception to this would be a temporary illness, a temporary injury or other temporary indisposition that is clearly evidenced.)

Separate invigilation should reflect the candidate's normal way of working in internal tests and mock examinations, as a consequence of a long-term medical condition, or long term social, mental or emotional needs [AA 5.16]

Nervousness, low level anxiety or being worried about examinations is not sufficient grounds for separate invigilation within the centre.

Example of separate invigilation within the centre

A candidate has a formal diagnosis of a tic disorder. This causes him to grunt as well as sometimes shout out words. The Head of ASAW considers separate invigilation to be appropriate based on his established difficulties.

Students who present after the deadline or on the day of an exam, are treated with emergency measures that may or may not include separate invigilation, within the limitations of available resources

In order to qualify for **separate invigilation** a student must provide:

- o A diagnostic report or medical letter provided by a qualified consultant
- o Evidence of ongoing treatment from a medical professional.

SMALL ROOM REQUESTS

A smaller examination room may be available as an alternative to separate invigilation. Small rooms are defined as classroom size, or somewhere other than the main examination room. Small rooms are not always available for all exams. Students may request seating arrangements, but allocation will be according to need and availability of space.

Supporting Evidence for small room requests

- o Doctor's note detailing reason for arrangement
- o Statement from the College Counsellor
- o Statement/evidence from the Designated Safeguarding Lead

The information is considered by the CDAA Panel and if need is evidenced, a file note is written by the Head of ASAW or by a Specialist Teacher (and signed off by the Head of ASAW) to evidence support for the access arrangement.

There is an internal deadline of the first week of November for January Exams, and first week of March for Summer Exams for referral, assessment, and evidence of need.

APPENDIX THREE

SUPERVISED REST BREAKS

The Head of ASAW/SENCo is allowed to provide a supervised rest break to a candidate where it is his/her normal way of working in the centre.

The Head of ASAW 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.
- there is a genuine need for the arrangement.

Supervised rest breaks may be awarded on account of:

- o cognition and learning needs;
- o Neuro developmental conditions;
- o a medical condition;
- o sensory and physical needs;
- o social, mental and emotional needs.

The candidate's difficulties must be established within the centre and thus known to their Tutor, Director of Study, the Head of ASAW and /or a senior member of staff with pastoral responsibilities.

- Evidence of need will be stored in the student's file.

[AA 5.1]

It is also stated within [AA 5.1]: *There is no maximum time set for supervised rest breaks. The decision must be made by the Head of ASAW based on their knowledge of the candidate's needs and the candidate's normal way of working when placed under timed conditions. The duration of the supervised rest break should be determined by the SENCo before that start of the examination series.*

- the Head of ASAW will determine the frequency and duration of supervised rest breaks, as above, where appropriate, and by prior arrangement with the individual student
- Dependant on the individual student's needs, a supervised rest break may or may not take place in the examination room

There is an internal deadline of the first week of November for January Exams, and first week of March for Summer Exams for referral, assessment, and evidence of need.

APPENDIX FOUR

READER/COMPUTER READER/READER PEN

“For a candidate with a disability or a learning difficulty a computer reader may allow them to demonstrate their attainment more effectively and independently than would be possible with a reader.” (AA 5.5.1)

Long Road Sixth Form College subscribes to and provides JCQ Approved Reader Software (Claro-read) to every student in the college, which can be accessed from any PC. We also have a supply of Reader Pens for students who use these as their normal way of working.

A reader/computer reader or reader pen may be provided as part of a full assessment or as a standalone arrangement following evidence of need.

The Head of ASAW must be satisfied that: the candidate has an impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect, giving rise to persistent and significant reading difficulties (the candidate is disabled within the meaning of the Equality Act.) and There is a genuine need for the arrangement.

A reader/computer reader or reader pen can be awarded on account of:

- Cognitive and learning needs
- Communication and interaction needs
- A medical condition
- Sensory and physical needs
- Social, emotional and mental health needs

“A computer reader will be allowed in papers (or sections of papers) testing reading. A computer reader and a reader do not interpret text in the same way. A reader can add a layer of vocal interpretation (nuance and meaning). This could affect a candidate’s response and therefore compromise the reliability of the qualification. A computer reader is an acceptable arrangement since it allows the candidate to independently meet the requirements of the reading standard” (AA 5.5.6)

The Head of ASAW will approve all arrangements involving the use of a reading aid.

There is an internal deadline of the first week of November for January Exams, and first week of March for Summer Exams for referral, assessment, and evidence of need.

Appendix Five - Types of Access Arrangements and possible evidence	Learning Need	Information required for Evidence of Need assessment	Evidence documents required by exam board
Coloured overlay	Learner experiences visual disturbance and uses an overlay in class	Evidence of Need form not necessary	No further evidence required Learner responsible for bringing overlay to exam (spares can be borrowed from Academic Support in emergencies)
Prompter	Learning Difficulty or medical condition that leads to lack of focus, easy distraction or poor time estimation that will lead to exam performance being seriously impaired	Describe the nature of the problem, its impact in class and what measures are currently in place to support the need in classes	Evidence of Need form Formal assessment or medical notes In class documentation
Separate invigilation	Behavioural, emotional, social need, medical condition, physical disability, psychological need that will lead to impaired performance within normal exam conditions	Describe the nature of the need and how it is currently supported within the classroom Include medical or other evidence where possible Discuss the option of being in a small group and record the outcome of this discussion	Evidence of Need form A diagnostic report or medical letter from consultant and evidence of ongoing treatment. In class documentation
Small Room	Behavioural, emotional, social need, medical condition, physical disability, psychological need that will lead to impaired performance within normal exam conditions	Describe the nature of the need and how it is currently supported within the classroom Include medical or other evidence where possible	Formal assessment or medical notes A diagnostic report or medical letter from consultant and evidence of ongoing treatment.
Supervised Rest Breaks	Learning difficulty, behavioural emotional social need, medical condition, physical disability, psychological need that leads to learner needing rest breaks in order to sustain performance in exam conditions	Describe the nature of the need and how it is supported within the classroom Include medical or other evidence where possible Confirm that having frequent breaks is the learner's normal way of working	Evidence of Need form Any formal assessment or medical notes that are available In class documentation

Use of Word Processor	Slow rate of writing, illegible handwriting or handwriting that deteriorates under stress Injury, physical disability, normal way of working	Describe the nature of the learner's difficulties Provide evidence of handwritten and typed scripts (ideally mock exam questions) and note differences in quality of language or rate of writing Confirm that word processing is the normal way of working within the classroom for this learner	Evidence of Need form Examples of typed and handwritten scripts Learner may be invited for further assessment
Extra time	Learning difficulty, medical, physical or physiological requirement or visual or hearing impairment which has an adverse effect on the candidate's speed of processing	Indicate the nature of the learner's processing problem and how it is supported in the classroom Include examples of unfinished timed assessments Discuss with learner how extra time will be	Evidence of Need form Examples of learner's work In class documentation Assessment by specialist tutor showing below average standardized scores in processing speed or reading and/or writing
Reader	Visual impairment or learning difficulty that leads to learner performing significantly less well than peers in either reading accuracy, comprehension or speed	Describe nature of learner's need – indicate that the learner performs significantly below peers in reading accuracy, comprehension or speed Describe how this is supported in class and confirm that reading support is the learner's normal way of working	Evidence of Need form Classroom documentation Specialist assessment showing below average score in reading accuracy, comprehension or speed
Scribe	Physical disability, medical condition or recent injury preventing writing Visual impairment and cannot touch type or use a braille Learning difficulties that means that writing cannot be read by others Writes so slowly that answers cannot be fully recorded even with extra time	Describe the nature of the difficulty – include examples of handwritten and scribed work (where appropriate) and comment on quality of language Describe how need is supported in class and confirm that using a scribe is the learner's normal way of working	Evidence of Need form Examples of learner's work Classroom documentation Specialist assessment indicating severe problems of legibility, incomprehensibility or processing speed Covering letter explaining precise nature of need