



Good practice guide: Running exams involving access arrangements and candidates with disabilities

The purpose of using access arrangements is to remove barriers which may prevent candidates from accessing opportunities and achieving their full potential. This guide will help you prepare for exams that involve candidates using access arrangements and candidates with disabilities.

Training invigilators

- Tell invigilators if there will be candidates using access arrangements in the exam.
- Invigilators need to be trained in disability issues, for example understanding the school's emergency evacuation and medication policies and learning relevant alternative ways to communicate important information.

Information for candidates

- Supply information, such as the Notice to Candidates, in a format suitable to the candidate's particular needs. For example, if the candidate has a modified paper because they are visually impaired you should enlarge the text on the Notice to Candidates.

Seating arrangements

- Put chairs outside the exam room so candidates with a disability (or those simply experiencing stress) can sit and rest before they go into the exam room.
- Check there is enough space between desks and chairs so wheelchair users can move around the room easily.
- If you know one of your candidates may be unwell during the exam because of their disability sit them close to the exit.
- Make sure chairs in the exam room are suitable for candidates who have a disability affecting their seating and posture.

Candidates requiring access arrangements

- If a candidate has a reader or a scribe, introduce them to each other before the exam. This is particularly important for candidates with autism, who may find it difficult to relate to strangers.
- If a candidate is taking supervised rest breaks, make sure the rest area is comfortable and that the candidate cannot do anything to break exam regulations, for example, talking to other candidates. Supervised rest breaks are for candidates who suffer from fatigue, hyperactivity, obsessive-compulsive disorders or long-term health conditions.
- Prompters must understand the disability of the candidate they are supporting, so they can decide the best way to 'prompt' them. For example, some candidates may prefer the prompter to tap the desk rather than touch their arm. Prompters are often used for candidates with autism who have difficulty judging time.
- For on-screen tests, think about adapting the hardware and software for candidates with a visual or aural impairment.

Emergency evacuation procedures

- Staff involved in conducting exams need to know the school's emergency evacuation procedures for candidates who need assistance leaving the building.
- If candidates with disabilities have different emergency evacuation procedures invigilators need to explain the differences to them.