

Access Arrangements Policy 2025/26

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1	Bethan Guilfoyle	October 2025		Areas highlighted in yellow

Access Arrangements Policy 2025/26

1. Purpose of the policy

Craven College aims to ensure that all students have equal access to examinations and are neither advantaged, nor disadvantaged over their peers by any learning, medical or psychological difficulty they may experience. This policy details how Craven College fulfils "its obligations in respect of identifying the need for, requesting and implementing access arrangements" [JCQ General Regulations for Approved Centres, (section 5.4), hereafter 'GR'] and by outlining staff roles and responsibilities in relation to:

- Identifying the need for appropriate arrangements, reasonable adjustments and/or adaptations (referred to in this policy as 'access arrangements)
- Requesting access arrangements
- Implementing access arrangements and the conduct of exams

2. Definitions

2.1. Exam access arrangements (hereinafter 'EAA')

Exam access arrangements are agreed before an assessment. They allow candidates with specific needs, such as special educational needs, medical conditions, disabilities, or temporary injuries, to access the assessment and show what they know and can do without changing the demands of the assessment. The intention behind an access arrangement is to meet the needs of an individual candidate without affecting the integrity of the assessment. Access arrangements are the principal way in which awarding bodies comply with the duty under the Equality Act 2010* to make 'reasonable adjustments'." [JCQ Adjustments



for candidates with disabilities and learning difficulties - Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments (hereinafter 'AARA'), page 13]

2.2. Reasonable Adjustments

"The Equality Act 2010 requires an awarding body to make reasonable adjustments where a candidate, who is disabled within the meaning of the Equality Act 2010, would be at a substantial disadvantage in comparison to someone who is not disabled. The awarding body is required to take reasonable steps to overcome that disadvantage. An example would be a Braille paper which would be a reasonable adjustment for a vision impaired candidate who could read Braille. A reasonable adjustment may be unique to that individual and may not be included in the list of available access arrangements. Whether an adjustment will be considered reasonable will depend on several factors which will include, but are not limited to:

- The needs of the disabled candidate.
- The effectiveness of the adjustment.
- The cost of the adjustment; and the likely impact of the adjustment upon the candidate and other candidates.

An adjustment will not be approved if it:

- Involves unreasonable costs to the awarding body.
- Involves unreasonable timeframes; or affects the security and integrity of the assessment.

This is because the adjustment is not 'reasonable'." [AARA, page 13]

3. Scope

This policy applies equally to all staff and students across all Craven College campuses.

4. Role and Responsibilities

Senior Specialist Support Co-ordinator

Head of Student Experience and Inclusion

Head of Centre

Ensure effective overall implementation of Exam Access Arrangements in line with the AARA Ensure all policies and procedures are in place and being adhered to in terms of compliance Overall responsibility for compliance with AARA and GR

5. Principles and procedures

5.1. General principles

The general principles of access arrangements for the centre to consider are detailed in AA (section 4.2). These include:

"The purpose of an access arrangement/reasonable adjustment is to ensure, where possible, that barriers to assessment are removed for a disabled candidate, preventing them from being placed at a substantial disadvantage due to persistent and significant difficulties. The integrity of the assessment is maintained, whilst at the same time providing access to assessments for a disabled candidate."

The Senior Specialist Support Coordinator, "**must** ensure that the proposed access arrangement/reasonable adjustment does not unfairly disadvantage or advantage the candidate."

"Candidates may not require the same access arrangements/reasonable adjustments in each specification." "The arrangement(s) put in place **must** reflect the support given to the candidate in the centre, commonly referred to as 'normal way of working'."



"The candidate must have had appropriate opportunities to practise using the access arrangement(s)/reasonable adjustment(s). This is particularly the case where a computer reader, modified enlarged papers, a scribe, speech recognition technology or a word processor will be used in examinations."

"Comments from parents cannot be recorded within Part 1 of Form 8 [...] or Part 1 of Form 9"

"The JCQ and the awarding bodies can only discuss access arrangements/reasonable adjustments with centres and **not** with parents/carers"

"Arrangements must always be approved **before** an examination or assessment", meeting the JCQ deadlines for approvals.

5.2. Additional principles

In addition to the JCQ deadlines, all relevant information and evidence must be submitted to the Study Support team by the internal deadlines set.

It is the responsibility of the student and the student's previous school to ensure the Study Support team receive a fully completed, accurate copy of their Form 8 or Form 9 from their previous school so that putting access arrangements in place can be expedited.

Where a Form 8 or Form 9 is incomplete, inaccurate and/or not correctly complete, the student's EAA will need to be considered as a new exam access arrangement [see section 6.2.2].

For the November exam series, approval of access arrangements cannot be guaranteed. Tutors struggle to establish normal way of working in the short time between the start of term and internal deadlines which prevents new access arrangements from being considered, and students are not always able to get their Form 8 or Form 9 plus any relevant evidence to us by the internal deadline.

5.3. Equalities Policy (Exams)

The Equalities Policy (Exams) covers staff roles and responsibilities in identifying the need for, requesting and implementing access arrangements and the conduct of exams. This policy is located on the Staff Intranet.

5.4. Appointment of assessors of candidates with learning difficulties

At the point an assessor is engaged/employed by the Centre, evidence of the assessor's qualification is obtained and checked against the current requirements in AA. This process is carried out prior to the assessor undertaking any assessment of a candidate.

5.4. Checking the qualifications of the assessors

The Human Resource department requires copies of all relevant academic/professional qualifications in order to verify and record the qualifications of the assessors. Staff are asked to ensure that they notify the Human Resources Department of any subsequent qualifications achieved and forward copies of relevant certificates, in order to update HR records.

JCQ regulations and guidance provided in GR and AA, including centres are required to:

"...have a written process in place to not only check the qualification(s) of their assessor(s) and that the correct procedures are followed, [in accordance with] ...AARA" [GR, section 5.4(f)]

"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]



5.5. The assessment process

Assessments are carried out by assessors appointed by the Head of Centre. The assessors are appropriately qualified as required in JCQ regulations in AA7.3:

The qualifications of the current assessors are:

- Level 7 Postgraduate Award of Proficiency in Assessment for Access Arrangements (PAPAA) through Communicate Ed
- SpLD Assessment Practising Certificate (APC) from the British Dyslexia Association

6. Access arrangement procedures

6.1. Referral points

Application: Students are asked to provide details of any exam access arrangements on application forms **Enrolment:** Students are asked to provide details of any exam access arrangements on the enrolment form and in person on the day they enrol. They are also asked to visit the Student Services room on enrolment day where they can speak to a member of the Study Support team.

Induction: Tutors will book onto the joint Learning Hub & Study Support induction where they will be introduced to the Study Support room and reminded of the relevant procedures for securing access arrangements.

Tutors: Tutors will complete an exam access arrangements referral form for any student who they recognise is accessing support in the classroom and would need this in exams. For students re sitting Math's and English Language GCSEs, tutors carry out an initial assessment where students have the opportunity to identify their previous and current EAA needs.

6.2. EAA Process

6.2.1 Approving previously approved EAA

If a student requires access arrangements and the Study Support Team has been provided with a copy of the Form 8 or Form 9 by the relevant deadlines, they will contact the student to ensure that the EAA stated on those forms are still required. When the student has confirmed relevant arrangements for any GCSE resits that student is sitting, the Study Support Team will approve those arrangements for use at Craven College, without the current need for normal way of working evidence. Where students also/only have exams for their main curriculum course, the Study

Support Team will contact tutors in relation to the relevant arrangements so that the tutor is aware of the students' previous needs. The tutor must send through a referral form and relevant evidence to show that the EAA needed is the student's current normal way of working. The Study Support Team will then consider the relevant evidence, consult with the student and approve any agreed access arrangements.

6.2.2 New EAA

If a tutor, or other support staff in conjunction with the tutor, identifies that a student has EAA needs, then the following procedures should be followed:

- The tutor should complete an EAA referral form (appendix 1) and send it to the Study Support Team alongside the relevant evidence to support consideration of those EAA. Types of evidence can be found in the table in appendix 2.
- This applies in all circumstances, for all exams, except for Math's and English Language resits where an accepted previous Form 8 or Form 9 is held on record. The EAA assessors must have upto-date evidence of student need.
- When referring a student, staff should give as much detail as possible about the nature of a student's needs. Any referral forms without sufficient information and/or evidence will be returned to the tutor.
- When a referral is received, the student will be invited to meet one of the assessors to discuss the EAA mentioned on the referral.



- During the discussion, the assessor will check the student's eligibility and discuss the most appropriate course of action for them.
- Outcomes of this meeting will be recorded on Pro Monitor.
- The assessors will then take the relevant steps to ensure the correct procedures are followed, in accordance with the JCQ AARA.
- Workplace learners /apprentices are encouraged to disclose exam access arrangement needs on their application form and at interview. A member of the work-based team will follow up any disclosure and arrange exam access arrangements in liaison with the Study Support team.
- Early referral is essential as any access arrangements must be linked to the student's usual way of working, therefore the student should have had this support throughout the year / their time at college.

6.2.3 Normal way of working

"The arrangement(s) put in place must reflect the support given to the candidate in the centre, for example:

- in the classroom (where appropriate);
- · working in small groups for reading and/or writing;
- · support lessons;
- intervention strategies;
- internal tests/examinations:
- mock examinations.

This is commonly referred to as 'normal way of working'. For candidates with learning difficulties, this is typically the background information recorded within Part 1 of Form 8 by the SENCo or the assessor working within the centre." [JCQ, AARA, section 4.2.5]

The only exception to this is where an arrangement is put in place as a consequence of a temporary injury or impairment [see JCQ, AARA, section 4.2.4]

6.2.4 Completing a Form 8 or Form 9

Part 1 of the Form 8 or Form 9 must be completed, in full, by an assessor prior to any assessment taking place detailing the student's normal way of working.

"Part 1 of Form 8 is a pen portrait of the candidate's needs. It allows the SENCo [or assessor] to 'paint a holistic picture of need', confirming normal way of working and bringing together:

- any previously granted access arrangements;
- comments and observations across relevant subjects from teaching staff and support staff (i.e. Learning Support Assistants, Teaching Assistants and Communication Support Workers);
- intervention strategies (e.g. individual education/learning plans) in place for the candidate;
- pupil premium indicators;
- screening test results;
- · use of pupil baseline and tracking data;
- information about any differentiation in the classroom;
- observing the candidate in the classroom to see their style of learning:
- normal way of working in the classroom (where appropriate);
- arrangements made for end of year internal school examinations/mock examinations;
- review of the candidate's workbooks, checking their spellings, legibility of writing and whether classroom tasks have been completed" [JCQ, AARA, section 7.6.1]

If the assessors are satisfied that using the relevant EAA is the student's normal way of working, they can complete the rest of the relevant form. If extra time and / or a scribe is required, an assessment should be carried out. *Only* when the need for one of these two EAA is clearly established should an assessor carry out an assessment.



In order for tutors to accurately establish the normal way of working, students' attendance must be at a reasonable level. Where tutors cannot accurately establish a normal way of working due to poor attendance, exam access arrangements cannot be put in place due to insufficient evidence of that student's usual working practices.

Due to the short time period between the start of the academic year and the deadlines for access arrangements for the November GCSE resits, exam access arrangements cannot be guaranteed for these exams.

6.2.5. EAA Assessment

If tutors have evidence that using extra time and / or a scribe is a student's normal way of working:

- a Form 9 can be complete for students with an EHCP or a letter or report from: CAMHS; HCPS
 registered psychologist; a registered psychologist; a registered specialist medical consultant; a
 psychiatrist; a speech and language therapist; a Local Authority Specialist Service (e.g. Sensory
 Impairment Service or Occupational Health); or other appropriate medical evidence.
- an assessment can be carried out with the student, in absence of the above, to establish that the student has a standard score of 84 or below relating to at least two different areas of speed of working. If this is established, a Form 8 must be completed to evidence this need.

6.2.6 Processing applications for EAA

Access arrangements online (AAO) is a tool provided by JCQ member awarding bodies for centres to apply for required access arrangement approval for the qualifications covered by the tool. The tool also provides the facility to order modified papers for those qualifications included.

AAO covers most of the awarding bodies used by the College. However, some awarding bodies require EAA to be logged using their own portals, including:

- City and Guilds
- NCFE
- VTCT

All approvals are downloaded and kept on the student's record on ProSolution alongside the appropriate evidence of need. This is available for inspection by the JCQ Centre Inspection Service on their visits.

6.2.7. Centre specific criteria – Word Processor

An exam candidate may be approved for the use of a word processor where this is appropriate to the candidate's needs and reflects their normal way of working, and not simply because this is the candidate's preferred way of working within the centre. The location of the Word processor policy (exams) is on the Staff intranet.

6.2.8 Centre specific criteria – Separate invigilation

A decision where an exam candidate may be approved by separate invigilation within the centre will be made by the Senior Specialist Support Co-Ordinator. The decision will be based on:

- Whether the candidate has a substantial and long-term impairment which has and adverse effect;
- The candidate's normal way of working within the centre (JCQ, AARA, section 5.16).

The available forms of separate invigilation are:

- Smaller group <12
- Smaller group <5
- Separate room

These will be given based on evidenced student needs and the available resources.



6.2.9 Centre specific criteria – Noise-cancelling headphones

A decision about where an exam candidate may be approved to use non-electronic ear defenders/ear plugs/headphones in an exam within the centre will be made by the Senior Specialist Support Co-ordinator. The decision will be based on:

- Whether the candidate has a substantial and long-term impairment which has and adverse effect;
 and
- The candidate's normal way of working within the centre (JCQ, AARA, section 5.16).

Where an approval is made, the student may use one of the following:

- Foam or silicone earplugs
- Loop earplugs
- College-issued noise-cancelling headphones

Where a student brings their own foam / silicone / loop earplugs, the invigilator in the room will thoroughly check these to ensure that they meet JCQ guidelines and they are not electronic earphones or are concealing electronic earphones.

6.2.9 Centre specific criteria - Overlays and coloured paper

Where a student uses an overlay or coloured paper as their normal way of working, this can be approved as an EAA. However, all attempts must be made by the student to have used an overlay to support their reading, as preferential to using coloured paper. This encourages students to be more independent and closer reflects practices in a workplace environment. Where an overlay does not work for students who struggle to write on white paper, all attempts should be made for students to type their answers on a Word Processor, using assistive technology to change the colour of the screen. Where neither of these arrangements are suitable and/or attempts to use these have been made without success, the student may be granted the use of coloured paper for exams. This should continue to reflect their normal way of working.

6.2.10 Training students

Tutors will ensure that candidates are using their EAA as part of their normal way of working in the classroom.

When students discuss their EAA with the Study Support Team, the following will be made clear:

- An overview of the agreed EAA
- An explanation of how to make best use of these in an exam
- What to expect when they go into the exam
- When they can and can't use their EAA in the exam e.g. human reader in English Language reading section
- Encourage students to use EAA in all mock assessments

6.2.11 Appeals

Craven College is committed to ensuring that it complies with the Equality Act and that students' access to examinations is fair, consistent and in accordance with the regulations and awarding body's specification and subject-specific associated documents. If a candidate believes that this may not have happened in relation to access to assessments, they may make use of the college's complaints procedure.

Where possible appeals should be resolved informally by discussion with the Senior Specialist Support Coordinator, the SEND Manager, the student, and their family. Where this is not possible, the formal complaints procedure to be followed is:

1. Appeals must be made in writing to the Head of Centre



- 2. Please ensure that a copy of all relevant documents and your full contact details accompany your letter to the Head of Student Experience and Inclusion. Please state in your letter the outcome that you desire and all the grounds of your appeal. Please also send the Head of Student Services a list of the documents which you believe to be in the College's possession. Any such appeal will be acknowledged in writing or by telephone within five working days of receipt of the appeals letter with an indication of the action to be taken and likely timescales.
- 3. The Head of Centre will send a written notification of the date, time and place of the hearing together with brief details of the staff members who will hear it.
- 4. The appellant will be informed in writing of the outcome of the appeal, including any relevant correspondence with the awarding body, and any changes made to internal assessment procedures.
- 5. A written record will be kept and made available to the awarding body upon request.

7. Legislation and Regulatory Compliance

This policy in based largely on the following:

- JCQ, Adjustments for candidates with disabilities and learning difficulties. Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments, 2025-2026 [AARA]
- JCQ, General Regulations for Approved Centres. General and Vocational qualifications, 2025-2026 [GR]
- JCQ, Instructions for conducting examinations, 2025-2025 [ICE]

taking into consideration their duties under the following legislation:

Equality Act 2010 [EA]

8. Monitoring and Review

Monitoring: Evidence of all EAA will be held on record for JCQ Inspection Service to review at any inspection or on request.

Review: The policy is annually reviewed to ensure that processes are carried out in accordance with the current edition of the JCQ Adjustments for candidates with disabilities and learning difficulties - Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments.

9. Related Policies and Documents

- Word Processor Policy (Exams)
- Equalities Policy

10. Equality Impact Assessment

This policy has been assessed for equality to ensure it does not discriminate against any protected characteristics.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Exam Access Arrangements Referral Form

Appendix 2: Types of Access Arrangements and possible evidence



Appendix 1: Referral for consideration of EAA 2025/2026

Please complete this form to the best of your ability, with the student present where possible, selecting relevant tick boxes and providing sufficient detail. Once complete, send to studysupport@craven-college.ac.uk

Student name:	Tutor name:				
Curriculum course:	Date:				
☐ Student has previously had EAA					
EAA was based on:					
□EHCP	☐ Diagnosis:	☐ Assessment in previous school:			
☐ Normal way of working <u>only</u>	☐ Student brought in diagnosis	\square Form 8 / 9 obtained from school			
Student's previous EAA:					
☐ Extra time	☐ Human Reader	☐ Computer Reader			
☐ Reading Pen	\square Read aloud to self	☐ Word processor (spellcheck ON)			
☐ Scribe	☐ Rest breaks	☐ Word processor (spellcheck OFF)			
☐ Separate room	☐ Smaller room <12	☐ Smaller room <5			
☐ Prompt	☐ Overlay:	☐ Coloured paper:			
☐ Fidget toy	☐ Other:				
☐ Student has not previously had	EAA 🗆 Unknown				
Evidence of current normal way	of working				
For a student to have an access arr	_	-			
working in the classroom. Please c will need. If you have concerns abo		tion to the EAA you think the student k to a member of Study Support.			
	ur a crauciir e irecus, preude epea	in to a monitor or creaty cappoint			
Extra time					
 ☐ Student is given more time to complete work than would typically be given to someone their age: ☐ Individual arrangement ☐ Whole class arrangement 					
In what ways is extra time given:					
,					
Extra time is given because:					



How does this help the student:				
☐ Sample of timed work from student is attached				
Reading Support: Human Reader Computer Reader Reading Pen Read aloud to self				
☐ Student is given reading support in class: ☐ Individual arrangement ☐ Whole class arrangement				
In what ways is reading support given:				
Reading support is given because:				
How does this help the student:				
Writing Support: □ Word processor □ Scribe				
Writing support is given because:				
How does this help the student:				
☐ Writing sample from student is attached if scribe is usually used				
Rest breaks				
Rest breaks are given because:				



How does this help the student:
Smaller rooms for exams: \square < 12 \square < 5 \square Separate room (exceptional circumstances only)
Student needs a smaller room for exams because:
☐ Evidence attached regarding need for separate room
Prompt
Student needs to be prompted as their normal way of working, because:
Other information / requirements
Student has exams for this course: 🗌 Yes 🗎 No
Student also does: 🛘 Maths GCSE 🖟 English GCSE 🖟 Functional Skills
☐ Sitting November Resits (submit by 3 rd October)
Tutor Signature
Tutor Signature



Tutor Signature	•••••
Student Signature	•••••
Next steps	

We will review the referral form and, provided there is enough detail on the form, we will check we have any relevant documentation / evidence on record, discuss the access arrangements with the student, carry out any observations of normal ways of working and assessments as needed, complete the relevant JCQ forms and apply for approval. Once this is complete, the student's EAA will appear on ProSolution/ProMonitor. If you have any concerns or questions, please contact Bethan or Rachel by emailing studysupport@craven-college.ac.uk.



Appendix 2 Types of Access Arrangements and possible evidence

Access arrangement	Why apply for this?	What to include on Evidence of Need referral form	Evidence required by exam board
Coloured overlay	Learner experiences visual disturbance and uses an overlay in class	State that this is used	 No further evidence required Learner responsible for bringing overlay to exam (spares can be borrowed from W1.01 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 in place to support in class	 Evidence of Need form Any formal assessment or medical notes that are available 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 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 Any formal assessment or medical notes that are available In class documentation
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

Craven College Access Arrangements Policy Review due October 2026



<u> </u>			
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 25%	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 used and record this on referral form Confirm that it is the learner's normal way of working to use extra time 	 Evidence of Need form Examples of learner's work In class documentation Statement of Special Educational Need or assessment by specialist tutor showing at least 2 below average standardized scores in processing speed or reading and/or writing speed or letter from specialist detailing precise nature of processing difficulty
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 	 Evidence of Need form Classroom documentation Short concise file note Specialist assessment showing below average score in reading accuracy, comprehension or speed dependent upon individual examining body requirements



		normal way of working	
Scribe	 Physical disability, medical condition or recent injury preventing writing Visual impairment and cannot touch type or use a brailler 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