



Access and participation policy 2023-2024

Introduction: Career Research Centre-CRC is committed to providing equal rights, equal opportunities and mutual respect for everyone with whom the Service has contact. We recognise that people may be disadvantaged through a range of circumstances and we will actively work to engage with all our employees and learners to understand and reduce disadvantage by making appropriate adjustments to enable the learner to access their learning.

We have put in place the necessary systems and procedures to allow the provision of access arrangements, including reasonable adjustments. These should reflect the needs of individual learners and must also ensure that the assessment enables a valid, reliable, and consistent judgement to be made about access to and achievement of learning outcomes against the stated assessment criteria.

Career Research Centre-CRC's Assessment Policy Statement outlines our full commitment and expectations of both tutors and learners. We believe all learners are entitled to receive assessment that is fair, rigorous, regular and appropriate to the learning needs of the individual and requirements of the course.

Career Research Centre-CRC's Admissions Policy outlines our values and that we seek to recruit students from a diverse student community. We are committed to promoting equal opportunities for all students, recognising that our provision is enriched by a diverse student body that is reflective of the wider community. We welcome applications from individuals from all backgrounds. We recognise that student potential is not always demonstrated merely by formal academic qualifications and are happy to accept home and international applicants and those from backgrounds that are under-represented within post-16 education (subject to eligibility criteria).

Access arrangements allow learners to show what they know, and can do, without changing the demands of the assessment. We aim to ensure that all learners who have additional reasonable requirements are not substantially disadvantaged by the difficulties they may have in relation to:

- Communication and interaction
- Cognition and learning
- Social, emotional and mental health
- Sensory and/or physical needs
- Specific learning difficulty e.g. dyslexia, meares irlen syndrome

For example we can arrange additional time, or the use of coloured overlays on question papers, scribes and readers or the presence of a support worker where anxiety is an issue.

Staff carrying out assessments are skilled at exploring and suggesting reasonable adjustments where these have not been previously identified by the individual. Access arrangements are discussed and agreed before an assessment and allow a learner with special educational needs, disabilities or temporary injuries to access the assessment.

Where individual or service delivery circumstances necessitate assessments taking place online, Career Research Centre-CRC will ensure that the learner has received details in

advance of the assessment and has been given the offer of support to access the assessment where required.

All tutors and learners are made aware of the existence of this policy at recruitment and it can be found on the [service website](#).

Roles and responsibilities

1. Curriculum teams are responsible for providing an inclusive approach to initial assessments and teaching and learning. This includes high quality assessment and teaching materials that are differentiated for individuals, including those with SEND so that they can fully access the curriculum. Learners should also be encouraged and supported to use technology in the classroom and at home to support independent learning where possible. Assessors and tutors play an important role in encouraging learners to fully utilise the support available.
2. Tutors and the support team will administrate and support applications to apply for additional support, for example; 1-1 support, reader, note taker, adaptive resources, specialist software, examination adjustments in extra time or breaks required.
3. Tutors and the examination team will work together to ensure approved access arrangements are put in place in a timely manner for internal test, assessments, mock examinations and examinations.
4. The examinations team will publish examination schedules, including exam access arrangements and staffing for supporting access arrangements in examination such as separate rooms. The tutor, learner support team and examinations team will work together to provide readers or scribes. Staff supporting in exams will have received training in how to carry out this support within JCQ regulations.
5. Tutors will encourage learners to take ownership of the adjustments necessary for their access to learning and will support them to carry this information forward, where appropriate to future courses and learning opportunities.

Procedures

Learners will be provided with the opportunity to disclose and discuss support requirements with tutors and support staff in a confidential setting at any time. Application is made via our learner support needs application form in a process of self referral or at:

1. admission stage (telephone, enrolment);
2. induction;
3. prior to registration for examinations and controlled assessments;

Exam Access Arrangements

1. Access arrangements allow learners with recognised support needs to access formal assessments without changing the demands of the assessment e.g. (extra time, readers). (Evidence will usually be required – see point 6). In this way awarding bodies and Career Research Centre-CRC comply with the duty of the Equality Act 2010 to make 'reasonable adjustments'. Access arrangements are assessed, approved and implemented in accordance with JCQ guidelines or other awarding body guidelines as appropriate.
2. A reasonable adjustment for a particular person may be unique to that individual and may not be included in the list of available Access Arrangements. How reasonable the adjustment is will depend on a number of factors including the needs of the learner. An adjustment may not be considered reasonable if it involves unreasonable costs, timeframes or affects the security or integrity of the assessment. There is no duty on part of the Awarding Bodies to make any adjustment to the assessment objectives being tested in an assessment.
3. Deadlines for applications for exam access arrangements to exam boards are raised by and discussed with the examinations team as it will relate to individual examination bodies and relevant qualification.
4. Any learners entitled to exam access arrangements will have details added to the examination timetable and curriculum teams informed.
5. Applications for exam access should be completed in line with the appropriate awarding body application process and should reflect a learner's normal way of working.
6. Appropriate documentation will be required for exam access adjustments such as:
 1. A letter from a doctor, hospital consultant, a psychiatrist, a speech and language therapist;
 2. A letter from the local authority sensory impairment service or occupational health service.

3. An EHCP which confirms the candidate's SEND and includes evidence of the candidate's current difficulties and how they impact on teaching and learning in the classroom.

7. Career Research Centre-CRC will provide a student with a word processor facility with the spelling and grammar check facility/ predictive text switched off. To use a word processor will need to be the student's normal way of working. (See appendix A)

Reasonable adjustments may include (depending on individual exam board regulations and, where required, formal SENCO assessment):

- Allocation of additional time – learners may be entitled to an allowance of up to 25% depending on the history of evidence of need and the recommendation of the assessor. In some circumstances a learner may be entitled to an allowance of up to 50%.

- Support of a reader – a trained adult who would read the question and any relevant text (with the expectation of section A of an English GCSE exam) for learners. The learner would then write the answer/s themselves. The reader can also read back the learner's answers to them, or this can be a digital reader such as 'Claro Read' or a reader pen.

- Support of a scribe/amanuensis – a trained adult who writes for the learner. The learner would dictate their answers and punctuation. The scribe will write exactly what they say.

- Word process; access to a computer for an exam (if appropriate – not necessarily appropriate for subjects such as maths and science) so the learner would word process their answers. Tools to check spelling and grammar and access to the internet and other areas of the Learning network would be switched off. (see point 7 above).

Special Considerations

Special consideration is a post-examination adjustment to a candidate's mark or grade to reflect temporary illness, temporary injury or other indisposition at the time of the assessment. This may have had, or is reasonably likely to have had, a material effect on a candidate's ability to take an assessment or demonstrate his or her normal level of attainment in an assessment. Special considerations are dealt with in line with the individual awarding body and JCQ policies.

Special consideration can only seek to go some way to assist a candidate affected by a potentially wide range of difficulties, emotional or physical, which may influence performance in examinations. It cannot remove the difficulty faced by the candidate. There will be situations where candidates should not be entered for an examination. Only minor adjustments can be

made to the mark awarded because to do more than this would jeopardize the standard of the examination.

Special consideration can be applied after an assessment if there was a reason the learner may have been disadvantaged during the assessment.

For example, special consideration could apply to a learner who has temporarily experienced:

- an illness or injury
- some other event outside of their control
- serious disturbance during an examination, particularly where recorded material is being used;

and which has had, or is likely to have had, a material effect on that learner's ability to take an assessment or demonstrate his or her level of attainment in an assessment.

Special consideration should not give the learner an unfair advantage, nor should its use cause the user of the certificate to be misled regarding a learner's achievements. The learner's result must reflect his/her achievement in the assessment and not necessarily his/her potential ability. If successful, special consideration may result in a small post-assessment adjustment to the mark of the learner. The size of the adjustment will depend on the circumstances and reflect the difficulty faced by the learner.

As Training Providers we also have to take into consideration due to certain exam board restrictions that:-

- where an assessment requires the learner to demonstrate practical competence or where criteria have to be met fully, or in the case of qualifications that confer a Licence to Practice, it may not be possible to apply special consideration. In some circumstances, for example with on demand assessments, it may be more appropriate to offer the learner an opportunity to take the assessment at a later date.

Appeals by a learner:

You have the right to appeal a decision made by Career Research Centre-CRC. If you wish to appeal please refer to the Appeals Procedure Policy.

Review Arrangements

We review this policy annually as part of our quality process and revise as and when necessary in response to our learner feedback, changes in our practices, actions from the regulatory authorities or external agencies or changes in legislation.

Appendix A

Access to Assessment –Computer Use in Exam Conditions

Career Research Centre-CRC will provide a learner with a word processor with the spelling and grammar check facility/ predictive text switched off. To use a word processor will need to be the learner's normal way of working. Career Research Centre-CRC follows the criteria below when allowing a learner to use a word processor in an exam:

- Their work is not legible due to a disability
- A medical condition
- A physical condition
- A sensory impairment
- poor handwriting

A word processing cover sheet (JCQ/WP Form 4) will be completed for each learner. Below are Career Research Centre-CRC requirements relating to the use of a computer in exam assessment. If you are granted the use of a computer to write your exams, the examination team will inform you of this decision who will also arrange a suitable room where computers will be subject to availability.

All examinations taking place using computers must comply with the usual "Notice to Candidates and Examinations Rules".

Use of a computer in exams – Instructions for examination centres

The computer used for examinations must be set up according to the following rules:

- No access to material stored as memory.
- No access to spell checker or related software (unless the awarding body regulations state or they inform the Exam Centre that permission is given).
- No access to the calculator (learners who are allowed to use a calculator should bring their own approved calculator as specified in the "candidate notes").
- No access to the Internet (unless the awarding body informs the Exam Centre that permission is given).
- No access to a translation dictionary or any other dictionary unless specified in the awarding body regulations.
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Before the start of the examination

The centre should remind learners to ensure that their candidate number, the paper code and title, and the respective question number appear on each page of answers. The learner's name must not appear on any part of the printed document.

After the examination

The electronic file containing the exam answers must be saved immediately and passed to the invigilator or Exams Officer.

The provided examination answer book cover should be completed according to the instructions and must include the candidate number.

A copy of the examination answers should be printed and all pages, including any rough work, should be inserted inside the examination answer book and secured together with string. The standard Career Research Centre-CRC exam form and the attendance sheet must also be completed by the invigilator and returned with the answer book to the Exam Officer.

If applicable, please retain an electronic copy of the candidate's script until the Exam's Officer has confirmed safe receipt of the answer book by email.