



Exam Access Arrangements

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Document Control/ Review Sheet

The information in the table below details earlier versions of this document with a brief description of each review and how to distinguish amendments made since the previous version date (if any).

Version Number	Version Description/ changes	Date of Revision
004	This Policy was created by Carolyn Bolger specifically for Rivers with reference to the most up to date JCQ ICE booklet. Changes highlighted in yellow- Access Arrangements. Updated December 2025 by Carolyn Bolger	December 2025
005	Carolyn Bolger updated the policy to add criteria for doodle paper – last paragraph of the policy	March 11, 2026

Criteria For The Use of a Scribe at Rivers ESC.

- A candidate is allowed a scribe if a Form 8 has been completed and an assessment has been carried out by a qualified Access Arrangements Assessor.
- The areas that can provide assessment evidence for a scribe are connected with writing skills and follow the rules set out by the JCQ. They are:
 - A Spelling accuracy score in the below average range (a standard score of 84 or less) with unrecognisable spelling attempts.

And / Or

- A writing speed score in the below average range (a standard score of 84 or less)
- In addition, the assessment can provide qualitative evidence of writing difficulties, where the writing is illegible or grammatically incomprehensible. These issues may not be evidenced by a standard score and as such will need to be referred to the awarding body.
- A scribe is **only permitted** in the Functional Skills exams if they meet the 2024-2025 criteria as set out Pearson Edexcel. (<https://qualifications.pearson.com/content/dam/pdf/Support/Access-arrangements/guide-functional-skills-access-arrangements.pdf>)
- Pupils can have access to the use of a WP with spelling and grammar check off.
- If a pupil prefers to make use of a WP because their handwriting is illegible then this is also offered (and the spelling and grammar check switched off). This also has to be the pupil's normal way of working and follow the JCQ guidelines.
- Form 9 describes the evidence of need for pupils who have been assessed needing a scribe.

Criteria For The Use of a Reader at Rivers ESC.

- If a candidate has a baseline assessment score below the average age range and having support with their reading is their normal way of working, then they are offered a reader as part of their Access Arrangements.

Or

- If a candidate has a low average standard score AND teachers' provide evidence that the pupil has difficulties with reading, or difficulties with understanding text based information in the classroom and that support is given as the pupil's normal way of working, then a reader is offered as an access arrangement for the pupil.
- The JCQ guidelines are followed: " the candidate has persistent and significant reading difficulties and that there is a genuine need for the arrangement."
- A human reader is not allowed when the test is assessing reading skills, but a student may use a computer reader in these circumstances.

Criteria For The Use of Rest Breaks at Rivers ESC.

- Where a candidate has a diagnosis of A.D.H.D or has recognised A.D.H.D traits and/or is waiting for an assessment, then the pupil can use movement breaks to refocus, so that they can return to learning and an access arrangement is given for rest breaks.
- This follows the JCQ guidelines for supervised rest breaks:

“Supervised rest breaks is a helpful arrangement for a candidate with a condition or issue that makes it difficult to complete an exam without a break or rest period.”

- This is also their normal way of working.

JCQ guidelines are adhered to:

- The SENCo is allowed to provide a supervised rest break to a candidate where it is his/her normal way of working within the centre. The SENCo 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 (the candidate is disabled within the meaning of the Equality Act); and there is a genuine need for the arrangement. Supervised rest breaks will be awarded on account of:
 - cognition and learning needs;
 - communication and interaction needs;
 - a medical condition;
 - sensory and physical needs;
 - social, mental and emotional needs.
- In addition, the candidate’s difficulties must be established within the centre and thus known to the SENCo and/or a senior members of staff.
- Form 9 is written for candidates with rest breaks as their access arrangements which evidences their need.

Criteria For The Use of a Prompter at Rivers ESC.

- The SENCo can permit a young person to have a prompter during exams where a candidate has a substantial and long-term adverse impairment resulting in persistent distractibility or significant difficulty in concentrating. For example, the candidate:
 - has little or no sense of time (e.g. candidates with ADHD or ASD); or
 - persistently loses concentration; or
 - is affected by an Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder which leads them to keep revising a question rather than moving onto other questions.
- In such instances a candidate may be assisted by a prompter who can keep the candidate focused on the need to answer a question and then move on to answering the next question.
- Form 9 is written to support evidence of need and normal way of working.

Criteria For The Use of 25% Extra Time (E.T) at Rivers ESC.

- The SENDco will always assess firstly if rest breaks are more appropriate for the candidate than 25%ET. Even if the pupil qualifies for 25% ET the SENDco will have a discussion with staff and the pupil to discuss what would work best for them and what is their normal way of working.
- If an assessment for extra time is carried out, the guidelines from the JCQ are followed, they are:
 - Standard assessment evidence of two below average scores or 84 or less
 - One below average score or 84 or less and one low average standard score of 85-89.
 - The scores must relate to two or more different areas of speed of working.
 - 2025-2026 rules now require centre based evidence as well as internal exam samples of work and staff comments explaining the need for 25% extra time. If form 9 is used for evidence for 25% extra time it must include evidence of a trial of rest breaks and why they were insufficient.
- Form 9 is included to support evidence of need.

Criteria For the Use of Doodle paper

This is a new centre delegated arrangement as of 2025-2026 JCQ access arrangements and reasonable adjustments. The target group is specifically intended for candidates with persistent and significant concentration difficulties e.g students with ADHD, anxiety or sensory processing needs. This must still be the candidate's normal way of working and can only be authorised by the SENDco. The candidate is provided with a blank sheet of paper specifically for doodling and this will be collected at the end of the exam. The doodle paper is not sent to the examiner. Evidence of need will only require a brief note on file explaining that the student has concentration difficulties and that doodling is their normal way of working.

Date policy last reviewed: March 2026

Signed by:



Headteacher

Date: 12/03/2026



Chair of governors

Date: 12/03/2026