

‘Separate invigilation/rooming’ for candidates – who decides and when does it apply?

Firstly, and most importantly, separate invigilation is determined by the SENCo, in conjunction with relevant teaching staff and exam office personnel. JCQ are clear in that the decision to offer separate invigilation to candidates is the responsibility of the SENCo.

So, on what criteria should the SENCo base this decision? On page 69 of JCQ’s [Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments](#) publication, it is clearly stated that the centre must make its decision based on the following criteria:

- the candidate’s difficulties are established within the centre;
- these difficulties are known to a Form Tutor, a Head of Year, the SENCo or a senior member of staff with pastoral responsibilities;
- separate invigilation reflects the candidate’s normal way of working in internal school tests and mock examinations as a consequence of a long term medical condition or long term social, mental or emotional needs;
- ‘normal way of working’ includes separate invigilation during mock examinations, internal school tests and/or high level GCSE controlled assessments.

The following are two examples where candidates would be eligible for separate invigilation:

- A candidate with depression who has been under Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS)
- A candidate with an established medical condition or formally recognised social, emotional and behavioural difficulties

Where a candidate simply panics on the day of an examination or becomes anxious, then he/she should not be offered separate invigilation, but be seated more appropriately within the main examination hall.

Separate invigilation is no different to other access arrangements; such as prompters, supervised rest breaks etc. Heads of Year and Assistant Head teachers with pastoral responsibilities will be aware of students with established and long term health conditions and which candidates are eligible for separate invigilation. Working with the SENCo and exams officer (EO), who may highlight issues such as room availability and the need for additional invigilation, a centre-based decision is made on the need for separate invigilation.

The issue of separate invigilation simply further reiterates the need for clarity over roles and responsibilities, clear communication channels between the SENCo and EO, and most importantly that SLT, SENCos and EOs are fully aware of JCQ’s rules and regulations. This means being fully conversant with all relevant JCQ publications – from cover to cover.

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