

## **Alternative Evidence Assessment (AEA): Guide**

### **What is Alternative Evidence Assessment?**

Alternative Evidence Assessment (AEA) is an exceptional process allowing an awarding body to determine a candidate's grade using alternative assessment evidence when the candidate cannot access the standard assessment, even with all reasonable adjustments. As outlined in the JCQ "Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments 2025/26", AEA may only be used when:

- The candidate is disabled under the Equality Act 2010.
- All suitable reasonable adjustments have been considered and found insufficient.
- The candidate has completed the course of study and produced valid alternative evidence demonstrating their knowledge, skills, and understanding.
- The evidence can be compared to national standards.

### **When AEA May Be Used**

AEA may be considered when a disabled candidate:

- Cannot sit the standard assessment despite all reasonable adjustments being exhausted.
- Has followed the full course of study.
- Has produced verifiable alternative evidence.

AEA is not the same as special consideration. Special consideration applies only when the candidate has taken part of the assessment. AEA applies when the standard assessment cannot be accessed at all due to disability-related restrictions.

### **How to Apply for AEA**

#### **Step 1: Early Identification**

- Confirm that the candidate is disabled under the Equality Act 2010.
- Confirm that no reasonable adjustment allows access to standard assessment.

- Ensure the candidate has completed the course and has relevant evidence.
- Contact the awarding body at the earliest opportunity.

## Step 2: Gathering Evidence

### **The centre must collect:**

- Medical or diagnostic evidence confirming disability.
- Documentation of all reasonable adjustments explored.
- A record of the candidate's course of study and specification coverage.
- Verified alternative evidence: mocks, assignments, NEA, supervised tasks.
- A centre statement confirming evidence authenticity and comparability.

## Step 3: Submission to the Awarding Body

- Submit all evidence and rationale to the awarding body.
- Follow awarding body submission procedures and deadlines.
- Await formal decision.

## Step 4: Decisions and Record Keeping

- Awarding body determines the grade using alternative evidence if approved.
- Centre must store all documents in line with JCQ 2025–26 retention guidance.

## **Roles and Responsibilities:**

### **SENCo/Access Arrangements Lead:**

- Identify candidates requiring AEA.
- Collate disability evidence and document all reasonable adjustments.
- Liaise with staff to collect alternative assessment evidence.

### **Exams Officer:**

- Submit the AEA request to awarding bodies.
- Maintain secure evidence records.
- Meet JCQ deadlines and compliance requirements.

### **Subject Teachers:**

- Provide specification-aligned alternative assessment evidence.
- Confirm authenticity of candidate work.

**Head of Centre:**

- Approve all AEA requests.
- Ensure compliance with JCQ 2025–26 documentation.

**Acceptable Alternative Evidence Includes:**

- Mocks under supervised conditions
- Past paper assessments
- Coursework/NEA (where applicable)
- Class tests aligned with specification content

**Retention and Audit:**

Centres must retain all AEA evidence records in line with JCQ's 2025–26 retention requirements and ensure they are available for inspection.

**Checklist:**

- ☐ Candidate meets Equality Act definition.
- ☐ Reasonable adjustments exhausted.
- ☐ Evidence collected and verified.
- ☐ Submission authorised by Head of Centre.
- ☐ Outcome recorded and next steps planned.
- ☐ Records retained securely.

**Relevant JCQ References (2025–26)**

The following documents apply:

- Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments 2025/26
- A Guide to the Special Consideration Process 2025/26
- Instructions for Conducting Examinations (ICE) 2025/26