



Access arrangements – guidance

This guidance document is intended for all applicants except for those applying for specific learning difficulties. If you intend to apply for access arrangements for a specific learning difficulty (SpLD) find out more on our [exams applications](#) web page.

ICAEW wants to test your knowledge and skills fairly. We know that exam conditions can be difficult for some students so we offer access arrangements if you have a short-term or long-term impairment, disability or health condition, or if you are pregnant or breastfeeding.

WHAT ACCESS ARRANGEMENTS ARE AVAILABLE?

We will do what we reasonably can to meet your needs. Common arrangements include:

- giving you rest breaks;
- giving you extra time;
- using a scribe (writer) or someone to read to you.

Some arrangements cannot be granted for short term conditions. Rest breaks or extra time for short term conditions will be a maximum of 17%.

Let us know if your condition means you may need to use equipment that you own or that your employer has provided for you, or if your condition prevents you from travelling.

HOW DO I APPLY FOR ACCESS ARRANGEMENTS?

Please upload the below information to my.icaew.com/examsonline:

- a covering letter explaining why you are applying for access arrangements;
- the medical report form *Application for access arrangements: supporting evidence* which should be completed by the appropriate medical expert; and
- any additional supporting evidence that will help us consider your application; if we understand your difficulties, we will be able to help you more effectively.

WHAT INFORMATION DO I NEED TO INCLUDE?

Please send us the above documents with the relevant sections filled out by a registered medical practitioner who has treated you. This will usually be your normal doctor or the specialist treating you for your condition. We will only accept diagnoses and recommendations from qualified medical practitioners. We won't accept a diagnosis from a nurse, practitioner of complimentary health, or occupational health advisor – although we'll consider this evidence together with a diagnosis. In almost all cases the medical practitioner will have seen you in person, and the diagnosis must be up-to-date.

Your evidence must be current and must explain as clearly as possible what the particular difficulties you may encounter are, and the arrangements that would help you overcome them. For example, telling us that 'extra time will be required' is not enough. We need to know how much time and why this is needed; eg, 'five minutes extra time per exam hour is required to allow

stretches to be carried out'. We will not accept applications which do not fully evidence the circumstances and the resulting recommendations.

WHEN DO I NEED TO APPLY?

We recommend that you apply as soon as possible. This means you should apply when you register as a student with ICAEW, or as soon as you are aware that you may need arrangements.

Professional and Advanced Level exams

For each exam session, the access arrangements application deadline is the same date as the exam applications deadline. However, your chosen centre may not be available with the arrangements you are awarded, so if you do not apply as soon as possible there is a risk that we won't be able to accommodate you.

[View all key exam dates and deadlines.](#)

We will not be able to process your access arrangement application if we receive it after the deadline for that exam session.

If you do have a condition which arises after the deadline, you should contact us immediately so we can advise you on the best course of action. You may need to consider whether to defer your exam. Such circumstances will be dealt with by ICAEW on a case-by-case basis.

Certificate Level exams

Please apply for access arrangements at least 30 days before your intended exam date, and please do not book your exam until arrangements have been confirmed. Our process may take more than 30 days during peak periods, if you are requesting complex arrangements, or those which require more information.

For Certificate Level exams we cannot consider any short-term problems that occur immediately before an exam. Instead, you will need to defer and book another date. If a problem affects you during the exam, you may be eligible for special consideration. [Find out more.](#)

WHO SHOULD I WRITE TO?

In order to apply for make an enquiry for access arrangements, please visit my.icaew.com/exams/online and click on 'Apply for Access Arrangements'.

HOW LONG WILL MY APPLICATION OR ENQUIRY TAKE TO PROCESS?

We will review your enquiry or application and aim to provide a response within 10 working days; during peak periods this can take a little longer. We will then let you know if your application can be approved, or if we need more information.

If we need further information, we will write to you telling you what you need to send us. Once we've received the information we need, we will deal with your application within our published timescales.

Some access arrangements take longer to arrange than others. These include using a scribe (writer), reader or an exam in a special format. If we're not able to meet your needs on the date you have chosen, we'll inform you of the next exam session when we can accommodate your needs.

HOW WILL ICAEW REVIEW THE APPLICATION?

If your application meets the criteria set out in this document, ICAEW will make an independent decision on the arrangements which we can provide. This means that the arrangements we award may be different to those recommended by your practitioner, or those you were granted by another organisation. The type and extent of any access arrangements you are awarded are entirely at the discretion of ICAEW.

Arrangements which are made on a temporary basis will require you to apply again when your award expires. Please ensure any up to date evidence is submitted before the deadline of your chosen exam session.

ARE ACCESS ARRANGEMENTS AVAILABLE AT ALL EXAM VENUES?

We can accommodate most access arrangements at your chosen exam venue. We recommend that you apply for access arrangements as early as possible to secure the arrangements you need at the centre of your choice.

If you are granted access arrangements after applying for an exam session, which cannot be accommodated at the venue you have applied to, your booking may be transferred to a different centre.

- To accommodate complex arrangements students in the UK may have to attend one of our two dedicated venues in Milton Keynes or Manchester.
- For computer-based exams for the Professional and Advanced Level, you will usually be accommodated with other students in your chosen venue, regardless of whether they also have access arrangements.
- Students awarded the 'sole occupancy' arrangement type are provided with their own room as standard. However, it is possible for any student to sit an exam alone in a room, if through chance they are the only candidate who was booked into that exam room. If you are awarded sole occupancy, you may have two ICAEW invigilators present.

The information pertaining to venues covers the vast majority of access arrangements students. However, if your requirements are complex we will discuss individual arrangements with you.

CONTACT US

For information on access arrangements, please visit my.icaew.com/examsonline