



Selecting Using and Interpreting Standardised Tests – *principles for educational testing.*

Will attendance at this course qualify me to become a ‘named’ Specialist Teacher for my centre and carry out assessments for JCQ Access Arrangements?

The short answer to this question is ‘No – not on its own’

You may be aware that the system for recognising teachers qualified to carry out assessments has changed. The list of recognised qualifications drawn up by the JCQ will no longer have new qualifications added to it, and Head Teachers are now responsible for appointing a ‘named’ Specialist Teacher who meets a list of criteria set out by the JCQ.

It is expected that most ‘named’ Specialist Teachers will have one of the qualifications previously recognised by the JCQ. There may be a few teachers who are experienced in assessment, and have other additional qualifications, who do not hold such a qualification. They would be able to demonstrate that they meet the required criteria by e.g. demonstrating other SEN qualifications, evidence of experience, practice and continued professional development.

A summary of the criteria which must be met by a named Specialist Teacher is as follows: (please see this year’s JCQ Regulations ‘Access Arrangements, Reasonable Adjustments and Special Consideration’ at: www.jcq.org.uk/exams_office, for a more detailed breakdown).

- ▶ Able to teach & assess secondary age or adult learners who have learning difficulties
- ▶ Have the skills and knowledge to carry out assessments
- ▶ Hold a thorough understanding of principles, procedures & accountabilities outlined in JCQ regulations*
- ▶ Be familiar with the Equality Act 2010
- ▶ **Understand & use age appropriate, nationally standardised tests (i.e. validity, reliability, standard deviations, raw scores, standard scores, quotients, percentiles, age equivalent scores)**
- ▶ **Training & experience in administering individual tests – reading, writing & spelling**
- ▶ **Training & experience with cognitive ability tests – know when to refer to an EP**

The criteria which will be covered during this two day/10 hour course is highlighted in bold.

Heads should be aware that, when an Exams Officer ‘names’ a teacher as a specialist on the Access Arrangements Online system, they are confirming that evidence that this teacher meets the above criteria is available in the centre for inspection. Centres are required to keep a copy of the Specialist Teacher’s certificate on file (the assumption is that they will hold an additional qualification in SEN even if it is not a JCQ recognised one) along with a statement from the head of centre outlining the rationale for the appointment of the Specialist Teacher.

Our ‘Selecting, Using and Interpreting Standardised Tests: *Principles in Educational Testing*’ course does not offer any qualification and no attempt is being made to assess what knowledge; skills or understanding delegates already have, or have gained during this course. Delegates will receive a certificate of attendance, and advice is offered on how to produce a portfolio of evidence to demonstrate theoretical knowledge and practical experience.

* Our one day/5 hour course ‘Access Arrangements for General Qualifications for new delegates’ will enable delegates to meet this criterion. However this course also only offers a certificate of attendance and will not qualify delegates to access for Access Arrangements. Please note that the ‘Selecting, Using and Interpreting Standardised Tests: Principles in Educational Testing’ focuses on the actual tests, it does not cover the regulations for Access Arrangements.

A number of course providers and awarding bodies do offer qualifications, and this is reflected in the length of their courses, as well as the cost. Delegates who need more in depth training leading to a qualification should consider the Certificate of Competence in Educational Testing (CCET) run by Real Training in partnership with Dyslexia Action (www.realtraining.co.uk) or the OCR Certificate for Teachers of Learners with Specific Learning Difficulties (01223 553998).

The aim of the two day/10 hour Selecting, Using and Interpreting Standardised Tests course is to provide training in the underlying principles for using educational tests for;

- Teachers who are new to using standardised tests (we recommend that you carry out some related activities before the course in this case).
- Those with some experience who need to understand the theory behind the practice and experience that they have.
- Experienced teachers holding a qualification previously recognised by the JCQ who wish to update and refresh their knowledge.
- Holders of an Assessor Practicing Certificate who need core CPD hours to update. Communicate-ed is an Authorised Assessment CPD provider for the BDA and SASC, and both our venue based and online 'Selecting, Using and Interpreting Standardised Tests: *Principles in Educational Testing*' courses can provide core hours for the renewal of Assessment Practicing Certificates.
- Teachers who hope to become a named 'Specialist Teacher' for their centre, who are experienced in assessment and may have other additional qualifications. They would be able to demonstrate that they meet all the required criteria by e.g. evidence of experience, samples of assessments, practice and continued professional development, but need to demonstrate that they have been trained in the criteria in bold above.

Only those in the final three categories who have met all the criteria listed on the previous page should be acceptable as named Specialist Teachers.

During the course advice will be offered on how to draw up a 'Portfolio of Evidence' to demonstrate your knowledge and experience. This is entirely optional, and the course presenters will not be able to 'mark' any portfolio that delegates elect to produce.

It is worth remembering that until a few years ago only Educational Psychologists were able to assess candidates identified as requiring Access Arrangements. This was subsequently extended to teachers who possessed a JCQ recognised qualification, most of which are at post graduate diploma or masters level. This is obviously not a set of skills that can be gained just from a 2 day/10 hour course!

The final decision concerning who should be named to carry out assessments for Access Arrangements for General Qualifications lies with the Head of Centre. He/she should consult the most recent JCQ regulations for a list of the required criteria (outlined on the previous page) and refer to the list of previously recognised qualifications (See www.jcq.org.uk/accessarrangements). Please be aware that JCQ inspectors, who visit centres on an annual basis, may ask to see evidence that a named Specialist Teacher is suitably qualified and meets all the required criteria.

It is not possible for Communicate-ed staff to ascertain whether an individual delegate holds the required knowledge, skills or understanding. This is a matter for the Head Teacher in discussion with the prospective Specialist Teacher to decide.

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