

Educational Assessment Unit (EAU)

Access Arrangements in National Examinations

Definition of Access Arrangements:

Provisions to allow eligible students to gain access to assessments and demonstrate their achievements without having an unfair advantage on their peers

Eligibility:

Students can be given Access Arrangements only if stipulated in the professional report presented to schools by the parents and/or after being assessed by a person appointed by the Specific Learning Difficulties (SpLD) Service, School Psychological Service and/or any other professional body. When more than one report of the same student is presented, the most recent report concerning the particular learning difficulty/challenge is to be given consideration.

Provision of Access Arrangements:

All measures should be taken by schools to ensure the provision of these arrangements. However, Access Arrangements can only be granted if the school has the resources that are required.

Range of Access Arrangements

These are the most common access arrangements offered in the various school exams and assessments. A definition for each access arrangement is given together with further information that is applicable to the specific arrangement.

		Examination Sessions		
Access Arrangement	Support Provided	Primary Years	Middle School Years	Senior School Years
Amanuensis	<p>This provision is given to students who cannot write at all, due to injury in hands, hand sutures, etc... The Amanuensis will write in green the student's dictated answers to questions. The Amanuensis must write down answers exactly as they are dictated.</p> <p>The Amanuensis must draw or add to maps, diagrams and graphs strictly in accordance with the student's instructions.</p> <p>In the creative writing tasks, after the student dictates the whole passage, s/he will spell every tenth word and the Amanuensis will write the word in blue ink. In some language exercises, it will be more feasible if students spell the word first and the Amanuensis writes straight away in blue ink.</p> <p>The Amanuensis, at the student's request, must read back what has been written, when the student can't read the Amanuensis' handwriting.</p>	✓	✓	✓
Communicator	<p>This service is carried out by a teacher of the Hearing Impaired or the Learning Support Educator (LSE), who is very careful not to give any extra information. The questions in the examination papers are modified at source and includes the simplification of the language. S/he may sign read the questions for students who are normally taught through sign language, if access to questions is not possible through other means.</p> <p>In the language listening comprehensions with an audio-visual recording, students who benefit from the service of a Communicator during examinations, can have the listening comprehension text read out live to them three times instead of twice. They can also benefit from a 25% extra time in this component.</p> <p>It is up to the discretion of the Communicator whether or not the audio-visual recording is shown to the particular student, as sometimes this can be a distraction rather than facilitate understanding.</p>	✓	✓	✓

Access Arrangement	Support provided	Primary Years	Middle School Years	Secondary School Years
Enlarged Print	<p>Due to visual impairment, the student may need an enlarged examination paper (in A3 format). These enlarged papers are to be done at school. Soft versions of the examination papers may be requested from the Educational Assessment Unit so the good quality of printing is retained.</p> <p>No specific font sized examination paper can be provided for individual students.</p>	✓	✓	✓
Extra Time	<p>If not stated otherwise, extra time is 25% of the time allocated for the examination. If longer time is deemed necessary, care must be taken not to tire the student beyond good performance. Granting extra time should never mean that the confidentiality of the paper is jeopardized or that the collection of scripts at the end of the session is unorderedly.</p>	✓	✓	✓
Multiplication Tables	<p>Some students require the multiplication tables during the Mathematics examinations.</p>	✓ (Written Paper only)	✓	
Prompter	<p>This is required to draw the student's attention back to work. The prompter works as unobtrusively as possible by using a light tap on the student's arm or shoulder or desk or pointing back to examination paper. Verbal prompting should be subtle, and the prompter should observe the student's behaviour and not their work.</p>	✓	✓	
Reader**	<p>The Reader is to read accurately all the paper to the students without explanation, translation, simplification or clarification. The reading is spaced in such a way that the student's pace of work is respected.</p> <p>For language Reading Comprehensions, unless the reading text can be read with a reading aid device, the text is to be read to the students. *This should be endorsed in the reporting of the result.</p> <p>In the language examinations, in the Listening Comprehension papers, students may ask to have the questions read when time is allocated for the students to check their work.</p> <p>When a Reader is being granted within a group setting, students are to be given the possibility to request reading/ re-reading of specific parts of the paper.</p>	✓ * ✓ ✓	✓ * ✓ ✓	✓ ✓ ✓

** This provision is not applicable for Foreign Languages examinations.

Arrangement	Support provided	Years	School Years	School Years
Reader when Requested	The Reader reads accurately to the student any part of the paper as and when requested by the student. Reading should be done without explanation, translation or clarification.	✓	✓	✓
Reader Pen	<p>The reading pen is an assistive technology device that may be used during examinations. By simply running the pen across printed questions, students can instantly hear them read aloud.</p> <p>The use of this device means students who have reading difficulties, such as dyslexia, can independently take exams knowing they can easily access written material thus facilitating the understanding of text.</p> <p>Refer to the Educational Assessment Unit Policy on the use of Reader Pens in National School Examinations accessible at https://curriculum.gov.mt/en/Examination-Papers/Documents/reader_pens_policy.pdf</p>	✓	✓	✓
Immersive Reader	<p>The Immersive Reader is a digital tool embedded in Microsoft Word. It provides students the possibility to listen to text read aloud or adjust how text appears by modifying spacing, colour and more.</p> <p>Schools may request a Word version of the examination paper from EAU, and make the necessary adjustments to the examination text to be read or seen on this digital tool.</p> <p>Students using the Immersive Reader may be placed in a separate room or use the headphones not to disrupt other students.</p>	✓	✓	✓
Rest Periods (Supervised)	The students will stop working every now and then, take a short break and then continue. The duration of this period will not be deducted from the time allocated to the examination.	✓	✓	✓
Separate/ Distraction free Room	Some students need to be placed in a separate room. Up to six students may be grouped together in each quiet room. Access arrangements with one student should not disturb other students.	✓	✓	✓

Access Arrangement	Support provided	Primary Years	Middle School Years	Secondary School Years
Scribe/ Transcription of illegible words	<p>The Scribe will transcribe illegible words.</p> <p>When the student finishes the task set, the Scribe will read through the student's written text and check for any illegible words. The Scribe is to ask the student what s/he intended to mean by the illegible words. Using a green biro, the Scribe is to write the words correctly on top of the illegible words only, without asking the student to spell the words.</p> <p>This will ensure that the marker of the script will have access to the ideas and writing of the student.</p>	✓	✓	✓
Use of a Word Processor	<p>Student must be using the PC during the learning process on professional recommendation for at least one scholastic year.</p> <p>EAU will provide a Word/Pdf version of the examination papers upon request.</p> <p>Student is to be accommodated separately for the examinations.</p> <p>Students sitting examination papers using PDF version of the papers are to write their answers on a hard version of the examination paper or use a blank Word document to type in their answers. The student's script must be printed out and signed by the student and the invigilator.</p> <p>Students who will be using a Word format of the examination paper must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Type answers directly on the soft version and frequently save their work. - Have the auto-spelling facility turned off during language tasks. - Have their examination responses printed at the end of the examination, and the print-out signed by the student and the invigilator. <p>For students using the Immersive Reader AND the Word Processor, a Word format of the exam paper should be requested from the EAU as this facilitates the usage of the Immersive Reader and the inputting of text in the same Word document.</p>	✓	✓	✓

Access Arrangements Providers must not give factual help nor offer any suggestions to the students. It is strictly prohibited to explain, clarify or translate into Maltese or English (or any other language), any part of the examination paper to the candidate.

Access Arrangements Providers must not advise the student regarding which questions to do, when to move on to the next question, nor the order in which questions should be answered.