



Educational Assessment Unit

Tel: 25982139/6/5/2/1 Fax: 25982114

GUIDELINES AND DEFINITIONS FOR ACCESS ARRANGEMENTS During School Examinations (excluding Benchmark)

Within these guidelines we are using the following terms:

- a) **EXAMINATION ASSISTANT** - the Examination Assistant is the Reader / Prompter / Amanuensis / Scribe who makes the examination paper accessible to the candidate. **The Examination Assistant is to adhere strictly to the Access Arrangements, so as not to give a candidate an unfair advantage or disadvantage.**
- b) **OBSERVER** - the Observer supports the Head of School and the Examination Assistant and ascertains that no irregularities occur during the examination. His duty is to see that the Examination Assistants adhere strictly to the Access Arrangements.

A) DUTIES OF THE EXAMINATION ASSISTANT AND OBSERVER

- Both the Examination Assistant and the Observer are accountable for the fair and smooth running of the examination and their joint testimony may be required at times to help neutralise any allegation of malpractice.
- The Examination Assistants and Observers should only meet the candidates at the place where the examination is held. They are **not** permitted to speak to the parents at any time before or after the examination.
- Talking between the Examination Assistant and Observer should be restricted to essential communication. Otherwise **strict silence** should be observed.

- The Examination Assistant **must not give factual help nor offer any suggestions** to the student. It is **strictly prohibited to explain, clarify or translate** into Maltese or English any part of the examination paper to the candidate.
- The Examination Assistant **must not advise the candidate** regarding which questions to do, when to move on to the next question, nor the order in which questions should be answered.

B) ACCESS ARRANGEMENTS

The Purpose of Access Arrangements

- 1) Access arrangements are arrangements which are approved in advance of the examination to enable candidates, who might otherwise be unable to do so, to demonstrate their attainment.
- 2) Access arrangements may be needed for:
 - Candidates with a permanent or long-term disability, for example,
 - mobility impairment
 - visual impairment
 - hearing impairment
 - specific learning difficulty
 - candidates with other disabilities / conditions
 - Candidates with a temporary disability or indisposition at the time of the examination(s).

Principles which are applied to decisions about Access Arrangements

- 1) The nature of the access arrangements will be determined according to the assessment needs of the individual candidate.
- 2) The access arrangements must not give the candidate an unfair advantage or disadvantage with other candidates.
- 3) Arrangements must be such that they do not mislead users of the certificate about the candidate's attainment.
- 4) Arrangements should not reduce the validity and reliability of the assessment and must not compromise the integrity of the examinations.
- 5) Account will normally be taken of the candidates's usual method of working in the classroom.

RANGE OF ACCESS ARRANGEMENTS

- **Separate Room** - certain candidates are placed in a separate room due to their particular needs. Access Arrangements with one candidate should not disturb other candidates.
- **Extra Time** - 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 candidate beyond good performance. Granting extra time should never mean that the confidentiality of the paper is jeopardised or that the collection of scripts at the end of the session is unorderly.
- **Rest Periods (supervised)** - certain candidates need to stop work every now and then, take a short break and then continue. The duration of this period will not be deducted from the time allowed for the examination.
- **Amanuensis** - in cases where the candidate cannot write at all, for example due to injury in hands, the Amanuensis will write **in green** a candidate's dictated answers to questions. The Amanuensis **must write down answers exactly as they are dictated**.
- **Scribe** - candidates may write words / phrases which are illegible. The Scribe asks the candidate what the illegible word means and writes it **in green**.
- **Reader all the paper** - the Reader is to read **accurately** all the paper to the candidate. The reading is spaced in such a way that the candidate's pace of work is respected.
- **Reader when requested** - the Reader reads **accurately** to the candidate any part of the paper as requested by the candidate.
- **Communicator** - This duty is carried out by a Teacher of the Hearing Impaired, who should be very careful not to give any extra information. (The examination papers are modified at source.) He/She may sign the questions for candidates who are normally taught through sign language, if access to questions is not possible through other means.
- **Prompter** - draws the candidate's attention back to work. ADHD candidates often require this Access Arrangement. The prompter works as unobtrusively as possible, touching an elbow or pointing back to the paper.
- **Enlarged print** - the candidate may need an enlarged examination paper.
- **Multiplication Tables** - may be required by the candidate during the Mathematics examination.