



READING POLICY

Relating to Examinations and Assessments

Policy Approved: November 2023
Policy Renewal: November 2025

Reviewed by the SENDCO and LGB Governors

“The Governors of Greenbank High School are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people at every opportunity and expect all staff and volunteers to share this commitment”

Item	Topic	Page
1	Introduction	2
2	Purpose of the policy	2
3	Principles for using a reader	2
4	At least one standardised score of 84 or less (accuracy or comprehension)	3
5	Rare and exceptional cases	3
6	Supplementary evidence – painting the picture of need	3
7	The school may determine that the use of a reader is not appropriate due to the following reasons	4
8	Computer reader / reader	4
9	Factors the centre must take into account	5
10	Read aloud	5
11	Examination reading pen	5
12	The rules – the use of a reader	5

1. Introduction

This policy on the use of reader in examinations and assessments is reviewed and updated annually, on the publication and updated JCQ regulations and guidance contained in the publications Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments and instructions for conducting examinations. References to 'AA' relate to JCQ Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments 2020/2021 and ICE to JCQ Instructions for conducting examinations 2020/2021

2. Purpose of the policy

This policy details how the centre manages and administers the use of readers in examinations and assessments.

3. Principles for using a reader

School complies with AA Chapter 5 Adjustments for candidates with disabilities and learning difficulties regulations and guidance as follows:

The School's SENDCO must be satisfied that:

- the candidate has an impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect, which gives rise to persistent and significant reading difficulties. The student will be seen as disabled within the meaning of the equality act;
- cognition and learning needs;
- communication and interaction needs;
- a medical condition;
- sensory and physical needs;
- social, mental and emotional needs.
- there is a genuine need for the arrangement
- reflects the student's normal way of working

To assist the school in determining if there is a genuine significant and persistent need we will:

- Assess all children at their point of entry to the school for reading proficiency and will continue to be tested on an annual basis;
- Pictorial representation of the criteria for the use of a reader.

<p>At least one score of 84 or less The vast majority of candidates with a substantial and long-term impairment awarded a reader will fall into this category.</p>	<p>Two or more scores between 85-89. A small proportion of candidates will fall into this category.</p>	<p>A reading Age that is more than 3 years behind their chronological age.</p>
---	---	---

4. At least one standardised score of 84 or less (accuracy or comprehension)

Those children who score in the below average range (84ss) will be provided with reading intervention/support and have their needs recorded on their SEND Support Plan (if this is in place).

The use of a reader will be made the child's normal way of working in lessons/assessments. This may take many forms: reading pen, computer reader, 1 to 1 reader, access to a group reader or support from an additional adult or peer as required.

Those children with below average scores (84ss) or those where there is a wealth of evidence to suggest they require the support of a reader will be reassessed at the start of the exam cycle.

5. Rare and exceptional cases

For those rare and exceptional cases which fall outside **the standard expected category, of at least one standardised score of 84 or less**, the amount of evidence of need will vary, and will likely need to be greater, according to the candidate's standardised scores on tests of reading.

6. Supplementary evidence – painting the picture of need

- a. At least one score of 84 or less Evidence of normal way of working within the centre (i.e. Part 1 of Form 8) and a sample of internal school tests/mock exam papers showing the application of extra time

Or

SEND Support Plan making reference to the need for reading support or comments and observations from teaching staff as to why the candidate needs a reader and how he/she uses this. Evidence of a reading age that is chronologically behind the child's actual age.

- b. Two or more scores between 85-89 (over consecutive assessments or a variety of reading assessments) Evidence of normal way of working within the centre

Or

Evidence of a reading age that is chronologically behind the child's actual age.

Or

SEND Support Plan making reference to the need for extra time

Or

Comments and observations from teaching staff as to why the candidate needs a reader

- c. Three or more scores between 90-94 relating to three different area of speed of working,

Evidence of normal way of working within the centre showing an extensive history of need;
and

Evidence of a clear, measurable and substantial long term adverse effect on performance and speed of working;

and

A diagnostic assessment report, from no earlier than Year 9, confirming a significant learning difficulty or disability. This must have been undertaken by a HCPC registered psychologist or specialist diagnostic assessor;

and

Evidence of a reading age that is chronologically behind the child's actual age.

- d. A cluster of standardised scores (at least three) relating to three different area of speed of working just within the average range, - 90 to 94.
- e. To assist centres with these rare and very exceptional cases, the Equality Act 2010 definition of disability, is provided on page 4.

7. The school may determine that the use of a reader is not appropriate due to the following reasons:

- The student does not use, access a reader as their normal way of working.
- The student does not fit the criteria of 'disabled' within the Equality Act.
- There is a lack of 'history of need'
- There is a lack of teacher-based evidence to suggest that the student has a 'genuine need'

8. Computer reader / reader

- Papers (or sections of papers) testing reading
- A computer reader will be allowed in papers (or sections of papers) testing reading.
- A computer reader and a reader do not interpret text in the same way. A reader can add a layer of vocal interpretation (nuance and meaning). This could affect a candidate's response and therefore compromise the reliability of the qualification. A computer reader is an acceptable arrangement since it allows the candidate to independently meet the requirements of the reading standards.

(See pages 43-50 on the permitted use of computer readers in GCSE and GCE qualifications).

JCQ AA 5.5.7 - A reader will not be allowed to read questions or text in papers (or sections of papers) testing reading. A candidate who would normally be eligible for a reader but is not permitted this arrangement in a paper (or a section of a paper) testing reading may be granted up to a maximum of 50% extra time. (Where a candidate is using a computer reader or an examination reading pen, the SENCo cannot grant up to a maximum of 50% extra time.)

An approved application for a reader will allow the SENCo to grant the candidate up to a maximum of 50% extra time in a paper (or a section of a paper) testing reading. Where reading and writing are being assessed in the same paper, the maximum allowance of 50% extra time must only be allocated to the reading section. Centres should calculate the total time allocated to reading based on the number of marks allocated to the reading questions and add up to a maximum of 50% to that time. Advice from the relevant awarding body may need to be sought. In a paper (or a section of a paper) testing reading a reader may read back, upon request, what the candidate has written without any emphasis on errors.

JCQ AA 5.5.8 A reader would bring their own interpretation to a description of a diagram. This could affect a candidate's response and compromise the reliability of the qualification. A reader should only help a vision impaired candidate retrieve information found in diagrams, graphs, maps and tables in response to a request from the candidate.

Factors the centre must take into account

JCQ AA 5.5.9 The centre is responsible for ensuring that the candidate and reader cannot be overheard by, or distract, other candidates. (This will also apply if the candidate uses a computer reader.)

A suggested memory aid for a reader can be found at Appendix 1. COMPUTER READER/READER Where the candidate and reader are accommodated in another room, on a one-to one basis, the reader cannot additionally act as the invigilator where he/she is the candidate's subject teacher, Learning Support Assistant or teaching assistant.

JCQ AA 5.5.10 Readers may work with more than one candidate but must not read the paper to a group of candidates at the same time, as this imposes the timing of the paper on the candidates. Where candidates only require occasional words or phrases to be read, three or four candidates may share one reader. The candidate will need to put their hand up or use a prompt card when he/she needs help with reading. If the group is accommodated in another room, away from the main examination room, a separate invigilator will be required. Each candidate in the group must meet the published criteria for a reader.

9. Read aloud

JCQ AA 5.6.1 It can make a significant difference to a candidate who persistently struggles to understand what they have read to read aloud. Where a candidate is reading difficult text, he/she may work more effectively if they can hear themselves read.

JCQ AA 5.6.2 The arrangement must reflect the candidate's normal way of working in internal school tests and mock examinations.

JCQ AA 5.6.3 A candidate who reads aloud to him/herself must be accommodated in another room, away from the main examination room.

JCQ AA 5.6.4 A candidate who would normally be eligible for a reader but is not permitted this arrangement in a paper (or a section of a paper) testing reading may read aloud with up to a maximum of 50% extra time.

10. Examination reading pen

JCQ AA 5.6.5 - A permitted examination reading pen will not have an in-built dictionary or thesaurus, or a data storage facility. The use of an examination reading pen, provided by the centre, might benefit those candidates who wish to work independently. It may increase the independence of candidates who needed a reader for accuracy rather than comprehension.

The use of an examination reading pen should always be considered for those candidates who only require occasional words or phrases to be read to them. As a examination reading pen may be used in papers (or sections of papers) testing reading, candidates cannot additionally be granted up to a maximum of 50% extra time in place of the reader.

11. The rules – the use of a reader – JCQ AA Page 46

- may help a vision impaired candidate retrieve information found in diagrams, graphs, maps and tables so that he/she has access to the same visual information as a sighted candidate. The candidate must make clear what help he/she requires;
- may read numbers printed in figures as words (e.g. 356 would be read as three hundred and fifty six, but when reading the number it should also be pointed to on the question paper). An exception

would be when the question is asking for a number to be written in words (e.g. write the number 356 in words);

- may decode symbols and unit abbreviations in Maths and Science examinations for candidates who require this arrangement to access the assessment, reflecting the candidate's current and normal way of working within the centre;
- may, if requested, give the spelling of a word which appears on the paper but otherwise spellings must not be given;
- may read back, when requested, what the candidate has written without any emphasis on any errors;
- must read accurately;
- must have appropriate subject knowledge in order to act effectively as a reader in Maths and Science examinations, and decode symbols and formulae with accuracy;
- must only read the instructions of the question paper and questions, and must not explain or clarify;
- must only repeat the instructions of the question paper or questions when a candidate indicates a specific need for help;
- must only read the instructions/rubric of a paper testing reading and must not read individual questions or text;
- must abide by the regulations since failure to do so could lead to the disqualification of the candidate;
- 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;
- must not decode any symbols in a Music examination