

How to apply for access arrangements

What are access arrangements?

Candidates with particular physical or learning needs can find themselves disadvantaged when it comes to taking an exam. Access arrangements help support learners with particular needs so that they can access their exams as easily as anyone else can. They make sure that all candidates have equal access to exams and that no-one has an unfair advantage over anyone else.

This leaflet will help you select the right type of access arrangements to support any of your candidates who have particular needs. It will also tell you how to apply to use the access arrangements you think are most appropriate.

How to apply for access arrangements

There are three different groups of access arrangements, each with their own application form and deadline.

1. Access arrangements: you must get our permission to use these arrangements.
2. Centre-delegated access arrangements: you need to notify us if you use these arrangements.
3. Modified papers: you need to apply for these in advance of the exams.



You can download the relevant access arrangements application forms from the 'Preparation' section of the *Cambridge Exams Officers' Guide* at www.cie.org.uk/examsOfficers. The forms are interactive so you can complete them on screen and email them back to us at info@cie.org.uk

Follow the steps below to work out which group of access arrangements you need to use.

1. Get a report from your special needs coordinator/relevant teacher which details the physical disabilities or learning difficulties the candidate has.
2. Work with your special needs coordinator/relevant teacher to decide which access arrangements need to be put in place to support the candidate.
3. See the the access arrangements section of the **>** *Cambridge Handbook* to find out which group each access arrangement belongs to.
4. Read the guidance notes and complete and return the relevant form to us.

What access arrangements are available?

| Candidate need | Possible access arrangements include |
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| <p>Hearing problems</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Headphones for listening examinations. • A version of the question paper where the language has been modified: for candidates with severe hearing loss. • An exemption for either the listening or the speaking paper in a language exam. • Extra time for listening and speaking exams. • Extra time for written papers: if the candidate has literacy difficulties which mean they are slower to show understanding of written questions. • A transcript with live speakers: for candidates who are used to lip reading. • Sign language: to help candidates read the question paper but not to provide any other support. Sign language must not be used in language examinations. |
| <p>Visual impairment</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Modified or enlarged papers in Braille, A3 size, or A4 modified papers reprinted in 18 point bold print with simplified visual information. • Between 25% and 100% extra time to enable candidates to finish the papers, particularly for those candidates using Braille. • A reader: for candidates who do not read Braille and cannot read independently. • A scribe: for candidates who are unable to write independently. If a candidate needs a scribe for a language exam, you should provide them with a recording device so they can dictate their answers. At the end of the exam the candidate plays back the recording, spells each word letter by letter and provides the punctuation for the scribe to transfer to the answer script. The candidate will need 100% extra time to do this. • Supervised rest breaks: for those candidates who find it a strain to read and/or write a paper as a result of their visual impairment. You may decide to arrange rest breaks instead of extra time. The invigilator can stop the timing of the examination and re-start it when the candidate is ready to continue. • A word processor or a Braille and print machine: for candidates who normally use this equipment. • A practical assistant: for blind candidates, to lift equipment or pour liquids during practical examinations. In this case candidates will only be given the credit for planning, analysis and evaluation. |
| <p>Other physical disabilities</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A scribe or personal assistant: for those candidates who cannot use one or both of their hands. • An extra time allowance of 25% to 100%. • Supervised rest breaks: for candidates who tire easily or have an illness which could cause them to fit. You may decide to provide separate invigilation for this candidate so that other candidates are not disturbed. • A word processor: for candidates who can type but cannot write. • A transcript: for candidates who can write but whose writing is difficult to read. |

| Candidate need | Possible access arrangements include |
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| <p>Learning difficulties</p> <p>To make access arrangements for candidates with learning difficulties you will need a report, dated within three years of the exam, written by an educational, clinical or occupational psychologist, or by a teacher with a specialist qualification in special needs.</p> <p>If a candidate only needs 25% extra time to finish the exam, the report can be dated from the time they began secondary school.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A reader: for candidates who score less than 85 in word reading, reading comprehension or reading speed. • A scribe: for candidates who have a spelling standard score of below 85 or a writing speed of less than 12 words per minute, based on a piece of timed free writing. If a candidate needs a scribe for a language exam, you should provide them with a recording device so they can dictate their answers. At the end of the exam the candidate should play back the recording, spell each word letter by letter, and provide the punctuation for the scribe to transfer to the answer script. You will need to allow the candidate 100% extra time to do this. • A word processor: for candidates who are able to use a word processor you may choose to make this arrangement, rather than providing a scribe. • You can allow the candidate to read aloud under separate invigilation but readers are not allowed for language exams. |



Making emergency access arrangements

You can make emergency access arrangements for any candidate who has had an accident at the time of the exam. If you do not have time to let us know about these arrangements in advance, do so as soon as possible after the exam. If this happens please send us a medical certificate with the relevant access arrangements form.



What next?

You must send us your form by the published deadline so that we can take the necessary action (depending on the type of application).

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| Access arrangements: you must get our permission to use these arrangements. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• We will use the evidence you supply to decide whether or not you can use the requested access arrangements.• It may be the case that we allow the access arrangements you want for some syllabuses but not for others. For example, a reader will not be allowed for language exams, where the skill of reading is being tested.• Access arrangements may also be allowed, with some conditions. For example, a scribe might be allowed for language exams but the candidate will have to spell each word letter by letter and dictate all punctuation, as spelling is one of the skills being tested. |
| Centre-delegated access arrangements: you need to notify us if you use these arrangements. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• We will keep a record of the access arrangements on file in case we need to refer to it. |
| Modified papers: you need to apply for these in advance of the exams. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• We will order your modified papers and make sure they are supplied at the same time as your other question papers. |

Deadlines for submitting application forms

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| Modified papers preparation – Form 3. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 21 January – June series• 1 May – November series |
| Non-delegated access arrangements preparation – Form 1. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 21 February – June series• 16 August – November series |
| Delegated access arrangements – Form 4. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 31 March – June series• 31 August – November series |
| Emergency access arrangements. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Just before and during the exam |

Learn more! For more information please visit the Exam Officers section at www.cie.org.uk/examsofficers or contact Customer Services on +44 (0)1223 553554 or email info@cie.org.uk