

## Public Exams Adaptations/Accommodations Policy

The Government of Newfoundland and Labrador recognizes its responsibility to provide reasonable accommodation to students with identified exceptionalities. The purpose of the “Public Exams Adaptation/Accommodation (PEAA) Policy” is to establish guidelines to provide reasonable accommodation during public examinations for students with identified exceptionalities.

The PEAA Policy lists and clarifies the most common adaptations and accommodations used by students with identified exceptionalities during public examinations. In special circumstances other forms of assistance may be required depending on the particular needs of the student. Determination of the use of other types of assistance or procedures will be made on an individual basis by the Manager for High School Certification at the Department of Education in consultation with the District’s Education Officer for Student Support Services.

1. Students with identified exceptionalities will be provided with accommodations/adaptations.

These adaptations/accommodations **must be both**;

- (i) consistent with the student’s Individual Education Plan (IEP) and/or Pathway 2 Record of Accommodations/Adaptations
- (ii) consistent with the adaptations/accommodations outlined in this policy

2. Such adaptations/accommodations refer to the use of any reasonable means or special arrangements in addition to those used generally for other students. These adaptations/accommodations are appropriate to ensure all students have a fair opportunity to demonstrate their achievement under suitable conditions. Special adaptations/accommodations include but are not limited to:

- extra time
- dictation of responses
- reading of the exam with clarification of instructions
- transcribing
- large print or Braille
- sign language
- alternate setting within the school
- use of word processing software with spell check and grammar check
- use of voice and text recognition software
- use of other forms of assistive technology

3. Specific conditions for requesting accommodations in the public examinations are as follows:

- Accommodations are provided to offset specific need(s) that have been acknowledged by program planning team members.
- Accommodations requested must have been previously utilized effectively by the student.
- Accommodations must be consistent with the student’s Individual Education Plan (IEP) and/or Record of Accommodations. These accommodations must be supported by the student’s comprehensive assessment results.

- Adaptations/accommodations to evaluation may include only such alternative means as are necessary for a fair and effective evaluation. The grading standards used will be the same as for all other students.
- No course may be evaluated by means which exclude the use of skills that are considered integral or essential to the course. For example, in a Language Arts course, specific skills include reading and viewing, writing and speaking (as well as listening in the instances of French Language Arts).
  - For the purpose of this policy, “reading” is the analysis, interpretation and critical evaluation of texts and text elements. At the high school level, a student may “read” by utilizing many different cuing strategies. “Reading” may not require the student to decode print.
  - Writing and other ways of representing are the integration and composition of information from many sources to convey meaning. They are also the articulation and justification of positions on an issue or text, showing an understanding of a range of viewpoints. At the senior high level, writing does not necessarily include the mechanical act of writing text on paper.
  - Viewing is the analysis, interpretation and critical evaluation of images, media texts, and visual elements. Schools with students who are blind or severely visually impaired should consult with the Itinerant Teacher for the Blind/Visually Impaired for recommended individual students’ accommodations.

4. Specific guidelines for adapted and accommodated evaluation in the public examinations are as follows:

(i) Extra time:

- Students who have been approved for extra time and are working productively can continue working to a maximum of 5 hours.
- In some cases, a student may require scheduled, supervised breaks. Where this accommodation has been approved, the time for breaks should not be included as part of the time allowed for writing the exam.

(ii) Dictation of Responses – Voice Recognition or Audio Recording:

- The use of assistive technology that the student is familiar with is the preferred option. Some examples may include, but are not limited to, digital recording, cassette tape, and speech recognition software.
- In cases where these accommodations are not possible, a scribe will be assigned. The scribe must follow the guidelines outlined on the scribe information sheet attached to this policy.

(iii) Reading of the Exam

- Test items may be read to a student for whom a comprehensive assessment report confirms such a need.

(iv) Clarification of Instruction

- The wording of exam questions may be clarified providing examinable terms are not defined for the student, thus compromising the integrity of the exam.
- The exam for which this accommodation has been approved cannot be read by:
  - the teacher teaching that particular course, or
  - any teacher who provided instructional support to the student in that course, or
  - a relative of the student.

The District Education Officer for Student Support Services must contact the Department's Manager for High School Certification in situations where the guidelines regarding who may and may not clarify instruction pose a problem for a student with significant anxiety.

(v) Transcribing:

- The student will write his or her response to the exam question. A teacher will read the student's written answer back to the student. The student orally tells the teacher of any required changes to his or her answer and the teacher writes those changes on the exam paper.

(vi) Use of Word Processing Software:

- When using word processing software, desktop computers or lap top computers may be used by a student to type or dictate responses to an exam. These computers must be supplied by the school. A student is not permitted to use his/her personal computer. Spell check and grammar check, consistent with the students IEP and/or Pathway 2 Record, are permitted in exams. Other features must be disabled. **Internet access is prohibited.**
- The file must be saved on a CD using the file name d:/student exam # name of exam (e.g. d:/51403Math3200).
- A printed copy of the file, together with the CD, must be sent to the Department of Education. The file must not be saved on the hard drive. No electronic or print copy of this file shall be kept at the school.

(vii) The following accommodations are permitted for English Language Learners (ELL) students if the school team determines that these accommodations are necessary:

- Bilingual dictionary (the dictionary must not have any definitions)
- Extended time
- Clarification of instructions

5. Procedures for requesting accommodations/adaptations are as follows:
- (i) Requests for an adaptation/accommodation are to be made on the appropriate form (provided) by **March 31<sup>st</sup>** for June.
    - Unless circumstances have changed, any adaptations/ accommodations approved for June will be allowed for August.
    - For those students writing a supplementary in August who have not written an exam the previous June, or who did not have an approved adaptation/accommodation, this application should be submitted by **June 30<sup>th</sup>**.
  - (ii) Forms must be signed by the student, parent and principal. These forms are to be submitted to the District's Education Officer for Student Support Services for signature. The Education Officer decides whether the application is approved, not approved, or if it requires further consultation with the Manager for High School Certification. The Education Officer must then forward these forms to the Department of Education.

## Scribe Information Sheet

Only individuals having professional qualifications in teaching or testing may be approved to act as scribes. Student assistants are not permitted to act as scribes.

The exam for which the accommodation has been approved cannot be scribed by:

- the teacher teaching that particular course, or
- any teacher who provided instructional support to the student in that course, or
- by a relative of the student.

The District Education Officer for Student Support Services must contact the Department's Manager for High School Certification in situations where the guidelines regarding who may and may not scribe pose a problem for a student with significant anxiety.

An approved scribe shall record only what the student dictates, without prompting. In any examination for which the conventions of written language are an integral aspect of the course (e.g., Language Arts) the student's dictation must be complete with grammatical usage and writing mechanics. The guidelines below must be followed.

- Where audio taping is used to complete examinations in which writing is integral, e.g., Language Arts, the student must provide dictation which indicates the writing mechanics, as noted above, to the qualified scribe or a written transcript of the oral presentation which indicates the conventions of written language.
- An approved scribe performing graphical or mathematical processes shall write only as directed by the student. However, scribes may utilize electronic calculators or mathematical instruments provided that students direct their use.
- All scribed sessions must be accompanied by an audio recording of the session.
- Language Arts
  - The student should have experience using a scribe so that conventions are easily interpreted by the scribe (e.g., the ending of a sentence indicated by a prolonged pause). The student should not have to spell every word or indicate the beginning and end of each sentence. The student should, however, indicate when a new paragraph is to start.

**ADAPTATIONS/ACCOMMODATIONS FOR PUBLIC EXAMINATIONS**

<b>STUDENT INFORMATION</b>	
Student Name: _____	MCP #: _____
School Name: _____	School ID #: _____
<b>THIS SECTION TO BE COMPLETED BY SCHOOL PERSONNEL</b>	
Date of recent comprehensive assessment: _____	
Person completing assessment: _____	
Upon review of the student's comprehensive assessment, the student's exceptionality is: _____	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accommodations being requested should be consistent with those currently in place.</li> <li>• If the same accommodations are being requested for more than one course please list all applicable courses in "Course Information 1". If there are different accommodations being requested for a course or courses please use subsequent "Course Information" sections</li> </ul>	
<b>Course Information 1</b> (list all courses for which the indicated accommodation(s) apply)	
Course Name(s) and Number(s): _____	
_____	
_____	
<input type="checkbox"/> extra time    amount of time _____	<input type="checkbox"/> large print or <input type="checkbox"/> Braille
<input type="checkbox"/> dictation of responses <input type="checkbox"/> scribed <input type="checkbox"/> audio-recorded	<input type="checkbox"/> transcribing
<input type="checkbox"/> reading of the exam (may supplement text reading software)	<input type="checkbox"/> sign language
<input type="checkbox"/> alternate setting within the school	<input type="checkbox"/> use of word processing software
<input type="checkbox"/> use of voice and text recognition software	<input type="checkbox"/> clarification of instruction
<input type="checkbox"/> use of other types of assistive technology	<input type="checkbox"/> other
please specify _____	please specify _____
<b>Course Information 2</b> (list all courses for which the indicated accommodation(s) apply)	
Course Name(s) and Number(s): _____	
_____	
_____	
<input type="checkbox"/> extra time    amount of time _____	<input type="checkbox"/> large print or <input type="checkbox"/> Braille
<input type="checkbox"/> dictation of responses <input type="checkbox"/> scribed <input type="checkbox"/> audio-recorded	<input type="checkbox"/> transcribing
<input type="checkbox"/> reading of the exam (may supplement text reading software)	<input type="checkbox"/> sign language
<input type="checkbox"/> alternate setting within the school	<input type="checkbox"/> use of word processing software
<input type="checkbox"/> use of voice and text recognition software	<input type="checkbox"/> clarification of instruction
<input type="checkbox"/> use of other types of assistive technology	<input type="checkbox"/> other
please specify _____	please specify _____

**Course Information 3** (list all courses for which the indicated accommodation(s) apply)

Course Name(s) and Number(s): \_\_\_\_\_

<input type="checkbox"/> extra time    amount of time _____	<input type="checkbox"/> large print or <input type="checkbox"/> Braille
<input type="checkbox"/> dictation of responses <input type="checkbox"/> scribed <input type="checkbox"/> audio-recorded	<input type="checkbox"/> transcribing
<input type="checkbox"/> reading of the exam (may supplement text reading software)	<input type="checkbox"/> sign language
<input type="checkbox"/> alternate setting within the school	<input type="checkbox"/> use of word processing software
<input type="checkbox"/> use of voice and text recognition software	<input type="checkbox"/> clarification of instruction
<input type="checkbox"/> use of other types of assistive technology please specify _____	<input type="checkbox"/> other please specify _____

_____ Signature of School Counsellor or Special Education Teacher	_____ Date
_____ Signature of Student	_____ Date
_____ Signature of Parent/Guardian	_____ Date
_____ Signature of Principal	_____ Date

Please forward to District's Education Officer (Student Support Services)

approved                       not approved (provide details)                       partially approved (provide details)

Details:  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of District's Education Officer (Student Support Services)                      Date