

UNIVERSITY OF MALTA

Guidelines to MATSEC Examinations Access Arrangements

2015



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These guidelines will be in force for all applications for the MATSEC examinations taken place in or after 2016.
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1. Introduction

The University of Malta (UoM) through the MATSEC Board and the ACCESS-Disability Support Committee (ADSC) has responded to the growing number of candidates who request access to the SEC/Matriculation Certificate examinations. These guidelines were developed to inform students, parents, representatives from schools and different professionals about the wide range of examination access arrangements (EAAs) offered to candidates with disability and the criteria for processing applications.

These guidelines are intended to help candidates with disability, as well as parents and professionals, understand the rationale behind the way access arrangements are made in relation to MATSEC examinations. They have been compiled by the ADSC in view of the relevant provisions of the Maltese legislation stipulating the right for candidates with disability to access examinations (see Education-Equal Opportunities (Persons with Disability) Act 2000 CAP.413 and the University Assessment Regulations, 2009 drawn up by Senate in terms and by virtue of its powers deriving from the Education Act (CAP 327)).

The number of EAAs mentioned in this document is based on experiences of past applications and requests that were processed by the ADSC. They are by no means to be considered as an attempt to exclude candidates who may have other impairments that are not mentioned in this document. The ADSC considers the details of each application on its own merits.

The present publication is a revised and updated edition of the UoM Guidelines to MATSEC Examinations Access Arrangements, 2011.

2. ACCESS-Disability Support Committee, MATSEC Board & Examination Access Arrangements

The ACCESS – Disability Support Committee (ADSC) is a joint Council and Senate appointed committee chaired by the Pro-Rector for Student and Institutional Affairs. Members of the ADSC have various areas of expertise. They are appointed to the Committee in order to ensure that each request for EAAs is fully understood and handled as effectively as possible. The ADSC consults with other experts whenever necessary.

The Matriculation and Secondary Education Certificate (MATSEC) Examinations Board is the responsible authority entrusted with setting examinations at SEC, Intermediate and Advanced Matriculation Level.

The ADSC and the MATSEC Board recognise the rights of persons with disability to access examinations with the appropriate arrangements. They also recognise that it is their duty to ascertain fair assessment that takes into account each person's impairment. Following on this principle, the ADSC in collaboration with the MATSEC Board assesses requests made by candidates with disability and reports to Council and Senate regarding the ways that accessibility to examinations can be achieved for each individual. The ADSC and the MATSEC Board intend to do this in compliance with local legal requirements in the area of equal opportunities for persons with disability.

The ADSC and the MATSEC board recognise the fact that there are students who have coped well with the learning demands of a course but for whom the standard arrangements for the assessment of their attainment may present a barrier which could be removed without affecting the validity of the assessment. Both students with known and long-standing disabilities as well as those who are affected at or near the time of assessment are included.

The nature of assessment barriers can be varied and relates to the type of impairment that a particular candidate has. Therefore the ADSC studies each application for EAAs individually. It makes recommendations about EAAs based upon the guidelines set out in this document which have the approval of Senate.

EAAs are approved by the ADSC before MATSEC examinations take place. These arrangements are intended to allow the students' attainment to be demonstrated by facilitating access to the examination while ensuring that the validity of the examination is upheld. In so doing, such provisions do not alter the assessment demands of the qualifications. It is the responsibility of the applicant, be it an independent candidate or any relevant representative at secondary or post-secondary level, to ensure that a request on behalf of a candidate is based on firm evidence that a barrier to assessment of attainment exists.

Candidates will receive a letter from the ADSC specifying those arrangements which have been approved. Candidates should bring this letter with them to each examination session.

3. The Purpose of Examination Access Arrangements (EAAs)

The ADSC and MATSEC Board recognise the fact that there are students who may have acquired the knowledge, understanding and skills required by particular subject syllabuses but are prevented from demonstrating their attainment due to an impairment, learning difficulty or other obstacle that impedes them from accessing or answering the examination questions.

For this reason, the ADSC's role is to make, wherever possible, the necessary reasonable EAAs that enable such candidates to demonstrate their attainment. EAAs are made on the basis of an application with full documentation and certification. These have to be submitted to the MATSEC Support Unit at the MATSEC Building, University of Malta, Triq I-Esperanto, Msida by the deadline stipulated by the MATSEC Board as indicated in Table 3. A separate application for examinations must be submitted to the Examination Department in Floriana.

Candidates sitting for SEC examinations are reminded that requests for EAAs can be made when in Form 4. The ADSC is currently studying the best way forward to grant EAAs to candidates who will be reading vocational subjects for which formal assessments take place from Form 3.

EAAs are intended to provide candidates with the necessary arrangements to access SEC and Matriculation examinations, which in this document refers to any form of assessment. The assessment criteria are laid down in the respective subject syllabi under the heading of 'Assessment Objectives' (www.um.edu.mt/matsec). These explain what students must know and do in order to achieve the qualification. EAAs cannot be granted if the assessment criteria are compromised or if they directly affect performance in the skills that are being examined.

Candidates must be able to demonstrate the knowledge, understanding and skills that form part of the assessment criteria for that particular examination. Thus, for example, even candidates with dyslexia who in non-language subjects qualify for a reader, cannot have the paper read to them during a language examination. In language examinations, reading the language is a skill that candidates must demonstrate.

Some impairments affect the student's ability to demonstrate one or more of the examination objectives. In some cases, an alternative route may be available in the syllabus and advice may be sought about how to approach the subject. It is not always possible to arrange access for students whose impairment affects a skill, knowledge, understanding or competence which is being assessed in a

particular examination. As a result, where the candidate might be unable to satisfy the assessment criteria required by the specifications of the syllabus, no EAAs can be granted.

It is highly unlikely that students who consistently sit for adapted examination papers or who obtain very low scores in regular school examinations throughout their secondary education would be able to cope with the demands of the MATSEC examinations despite all possible access arrangements provided.

Candidates must be aware that during the processing of the applications for EAAs, it might be necessary for relevant personal information to be either:

- (a) passed on to relevant third parties or
- (b) for the ADSC to request further relevant personal information from third parties.

In either case the ADSC ascertains the safeguard of all the candidate's rights under Chapter 440 of the Laws of Malta under the Data Protection Act.

The relevant application form (see Chapter 11) should be filled in and submitted. All the relevant documentation should be submitted with the application form requesting EAAs and handed in or sent through registered mail to the MATSEC Support Unit at the address hereunder.

MATSEC Support Unit University of Malta Msida MSD2080 Tel: 2340 2815/6

Email: access.matsec@um.edu.mt

These must be received by not later than the stipulated deadlines, published on the websites: www.um.edu.mt/matsec and exams.gov.mt.

For other relevant information on deadlines please refer to Table 3 in Chapter 8.

Late applications will not be accepted unless new circumstances arise (e.g. a condition resulting from an accident or other unforeseeable circumstances).

4. Principles Applied by the ADSC to Provide EAAs

The nature of the EAAs will be determined according to the needs of the individual candidate after taking into account the severity of the impairment and the requirements of the examination.

Examination Access Arrangements:

- must neither disadvantage candidates nor give them an unfair advantage over other candidates
- must be such that they do not mislead users of the certificate about the candidate's attainment
- should not reduce the validity and reliability of the assessment and must not compromise the integrity of the examination.

There are instances when a candidate's certificate might be endorsed (see Exemption and Endorsement in Table 2, p.15). In such cases, the candidate is always formally informed about the endorsement before the examination.

Candidates who are granted access arrangements for an examination and do not avail themselves of these arrangements without providing a justifiable reason may not be granted the particular access arrangements in subsequent examinations.

All specific enquiries, requests for advice and all completed application forms for access arrangements must be sent to:

MATSEC Support Unit University of Malta Msida MSD2080 Tel: 2340 2815/6

Email: access.matsec@um.edu.mt

Private students and students following courses in post-secondary institutions may obtain further information from the above office or from:

ACCESS-Disability Support Unit
Old Humanities Building Room 109
University of Malta
Msida
MSD 2080
Tel: 2340 2557

Email: adsu@um.edu.mt

5. Impairments

The ADSC will deal with requests for EAAs from candidates who have long term chronic disabling conditions and impairments such as the ones listed below:

- mobility impairment;
- visual impairment;
- hearing impairment;
- specific learning difficulties (such as dyslexia);
- mental health difficulties;
- medical conditions (such as M.E., epilepsy, diabetes);

This list is by no means exhaustive and does not exclude candidates who may have other impairments or conditions not specifically mentioned in this document. Each application is considered on its own merits.

Candidates who have an acute condition of a temporary nature, such as:

- injury resulting from an accident;
- a condition resulting from an acute illness;
- in the case of an emergency

should contact the MATSEC Support Unit as quickly as possible. The MATSEC Support Unit will do its best to accommodate candidates.

It is essential that relevant applications sent to the MATSEC Support Unit should include reports relevant to the particular impairment written by the main professional listed in the middle column in Table 1. Certificates, reports and other documentation have to provide details of the diagnosis and the functional implications related to the impairment as well as recommendations based on the evidence provided where applicable. Other evidence presented by supporting professionals (where relevant) is highly valued as it substantiates the application for access arrangements.

Table 1 Professionals who need to provide reports and/or certification

	Impairment or condition	Professional from whom report/certification is required	Professional (s) from whom additional information may be requested
10.1	ADD/ADHD	Psychologist or Psychiatrist	Occupational Therapist
10.2	Autism Spectrum Condition (ASC)	Educational Psychologist or Clinical Psychologist or Psychiatrist	Speech Language Pathologist or Occupational Therapist or Psychiatrist
10.3	Developmental Coordination Disorder (DCD/Dyspraxia)	Occupational Therapist	Psychologist or Neurologist
10.4	Dyscalculia	Educational Psychologist/ Psychologist working in psycho- educational assessment	
10.5	Hearing Impairment	Audiologist and Teacher of the deaf	Sign Language Interpreter
10.6	Systematic Lupus Erythematosus	Rheumatologist	Psychotherapist Occupational Therapist
10.7	ME/CFS/Post Viral Fatigue Syndrome	Neurologist or Endocrinologist	Physiotherapist or Occupational Therapist or Psychologist
10.8	Mental Health Difficulties	Psychiatrist and/or Psychologist	Psychotherapist Social worker
10.9	Physical and/or Mobility Impairment	Relevant Consultant	Physiotherapist Social worker
10.10	Neurological Disorders	Neurologist	Physiotherapist Occupational Therapist Speech Language Pathologist
10.11	Specific Learning Difficulties	Educational Psychologist or Psychologist working in psycho- educational assessment and literacy specialist	Specialist Teacher Literacy/Dyslexia Specialist
10.12	Speech & Language Impairment	Speech Language Pathologist	
10.13	Visual Impairment	Ophthalmologist	Specialist Teacher

6. Range of EAAs

The ADSC takes into account the candidate's usual method of working in the educational setting and the arrangements made during assessment. However, some of these arrangements may not be appropriate or acceptable for MATSEC examination purposes.

EAAs considered for MATSEC examinations are listed in Table 2. In addition, Chapter 10 provides information on how these arrangements apply in the case of particular impairments.

Heads of School/INCOs and support staff should read the guidelines and make sure that students with particular impairments and their parents/guardians read these guidelines so that they are aware of the different ways in which needs are normally met during SEC/MATSEC examinations. It should also be noted that while some exam arrangements are allowed in certain subjects, they might not be allowed for others.

The types of arrangements for MATSEC examinations vary according to the particular impairment and its severity as well as the particular examination and the examination level. These arrangements are made to enable the candidates to access examinations which they would not otherwise be able to access. EAAs apply only when the impairment puts the candidate at a disadvantage. Nevertheless, arrangements cannot be expected to make up for the impairment. Where subjects are not accessible to a student for other reasons (e.g. level of achievement), arrangements that go against the assessment objectives cannot be considered.

Table 2 Glossary for Examination Access Arrangements

Adaptive equipment	Candidates who make use of small adaptive equipment (such as typing sticks, writing splints, arm supports) must bring their own equipment, subject to approval by the ADSC. Larger equipment such as adapted tables and chairs could be supplied, within reason, provided they have been requested and specifications given well in advance.
Examination venues	In very exceptional circumstances, examinations may be taken outside an examination centre, e.g. in hospital, provided that examination security can be guaranteed and that the supervision requirements can be met.
Time allowance	Time allowance can be in the form of: a) Extra Time Additional time may be allowed in most subjects and types of examination according to need. Additional time will not normally be permitted in an examination component where performance of a task in a limited time is itself an assessment objective (e.g. in the (SEC) Mathematics Paper 1 Section A) or where candidates' ability to demonstrate attainment within the allotted time is not normally affected by their impairment (e.g. in Art). b) Supervised Rest Breaks Rest breaks are given to candidates who, for various reasons, are unable to complete the examination without a break. When supervised rest breaks are granted, the duration of the break will not be deducted from the time allowed for the examination component but will be compensated for after the normal exam time has passed. It is important that students do not distract others during this time and must follow the instructions given by the supervisors of the centre. During the break the candidate will not have access to the examination paper and script. c) Settling down period Compensation time may be given during which eligible candidates can take time to calm down at different points of the examination. Candidates: will be able to enter the examination venue at the same time as all candidates; should advise the invigilator when taking the settling down time necessary. During this time candidates will not have access to the exam paper; should advise the invigilator once s/he wishes to continue with the exam so that the time taken will be added at the end of the official examination time. The total amount of settling time allowed will not exceed 25% of the exam time.

Means of access to questions	 Modifications may be made to the examination paper including: Changes in the visual presentation of the examination paper e.g enlargement; The use of aids and devices (including word processors); Modification of the carrier language for non-language subjects for SEC examinations only; The use of alternative communication (e.g. readers or sign language interpretation) for SEC non language examinations only.
Means of presenting responses	If the candidate's impairment makes writing by hand difficult, responses may be presented in other ways accepted by the MATSEC Board such as by means of a word processor. In very exceptional circumstances (e.g. severe muscular dystrophy) use may also be made of a scribe.
Communicator	Simplification of the rubric of the paper is given by the communicator but this must not extend to the simplification of technical terms or to the text that the candidate is expected to process directly.
Coursework or project work	If a syllabus requires that coursework or project work should be completed within a specified period during the course, or places a limit on the duration of particular assignments, extension of deadlines within a reasonable timeframe may be allowed, provided that this does not jeopardise the publication of results at the agreed time. Requirements may vary depending on examination subject syllabi, therefore early consultation with the ADSC and/or MATSEC Support Unit is strongly recommended. Candidates who may need to apply for an extension must apply two years prior to the examination. All applications must be fully supported by relevant documentation.
Examination Access Arrangements Support Assistants (EAASAs)	EAASAs support candidates with a disability who cannot otherwise access the examination. These may include readers, prompters, scribes, practical assistants, sign language interpreters, communicators (see more information on the MATSEC website by following the link: www.um.edu.mt/matsec/Access). They are trained by the MATSEC Support Unit to support candidates where the support is allowed by the ADSC. They cannot be relatives or friends or persons who support candidates within the educational setting.

Exemption and endorsement	It is not normally in the interest of candidates to be exempted from part of the assessment but, if a candidate is unable to fulfill an assessment objective and an exemption is made, there will be pro-rata adjustment to marks. The missed component should not constitute more than 25% of the marks. Endorsement is also made when an examination objective cannot be fully reached with the required arrangement such as for example, when a scribe assists a visually impaired candidate who is sitting for a language examination. Certificates will be endorsed as follows: "Special arrangements were made to enable the candidate to be assessed in this subject. Details may be obtained from the Registrar." Refer to the Secondary Education Certification Examination Regulations: www.um.edu.mt/matsec/regulations
Physical access to examination venues and examinations	A request may be made for the examination venue to be fully accessible ensuring the dignity of the candidate who has a mobility impairment. Candidates may be given permission to be dropped off as close as possible to the examination venue. Reserved parking close to the examination hall may be requested if candidates are over 18, have a severe mobility impairment and drive their own car. Candidates should also indicate any other ergonomic or environmental adaptations required.
Personal assistant	Candidates may request a personal assistant or a relative to be on call outside the examination hall to assist them when necessary.
Practical assistant for severe physical disability	The guiding principle in practical assessments is to observe safety measures at all times. Candidates must neither endanger themselves nor endanger other candidates. The ADSC should be contacted as early as possible about the possibility of using a practical assistant working under the direction of the candidate for examinations involving practical components or practical coursework to support the candidate by assisting with those elements of the tasks which are not the focus of the assessment.

Prompter	Prompters are assigned to draw candidates' attention back the examination task when the candidate's attention appear be away from the examination task.			
Reader	A reader will be allowed in certain subjects where a candidate has a significant impairment. When requested by the candidate, the reader will read instructions, questions, words or phrases as set down on the examination paper without explanation, translation or clarification.			
Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar	For SEC examinations spelling arrangements are made for all students irrespective of whether candidates are eligible for EAAs. The regulation stipulates that: A candidate's level of a language is not assessed in non-language examinations. Examiners will not penalise candidates for misspelling of particular terms, as long as the term is still recognisable. However, the student should take extra care with similarly spelt terminology such as ethene and ethane (Chemistry); reflection and refraction (Physics) since such errors will be penalised. (MATSEC, 2014) This regulation eliminates the need to apply for spelling, punctuation and grammar arrangements.			
Scribe (only in exceptional circumstances)	When permission is given for the use of a scribe in non-language examinations, candidates will in the course of the examination be asked to dictate spelling of technical terms as well as other words at regular intervals. A scribe is given for language examinations only in very exceptional circumstances when the candidate is physically unable to write (eg. A candidate with severe muscular dystrophy). In such cases, candidates will be asked to dictate punctuation and at the end of the examination, the candidate will be asked to spell every seventh word letter by letter. Candidates using a scribe should be informed that the examination proceedings will be audio recorded and this recording will be made available to the examiners and relevant third parties should the need arise. A word processor is the preferred arrangement where writing difficulties are involved.			

Word Processor

A word-processor is an EAA for candidates with dyspraxia and/or dyslexia whose degree of illegibility of handwriting has been clearly established or whose speed of writing is extremely slow. Samples of the candidate's scripts produced under examination conditions should be submitted to show the candidate's degree of illegibility.

The ADSC will consider each application for a word processor in relation to the assessment objectives of the subjects for which the candidate has registered. Usually a word processor is granted for examinations that require long essay writing. In other subjects like SEC Mathematics, SEC Physics and SEC Chemistry, the use of a word processor does not facilitate the presentation of responses due to a format that involves graphs, tables, diagrams and numbers.

The ADSC reserves the right to seek independent advice concerning the operations of word processors or processor-controlled devices used by the candidates in order to help them determine what examination arrangements should be made.

The most appropriate method of answering should be the one which will enable candidates to demonstrate their attainment in the subject as quickly and fluently as possible. If a word processor is used, the material should be saved at short regular intervals. Back-up equipment should be available in case of breakdown. Printing of material takes place at the end of the exam and does not affect time allowance. The candidate will be asked to sign on the seal of the envelope into which the examination paper is enclosed.

The word processor must not have any predictive text software or automatic spellcheckers, grammar checks or thesauri and must not give access to other applications such as calculators and spreadsheets.

Candidates must have access only to those facilities, including type of processor and devices, which have been approved in advance in writing. If an arrangement involves the use of equipment owned by the candidate, the ADSC may require that the equipment be passed on to them in advance for the necessary preparations.

7. Eligibility for EAAs

Since each application is considered on its own merits, EAAs are granted on the basis of the particular needs of the individual. Therefore candidates with multiple impairments may qualify for more access arrangements than usually given for a single impairment. On the other hand, a candidate with a particular impairment may not necessarily qualify for all arrangements usually given for that particular impairment.

The ADSC recognises the distinction in academic levels between SEC and Matriculation Level examinations. While SEC examinations are intended as certification for secondary level education, Matriculation Certificate examinations may constitute the gateway to further education, potentially leading to a degree or diploma or certificate. Such qualifications may be the key to a variety of professions which assume certain knowledge and skills that are fundamental to the professional's safe conduct. This means that the same access arrangements may not be granted at all examination levels e.g. the assistance of a reader and a prompter are generally not given in any Matriculation level examination.

It is essential for the relevant professionals not only to provide test results but also to comment on the **functional implications**, that is, how the impairment affects the candidate during examinations. Other evidence, for example school reports, should also be presented if relevant, indicating a history of the impairment. **The ADSC does not meet the candidates**, **parents and/or professionals personally**, but candidates may contact the MATSEC Support Unit or the ACCESS – Disability Support Unit (ADSU) for advice.

Whilst it is the ADSC's role to decide upon the arrangements that best suit candidates with an impairment, it is also the ADSC's responsibility to ensure that candidates are not given EAAs for which they do not qualify.

The ADSC is pleased to note that students with disability are being encouraged to apply for MATSEC examinations that assess the attainment they have reached. Consequently, in recent years the number of candidates applying for access arrangements has increased considerably. This increase has logistical and financial implications. Therefore, applications for EAAs must not be taken lightly and must only be requested when really needed. Moreover, in fairness to the integrity of the examinations and to all candidates, it is the responsibility of the ADSC to filter requests based on real need from others that attempt to gain unfair advantage. The ADSC takes these requests very seriously and will not concede to requests that are not fully justified.

Submitting a false claim for EAAs is regarded as an attempt to gain unfair advantage and shall be subject to disciplinary procedures as laid down in the statutes, regulations and bye-laws of the University at the time of the examination.

8. How to Apply for EAAs

Generally the administration in Schools and Colleges together with students/parents/guardians are responsible for requesting EAAs for SEC and Matriculation Certificate examinations on behalf of students. Private candidates sitting for SEC and Matriculation Certificate examinations may apply on their own initiative. Supporting certification from the relevant professionals (see Table 1, p.11) must always accompany the requests.

Applicants should use the relevant application form (see Chapter 11) and all relevant sections of the application should be completed and submitted with all the necessary documentation for the efficient processing of the application. If by the late application deadline, there is missing information, the application will be processed on the basis of the available evidence.

Candidates applying for subsequent examination sessions at the same level still need to submit the relevant application form A by the stipulated deadline but they need not re-submit professionals' report/s. The same EAAs will apply for any exam taken at the same level unless the circumstances change and new application must be submitted.

No assumptions based on previous experience or hearsay should be made about the kind of arrangements which may or may not be made. The ADSC considers applications on an individual basis whilst adhering to these guidelines for examination arrangements. The ADSC should be approached as early as possible whenever candidates have doubts about their application arrangements.

Please also refer to Chapter 9 and the relevant section of Chapter 10 for further details together with updated information found on the website:

www.um.edu.mt/matsec/Access

Applications for the examinations themselves must still be submitted to the examination department in Floriana.

Table 3 Deadlines for Applications for EAAs

	SEC	MATSEC/ A/I
Students sitting for May SEC/MATSEC session	Must submit application for EAAs with valid certification by the deadlines published by the MATSEC Board	Must submit application for EAAs with valid certification by the deadlines published by the MATSEC Board
Students resitting exams in September	Must submit application form A only by the deadlines published by the MATSEC Board, however same EAAs will apply for any exam taken at the same level	Must submit application form A only by the deadlines published by the MATSEC Board, however same EAAs will apply for any exam taken at this level
Students sitting for exams as first sit in September	n/a	Must submit the EAAs application by mid-June (i.e. by or before 15 th June) with valid certification
Students sitting for two different levels i.e SEC and Matriculation examinations at AM/IM level at the same sitting	Need to reapply for EAAs by the deadlines published by the MATSEC Board but same arrangements are given as for the first sit	Must submit a fresh application by mid-June with valid certification

It should be noted that deadlines for applying for MATSEC examination access arrangements (EAAs) are not extended in the same way as deadlines for applying for the MATSEC examinations themselves. The deadlines for EEAs need to be respected since the process involved in vetting access arrangements is different and longer. Moreover, the committee processing requests for access arrangements needs to forward the arrangements to the Examinations Department that is responsible for making the arrangements. It would be difficult to provide resources, which include physical space and Examination Access Arrangements Support Assistants (EAASAs), if approval is given late.

Candidates should check the MATSEC website for the dates by which applications for access arrangements should be submitted without assuming they are the same as the deadlines for applications for examinations. See Table 3 on page 20 of these guidelines.

Applications for EAAs can be made from Form 4 (p.7). For this reason it is advisable to apply for EAAs for the May examinations in November. Students may apply before the deadline. Applications for those sitting for the Matriculation Examinations in September for the first time must apply by the 15th of June (or before if 15th June falls on a Saturday or Sunday).

9. General Section

General Principles

In order to establish that candidates qualify for EAAs, they must submit full and recent documentation (see Table 4 p.22) confirming that the condition has a significant negative impact on the candidates' performance during examinations.

The professional's documentation should provide evidence for the need of access arrangements based on the candidate's current level of functioning. A prior history of access arrangements without demonstration of a current need does not in itself warrant the provision of EAAs. If no prior EAAs have been provided, the professional administering the assessment should include a detailed explanation as to why no access arrangements were used in the past and why these are necessary for the current examinations.

The School should help the candidate complete the General Application Form A. The Head of School must submit the report/s together with an application for EAAs. In the case of private candidates the reports and the application forms should be submitted by the candidates themselves. In the case of independent candidates, it is the responsibility of the individuals to ensure that they have the necessary documentation specified in these guidelines.

Applications for EAAs will only be processed if all the relevant sections of the application form are fully completed and submitted together with all relevant documentation by the published deadlines.

Evaluation by suitably qualified professionals

Professionals conducting assessments must be qualified to do so. Table 1 (p.11) lists the professionals considered appropriate for each particular impairment or condition.

Validity of Documentation

The determination of whether candidates' functioning is substantially influenced by the impairment is based on the assessment of its impact on their current performance. It is therefore important that the request for EAAs is supported by recent documentation. The validity of the documentation is summarised in Table 4 overleaf. The documentation should be concise but provide sufficient evidence of diagnosis and make a case for the requested EAAs.

An evaluation is primarily based on an in-depth history in order to reflect the chronic and pervasive developmental profile of symptoms and associated impairment usually beginning during childhood and should indicate the current situation. The evaluation should provide a broad, comprehensive understanding of the candidate's relevant background. This may need to include academic, behavioural, family, social, vocational, medical, developmental, or psychiatric history depending on the candidate's condition. Where appropriate, there should be details on how the symptoms have manifested across various settings over time, how the candidate has coped with the problems, and what success the candidate has had in coping. Reference should be made to any past or current treatments/interventions (including medications, EAAs, tutoring, classroom modifications, counselling, etc.) and their impact. Narrative documentation from other individuals who know the candidate well can also be relevant.

An account of the impact of the condition on the candidate's current functioning during examinations as evidenced in classroom observations or clinical assessment should be included.

Table 4 Validation of Certification

	Once	2 years	3 Years
ADD / ADHD			Х
Autism Spectrum Condition	Х		
Dyspraxia/DCD			Х
Dyscalculia		Х	
Deaf/Hearing Impaired	Х		
Lupus/SLE	Х		
ME/CFS	Х		
Mental Health	Х		
Physical Disability	Х		
Neurological Problems	Х		
SpLD		Х	
Speech Impairment			Х
Visually Impaired/Blind	X		

Justification and rationale of recommendations

Requests for EAAs need to be linked to the candidates' specific history and the current functional impairment. The relevant professional must describe the type and degree of impact that the condition has on the candidate, especially on the performance during examinations. The assessment report must include specific recommendations for EAAs that result from the current functional impairment.

A detailed explanation must be provided as to why each access arrangement is being recommended and must be correlated to specific identified functional limitations.

Application form

Candidates should fill in the relevant application forms in Chapter 11 and attach all relevant certification and documentation. These forms are also available on the Matsec website: www.um.edu.mt/matsec/forms

Candidates will receive a letter from the ADSC specifying those arrangements which are approved, if any. Candidates should bring this letter with them to each examination session.

10. Candidates with Particular Impairments

Candidates should read the information in the section(s) of this chapter relevant to them depending on their impairment(s). However, the preceding chapters of this document are relevant to all candidates and should be read with care.

This chapter is intended to help candidates with particular impairments as it lists and explains what is available to them depending on the nature and severity of the impairment. It is intended to prepare them for filling in their application form. Should candidates have an impairment that is not listed in this document, they are advised to write to the ADSC giving details and full certification following the principles of the guidelines given in this document.

Candidates should ask the ADSC or the MATSEC Support Unit for advice as early as possible (see contact details at the end of Chapter 4).

Candidates should submit the appropriate form related to their particular impairment (see Chapter 11) together with General Form A and all relevant documents.

More details on the EAAs referred to in this section can be found in Table 2 (p. 13 to p. 17).

10.1 Attention Deficit (Hyperactivity) Disorder (ADD/ADHD)

Definition

Students with Attention Deficit (Hyperactivity) Disorder (ADD/ADHD) have difficulty in allocating and maintaining attention, regulating motor activity, and managing behavioural impulses.

Certification and justification

The psychologist or psychiatrist must describe the type and degree of impact that the ADD/ADHD has on the candidate's functioning in examinations. The report must include specific recommendations for EAAs and why the EAAs are being recommended.

If the student is on medication, the psychiatrist's report will be required to indicate the effects of the medication.

Test scores, checklist results and observations.

Except for para (i) below, the assessment of ADD/ADHD must include the following data obtained within three years from the stipulated application deadline:

- i. There must be evidence of the level of general conceptual ability as shown through a cognitive ability test. An assessment undertaken anytime during the candidate's educational history from primary education onwards is sufficient.
- ii. Scores obtained on a questionnaire rating scale for ADD/ADHD such as the Conners', Vanderbilt or Brown Rating Scales. These must include evidence that the candidate's scores on both parent and teacher forms have scores in at least 1 scale that are 1 or more standard deviations (SD) above the mean (e.g. a T-score of =/>60 on the Conners').
- iii. Evidence of observed attention processes through the use of either Continuous Performance Testing (CPT) instruments such as the Conners' Continuous Performance Test (CPT) and/or Integrated Visual and Auditory Test (IVA). This must include evidence that the candidate's scores on the Full Scales or Sustained Scales quotients are 1 SD below the mean (< 85), or that at least 1 of the specific scales is 2 SD below the mean (< 70). The summary score sheet should be attached to the application form.
- iv. A number of individuals with ADD/ADHD may also have sensory motor coordination difficulties. An occupational therapist's evaluation report must be provided if requesting arrangements on this basis.

A number of ADD/ADHD applicants have associated SpLD difficulties. Therefore, the application form has been designed to include information required for both ADD/ADHD and SpLD. Specialists who are assessing for ADD/ADHD only should ignore the SpLD part of the application form.

EAAs

For **SEC** level examinations

- A prompter;
- A room with fewer students
- Up to a maximum of 25% supervised rest periods or, in exceptional circumstances, extra time;

For **Matriculation** level examinations

• Up to a maximum of 15% supervised rest periods

Application Forms A & B and relevant documents.

10.2 Autism Spectrum Condition (ASC)

Definition

Candidates with an Autism Spectrum Condition (ASC) may have difficulties with coursework and examinations because of one or more of the following factors:

- They feel anxious;
- They have difficulties with communication and social interaction;
- They may misinterpret instructions;
- They have unusual sensory reactions and may not cope well with, for instance, strip lighting, noise, strong smells, lecturer or invigilator walking about or a large exam hall;
- They have difficulty staying 'on task'.

Certification and justification

Requests for EAAs need to be linked to the students' specific history and current functional impairment that supports their use. The psychologist must explain how the ASC symptoms have manifested across various settings over time, how the candidate has coped with the problems, and what success the candidate has had in coping. Reference should be made to any current treatments/interventions for ASC (including medication, access arrangements, tutoring, classroom modifications) and their impact.

The psychologist must describe the type and degree of impact that the ASC has on the student's life particularly during examinations. The assessment report must include specific recommendations for EAAs and detailed explanation for the recommendations related to current functional limitations.

Test scores, checklist results and observations.

The assessment of ASC must include the following data:

- i. Evidence of the level of general conceptual ability as shown through a cognitive ability test. An assessment undertaken anytime during the candidate's educational history from primary education onwards is sufficient
- ii. A diagnosis of ASC based on results from at least one of the following or equivalent standardised measures undertaken anytime during candidate's educational history.
- The Childhood Autism Rating Scale (CARS),
- The Autism Diagnostic Observation Schedule (ADOS),
- The Diagnostic Interview for Social and Communication Disorders (DISCO),
- The Autism Diagnostic Interview Revised (ADI R),
- Social Responsiveness Scale (SRS)

EAAs

For **SEC** level examinations

- A prompter;
- A room with fewer students;
- Up to a maximum of 25% extra time

For **Matriculation** level examinations

- A room with fewer students;
- Up to a maximum of 15% extra time

Other access arrangements may be considered on the basis of appropriate supportive evidence.

Application Forms A & C & Relevant documents

10.3 Developmental Coordination Disorder (DCD)/ Dyspraxia

Definition

Candidates with dyspraxia have difficulty with thinking out, planning and carrying out sensorimotor tasks despite adequate teaching, a stimulating environment and generally within average cognitive ability. Students with dyspraxia may also have other difficulties to varying degrees.

Certification and justification

Candidates requesting EAAs on the basis of dyspraxia need to provide a detailed report, not older than three years before the closing date for applications for examinations. by a suitably qualified occupational therapist (OT). The following standardised tests are recommended for use by the professional:

- Beery-Buktenica Developmental Test of Visual-Motor Integration (BEERY™ VMI) (6th ed). Keith E. Beery, PhD, Norman A. Buktenica, Natasha A. Beery
- Movement Assessment Battery for Children (MVMT ABC-2) (2nd ed). Sheila E. Henderson, David A. Sugden, Anna Barnett
- Detailed Assessment of Speed of Handwriting (DASH 17+). Anna Barnett,
 Sheila E Henderson, Beverly Scheib, Joerg Schulz
- Clinical Observations Of Motor and Postural Skills (COMPS) (2nd ed).
- Bruininks-Oseretsky Test of Motor Proficiency (BOT[™]-2) (2nd ed). Robert H. Bruininks, PhD, Brett D. Bruininks, PhD
- Sensory Profile™ 2. Winnie Dunn, PhD, OTR, FAOTA
- Adolescent/Adult Sensory Profile® (AASP). Catana Brown, PhD, OTR, FAOTA, Winnie Dunn, PhD, OTR, FAOTA
- The Sensory Integration and Praxis Test (SIPT). J. Ayres

The OT's report must contain supporting evidence of motor coordination difficulties in areas of: visual motor integration, visual perception, fine and gross motor coordination, sensory processing abilities as well as a detailed assessment of speed and quality of handwriting. These have to be supported by results of performance on a standardised assessment and include the functional limitations in familiar settings such as the home and/ or school environment.

EAAs for extra time may be justified due to:

- (a) Below average scores (2 SD below mean) on **ONE** of the following tests of motor function:
- MVMT ABC: standard score below 5:
- Test of visual motor integration standard score below 70;
- DASH: Total standard score below 70;

- BOTMP: scores below 30;
- SIPT: scores of at least 2 SD below the mean on one or more of the praxis subtests

or

- (b) Below average (1SD below the mean) on at least TWO of the following tests:
- MVMT ABC standard score of 6 (based on total test score) and below;
- VMI standard score below 90;
- DASH: Total standard score below 85:
- BOTMP: scores below 40:
- SIPT: scores of 1SD below the mean on 2 or more of the praxis sub-tests.

or

- (c) One below average (1SD below mean) score from any of the following tests:
- MVMT ABC standard score of 6 (based on total test score) and below;
- VMI standard score is below 90;
- DASH: Total standard score below 85;
- BOTMP: scores below 40;
- SIPT: scores of 1 SD below the mean on 2 or more of the praxis sub-tests.

Together with one of the following:

- DASH: A standard score of below 7 on the Graphic speed subtest;
- Motor coordination subtest of the VMI is below 90;
- COMPS any score below 0

EAAs for **Supervised Rest Breaks** may be justified where the candidate has significant difficulties, as evident by below average scores on tests of sensory processing, namely sensory discrimination and sensory modulation. The need can be warranted through below average scores on one of the following tests:

- SIPT indication of dysfunction as per test criteria.
- Sensory Profile 2 (indication of dysfunction as per test criteria)
- The AASP Score of at least one quadrant with 'much more/much less than most people', i.e. 2 SD below mean, or two or more quadrants with 'more/less than most people', i.e. 1 SD below mean

Any one of the following criteria may justify the request for a **Word Processor**:

- i. The candidate has a history of dyspraxia with an early diagnosis indicating motor planning difficulties, and is familiar with the use of the word processor under examination conditions.
- ii. The candidate has illegible handwriting as evidenced by samples of handwriting from school work and examination scripts
- iii. The candidate has very slow speed of writing as determined by below average scores on one or more tests that assess motor coordination (see list above).

The examination paper can be provided in accessible format (soft copy) accompanying the other examination paper.

EAAs

For **SEC** level examinations

- Extra time (up to a maximum of 25%)
- Supervised rest periods (up to a maximum of 25%) for students who fatigue easily as a result of low tone related to sensory processing difficulties
- Use of a word processor

For Matriculation level examinations

- Extra time (up to a maximum of 15%)
- Supervised rest breaks (up to a maximum of 15%) for students who fatigue easily as a result of low tone related to sensory processing difficulties
- Use of a word processor

Application Forms A & E & Relevant documents

10.4 Dyscalculia

Dyscalculia is a specific developmental disability affecting a person's ability to conceptualise and, in particular, to carry out mathematical processes.

Certification

Candidates with dyscalculia need to present a full psychological report by an educational psychologist taken at any time during the candidate's educational history together with a full literacy assessment update.

The report should provide evidence on the basis of which the diagnosis of dyscalculia has been made. This should include an assessment of processing speed and working memory and the candidate's scores in recent school examinations.

EAAs

For **SEC** level, candidates with dyscalculia may be granted up to 25% extra time in examinations which include calculations, except for the mental paper in mathematics where speed is an assessment criterion.

For **Matriculation** Certificate level up to 10% extra time may be granted. Calculators and multiplication tables are not allowed when these are not permitted for other candidates.

Application Forms A & B (where applicable) & Relevant documents

10.5 Hearing Impairment

Definition

Candidates are considered Deaf or hearing-impaired if their impairment is congenital or if it occurred early in life and preceded the acquisition of spoken language(s) or if it severely affects their use of language. Students who are Deaf are those who make use of sign language, hearing impaired or deaf students are those whose hearing loss affects their language processing but do not use sign language. They usually wear hearing-aids or use cochlear implants. Deafened or hard of hearing students are those whose hearing-impairment occurred much later in life and normally make use of hearing-aids which can enable them to access spoken communication. Deafened students may not have difficulty with processing language but may have difficulty with accessing spoken language.

Certification and justification

Students with hearing-impairment need to submit an audiogram signed by a qualified audiologist indicating the age of onset of the impairment. A report should be provided by the teacher of the deaf to explain the functional implication on the candidate's spoken and written languages. A report should be provided by the sign language interpreter where the candidate is supported by sign language interpreting in school.

EAAs

For **SEC** level examinations

- Time allowance of up to 25%
- Candidates may also need additional time in an assessment administered orally which requires oral or written answers because they will not be able to lip-read and write at the same time.
- In examinations administered orally, a live speaker may be requested to present the recorded material. They will need to be seated close to the speakers and may have to use a radio aid.
- If candidates are able to sit for oral examinations, arrangements may be made to make the testing environment as stress-free as possible.
- If candidates are unable to be assessed for part of or for all of an oral or aural examination (e.g. in a language examination), an exemption may be made and there will be a pro-rata adjustment to the marks of not more than 25% of the examination component. In these cases the certificates will be endorsed.
- A request may be made for a sign language interpreter in non-language subjects.
- A request may be made for a communicator to clarify written instructions.
- Special arrangements are made for listening comprehension examinations where candidates do not request an exemption

For **Matriculation** level examinations

- Extra time allowance of up to 25%
- Candidates may need additional time in an assessment administered orally which requires oral or written answers because they will not be able to lip-read and write at the same time.
- In examinations administered orally, a live speaker may be requested to present the recorded material. They will need to be seated close to the speakers and may have to use a radio aid.
- If candidates are able to sit for oral examinations, arrangements may be made to make the testing environment as stress-free as possible.
- If candidates are unable to be assessed for part or all of an oral or aural examination (e.g. in a language examination), an exemption may be made and there will be a pro-rata adjustment to the marks of not more than 25% of the examination component. In these cases the certificates will be endorsed.
- Special arrangements are made for listening comprehension examinations where candidates do not request an exemption

Other access arrangements may be considered on the basis of appropriate supporting evidence.

Invigilators will need to be informed and asked to draw the student's attention to any notices being given during the examination, particularly when pointing out errors in examination papers. These will need to be given to the student on a hard copy. This also applies to time announcements.

Application Forms A & D & Relevant documents

10.6 Systemic Lupus Erythematosus (SLE or Lupus)

Definition

Systemic lupus erythematosus (SLE or lupus) is a systemic autoimmune disease that can affect any part of the body, particularly the heart, joints, skin, lungs, blood vessels, liver, kidneys and nervous system and has the effect of intense debilitating fatigue. Lupus-like symptoms can be a manifestation of other medical conditions. Depression can often result from the physical effects of this chronic illness or from the prescribed medication.

Certification and justification

Candidates with lupus or lupus-like symptoms need to present a rheumatologist's report. The report should include the history and severity of the condition and outline the functional implications with regards to the individual candidate's functioning particularly under examination conditions. A psychiatrist's report will be required if the candidate suffers from depression resulting from the illness.

EAAs

For **SEC** and **Matriculation** level examinations

- Allocation of particular venues,
- Supervised rest periods and/or extra time. However, these will depend on the individual and hence full details should be included in the application and certification.
- Extension of deadlines for coursework may also be made only in exceptional circumstances and if fully justified. However, candidates are advised that such extensions can be counter-productive.

Application Form A & Relevant documents

10.7 Myalgic Encephalopathy (ME)/ Chronic Fatigue Syndrome (CFS)/ Post Viral Fatigue Syndrome

Definition

Myalgic Encephalopathy/Chronic Fatigue Syndrome (ME/CFS) is a severe systemic, acquired illness that can be debilitating. It manifests symptoms predominantly based on neurological, immunological and endocrinological dysfunction. Post viral fatigue syndrome has similar symptoms to ME and CFS.

Certification and justification

Candidates with ME/CFS/Post-Viral Fatigue Syndrome need to present a report by a neurologist or endocrinologist who has treated them. The report should include the history and severity of the condition and should outline the functional implications with regards to the individual candidate's performance particularly under examination conditions. The documentation will form the basis on which the ADSC will determine how to enable the student to access the examinations.

EAAs

For **SEC** and **Matriculation** level examinations

- Allocation at particular venues,
- Supervised rest breaks and/or extra time. However, these will depend on the individual and hence full details should be included in the application and certification.
- Extension of deadlines for coursework may also be made only in exceptional circumstances and if fully justified. However, such extensions can be counter-productive.

10.8 Mental Health Difficulties

Definition

Mental health difficulties comprise a broad range of problems with different symptoms. They are generally characterised by disorders of one or more of the following: thought processes, emotions, behaviour and relationships with others. These may be of sufficient severity to affect the individual's functioning.

Certification and justification

Candidates are required to submit a psychiatrist's and/or clinical psychologist's report detailing the difficulties and their effect on the student. If medication is taken which affects the candidate's normal functioning, then it should be specified and the effects explained. Enough details should be included to guide the ADSC's recommendations for EAAs.

EAAs

For **SEC** and **Matriculation** level examinations

- Accommodation in a different venue and/or in a separate room.
- Settling down period at the start of the examination or at any other time during the examination.

Other EAAs may be considered on the basis of appropriate supporting evidence.

10.9 Neurological Disorders (including Epilepsy)

Definition

Neurological disorders affect the central and peripheral nervous system, i.e. the brain, spinal cord, cranial nerves, peripheral nerves, nerve roots, autonomic nervous system and neuromuscular junctions. These include epilepsy, cerebrovascular conditions including stroke, chronic migraine, multiple sclerosis, neural infections, brain tumours, trauma to the nervous system and congenital conditions affecting the nervous system.

Certification and justification

Candidates with a neurological disorder need to submit a neurologist's report showing the history and severity of the condition as well as the functional implications with respect to the candidate's sitting for examinations.

EAAs

For **SEC** and **Matriculation** level examinations

- Supervised rest periods (up to a maximum of 25%) and/or extra time (up to a maximum of 25%)
- Accommodation in a room with fewer students

In the case of poorly controlled epilepsy, it is recommended that a relative or significant other be on call outside the examination venue. Where other arrangements are requested, relevant documentation must be submitted.

10.10 Physical and/or Mobility Impairment

Definition

Students with a physical and/or mobility impairment include those who have difficulty using one or more of their limbs, or lack the strength to walk or to manipulate objects. The use of a wheelchair, crutches, walker or other aids may be utilised to enhance mobility.

Certification and justification

A report from the specialist with whom the student has been in touch in relation to the impairment should be submitted. This should explain the functional implications of the impairment in order to guide the ADSC's recommendation for EAAs.

Candidates who, because of co-ordination difficulties, shaky hands or poor hand/ eye co-ordination find it difficult to record answers, complete tables, graphs and other sections of the paper where there is limited space for the answer, may be provided with an enlarged grid or the use of software and technological aids may be of assistance. A practical assistant may be used to draw labelling lines or to join points on a graph at the direction of the candidate.

Candidates who, because of motor or perceptual problems, find it difficult to manipulate the question paper or the script, may find it helpful to have these taken apart and the separate sheets arranged on a larger working surface. Question and answer books which have been taken apart should be re-assembled and stapled when the papers are collected. Permission to adopt this procedure should be obtained prior to the examination.

EAAs

For **SEC** and **Matriculation** level Examinations

- Accessible venues
- Personal assistant
- Extra time allowance or Supervised Rest Breaks
- Means of presenting responses
- Practical assistant
- Word Processor
- Adaptive Equipment
- Scribe (in very exceptional circumstances)
- A request can also be made for a soft copy of the questions to be provided.

10.11 Specific Learning Disabilities (e.g Dyslexia)

The range of learning difficulties is extensive and difficult to define. EAAs are made on the basis of an individual candidate's needs. These may usually concern the candidate's word recognition skills, writing and spelling skills, or speed of reading and writing. Candidates with SpLD are likely to experience difficulties in some of the areas listed below:

• Reading Accuracy:

This would include candidates who are unlikely to be able to read the examination material with sufficient accuracy to avoid making mistakes which will affect the understanding of what they read.

• Spelling:

This would include candidates with spelling difficulties that slow down their work rate or lead them to use alternate words which are easier to spell. Other candidates may have spelling difficulties that make their writing incomprehensible to the examiner.

• Reading and Writing Speed:

This would be a particular problem where the speed of reading and writing is so slow that candidates lose the sense of what they read and write, or are unable to complete the examination within the stipulated time

Handwriting Legibility:

Some candidates may be unable to write legibly under time pressure; other candidates produce scripts that are illegible despite being allowed time to write more slowly.

Assessment by a qualified psychologist

Most assessments are carried out by Educational Psychologists. However, there are cases where psychologists with a different area of specialisation but with competence in psycho-educational assessment might have been following the candidate over time. Their reports will also be accepted.

In all cases, the psychologists must be warranted. Reports submitted by psychologists still awaiting their warrant must be endorsed by the supervising psychologist.

Reports are to be submitted with the application form. Early learning milestones are not required on the form, although a full report for parents may have included such details. Where psychologists use an electronic version, the wording of the Application Form Section B must not be changed.

Psychologists must not sign assessments carried out by other persons except in the case of trainee psychologists or those working under supervised practice. Since a substantial number of SpLD applicants have associated ADD/ADHD comorbidity, the application form has been designed to include fillable space for both SpLD test scores and ADHD test scores. Specialists who are assessing for SpLD only should ignore the ADD/ADHD part of the application form.

Assessment by a literacy/dyslexia specialist

The literacy/dyslexia specialist should establish that the results of tests in reading and writing present evidence that the candidate has a learning difficulty because it is clear that the candidate's performance is below the expected attainment of the candidate's chronological age.

The literacy specialist must hold relevant qualifications, normally a Masters degree in literacy and/or learning difficulties which includes training in literacy assessment. The ADSC can advise on the validity of a literacy/dyslexia specialist's qualification should this be required.

Certification and justification

The school must ensure that the candidate has had at least one full and detailed psycho-educational assessment by a warranted psychologist, which may have been undertaken at any point in the child's educational history, indicating that the candidate has specific learning difficulties. In addition, the candidate must have an assessment of literacy skills carried out up to two years prior to the closing date of the applications for the examination. This literacy update may be carried out by a qualified psychologist or a literacy/dyslexia specialist. If the candidate has not been previously assessed by a psychologist, the psychologist must include the literacy assessment as part of the whole psycho-educational assessment for learning difficulties.

The update assessment must include the following four locally standardised tests:

- English Reading Comprehension Test- Suffolk Reading Scale 2 (Levels 1 & Levels 2). Malta: MEEF & UoM.
- Maltese Reading Comprehension Test- Nagra u Nifhem (TL1 & TL2). Malta: MEEF & UoM.
- English Spelling Test. Malta: MEEF & UoM.
- Maltese Spelling Test. Malta: MEEF & UoM.

It is only when candidates do not qualify for extra time or a reader on the basis of scores on these four tests that more tests may be useful to justify EAAs as indicated below.

Once the assessor has completed the tests which ascertain that the candidate is eligible for EAAs, s/he should complete Application Form B. This should include a clear recommendation of the EAAs which will be required on the basis of the literacy test results and the information given by the school.

Reporting Assessment Results

- Assessors must present results in standardised scores, percentiles and age equivalent scores as relevant. If relevant scores are not provided the application form will be considered incomplete.
- Where requests are based on tests that have a ceiling below the candidate's age level only age-equivalent scores should be given.

Candidates will qualify for EXTRA TIME if:

- (a) Their standardised score on the English Reading Comprehension Test is <85 (1 SD below the mean) or <16th Percentile Rank; or
- (b) Their standardised score on the English Spelling Test is <85 (1 SD below the mean) or <16th Percentile Rank; or
- (c) If a candidate did not qualify on the basis of (a) or (b), but the assessor considers that the candidate may need extra time due to slow processing, the assessor should assess the candidate additionally on the NARA II Reading Rate and the PATOSS or HEDDERLY speed of writing test. Candidates will qualify for extra time if their score on the speed of handwriting test (e.g. PATOSS or HEDDERLY) is at 13wpm or below and, in addition, their score on the NARA II Reading Rate is <10.00 years.

Table 5 Extra Time Allowance

Subject	Extra Time (Max)	Other comments
SEC		
Art		
Mental Arithmetic	0%	
Technical Design		
All other SEC Subjects	25%	30 minutes per two hour exam session
Advanced and Intermediate		
Graphical Communication		
Engineering Drawing	0%	
IM Art	0%	
AM Art (Papers 1 & 2)		
Pure Mathematics	10%	20 minutes per examination
Applied Mathematics	10/0	20 minutes per examination
All other Advanced and Intermediate	15%	30 minutes per examination
written examinations	1070	o mineres per examination

No extra time will be permitted in subjects where reading or writing are not a substantial part of the examination such as in Graphical Communication. (See Table 5)

No extra time will be permitted in examinations testing the time in which a practical skill is performed, such as mental mathematics, P.E. practicals, musical performance, or expressive arts, where the timing may be a crucial part of the assessment.

Further notes on eligibility for extra time

Candidates whose standardised score on Naqra u Nifhem is <85 (1 SD deviation below the mean), or <16th Percentile Rank, will qualify for extra time in Maltese (SEC) examinations;

Candidates with SpLD who obtain Grade 3 or better at SEC level in English Language, when taking subsequent examinations in any subject which uses English as a medium, may qualify for up to 50% of the extra time allotted but only if justified after a reassessment by a psychologist appointed by the ADSC (see also below re Reader).

Candidates who are allowed a reader in non-language examinations may be granted up to a maximum of 30% extra time in language examinations at SEC level where a reader is not allowed.

Candidates who are 18 years and older will be eligible for extra time ONLY if their reading is below the 13-year-old level.

Candidates will qualify for a READER in non-language subjects if:

- (a) their standardised score on the English Reading Comprehension Test is < 70 (2 SD below the mean); or
- (b) a candidate did not qualify on the basis of (a) but the assessor considers that the candidate may need a reader due to weak reading skills, the assessor should assess the candidate additionally on the NARA II Reading Accuracy. Candidates will qualify for a reader if their standardised score on the English Reading Comprehension Test is < 85 (though not < 70) and, additionally, their age-equivalent Reading Accuracy score on NARA II is <10.00 years.

It should be noted that candidates who obtain Grade 3 or better at SEC level in English Language, when taking subsequent examinations in any subject which uses English as a medium, will not qualify for a reader.

It should also be noted that a reader is only granted for SEC level examinations but NOT for Matriculation level examinations.

Candidates will qualify for the use of a WORD PROCESSOR if

- the candidate's degree of illegibility of handwriting is clearly established through updated certification by an occupational therapist (samples of the candidate's scripts produced under examination conditions should also be attached); or
- (b) If the candidate has severe dyslexia established through updated certification by a psychologist which includes:
 - i. A well documented history of the candidate's literacy difficulties from early childhood until adolescence. This must include an account of the support received by the candidate and the reason for lack of improvement in his or her handwriting.
 - ii. Evidence that the candidate experienced difficulties in all aspects of reading and writing in all the languages taken at school.
 - iii. Evidence that the candidate's use of the word processor is the usual mode of working.

It should be noted that if the examiner cannot decipher the script, the candidate will be asked to attend at MATSEC office to read their handwriting.

Spelling

With regards to spelling, it should be noted that an important decision was made in 2014 by MATSEC Board that established that the examination arrangements for spelling in non-language subjects that were previously made for candidates with SpLD are to be applied to all students irrespective of whether candidates receive EAAs. The regulation on the correction of spelling stipulates that:

"A candidate's level of a language is not assessed in non-language examinations. Examiners will not penalise candidates for misspelling of particular terms, as long as the term is still recognisable. However, the student should take extra care with similarly spelt terminology such as ethene and ethane (Chemistry); reflection and refraction (Physics) since such errors will be penalised". (MATSEC, 2014)

This regulation eliminates the need to apply for spelling arrangements and therefore the EAA letter that SpLD candidates receive will no longer include "spelling not penalised".

Other Relevant Information

The specialist is advised to include additional information relating to the candidate's performance which might clarify further the reason for the request for access arrangements.

EAAs

For **SEC** level examinations

- Up to a maximum of 25% extra time
- Reader
- Use of a word processor

For **Matriculation** level examinations

• Up to a maximum of 15% extra time

10.12 Speech Impairment

Definition

A speech impairment refers to an impaired ability to produce flowing, fluent speech and may range from mild to severe. It may include an articulation disorder, characterised by omissions or distortions of speech sounds, a fluency disorder, characterised by atypical flow, rhythm, and/or repetitions of sounds, or a voice disorder, characterised by abnormal pitch, volume, resonance, vocal quality, or duration.

Certification and justification

The student will need to submit a speech and language pathologist's report giving full details of the impairment and how it should be managed during an oral examination.

EAAs

EAAs for candidates who have a speech impairment are only required for oral components of examinations. Normally these will follow the recommendations of the speech and language pathologist provided that they do not go against the guidelines in this booklet.

Examiners can be asked to make the environment as stress-free as possible while trying to put the candidate at ease. During the assessment of the one-to-one oral conversation, the examiner will allow ample time for the candidate to express himself or herself without giving unnecessary prompts. In exceptional circumstances, candidates may ask for an exemption from the orals. The marks will be pro-rated and the certificate endorsed.

10.13 Visual Impairment

Definition

Candidates are considered visually-impaired when they have significant limitations of functional visual capability that cannot be adequately corrected by conventional means, such as spectacles, refractive correction or medication.

Certification and justification

Candidates need to submit an ophthalmologist's and/or optometrist's report with details of the functional implications of the visual impairment.

EAAs for **SEC** examination level and **Matriculation** examination level (any of the below may apply)

- Accessible venues
- Extension of deadlines for coursework provided that this does not delay the publication of results
- Use of a Word Processor
- Extra time allowance of up to 50%. Where additional extra time may be necessary details to justify the request will be required when applying.
- Rest periods might be necessary especially in the event where candidates have two examinations with extra time occurring on the same day. In exceptional circumstances, candidates may be allowed to start the first paper earlier and the second paper later provided they will not be allowed to leave the examination room until the lapse of 30 minutes from the official commencement of the examination
- A request may be made for access to practical tasks wherever possible, instead of or in addition to using a practical assistant. The granting of such a request will depend on the assessment objective(s) being tested.
- Any other access arrangements that may facilitate the candidate's coping
 with the examination should be identified. The ADSC will consider any
 suggestion provided it is justified and does not change the examination
 objectives.
- Candidates are strongly encouraged to contact the MATSEC Support Unit well in advance to discuss any EAAs not listed above.

Frequently asked questions

What are examination access arrangements (EAAs)?	EAAs include various measures taken to enable students with a disability to access MATSEC examinations. Examples of EAAs include provisions of an enlarged paper for a candidate with visual impairment and supervised rest breaks for a candidate with ADD/ADHD.
Who can conduct assessments for candidates?	The relevant experts specialising in the field of the candidate's disability should conduct the assessment (see Table 1). Only reports from the relevant professionals will be considered by the ADSC when processing EAA applications.
How recent should an assessment by a professional be?	For some impairments/conditions, it is important to present any documentation of assessments relating to the disability that were carried out during any stage of a candidate's education to provide evidence of an early diagnosis and the steps taken to assist the student during schooling. Further information can be found in Chapter 9.
Do candidates have to apply for EAAs for each examination session?	An examination session at SEC level includes the May sitting (including oral and aural examinations that start earlier) and the September supplementary sitting (i.e. resits). Candidates have to apply for EAAs by the deadline for the registrations of the May examination, that is usually at the beginning of the previous November (refer to Table 3 p. 20). Applications for EAAs for Matriculation examinations must be made by the deadline for the registrations of the May session. Where students sit for part or all of the Matriculation examination as a first sit in September, the application for EAAs must reach the Matsec Support Unit by 15th June the latest. Further information can be found in Chapter 8 and from: www.um.edu.mt/matsec/Access
Are candidates who are granted EAAs accommodated in separate examination venues?	Usually all candidates who are granted EAAs are accommodated in a separate examination venue, Candidates who have not received the time-table two weeks prior to the first examination should contact the Examinations Department on 2598 2961 querying about examination venues.
Do candidates who are granted EAAs need to present a document at the exam venue?	Yes. Candidates who are granted EAAs are to present the letter showing the approved EAAs together with their time-table and ID card.
Will certificates show that the candidate had EAAs in examinations?	There will not be any indication of EAAs on the certificate except in the case of candidates who were exempted from part of the examination and whose result was pro-rated. In such cases, certificates are endorsed.
Is the arrangement of extra time given in all subjects?	Generally extra time is not given for the following SEC examinations: Mental Mathematics, Art and Graphical Communication and for the following Matriculation Subjects: Graphical Communication, Engineering Drawing, IM Art and AM Art (Papers 1 and 2). Extra time allotted for Pure Mathematics and Applied Mathematics at Matriculation level is reduced (see Table 5).

	adsu@um.edu.mt www.um.edu.mt/about/services/support/access
	ACCESS-Disability Support Unit Tel: 2340 2557
	And/or
assistance, who should they contact?	access.matsec@um.edu.mt www.um.edu.mt/matsec/Access
If candidates require further	MATSEC Support Unit: Tel: 2340 2240 or 2340 2813
If candidates disagree with the EAAs granted by the ADSC, what should they do?	Should candidates disagree with the decision made by the ADSC, they may be eligible to refer their case to the Board of Referral within the stipulated deadline (see Chapter 12).
Can EAAs be refused by candidates?	Yes, candidates can refuse the EAAs granted, provided that they inform the MATSEC Support Unit in writing. If candidates are granted access arrangements during examinations and do not avail themselves of these arrangements without justifiable reason, they may not be granted the particular access arrangements in subsequent examinations.
What steps should be taken before applying for EAAs?	Whenever candidates experience barriers or difficulties accessing learning at school and during examinations, they should seek advice from persons with the relevant expertise as early as possible.
Why is it necessary to compile a history of the needs and arrangements made in the school?	It is important for the ADSC to consider the arrangements made for candidates in their regular educational settings. These will enable the ADSC to make an informed decision in line with the guidelines regarding the EAAs required by the particular student. It is also important that candidates have had experience of, and practice in, the use of any access arrangements which are requested.
What happens if a candidate has more than one impairment?	Candidates who have more than one impairment need to provide evidence as to how each of the impairments affects their performance. For example, some students with physical impairments may also experience sensory difficulties. These can compound the difficulties in an examination setting. If candidates have multiple disabilities, consideration is given as to whether all the possibilities for meeting their assessment needs have been considered.
Are candidates who do not have a disability granted EAAs?	EAAs can also be granted to candidates with temporary medical or other conditions, for example in the case of an injury affecting the ability to access the examination provided that full certification by the relevant professional is submitted in due time to be processed.

11. Application Forms

Candidates should fill in the General Application Form A and the relevant application form according to the impairment for which the application is being made. All relevant certification and documentation should be attached and submitted to the MATSEC Support Unit.



Form A General Application Form for EAAs

	Please indicate: SEC \square MATSEC \square						
Candidate's D	<u>etails</u>	Year of exam	session				
ID. Number:		Date of Birth:					
Last Name:		First Name:					
Address							
Locality:		Candidate's Contact No:					
Condition/Disc	ability/Impairment						
Details of Perso	on filling in this form:						
Last Name:		First Name:					
Title/Role:							
Name of Scho	ol:						
Declaration							
	y that all information provide						
support the ap	oplication. The candidate h	nas been affending the so	chool for years.				
l would also lik	e to state that (write here if	applicable):					
				-			
Signature: _			School Stamp				
Date: _							

Examination candidate is applying for (Fill in where relevant)

Subject	SEC Paper A/B	Int/ Adv	Subject	SEC Paper A/B	Int/ Adv	Subject	SEC Paper A/B	Int/ Adv
Accounting			English Literature			Mathematics		
Agribusiness			Environmental Studies/Science			Music		
Applied Mathematics			European Studies			Philosophy		
Arabic			French			Physical Education		
Art			Geography			Physics		
Biology			German			Psychology		
Business Studies			Graphical Communication			Pure Mathematics		
Chemistry			Greek		Religious Knowledge			
Classical Culture& Civilisation			Health and Social Care			Russian		
Commerce			History			Social Studies		
Computer Studies			Home Economics/& Human Ecology			Sociology		
Design and Technology			Hospitality			Spanish		
Economics			Information Technology			Systems of Knowledge		
Engineering Drawing			Italian			Textiles and Design		
Engineering Drawing & Graphical Comm			Latin	atin Theatre and Performance				
Engineering Technology			Maltese					
English Language			Marketing					

Requests and other information attached to this report (Kindly check and mark in the middle column)

Evidence attached to this application Please mark where applicable	Checked before submitting application	For office use only	Evidence attached to this application Please mark where applicable	Checked before submitting application	For office use only
Psychologist's Report			Occupational Therapist's Report		
Psychiatrist's Report			Rheumatologist's Report		
Relevant Consultant's Report			Neurologist's Report		
Ophthalmologist's Report			Speech Language Pathologist's Report		
Audiologist's Report & Audiogram			Past scripts/MATSEC letter		
Teacher of the Deaf for Sign Language Interpreter			Other, Please specify		

Kindly indicate if the candidate has previously been granted EAAs

Exam Access Arrangements (EAAs)	EAAs given previously by the School	State when made (e.g.June 2006)	EAAs given previously by the ADSC	Date when approved	EAAs Approved By ADSC (Official Use)
Extra Time					
Alternative accommodation venue away from centre Sign Language					
Interpreter					
Communicator					
Exam paper enlarged to A3					
Practical Assistant					
Reader					
Voice activated computer					
Word Processor					
Supervised rest break					
Settling down period					
Relative on Call					
Books and papers to be taken apart					
Permission to Use toilets frequently					
Prompter					
Handwriting consideration					
Other (Please specify)					



Form B

Application for Candidates with SpLD and/or ADD/ADHD

Candidate's Details ID. Number: Date of Birth: Last Name: First Name: Condition:

Did the candidate sit for any SEC exams previously? Yes No Please give details if previous examination access arrangements were granted by the ADSC. Author/s of this report Last Name: First Name: Qualifications: Warrant No: Are you a qualified psychologist? Yes No Are you a qualified literacy specialist? Yes No If you have answered NO to the previous questions, please explain how you deem your qualification(s) to be appropriate for the certification required:

I declare that the contents of this report are accurate:

Date:

Signature:

Examination Access Arrangements Requested:

Room with a few students Word Processor Prompter Supervised rest breaks

Extra Time Reader Other, please specify

SpLD/Dyslexia Section

Candidate's Cognitive Profile (fill in scores where relevant)

Year	IQ/GCA	Verbal	Performance	Non Verbal	Spatial	Other

				ne of the	psycho	-educational	assessment a	nd state
he date whe	n it was t	Jnaеттаке	en:					
iteracy Upd	ate Sco	res (Con	plete if	applicab	le)			
- 1: 1 5								
English Read	ling Con	nprenen	sion lest		Мс	ıltese Readin	ng Comprehe	ension Tes
(Suffolk)						agra u Nifher		
Date					· <u> </u>	Date	· 	
Standard						tandard		
Score	00					core		
Reading A	ige				K	Reading Age	!	
Spelling Test	S							
	English	Malte	ese					
Standard Score								
Reading								
Age								
NARA (Comp	olete if ap	pplicable)	S	peed c	of Writing Test	(Complete if c	applicable
Date					Pat	oss	Hedde	rley
Reading S	peed							
wpm					Date			
Reading R					l l	ng speed		
Comprehe Age	ension				wpm	dard score		
Accuracy	Age				Sidil	autu score		

ADD/ADHD Section (complete if applicable and attach the summary score sheet)

Continuo	us Performan	ce Scores Te	st Date: [
IVA+]				Conners CPT	
	Full Score	Auditory	Visual			Scores
		Score	Score	Inatte	entiveness	
RCQ				Impu		
AQ					ined Attention	
SAQ				Vigilo	nce	
Other:						
	Parents/ Tead					
Please a	tach a copy	of the summo	iry score s	heet L	oate: [
		Parent	Scale T-Sc	core	Teacher Scale T-Sca	ore
	oositional					
	gnitive/Inatte	ntion				
	eractivity					
ADI	HD Index					
Qualitati	ve Analysis (If	applicable)				
For Offici	al Use Only:					
Date of A	Application R	eceived				
Date of A	Application D	iscussed				
Commer	nts					
Decision						



Form C

Application for Candidates with Autism Spectrum Condition (ASC)

Candidate's Det	<u>ails</u>		
ID. Number:		Date of Birth:	
Last Name:		First Name:	
Condition:			
Did the candida	te sit for any SEC exams p	previously? Yes N	lo 🗌
Please give deta	ills if previous examination	n access arrangements w	ere granted by the ADSC.
Author/s of this re	eport		
Last Name:		First Name:	
Qualifications:		Warrant No:	
Are you a qualifi	ed psychologist?	Yes No	
	swered NO to the previous be appropriate for the a		plain how you deem your
	., .	·	
I declare that the	e contents of this report o	ure accurate:	
Date:	S	ignature:	
Examination Acc	cess Arrangements Reque	ested:	
Room with fewer	r students Extra Time	Prompter Sup	ervised rest breaks
Other releases are	a a:f. /		

ASC Assessment Scores

Candidate's Cognitive Profile (fill in where relevant)

Year	IQ/GCA	Verbal	Performance	Non Verbal	Spatial	Other
						<u> </u>
•	de a summary en it was unde		ne of the psycho	o-educational	assessment a	and state
Which test w	vas carried out	to diagnose A	r2Cs D	ate:		
Social Respo	onsiveness Scal	e (SRS)				
The Childho	od Autism Rati	ng Scale (CAF	?\$)			
The Autism	Diagnostic Ob	servation Sch	edule (ADOS)			
The Diagnos	tic Interview fo	r Social and C	ommunication [Disorders (DISC	CO)	
The Autism D	Diagnostic Inter	view – Revised	d (ADI – R)			
Other valida	ited instrument	s (specify)				
Results of asse	esments					



Form D

Application for Candidates who are Hearing Impaired (Attach audiogram)

Candidate's Details ID. Number: Date of Birth: Last Name: First Name: Diagnosis of Loss: Did the candidate sit for any SEC exams previously? Yes No Please give details if previous examination access arrangements were granted by the ADSC. Author/s of this report Last Name: First Name: Qualifications: Teacher of the Deaf Report Sign-language interpreter report I declare that the contents of this report are accurate: Date: Signature: Examination Access Arrangements Requested: Room with a few students Extra Time Live Speaker Exemption form Other, please specify



Form E

Application for Candidates with DCD/Dyspraxia

Candidate's Details									
ID. Number:	Date of Birth:								
Last Name:	First Name:								
Condition:									
Did the candidate sit for any SEC example Please give details if previous examination the ADSC.									
Author/s of this report									
Last Name:	First Name:								
Qualifications:	Warrant No:								
Are you a qualified Occupational The	erapist? Yes	No 🗌							
If you have answered NO to the previous questions, please explain how you deem your qualification(s) to be appropriate for the certification required:									
I declare that the contents of this repo	ort are accurate:								
Date:	Signature:								
Examination Access Arrangements Re	equested:								
Word Processor Supervised rest	breaks Extra Tim	ne 🗌							
Other please specify									

Candidate's Cognitive Profile (fill in where relevant)

Year	IQ/GCA	Verbal	Performance	Non Verbal	Spatial	Other	

Please provide candidate's results obtained on a validated assessment instrument that assesses motor coordination (eg. MVMT, ABC, BOTMP, SIPT) Name of Assessment Instrument Standard Score Date of Administration Comments Please provide candidate's results obtained on a validated assessment instrument that assesses visual coordination (including visual perception) skills and speed and quality of handwriting Name of Assessment Instrument Standard Score Date of Administration Comments	Please provide a summo	ary of any previous educational assessments if relevant:	
that assesses motor coordination (eg. MVMT, ABC, BOTMP, SIPT) Name of Assessment Instrument Standard Score Date of Administration Comments Please provide candidate's results obtained on a validated assessment instrument that assesses visual coordination (including visual perception) skills and speed and quality of handwriting Name of Assessment Instrument Standard Score Date of Administration			
Instrument Standard Score Date of Administration Comments Please provide candidate's results obtained on a validated assessment instrument that assesses visual coordination (including visual perception) skills and speed and quality of handwriting Name of Assessment Instrument Standard Score Date of Administration	•		ıment
Please provide candidate's results obtained on a validated assessment instrument that assesses visual coordination (including visual perception) skills and speed and quality of handwriting Name of Assessment Instrument Standard Score Date of Administration	Instrument		
Please provide candidate's results obtained on a validated assessment instrument that assesses visual coordination (including visual perception) skills and speed and quality of handwriting Name of Assessment Instrument Standard Score Date of Administration	Date of Administration		
that assesses visual coordination (including visual perception) skills and speed and quality of handwriting Name of Assessment Instrument Standard Score Date of Administration	Comments		
Instrument Standard Score Date of Administration	that assesses visual coc		
Date of Administration			
	Standard Score		
Comments	Date of Administration		
	Comments		

If (applicable,	please	give	the	results	of	an	occup	pational	therapis	t's	report	of	the
са	ndidate's s	ensory p	roces	sing	difficul	ties	prir	marily	those rel	lated to p	ora	ıxis.		

ļ	Name of Assessment Instrument		
	Date of administration		
	Administered by		
	Results and Interpretation		
-	limitations the candida	e assessment results please give a summary of the funct ate is experiencing in the educational setting and l a arrangements. Include any other information you co	nis/her

12 Guidelines for the reconsideration by the Referral Board of Decisions of the ACCESS-Disability Support Committee

Title

The title of these guidelines is the 'Guidelines for the Reconsideration of Decisions of the ADSC by the Referral Board'.

Interpretation

For the purposes of these guidelines:

'A decision at first instance' means a decision delivered by the ACCESS-Disability Support Committee, hereinafter referred to as ADSC, which decision constitutes a res judicata unless a request for reconsideration as applicable hereunder is considered admissible by the Referral Board.

'Candidate' means the applicant who claims to have a disability or disabilities and who is requesting a reconsideration of the case after the decision at first instance.

'Days' shall mean running (not working) days.

'Fresh evidence' means evidence which at the time of the decision at first instance, either did not exist or was not known to a candidate, parent/guardian. 'Point of law' means any point which does not deal with the facts of the case or the evidence produced, but which involves a matter which is predominantly of a juridical and/or procedural nature.

"Professional" means a person possessing the necessary pre-requisites, credentials and qualifications required to provide evidence as per table 1 within this document.

"Res Judicata" means the decisions of the first instance are final.

"Technical person" means a person identified by the Referral Board, who can, in the Board's view, shed light on and/or assist in the consideration of any case brought before it. The technical expert shall have the necessary qualifications and/or experience in the area that is relevant to the merit of the case in question.

Purpose and applicability

The purpose of these guidelines is to lay down the pre-requisites required in order to allow a request for the reconsideration of a case which has already been brought to the attention of the ADSC, a joint committee as constituted by Senate and Council of the University of Malta. This request for reconsideration is not tantamount to appellate proceedings.

These guidelines shall be applicable solely and exclusively to cases directly relating to requests dealing with support for candidates with a disability or

disabilities which have already been rejected, in toto or in partem, by the ADSC, which decisions shall be deemed to be decisions at first instance constituting a res judicata, unless a request for reconsideration as applicable hereunder is considered admissible by the Referral Board.

These guidelines shall therefore supplement and complement any existing guidelines, laws, bye-laws or guidelines relating to support for candidates with a disability or disabilities. They shall in no manner whatsoever replace, amend, change or repeal any existing guidelines, laws, bye-laws or guidelines relating to support for candidates with a disability or disabilities.

Appointment of the referral board

There shall be a Referral Board which shall enjoy exclusive jurisdiction to hear requests filed by candidates, or their parents/guardians or their representative, for the reconsideration of cases which have been decided at first instance.

Composition of the referral board

The Referral Board shall be composed of the following members:

- (a) a representative of the Kummissjoni Nazzjonali Persuni b'Dizabilita`;
- (b) a representative of the Division of Education;
- (c) an ad hoc independent professional in the field which is being examined and which constitutes the subject-matter of the disability or disabilities under scrutiny;
- (d) a senior member of the administration of the University of Malta;
- (e) Pro Rector (Academic Affairs) acting as chair.

In addition, the chairperson may from time to time, co-opt a technical expert in order to assist the Referral Board in the performance of its duties. For this purpose, the chairperson shall consult with the board members with a view to identifying a suitable person. The co-opted member shall, for all intents and purposes, have the same rights and duties as the other board members with respect to the functions in the particular case.

Further to such co-option, the chairperson, in consultation with the Referral Board, shall motivate his decision to appoint such co-opted member, which written motivation shall be attached to the minutes of the session/s held by the Referral Board.

Decisions shall be taken by simple majority of members present, provided that a quorum shall be constituted by at least three members. In the case of a tie, the chair shall have the casting vote.

Roles, functions and powers of the referral board

The Referral Board set up by these Guidelines shall:

- (a) take full cognisance of a request for reconsideration and subsequently consider whether this request is admissible or otherwise in accordance with the relative provisions of these guidelines;
- (b) decide on a preliminary basis and in writing, during a preliminary sitting, as to whether such a request is admissible or otherwise;
- (c) hear requests which are considered admissible further to its preliminary decision confirming admissibility, and subsequently decide, in writing, as to whether or otherwise such requests should be referred back to the ADSC for its ulterior consideration leading to a res judicata.

Requests for reconsideration

Requests which are inadmissible shall be immediately struck off the list of requests and the applicant shall be notified accordingly about the preliminary decision of the Referral Board and shall be referred back to the ADSC, thus ensuring that the decision at first instance becomes a res judicata.

Pre-requisites for admissibility

Requests shall be considered admissible only if filed at the Referral Board within the Office of the Pro-Rector (Academic Affairs) by not later than thirty days, from the decision of the first instance, by the candidate or his/her parent/guardian or their representative and only when either:

(a) the candidate decides that his/her circumstances have changed to render worse his/her disability or the disability itself has deteriorated considerably after the decision at first instance provided that fresh evidence is produced strengthening and substantiating such contention sufficiently;

or

(b) two separate written and signed declarations containing reports and/ or medical certificates of two different professionals are produced, the contents of which rebut the findings of the decision at first instance;

or

(c) any point of law, including allegations of unfair proceedings before the first instance.

Provided that for the purposes of sub-paragraph (a) here above, the thirty-day limit shall not be applicable, and any such request based on fresh evidence may be filed when such fresh evidence becomes available.

Provided that the Referral Board may consider a request admissible, notwithstanding that such request was not filed within thirty days from the decision of the first instance, where the Referral Board is convinced that the parent/guardian or representative could not have obtained the required documentation/evidence within such period/ timeframe. Such decision shall only be valid if reached unanimously by all five members of the Referral Board, is sufficiently motivated and shall be minuted accordingly.

Provided that the Referral Board may, only in exceptional circumstances, and should it deem it in the ultimate interest of justice, consider a request admissible although it does not satisfy either 8(a), 8(b) or 8(c). Such exceptional circumstances may include, inter alia, evident and manifest financial constraints. Such decision shall only be valid if reached unanimously by all five members of the Referral Board, is sufficiently motivated and shall be minuted accordingly.

Upon receipt of a request for reconsideration, the Pro-Rector (Academic Affairs) shall notify such request to the Chairman of the Access Disability Support Committee within forty-eight hours.

Procedure post-preliminary decision:

A decision of the Referral Board relating to admissibility or otherwise shall not impinge on the merits of the case, which merits shall be reconsidered by the ADSC should the case be referred back to ADSC after a finding of admissibility by the Referral Board. The Referral Board shall determine whether the grounds for re-consideration exist or otherwise and it shall not have jurisdiction to consider the merits of the case unless, as a result of the nature of the case, it deems it fit, expedient and necessary to take the merits of the case into account in order to reach its own decision relating to admissibility or otherwise. Pleadings before the Referral Board shall be made in writing. Proceedings before the Referral Board may be held viva voce when the Referral Board deems it necessary. When proceedings are held viva voce, the student may be assisted by his/her parent/ guardian or representative. The decision of the Referral Board shall be taken by a simple majority, unless otherwise provided for within these guidelines and shall be brought to the attention of the ADSC and the applicant forthwith.



Application to fill in for request made to the Referral Board (Kindly attach the relevant documents)

Candidate's Details

	_										
ID. Number:	D.	ate of Birth:									
Last Name:] Fi	rst Name:		_							
Address:				_							
Locality:	Candidate's Contact No:										
Condition/Disability/Impairment				_							
EAAs requested:											
Details of Person filling in this form:				_							
Last Name:		First Name:									
Title/Role:				_							
Have you read the guidelines for the reconsideration by the Referral Board of decisions of the ADSC? Yes No On what basis are you lodging the request (a) the candidate decides that his/her circumstances have changed to render worse his/her disability or the disability itself has deteriorated considerably after the decision at first instance provided that fresh evidence is produced strengthening and substantiating such contention sufficiently (b) two separate written and signed declarations containing reports and/or medical certificates of two different professionals are produced, the contents of which rebut the findings of the decision at first instance (c) any point of law, including allegations of unfair proceedings before the first instance. Provided that for the purposes of sub-paragraph (a) here above, the thirty-day limit											
shall not be applicable, and any such request based on fresh evidence may be filed when such fresh evidence becomes available											
Other											
Signature:	Date:										