



**L-Università
ta' Malta**

**Guidelines to
MATSEC Examinations
Access Arrangements 2019**

These guidelines shall apply to all applications for MATSEC examinations taking place from 2020 onwards.

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Table of Contents

Foreword.....	7
Introduction	9
Section I.....	11
Background, Structures and Principles	11
1.1 Provision of examination access arrangements	12
1.2 Selecting the appropriate examination level.....	12
1.3 Limitations of examination access arrangements	12
1.4 Purpose of examination access arrangements	13
1.5 Scope of guidelines	13
1.6 Structure	13
1.6.1 The ACCESS – Disability Support Committee (ADSC)	14
1.6.2 The ACCESS – Disability Support Unit (ADSU).....	14
1.6.3 The Matriculation and Secondary Education Certificate Examinations Board	14
1.7 Distinction between SEC, SEAC and Matriculation Levels	15
1.8 Responsibility in submitting an application	15
Section II.....	16
The Application Process	16
2.1 Conditions for which EAAs are granted	17
2.1.1 Long-term Conditions	17
2.1.2 Temporary conditions	17
2.2 Evidence of Need	18
Table 1 Professional Certification required for different disabilities.....	20
2.3 Factors taken into account.....	21
2.4 Types of EAAs given	21
Table 2 Glossary for Examination Access Arrangements.....	22
2.5 Individual consideration of each application	26
2.6 Filling in of online applications.....	26
2.7 Submission of application	27
2.7.1 Applying for SEC examinations from Year 10/Form 4.....	27
2.7.2 Applying for SEC vocational subjects and SEAC subjects from Year 9/Form 3	27
2.7.3 Applications for subsequent examinations sessions	28
2.7.4 Submission of application and documentation	28
2.8 Deadlines for applying for EAAs.....	28

Table 3: Deadlines for Applications for EAAs	29
2.9 Validity of Documentation	31
Table 4: Validity of Documentation	31
2.10 Letter from ADSC regarding approved arrangements	31
2.11 Appeals.....	31
2.12 Data Protection and Confidentiality	32
Section III.....	33
Access Arrangements for Specific Conditions.....	33
Candidates with Particular Impairments	34
1 Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD).....	35
2 Autism Spectrum Condition (ASC)	37
3 Developmental Coordination Disorder (DCD)/ Dyspraxia	39
4. Diabetes Mellitus	43
Certification and rationale	43
EAAs	43
EAAs for SEC and SEAC examination level and Matriculation examination level usually considered as appropriate for candidates with Diabetes Mellitus:.....	43
5 Epilepsy	44
6. Hearing impairment	45
7. Irritable Bowel Syndrome	47
8 Medical Conditions	48
9 Mental Health Difficulties	49
10 Physical and/or Mobility Impairment	50
11 Specific Learning Difficulties	51
12 Speech, Language and Communication Impairment	57
13. Visual Impairment.....	58
Appendices.....	59
Appendix 1: Frequently Asked Questions	60
Appendix 2	62
Guidelines for the use of Word Processor during examinations	62
Appendix 3	64
Guidelines for the reconsideration by the Referral Board of Decisions of the ACCESS-Disability Support Committee.....	64
Title	64
Interpretation.....	64
Purpose and applicability.....	65

Appointment of the Referral Board	65
Composition of the Referral Board	65
Roles, functions and powers of the Referral Board	66
Requests for reconsideration.....	66
Pre-requisites for admissibility	67
Procedure post-preliminary decision.....	68
Appendix 4	70
Data Policy Statement.....	70
Appendix 5	72
References to website links	72

Foreword

Pro Rector Professor Carmen Sammut

Chairperson ACCESS-Disability Support Committee

It is not an easy task to merge two contrasting philosophies – on the one hand the standardization of national assessment that implies the provision of same and exact examination conditions for all. And, on the other hand, the practice of inclusion that shakes up the traditional concept of the ‘one-size-fits-all’, reflecting differentiated and customised assessment that enables and encourages a growing number of students with conditions/disabilities to sit for national examinations.

These Guidelines build upon past editions and are written with a vision that reflects a sense of equity and justice, while ensuring validity and fairness in national assessments. The ADSC has used its experience together with feedback from candidates, parents, non-government organisations, experts in the different areas of disability and other stakeholders to revise this edition of the Guidelines.

The changes in this edition, which come into effect in 2020, are primarily a reflection of ongoing changes prompted by technological advancement. In schools and colleges a growing number of students are already conversant with assistive technology devices to access their examinations. To mirror such developments, the revised Guidelines approve assistive technology, such as the reading pen for those candidates with severe literacy difficulties.

Furthermore, a fundamental principle that has been reinforced in these Guidelines is the processing of requests on a case-by-case basis, which is the approach that has always been used by the ADSC. With this approach, candidates’ applications for examination access arrangements (EAAs) are viewed holistically, taking into consideration the history of educational needs, the overall scores and results and the assessment performance at the school/college. In addition, criteria for adjudicating EAAs have been revised to ensure that candidates whose standardised scores fall in borderline areas can still be given the necessary EAAs.

Since the publication of the previous edition of these Guidelines, the format of examination papers has evolved. Examination papers are now presented in coloured background with Verdana font style print. This change builds upon the concept of the Universal Design for Learning (UDL) that makes the format not simply dyslexia-friendly, but more accessible to all candidates, irrespective of disability. These practices have also been used for the revised

Guidelines, making them more user friendly in language, structure and presentation.

On a national level, another notable change concerns the implementation of the National Curriculum Framework (NCF) with the launch of the Secondary Education Applied Certificate (SEAC) and the introduction of more subjects in Vocational Education Training (VET). These new subject streams are continuously assessed from Years 9 to 11 (Forms 3 to 5), facilitating both candidates with disabilities and others who find assessments that are exclusively summative challenging.

We trust that the revised guidelines will increase the possibility for candidates with disabilities to access examination and to succeed.

Introduction

The University of Malta (UM) recognises the fact that there are students who have done well with the learning demands of their studies 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 long-standing disabilities as well as those who become ill or injured, at or near the time of assessment can be thus affected.

The UM, through the MATSEC Board and the ACCESS-Disability Support Committee (ADSC), is proud of its track record in providing examination access arrangements (EAAs) for candidates with different impairments/medical conditions/specific learning difficulties that enable them to sit for their MATSEC examinations¹ (Secondary Education Certificate [SEC], including vocational subjects [VET] and Secondary Education Applied Certificate [SEAC], and Matriculation Examinations) on an equal basis with others. These guidelines have been developed to inform candidates, parents, representatives from schools and different professionals about the wide range of EAAs offered and the criteria for processing applications.

These guidelines are also intended to help candidates, as well as parents and professionals, understand the rationale behind the way EAAs are approved in relation to MATSEC examinations. They have been compiled by the ADSC in view of the relevant provisions in Maltese legislation stipulating the right for candidates with disability to access examinations. These rights are established in Article 11 (Education) of the Equal Opportunities (Persons with Disability) Act 2000 (CAP 413) and Article 24 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

The present publication is a revised and updated edition of the UM *Guidelines to MATSEC Examinations Access Arrangements, 2015*. The document is divided into three sections. The first section presents the background and structure within which EAAs are provided. The second section explains the procedures and processes entailed in applying for EAAs and for applications to be processed. The third section focuses on EAAs that are normally granted for specific conditions. There are also 4 appendices which cover Frequently Asked Questions (Appendix 1);

¹ Hereinafter, the phrase 'MATSEC examinations' refers to SEC (including VET, SEAC) and Matriculation level examinations.

Guidelines for the use of a word processor during examinations (Appendix 2); Guidelines for reconsideration by the Referral Board of Decisions of the ACCESS-Disability Support Committee (Appendix 3); and Data Protection Statement (Appendix 4).

These guidelines have been drawn up in consultation with the relevant stakeholders and the review process continues to evolve. Past and present students, parents/guardians and professionals are very welcome to provide constructive feedback on the guidelines by sending an email. This feedback and new developments in the field will be taken into consideration in future updates.

In line with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disability (UNCRPD), disability is understood as “an evolving concept and ... results from the interaction between persons with impairments and attitudinal and environmental barriers that hinders their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others” (Preamble (e)).

These guidelines therefore apply to individuals with physical, sensory or mental impairments; medical conditions; or specific learning difficulties. The term “disability” is taken to encompass all of the above.

Section I

Background, Structures and Principles

1.1 Provision of examination access arrangements

It is the role of the University of Malta (UM) to approve the necessary reasonable Examination Access Arrangements (EAAs) that enable MATSEC examination candidates who have a disability to demonstrate their attainment.

EAAs are intended to provide candidates with the necessary arrangements to access MATSEC examinations, which in this document refer to any form of assessment organised by MATSEC. The assessment criteria are laid down in the respective subject syllabi available on the [MATSEC website](#). These criteria explain what candidates must know and do in order to achieve the respective qualification. EAAs cannot be granted if the assessment criteria are compromised or if the arrangements 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.

Some disabilities 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 need to be sought about how to approach the subject.

1.2 Selecting the appropriate examination level

Students are advised to sit for the level of examination that corresponds to their ability and achievements in the respective subject/s. At SEC level, MATSEC offers a myriad of subjects at different levels under three main streams – academic, vocational and applied. In the academic stream, Papers A and B are offered for all subjects at SEC level. Some subjects are offered in both the vocational and the applied streams. Students can consult with their subject teachers/career counsellors, taking into account their progress throughout the years in the subject/s, in order to decide which stream, level and subjects to attempt.

1.3 Limitations of examination access arrangements

The provision of EAAs may not always be the solution for difficulties encountered by individual students. In some instances, despite all efforts to cater for particular individual educational needs, it may not be possible to arrange access for students whose disability 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.

1.4 Purpose of examination access arrangements

The nature of the EAAs given 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. The procedures used for carrying out this assessment are explained in Sections II and III.

Examination Access Arrangements:

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

1.5 Scope of guidelines

The types of disabilities identified in this document, and the related EAAs, are based on past experience of applications and requests that have been processed by the ADSC. **They are by no means to be considered all inclusive. Candidates who may have other disabilities, which are not mentioned in this document, may still submit a request for EAAs.** Each application is considered on its own merit, taking into account each student's access needs and the nature and objective of the examination that the student is sitting for.

1.6 Structure

Applications for EAAs are processed by the ADSC, in liaison with MATSEC. The arrangements approved are put in place by MATSEC in collaboration with the Examinations Department of the Ministry for Education and Employment.

1.6.1 The ACCESS – Disability Support Committee (ADSC)

The ADSC is a joint Council and Senate appointed committee chaired by the Pro-Rector for Student & Staff Affairs and Outreach. One of its roles is to consider requests by candidates for MATSEC Examinations and to approve reasonable EAAs that enable such students to demonstrate their attainment and capabilities.

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 ADSC appoints working groups that vet individual requests on a case-by-case basis, according to the guidelines set out in this document. When the necessary expertise is not available in the working group, or when a second opinion is advisable, ADSC members or external experts are consulted. The ADSC also makes recommendations to Council and Senate regarding the ways that accessibility to examinations can be achieved for each individual, when necessary.

1.6.2 The ACCESS – Disability Support Unit (ADSU)

The ADSU is the operational arm of the ADSC. Its roles include:

- processing applications for EAAs for MATSEC Examinations;
- providing advice regarding the provision of EAAs;
- liaising with the relevant professionals and other stakeholders;
- forming part of the working groups appointed by the ADSC;
- coordinating the necessary resources for the implementation of the decisions made by the ADSC.

1.6.3 The Matriculation and Secondary Education Certificate Examinations Board

The Matriculation and Secondary Education Certificate Examinations (MATSEC) Board is the responsible authority entrusted with setting examinations at SEC (including vocational subjects

[VET] and Secondary Education Applied Certificate [SEAC]), Intermediate and Advanced Matriculation Levels.

The ADSC liaises closely with the MATSEC Board in order to ensure that the rights of candidates with disability to access examinations with the appropriate arrangements are upheld.

The [MATSEC Support Unit](#) is the operational arm of the MATSEC Board. It coordinates all activity related to examinations. Among other roles, it receives applications for EAAs that are then processed by the ADSC in collaboration with MATSEC Support Unit.

1.7 Distinction between SEC, SEAC and Matriculation Levels

The ADSC recognises the distinction in academic levels between SEC, SEAC and Matriculation Level examinations. The EAAs should reflect the principle that at higher levels of education, greater autonomy is expected where possible.

1.8 Responsibility in submitting an application

Applications for EAAs must not be taken lightly and should be based on sufficient professional evidence. **Submitting a false claim for EAAs is regarded as an attempt to gain unfair advantage and is subject to disciplinary procedures as laid down in the [Statute for the Matriculation and Secondary Education Certificate Examinations](#).**

Section II

The Application Process

2.1 Conditions for which EAAs are granted

2.1.1 Long-term Conditions

The ADSC processes requests for examination access arrangements (EAAs) from candidates who have long term impairments, chronic medical conditions or specific learning difficulties, such as the ones listed below:

- mobility or sensory impairment
- dyslexia, dyspraxia, dysgraphia, dyscalculia
- ADHD
- autism spectrum conditions
- diabetes, epilepsy, and other chronic medical conditions
- depression, anxiety and other mental health conditions.

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. As explained below, each application is considered on its own merits, based on the documentation submitted.

2.1.2 Temporary conditions

Candidates who have an acute condition of a temporary nature during the MATSEC examination period may also be granted EAAs. This includes candidates who have:

- sustained an injury resulting from an accident
- a condition resulting from an acute illness
- a case of emergency.

As explained below, such candidates should contact the MATSEC Support Unit as quickly as possible. Each application is considered on its own merits, based on the documentation submitted.

2.2 Evidence of Need

It is the responsibility of the applicant, be it an independent candidate or any relevant representative, to ensure that a request on behalf of a candidate is based on firm evidence of need. Candidates - and parents/guardians when the candidate is under 18 - should always be made aware that an application is being submitted and must give their consent by signing Application Form A. Applications, including all required documentation, are to reach the MATSEC Examinations Board by the [published dates](#).

It is essential that applications include reports, relevant to the particular impairment, written by suitably qualified professionals and in accordance with the requirements of these Guidelines (see 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 EAAs.

The respective professionals should not only provide test results but also comment on the **functional implications**, that is, provide an account of the impact of the condition on the candidate's current functioning during examinations as evidenced in classroom observations or clinical assessment. A detailed explanation must be provided as to why each EAA is being requested and how it is correlated to specific identified functional limitations.

In cases of long-standing disabilities, an evaluation should include any relevant history. The evaluation should also indicate the current situation. It must 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, and what measures have been effective in enabling the candidate to access learning and assessments. Reference should be made to any past or current treatments/interventions (including medications, EAAs, tutoring, classroom modifications, counselling, etc.) and their impact. Other relevant evidence, for example school reports, may also be presented in indicating the history of the condition. Narrative documentation from other professionals who know the candidate well may also be relevant.

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.

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 the application or EAAs.

The ADSC does not normally meet the candidates, parents/guardians and/or professionals personally, but candidates and their parents/guardians may contact the MATSEC Support Unit or the [ACCESS – Disability Support Unit \(ADSU\)](#) for advice.

Table 1 Professional Certification required for different disabilities.
(for further details see Section III)

	Disability	Professional from whom report/certification is required²
1	ADHD	Psychologist / Psychiatrist
2	Autism Spectrum Condition (ASC)	Psychologist / Psychiatrist
3	Developmental Coordination Disorder (DCD/Dyspraxia)	Occupational Therapist
4	Diabetes Mellitus	Endocrinologist
5	Epilepsy	Neurologist
6	Hearing Impairment	Audiologist
7	Irritable Bowel Syndrome	Family doctor / Endocrinologist
8	Medical Conditions	Relevant medical consultant
9	Mental Health Difficulties	Psychiatrist / Psychologist
10	Physical and/or Mobility Impairment	Relevant medical consultant
11	Specific Learning Difficulties (including dyslexia, dysgraphia and dyscalculia)	Psychologist working in psycho-educational assessment / Dyslexia specialist
12	Speech, Language and Communication Impairment (Chapter)	Speech and Language Therapist
13	Visual Impairment	Ophthalmologist / Optometrist

² In the case of medical conditions, it may be sufficient for the family doctor to confirm past consultants' reports, in addition to providing an update of the candidate's condition. The ADSC may however request a copy of the eHealth report.

2.3 Factors taken into account

In considering each application and reaching its decisions, 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. **It is therefore important that those involved read the guidelines in order to familiarise themselves with the different ways in which needs are normally met during MATSEC examinations.** The persons concerned include Heads of School, Heads of Department (Inclusion), and support staff as well as students and their parents/guardians.

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. Since these arrangements are made to enable the candidates to access examinations which they would not otherwise be able to access, EAs apply only when the disability puts the candidate at a disadvantage and when they do not go against the assessment objectives of the examination.

2.4 Types of EAs given

EAs considered for MATSEC examinations are listed in Table 2. In addition, Section III provides information on how these arrangements apply in the case of particular disabilities. It should be kept in mind that access arrangements may vary from SEC, SEAC to Matriculation level.

Table 2 Glossary for Examination Access Arrangements

Adaptive equipment	<p>Candidates who make use of small adaptive equipment (such as typing sticks, writing splints, arm supports, inflatable dynamic air cushion) must bring their own equipment, subject to approval by the ADSC.</p> <p>Arrangements for larger equipment such as adapted tables and chairs can be made, within reason, provided they have been requested and specifications given well in advance.</p>
Assistive Technology	<p>Assistive technology includes devices and systems that provide access in terms of functional capabilities for examination candidates. Examples include reader pen, screen reader, modified keyboards, communication devices.</p>
Examination Venues	<p>In very exceptional circumstances, examinations may be taken outside an examination centre, for example in a hospital, provided that the request is made reasonably in advance, examination integrity can be guaranteed, the candidate is fit to take the examination, permission from the authorities of the institution is given, and the examination supervision requirements can be met. There is no guarantee that emergency requests will be accommodated due to logistical reasons.</p>
Extra Time	<p>In most cases, extra time can also be used as supervised rest breaks, supervised movement breaks or as settling-down period.</p> <p>This arrangement may be allowed in most subjects and types of examinations according to need. Candidates may use extra time as additional time to work on the examination paper, as a break from the examination that may include leaving the room under supervision, and taking time to settle down prior to starting the examination.</p> <p>Extra time will not normally be permitted in an examination component where performance of a task in a limited time is itself an assessment objective (for example, in SEC Mathematics Paper 1 Section A, mental paper). Extra time is not normally given in oral/aural and performance examinations (for example, practical Music, PE practical, Theatre and Dance).</p>

Means of access to questions	<p>Modifications may be made to the examination paper including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • changes in the visual presentation of the examination paper, e.g. enlargement from A4 to A3; • the use of aids and assistive devices (including word processors, reader pens, screen readers, communication devices). • the use of sign language interpretation and other recognised means of communication.
Means of presenting responses	<p>If the candidate's impairment makes writing by hand difficult, responses may be presented in other ways such as by means of a word processor. In very exceptional circumstances, use may also be made of a scribe or speech-to-text software.</p>
Communicator	<p>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. The communicator is allowed in SEC and SEAC examinations only and is not given in language subjects.</p>
Coursework or project work	<p>If a syllabus requires that coursework or project work is to 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 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.</p>
Examination Access Arrangements Support Assistants (EAASAs)	<p>EAASAs support candidates with a disability who cannot otherwise access the examination. These may include readers, prompters, scribes, practical assistants, sign language interpreters and communicators (see more information in the handbook on the MATSEC website). EAASAs are trained by the MATSEC Support Unit to support candidates where the support is allowed by the ADSC. They cannot be relatives, friends or persons who support candidates within the educational setting, for example, learning support educators (LSEs) or peripatetic teachers.</p>

Exemption and endorsement	<p>It is not normally in the interest of candidates to be exempted from part/s 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.</p> <p>Endorsement is also made when an examination objective cannot be fully reached with the required arrangement.</p> <p>Certificates will be endorsed as follows: "Access 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: https://www.um.edu.mt/matsec/regulations/sec_regulations.</p>
Physical access to examination venues and examinations	<p>A request may be made for the examination venue to be fully accessible. This includes ground floor accommodation or the use of lift for rooms on higher floors, and accessible bathrooms. 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 given if candidates are over 18, have a severe mobility impairment and drive their own car.</p> <p>Candidates should also indicate any other ergonomic or environmental adaptations required.</p>
Personal assistant	<p>If necessary, candidates may request a personal assistant or a relative to be on call outside the examination venue to assist them should there be a need. Assistance should not interfere with the examination itself.</p>
Practical assistant for severe physical disability	<p>The guiding principle in practical assessments is to observe safety measures at all times. Candidates must neither endanger themselves nor endanger others.</p> <p>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. The practical assistant is a person who is conversant with the subject matter.</p>

Prompter	Prompters are assigned to draw candidates' attention back to the examination task when the candidate's attention appears to be away from the task.
Reader	<p>A reader will be allowed in subjects where a candidate has a significant impairment in vision or in literacy. The reader can be either an assistive device or, if appropriate and necessary, a human reader.</p> <p>The ADSC advocates for assistive technology that enables candidates to be fully independent in accessing the examination. The assistive technology can be a screen reader, an examination reader pen or other application/device.</p> <p>When requested by the candidate, the human reader will read instructions, questions, words or phrases as set down on the examination paper without explanation, translation or clarification.</p>
Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar	<p>For SEC examinations, spelling arrangements are made for all students irrespective of whether candidates are eligible for EAAs. The relevant regulation stipulates that:</p> <p>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.</p>
Scribe (only in exceptional circumstances)	<p>A word processor is the preferred arrangement where writing difficulties are involved.</p> <p>When permission is given for the use of a scribe, in the course of the examination, candidates will be asked to dictate spelling of technical terms as well as other words at regular intervals.</p> <p>A scribe is given for language examinations only in very exceptional circumstances when the candidate is physically unable to write or type. 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 will 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. The recording will be stored in a secure place and destroyed at the end of the examination process.</p>

Word Processor	<p>A word-processor is an EAA for candidates who have a severe visual impairment and those 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 illegible handwriting.</p> <p>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, such as Mathematics, Physics and Chemistry, the use of a word processor is not recommended since it does not facilitate the presentation of responses due to a format that involves graphs, tables, diagrams and numbers (See Appendix 2).</p> <p>The ADSC may need 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.</p>
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2.5 Individual consideration of each application

Each application is considered on its own merits, in order to ensure that EAAs are granted on the basis of the particular needs of the individual. Candidates with multiple conditions may qualify for more EAAs than are usually given for a single condition. On the other hand, a candidate with a particular condition may not necessarily qualify for all arrangements that are listed for that particular condition in these guidelines.

It is the ADSC's role to decide on the arrangements that best suit each candidate with a disability. It is equally the ADSC's responsibility to ensure that candidates are only given EAAs for which they qualify.

2.6 Filling in of online applications

Generally, the authorities in schools and colleges together with students and parents/guardians are responsible for requesting EAAs for MATSEC examinations. Students should always be made aware that an application is filled in on their behalf. The application request for EAAs is made by filling in the online [Form A](#) and submitting it with the accompanying documentation by the deadline date. Private candidates sitting for MATSEC examinations may apply on their own

initiative and are responsible for submitting the full application that includes all documentation by the deadline date. Parents/guardians of candidates who are under 18 must always sign application Form A.

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.**

2.7 Submission of application form and accompanying documentation

2.7.1 Applying for SEC examinations from Year 10/Form 4

Applications for EAAs can be made from Year 10/Form 4. In this case, students may apply as early as February of Year 10/Form 4.

2.7.2 Applying for SEC vocational subjects and SEAC subjects from Year 9/Form 3

Year 9/Form 3 candidates who apply for access arrangements for the assessment of vocational subjects (VET) at SEC or SEAC level will need to apply by the end of January since the first controlled assessment will be held at the end of Year 9/Form 3. Any assessment updates will have to be carried out from July of the previous year onward (Year 8/Form 2 leading to Year 9/Form 3). This applies for Specific Learning Difficulties (SpLD) and/or ADHD and DCD/Dyspraxia. Those candidates with SpLD and/or ADHD will also need to present a full psychological report based on tests made at any time during their educational career. Access arrangements granted on this basis will be given for all assessments, including SEC and/or SEAC examinations for other subjects at Year 10/Form 4 and Year 11/Form 5. Candidates who do not present an updated report by January will not be eligible for access arrangements.

EAAs application forms from candidates who have a long standing disability and who are following SEC VET or SEAC will be accepted in Form 4/Year 10 or Form 5/Year 11. Such applications have to be submitted by the end of the January deadline date. However, it is highly recommended that the application form is submitted from the beginning of the SEC VET or SEAC programme in Form 3/Year 9.

2.7.3 Applications for subsequent examinations sessions

Candidates applying for subsequent examination sessions at the same level still need to submit the relevant application (Form A) by the stipulated deadline date **but they need not** re-submit professionals' report/s. The same EAAs will apply for any examination/s taken at the same level unless the circumstances change, in which case a new application with fresh documentation must be submitted. Candidates who had qualified for EAAs at SEC level and who are now sitting for Matriculation level and wish to have EAAs, need to reapply by filling in Form A and providing all reports. They would also need to ensure that any expired reports are updated (see Table 4).

2.7.4 Submission of application and documentation

The application and accompanying documentation should be submitted **by hand or by registered mail to the MATSEC Support Unit at:**

MATSEC Office

University of Malta

Triq l-Esperanto

Msida MSD2013.

Please also refer to Section III for further details on the documentation needed when submitting a form. The relevant forms can be found on the [MATSEC website](#):

The online registrations for examinations is a separate application process and should not be mixed up with the applications for EAAs. Therefore, registering for an examination does not mean that a candidate has automatically applied for EAAs. Conversely, when candidates apply for EAAs, they must ensure that they also submit an online registration for examinations.

2.8 Deadlines for applying for EAAs

It should be noted that the same deadlines that apply for MATSEC examinations apply for EAAs. However, no applications for EAAs will be accepted after **mid February**, since the process involved in vetting access arrangements is different and longer than the process for registrations.

Candidates should check the [MATSEC website](#) for the dates by which applications for access arrangements should be submitted. See Table 3.

These documents must be received by not later than the stipulated deadlines, published on the MATSEC and Examinations Department websites. For other relevant information on deadlines please refer to Table 3.

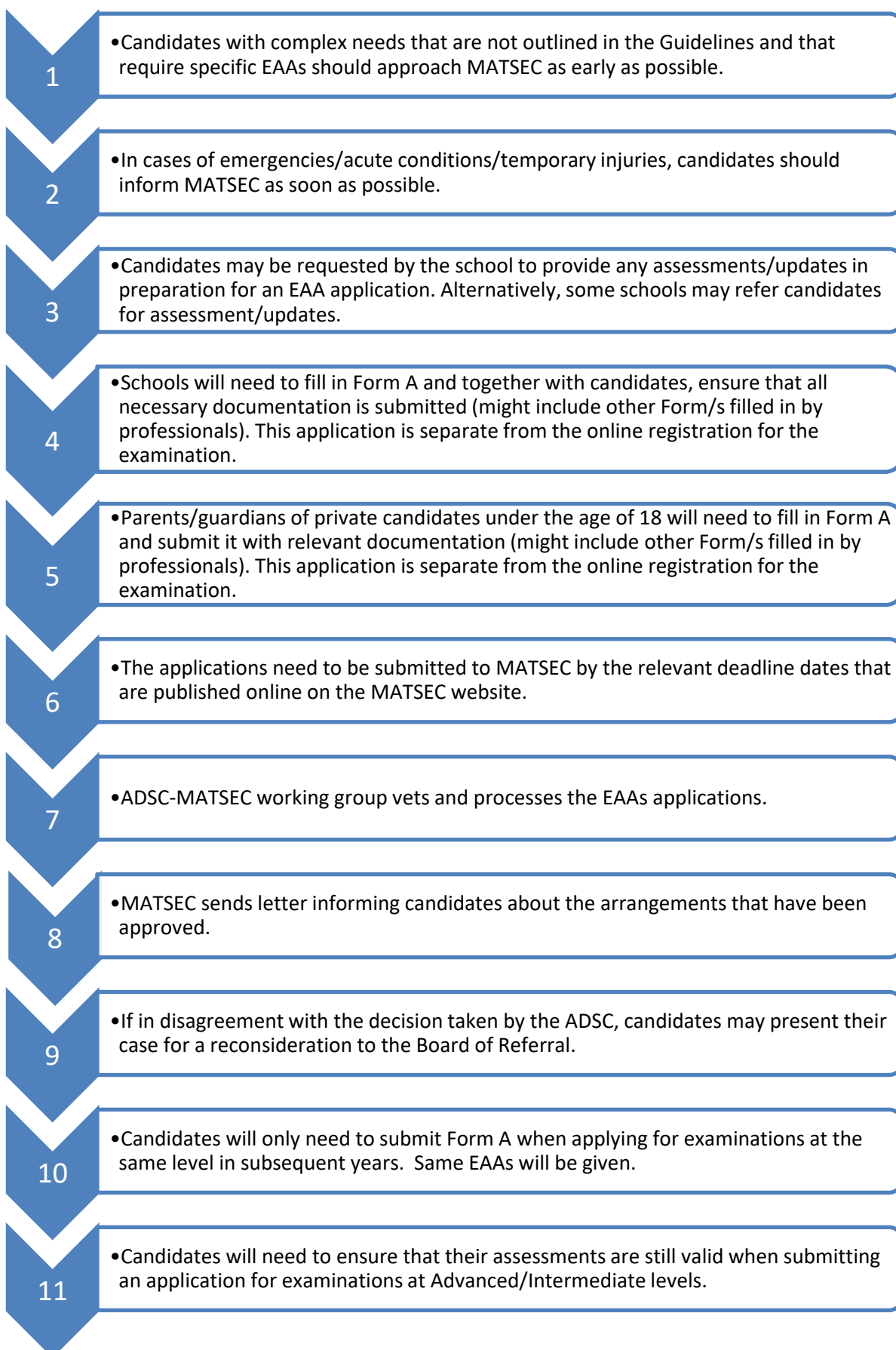
Late applications will not be accepted unless new circumstances arise (for example, a condition resulting from an accident or other unforeseeable circumstances).

Table 3: Deadlines for Applications for EAAs

	SEC	Matriculation (Adv/Int)
Candidates 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.
Candidates re-sitting exams in September	Need not resubmit Form A. Same EAAs given in the May session will apply.	Need not resubmit Form A. Same EAAs given in the May session will apply.
Candidates sitting for exams as first sit in September	Only when applicable, must submit the EAAs application by the deadline date with the relevant certification.	Must submit the EAAs application by the deadline date with the relevant certification.
Candidates sitting for two different levels i.e. SEC and Matriculation examinations at AM/IM level in 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 (if already sat for SEC before).	Must submit a fresh application by the deadline dates with valid certification

Summary of process for applying for EAAs for SEC (including VET and SEAC) and

Advanced/Intermediate Matriculation Level



2.9 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. The documentation should be concise but provide sufficient evidence of diagnosis and make a case for the requested EAAs.

Table 4: Validity of Documentation³

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

2.10 Letter from ADSC regarding approved arrangements

After the application has been discussed by the ADSC, the candidate concerned receives a letter from the ADSC specifying those arrangements which have been approved. **Candidates must bring this letter with them to each examination session together with the time-table, ID card and necessary materials for the examination in question.**

2.11 Appeals

Candidates who are not satisfied with the decision of the ADSC may forward their request for EAAs to the Board of Referral for a reconsideration. The Board of Referral is a separate and independent Board that is chaired by the Pro Rector for Academic Affairs. For more information

³ The validity of certifications for medical conditions and mental health difficulties will vary according to the condition and the individual. Some might need a recent update.

about this process, please see Appendix 3.

2.12 Data Protection and Confidentiality

UM collects and stores data concerning MATSEC candidates' applications for EAAs through the ACCESS Disability Support Unit, in order to fulfil its obligations under the Equal Opportunities Act (*Equal Opportunities (Persons with Disability) Act 2000 (CAP. 413)*) and to provide necessary access arrangements. This special category data is processed in accordance with the provisions of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and all other applicable data protection legislation, including the Data Protection Act (*CAP. 586*) and the Processing of Personal Data (Education Sector) Regulations (*S.L.586.07*). Further information about the ADSU and MATSEC's processing of personal data is set out in the Data Protection and Confidentiality Statement in Appendix 4.

Section III

Access Arrangements for Specific Conditions

Candidates with Particular Impairments

Candidates should read the information in this section, depending on their impairment/medical condition/specific learning difficulty, and within the context of the preceding sections of these guidelines. The list is presented alphabetically for ease of reference and is by no means exhaustive.

Candidates may have more than one impairment and, therefore, access may require less straightforward arrangements. On the other hand, it must also be noted that a candidate with a particular disability does not necessarily qualify for all arrangements listed as possible arrangements for candidates with that particular disability.

Candidates may be experiencing difficulties both due to other longstanding medical conditions or difficulties of a temporary nature, like acute injuries to the hands and arms that affect their ability to write. In such cases, students are encouraged to contact the ADSC or the MATSEC Support Unit before applying for arrangements.

Candidates should submit the appropriate form related to their particular impairment together with General Form A and all relevant documents. Further certification may be requested by the ADSC where necessary.

Each application is considered on its own merits.

More details on the EAAs referred to in this section can be found in Table 2.

1 Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)

Students with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) may have difficulty in allocating and maintaining attention, regulating motor activity, and managing behavioural impulses. ADHD can be predominantly Inattentive ADHD, predominantly hyperactive-impulsive ADHD or the combined type.

Certification and justification

Requests for access arrangements need to be supported by evidence linked to the candidate's specific history and current functional impairment. The psychologist or psychiatrist must describe the type and degree of impact that the 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 ADHD must include the following

data obtained within three years from the stipulated application deadline at Year 11/Form 5:

- 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 ADHD such as the Conners', Vanderbilt or Brown Rating Scales. These must include evidence that the candidate's scores, on either the parent or teacher forms, are at 1 or more standard deviations (SD) above the mean.
- iii. Evidence of observed attention processes through the use of either Continuous Performance Testing (CPT) instruments such as the Conners' Continuous Performance Test (CPT) (CATA and CPT3) and/or Integrated Visual and Auditory Test (IVA). This must include evidence of atypical scores - for example IVA+ 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); and >60 on the Conners CATA or CPT3). The summary score sheet should be attached to the application form.

- iv. A number of individuals with ADHD may also have sensory motor coordination difficulties. An occupational therapist's evaluation report must be provided if requesting arrangements on this basis.
- v. A detailed diagnostic psychiatrist's report can be presented in lieu of the evidence required by Paras ii and iii.

Professionals filling in the application form for ADHD only should indicate the SpLD part of the application form as not applicable.

EAAAs

EAAAs usually considered as appropriate for candidates with ADHD:

For **SEC and SEAC level** examinations:

- a prompter;
- a room with fewer students
- up to a maximum of 25% extra time that may be used as extra time, settling down period, supervised rest breaks or supervised movement breaks.

For **Matriculation** level examinations:

- a room with fewer students;
- up to a maximum of 25% extra time that may be used as settling down period, supervised rest breaks or supervised movement breaks

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

Documentation Needed: Online application [Forms A & B](#) and relevant documents.

2 Autism Spectrum Condition (ASC)

Students with 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 and may misinterpret instructions; they have unusual sensory reactions and may not cope well with, for instance, strip lighting, noise, strong smells, invigilator walking about or a large exam hall; and they have difficulty staying 'on task'.

Certification and justification

Requests for access arrangements need to be supported by evidence linked to the candidate's specific history and current functional impairment. The psychologist/psychiatrist must explain how the ASC symptoms have manifested across various settings over time, how the candidate has addressed these challenges. Reference should be made to any current treatments/interventions for ASC (including medication, access arrangements, tutoring, classroom modifications) and their impact.

The psychologist/psychiatrist 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 EAs 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)

iii. A detailed diagnostic psychiatrist’s report can be presented in lieu of the evidence required by Paras i and ii.

EAAs

EAA

s usually considered as appropriate for candidates with ASC:

For **SEC and SEAC level** examinations

- a prompter;
- a room with fewer students;
- up to a maximum of 25% Extra time that may be used as extra time, settling down period, supervised rest breaks or supervised movement breaks.

For **Matriculation** level examinations:

- a room with fewer students;
- up to a maximum of 25% Extra time that may be used as extra time, settling down period, supervised rest breaks or supervised movement breaks.

Other EAA

s may be considered on the basis of appropriate supportive evidence.

Documentation Needed: Online application [Forms A & C](#) and relevant documents.

3 Developmental Coordination Disorder (DCD)/ Dyspraxia

DCD is distinct from other motor disorders and is characterised by an impairment in fine and gross motor coordination in children and adults. It may interfere significantly with academic achievement and activities of daily living. Both quality of movement and functional performance are impaired (DSM V). It is an umbrella term including subtypes such as:

- sensory integration
- perceptual motor
- postural motor
- musculo-skeletal or minor neuro-motor deficits.

Students with dyspraxia take a long time to think out, plan and carry out motor tasks, which are normally automatic for other persons. In an educational context, this may translate into difficulties in: speed and/or quality of motor performance (handling classroom tools, planning and writing) and/or legibility.

Certification and justification

Requests for access arrangements need to be supported by evidence linked to the candidate's specific history and current functional impairment. Candidates requesting EAAs on the basis of dyspraxia need to provide a detailed report, not older than three years before the deadline date for applications for EAAs at Form 5/Year 11 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
- Both versions of the Detailed Assessment of Speed of Handwriting. 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.

25% extra time that may be used as extra time, settling down period, supervised rest breaks or supervised movement breaks ***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

25% extra time that may be used as extra time, settling down period, supervised rest breaks or supervised movement breaks may also be justified due to:

- 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 a, b and c above).

EAAAs

EAAAs usually considered as appropriate for candidates with DCD/Dyspraxia.

For **SEC and SEAC level** examinations:

- up to a maximum of 25% Extra time that may be used as extra time, settling down period, supervised rest breaks or supervised movement breaks;
- use of a word processor;
- a room with few students.

For **Matriculation** level examinations:

- up to a maximum of 25% Extra time that may be used as extra time, settling down period, supervised rest breaks or supervised movement breaks;
- use of a word processor;
- a room with few students.

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

Documentation Needed: Application [Forms A & E](#) and relevant documents.

4. Diabetes Mellitus

Diabetes Mellitus (DM) is a chronic disease that causes uncontrolled high blood glucose concentrations. There are two main types: type 1 and type 2. Those who have type 1 DM are completely dependent on injected insulin therapy. Those with type 2 DM will need oral medication, but some may also need injected medication (e.g. insulin). Individuals with DM need to check their own blood glucose level, with a portable glucose meter, at regular intervals and whenever they feel unwell. Persons with DM may need frequent access to a lavatory. They may also need access to drinking water.

Certification and rationale

Requests for access arrangements need to be supported by evidence linked to the candidate's specific history and current functional impairment. Certification of the condition should be based on a diagnostic report detailing the candidate's condition and access needs by a relevant medical consultant. If the candidate is on medication, the consultant's certification should indicate the type and effects of medication. This and other relevant documentation will form the basis on which the ADSC will determine how to enable the candidate to access the examinations.

EAA's

EAA's for **SEC and SEAC** examination level and **Matriculation** examination level usually considered as appropriate for candidates with Diabetes Mellitus:

- permission to bring in a blood glucose measuring device (e.g. a portable glucose meter, or a continuous glucose monitor that is worn on the body);
- permission to bring and administer their own medication;
- extra time will be allowed to make up for when the blood glucose goes low until it is normalised and the candidate has recovered. In such cases, it is the responsibility of the candidate to inform the invigilator of hypoglycaemia symptoms during the examinations so that up to 25% extra time is given;
- permission to bring water and basic snacks to eat during the examinations.

Other EAA's may be considered on the basis of appropriate supportive evidence.

Documentation Needed: Application [Form A](#) and consultant's certificate.

5 Epilepsy

Epilepsy is a central nervous system (neurological) disorder in which brain activity becomes abnormal, causing seizures or periods of unusual behaviour, sensations, and sometimes loss of awareness. At least two unprovoked seizures are generally required for an epilepsy diagnosis. People with epilepsy usually require lifelong treatment. Medications or sometimes surgery can control seizures for the majority of people with epilepsy. However, 30% of patients are not controlled and still have seizures. Since epilepsy is caused by abnormal activity in the brain, seizures can affect any process that the brain coordinates. Signs and symptoms can vary widely and may include: temporary confusion; a staring spell; uncontrollable jerking movements of the arms and legs; loss of consciousness or awareness; psychic symptoms such as fear, anxiety or déjà vu. Anyone can develop epilepsy, at any time in life.

Certification and justification

Requests for access arrangements need to be supported by evidence linked to the candidate's specific medical history and current control of epileptic seizures. Certification of the condition should be based on a detailed medical report by a neurologist. The report should identify current functioning and any specific access needs. If the candidate is on medication, the report should also indicate the medication the candidate is on and possible adverse effects which may affect the candidate during the examinations. This and other relevant documentation will form the basis on which the ADSC will determine how to enable the candidate to access the examinations.

EAA's

The access arrangements depend very much on the type of epilepsy and the degree of control of seizures and possible adverse effects due to the medication that may impact the particular candidate's functioning. EAA's usually considered as appropriate for candidates with Epilepsy:

For **SEC**, **SEAC** and **Matriculation** level examinations:

- up to a maximum of 25% Extra time that may be used as extra time, settling down period, supervised rest breaks or supervised movement breaks;
- a room with fewer students;
- a relative on call.

Other EAA's may be considered on the basis of appropriate supportive evidence.

Documentation Needed: Application [Form A](#) and consultant's certificate.

6. Hearing impairment

Candidates are considered deaf or hearing-impaired if their impairment is congenital or if it occurred early in life and preceded the acquisition of their spoken language(s) or if it severely affects their use of language. For the purposes of these Guidelines, Deaf candidates are those who make use of sign language. Hearing impaired or deaf candidates are those whose hearing loss affects their language processing. They usually wear hearing-aids, have cochlear implants or use other assistive devices.

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 do not have any difficulty with processing language but may have difficulty with accessing spoken language.

Certification and justification

Requests for access arrangements need to be supported by evidence linked to the candidate's specific history and current functional impairment. Candidates 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 implications 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.

EAA's

EAA's usually considered as appropriate for candidates with Hearing Impairment:

For **SEC and SEAC** level examinations:

- up to a maximum of 25% Extra time that may be used as extra time, settling down period, supervised rest breaks or supervised movement breaks;
- a live speaker will read the listening comprehension. The listening comprehension passage is read a third time. Some candidates may request the use of a radio aid during the listening comprehension;
- if candidates are unable to be assessed for part of or for all of an oral or aural examination (e.g. in a language subject), 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 certificate will be endorsed;

- communicator to clarify written instructions;
- sign language interpreter in non-language subjects for Deaf students who communicate in sign language.

For **Matriculation** level examinations:

- up to a maximum of 25% Extra time that may be used as extra time, settling down period, supervised rest breaks or supervised movement breaks;
- a live speaker will read the listening comprehension. The listening comprehension passage is read a third time. Some candidates may request the use of a radio aid during the listening comprehension;
- 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 certificate will be endorsed;
- sign language interpreter in non-language subjects for Deaf students who communicate in sign language.

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

Invigilators will need to be informed and asked to draw the student's attention to any notices being given during the examination, particularly in case that errors in examination papers need to be pointed out.

Documentation Needed: Application [Forms A & D](#) and relevant documents.

7. Irritable Bowel Syndrome

Irritable Bowel Syndrome (IBS) is characterised by bouts of constipation alternating with bouts of diarrhoea. Other symptoms can include an increased frequency of defaecation, abdominal pain or cramps, abnormally loud bowel sounds and nausea. Symptoms may be worse in periods of stress such as examination time.

Certification and justification

Requests for access arrangements need to be supported by evidence linked to the candidate's specific history and current functional impairment. Certification of the condition should be based on a diagnostic report by a family doctor or gastroenterologist. An update of the candidate's current functioning and access needs must be provided in the report. If the candidate is on medication, the report will be required to indicate the type of medication and the effects of it, if any.

EAA's

EAA's for **SEC and SEAC** examination level and **Matriculation** examination level usually considered as appropriate for candidates with Irritable Bowel Syndrome:

- compensation time in case of candidate requiring frequent use of bathroom;
- a room with fewer students;
- an examination room close to the bathroom.

Other EAA's may be considered on the basis of appropriate supportive evidence.

Documentation Needed: Application [Form A](#) and medical certificate.

8 Medical Conditions

There is a variety of medical conditions that candidates may present with that may affect their performance during examinations, other than those mentioned in other parts of this section. These conditions may include Myalgic Encephalopathy/Chronic Fatigue Syndrome (ME/CFS), Systemic Lupus, and neurological disorders, among many others.

Certification and justification

Requests for access arrangements need to be supported by evidence linked to the candidate's specific history and current functional impairment. The candidate needs to present a report by the relevant medical consultant. 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. It may be sufficient for the family doctor to confirm past consultants' reports, in addition to providing an update of the candidate's condition. The ADSC may however request a copy of the eHealth report.

The documentation will form the basis on which the ADSC will determine how to enable the candidate to access the examinations.

EAA's

EAA's for **SEC and SEAC** examination level and **Matriculation** examination level usually considered as appropriate for candidates with Medical Conditions:

- up to a maximum of 25% Extra time that may be used as extra time, settling down period, supervised rest breaks or supervised movement breaks:
- a room with fewer students.
- Word processor

Other EAA's may be considered on the basis of appropriate supportive evidence.

Documentation Needed: Application [Form A](#) and relevant documents.

9 Mental Health Difficulties

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 candidate's functioning.

Certification and justification

Requests for access arrangements need to be supported by evidence linked to the candidate's specific history and current functional impairment. Candidates are required to submit a psychiatrist's and/or clinical psychologist's report detailing the difficulties and their effect on the candidate. In the case of candidates with a history of severe performance anxiety may present a report by an educational psychologist or a counselling psychologist. Such report would need to include a detailed history of how the anxiety affects the candidate's functioning during the examination. 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

EAAs for **SEC and SEAC** examination level and **Matriculation** examination level usually considered as appropriate for candidates with Mental Health Difficulties:

- accommodation in a different venue and/or in a room with fewer students;
- up to a maximum of 25% Extra time that may be used as extra time, settling down period, supervised rest breaks or supervised movement breaks.

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

Documentation Needed: Application [Form A](#) and relevant documents.

10 Physical and/or Mobility Impairment

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 manipulate objects. The use of a wheelchair, crutches, walker or other aids may be utilised to enhance mobility.

Certification and justification

Requests for access arrangements need to be supported by evidence linked to the candidate's specific history and current functional impairment. A report from the medical consultant with whom the candidate has been in touch in relation to the impairment should be submitted. This should explain the functional implications of the impairment. The documentation will form the basis on which the ADSC will determine how to enable the candidate to access the examinations.

EAA's

EAA's for **SEC and SEAC** examination level and **Matriculation** examination level usually considered as appropriate for candidates with Physical and/or Mobility Impairment:

- up to a maximum of 25% Extra time that may be used as extra time, settling down period, supervised rest breaks or supervised movement breaks;
- accessible venues;
- personal assistant;
- means of presenting responses;
- practical assistant;
- word processor;
- adaptive equipment;
- scribe (in very exceptional circumstances);
- in exceptional circumstances and where applicable, 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.

Other EAA's may be considered on the basis of appropriate supportive evidence.

Documentation Needed: Application [Form A](#) and relevant documents.

11 Specific Learning Difficulties

Specific learning difficulties refer to the ongoing challenges in the adequate development and consolidation of literacy and numeracy skills. Difficulties with encoding and decoding words, severe limitations in reading fluency and writing automaticity together with evident weaknesses in the areas of phonological processing, rapid naming, working memory and visual and auditory processing are usually referred to as dyslexia. Difficulties with handwriting are often referred to as Dysgraphia.

Difficulties with mathematics can include challenges with number sense, memorisation of number facts, calculations or reasoning/problem solving. Difficulties learning mathematical facts and performing mathematical calculations are often referred to as Dyscalculia.

Assessment by a qualified psychologist

Most assessments are carried out by Educational Psychologists. However, there are instances 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.

Relevant reports are to be submitted with the application form.

Assessment by a dyslexia specialist

The dyslexia specialist should establish that the overall performance and attainment of the candidate provide evidence which indicates that s/he is encountering literacy difficulties as a consequence of which the test scores are below those expected of students of similar age and ability.

The ADSC can advise on the validity of a literacy/dyslexia specialist's qualification should this be required.

Certification and justification

The application must include at least one comprehensive psycho-educational assessment carried out 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 (SpLD). In instances where SpLD is not specifically indicated but candidates present evidence of

significant difficulties in literacy, due consideration will be given to such requests.

In addition, the candidate must have an assessment of literacy skills carried out up to two years prior to the closing date of the registrations for the examination. This literacy update may be carried out by a qualified psychologist or a dyslexia specialist.

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

- English Reading Comprehension Test- Suffolk Reading Scale 2 (Levels 1 or Levels 2 as applicable). Malta: MEEF & UM.2010)
 - Maltese Reading Comprehension Test- Naqra u Nifhem (TL1 or TL2 as applicable). Malta: MEEF & UM.
 - English Spelling Test. Malta: MEEF & UM.
 - Maltese Spelling Test. Malta: MEEF & UM.
1. When candidates do not qualify for extra time or a reader on the basis of scores on these four tests, the assessor may consider administering further tests to justify the need for EAAs as indicated further on in this section.
 2. Other tests administered may include a standardized test of prose reading in the English language, such as the Neale Analysis of Reading Ability (NARA II), working memory tests, processing speed tests and others.

Once the assessor has completed the tests which meet eligibility criteria for EAAs, s/he should complete Application Form B. This should include a clear recommendation of the specific EAAs which will be required on the basis of the literacy test results and the information given by the school (where applicable).

Reporting Assessment Results

- Assessors must present results in standardised scores 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 <10 years reading age on NARA reading accuracy; or
- b) Their standardised score on the English Spelling Test is <85 (1 SD below the mean); 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/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 13 words per minute or below and, in addition, their score on the NARA II Reading Rate is <10.00 years.
- d) **For borderline scores**, where the student does not qualify on the basis of the above criteria, extra time may still be justified if the candidate's performance meets any three of the following criteria:
 - i. below 90, in any of the locally standardised literacy tests (reading comprehension or spelling)
 - ii. below 11 years in NARA reading speed
 - iii. at 13 wpm or below in writing speed
 - iv. below average score (1 standard deviation below the mean) in a standardised test of working memory and/or speed of processing.

Other supportive evidence, including history of difficulties, must be submitted.

Further notes on eligibility for extra time

Candidates whose score on Maltese spelling or Naqra u Nifhem is <85 (1 SD deviation below the mean), will qualify for extra time in the SEC Maltese examination only (SEC Malti);

Dyscalculia

Candidates who have specific learning difficulties in mathematics will be eligible for 25% extra time in the Mathematics examination **only**, except for the mental paper where speed is an assessment criterion.

Certification should include the results of standardized tests of processing speed and working memory, and the candidate's recent school examination reports (of all subjects not only of mathematics for comparative purposes).

Reader

Candidates will qualify for a **Reader (Human Reader or Reader Pen)** if:

- a) Their standardised score on the locally standardised test of English Reading Comprehension (Suffolk) is < 70 (2 SD below the mean);

or

- b) (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 and, additionally, their age-equivalent Reading Accuracy score on NARA II is <10.00 years.

A Reader Pen is allowed in language subjects (where applicable) but a Human Reader is not. A human reader is only granted in non-language subjects. When a reader pen is used in a language subject, the certificate will be endorsed.

Only assistive technology devices may be considered for Matriculation level examinations.

Spelling

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.

Assistive Technology Devices and Word Processor

Assistive technology, including the word processor, may be used to help students access the examination paper independently. Whenever these devices are recommended, the psychologist/dyslexia specialist must ensure that the candidates can use them confidently during the examinations.

Assistive technology devices may include text-to-speech software, speech-to-text software and reader pen.

Candidates will qualify for the use of a Word Processor if:

- a) the candidate's degree of illegibility of handwriting can be established through evidence provided by the psychologist/dyslexia specialist/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 ongoing reports by a psychologist/dyslexia specialist which include:
 - 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 ability to encode words decipherably.
 - ii. Evidence that the candidate experienced difficulties in many 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.

Assessment for adult candidates (18 years and over)

For the updated assessment of adult candidates (18 years and over), the report should include evidence of the student's below average performance in literacy/numeracy skills– that is, with a standardized score of one standard deviation below the mean (i.e. <85 or <16 percentile rank) in one or more of the following skills:

- word recognition
- reading comprehension
- spelling
- reading or writing speed
- illegible handwriting
- below average functioning in mathematical skills (where applicable).

For this reason, standardised test scores on relevant and age appropriate scales should be included. The report should also indicate the severity of needs and what access arrangements have been hitherto used and are being requested. This and other relevant documentation will form the basis on which the ADSC will determine how to enable the student to access the examinations.

EAAAs

EAAAs usually considered as appropriate for candidates with SpLD:

For **SEC and SEAC** level examinations:

- up to a maximum of 25% extra time;
- human reader or assistive technology devices;
- use of a word processor.

For **Matriculation** level examinations:

- up to a maximum of 25% extra time;
- assistive technology devices;
- use of a word processor

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

Documentation Needed: Application [Form A & B](#).

12 Speech, Language and Communication Impairment

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 (such as stuttering and cluttering) characterised by atypical flow, rhythm, and/or repetitions of sounds and blocks; or a voice disorder characterised by abnormal pitch, volume, resonance, vocal quality, or duration; or verbal dyspraxia characterized by oral motor difficulties.

Certification and justification

Requests for access arrangements need to be supported by evidence linked to the candidate's specific history and current functional impairment. The candidate will need to submit a speech and language therapist's report giving full details of the impairment and how it should be managed during an oral examination.

EAA's

EAA's 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 therapist.

Examiners can be asked to make the environment as stress-free as possible while putting 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. In such cases, the marks will be pro-rated and the certificate endorsed.

Documentation Needed: Application [Form A](#) and relevant documents.

13. Visual Impairment

Candidates are considered visually-impaired when they have significant limitations of functional visual capability, including visual acuity and field of vision, that cannot be adequately corrected by conventional means, such as spectacles, refractive correction or other assistive devices.

Certification and justification

Requests for access arrangements need to be supported by evidence linked to the candidate's specific history and current functional impairment. Candidates need to submit an ophthalmologist's and/or optometrist's report with details of the functional implications of the visual impairment.

EAA's

EAA's for **SEC and SEAC** examination level and **Matriculation** examination level usually considered as appropriate for candidates with visual impairment:

- accessible venues;
- enlarged paper (A4 to A3);
- use of a word processor and/or assistive technology;
- up to a maximum of 50% Extra time that may be used as extra time, settling down period, supervised rest breaks or supervised movement breaks;
- in exceptional circumstances and where applicable, 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;
- practical assistance.

Other EAA's may be considered on the basis of appropriate supportive evidence.

Documentation Needed: Application [Form A](#) and relevant documents

Appendices

Appendix 1: Frequently Asked Questions

What is a disability?	<i>The term disability refers to physical, sensory or mental impairments, medical conditions or specific learning difficulties.</i>
What are examination access arrangements (EAAs)?	<i>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 extra time for a candidate with SpLD. (See Section III)</i>
Who can conduct assessments for candidates?	<i>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.</i>
How recent should an assessment by a professional be?	<i>For some disabilities, it is important to present any documentation of assessment/s relating to the disability that was 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. For some conditions, a more recent update is required. Further information can be found in Table 4.</i>
Do candidates have to apply for EAAs for each examination session?	<i>MATSEC examination sessions include the Main session and the Supplementary session for SEC and the First session and Second session for Advanced/Intermediate level examinations. Candidates have to apply for EAAs by the deadline dates depending on the particular session (refer to Table 3). Although candidates will be entitled for same arrangements in subsequent sessions once EAAs are given for a particular examination level, they will always have to submit Form A in subsequent years.</i>
Are candidates who are granted EAAs accommodated in separate examination venues?	<i>Usually all candidates who are granted EAAs are accommodated in a separate examination venue.</i> <i>Candidates who have not received the time-table two weeks prior to the first examination should contact the Examinations Department on 2598 2960/1 to ask about examination venues.</i>
Do candidates who are granted EAAs need to present a document at the examination venue?	<i>Yes. Candidates who are granted EAAs are to present the letter showing the approved EAAs together with their time-table and ID card.</i>
Will certificates show that the candidate had EAAs in examinations?	<i>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. In such cases, candidates will be informed about the endorsement in advance.</i>
Is the arrangement of extra time given in all subjects?	<i>Generally extra time is not given in examinations where timing is an assessment objective. This includes: Physical Education. practical examinations, musical performance or expressive arts, oral examinations, Mental Mathematics.</i>

Are candidates who do not have a disability granted EAAs?	<i>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.</i>
What happens if a candidate has more than one disability?	<i>Candidates who have more than one disability need to provide evidence as to how each of the disabilities affects their performance. For example, some students with physical impairments may also experience sensory difficulties. These can compound the difficulties in an examination setting. In such cases, consideration is given to the candidate's various needs.</i>
Why is it necessary to compile a history of the needs and arrangements made in the school?	<i>It is important for the ADSC to consider the arrangements made for candidates in their regular educational settings. This will enable the ADSC to make an informed decision in line with the guidelines regarding the EAAs required by the particular candidate. It is also important that candidates have had experience of, and practice in, the use of any access arrangements which are requested.</i>
What steps should be taken before applying for EAAs?	<i>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.</i>
Can EAAs be refused by candidates?	<i>Yes, candidates can refuse the EAAs granted, provided that they inform the MATSEC Support Unit in writing.</i>
If candidates disagree with the EAAs granted by the ADSC, what should they do?	<i>If 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 Appendix 3).</i>
Where can the application forms be obtained from?	<i>Application Forms can be obtained from the following link: https://www.um.edu.mt/matsec/Access</i>
If candidates require further assistance, who should they contact?	<p>MATSEC Support Unit: Tel: 2340 2814/5/6 access.matsec@um.edu.mt www.um.edu.mt/matsec/Access</p> <p><i>And/or</i></p> <p>ACCESS-Disability Support Unit: Tel: 2340 2557 adsu@um.edu.mt www.um.edu.mt/about/services/support/access</p>

Appendix 2

Guidelines for the use of Word Processor during examinations

Candidates who apply for a word processor need to be conversant in its use. In most cases, the word processing device is a laptop. Therefore, hardware such as keyboard, touchpad and speakers/microphone will be integrated as part of the laptop. In circumstances where these do not meet the needs of the candidate, a justification needs to be made for another device by the professional requesting the EAAs.

The word processor is provided by the Examinations Department of the Ministry for Education and Employment. Candidates cannot use their own word processor unless there are exceptional circumstances as determined by the ADSC. In such cases, the ADSC may require that the equipment be passed on to them in advance for the necessary preparations.

Usually a word processor is granted for examinations that require long essay writing. The word processor is not given in the subjects below where it does not facilitate the presentation of responses due to a format that includes graphs, tables, diagrams and numbers.

SEC Accounting	Int/Adv Accounting
SEC Art	Int/Adv Art*
SEC Chemistry	Int/Adv Chemistry
SEC Graphical Communication	Int/Adv Engineering Drawing and Graphical Communication
SEC Music	N/A
SEC Mathematics	Int/Adv Maths (Applied and Pure)
SEC Physics	Int/Adv Physics
SEC VET Engineering Technology	

*in the sections requesting drawing

During the examinations, the candidate will be given a **hard copy** of the examination paper. The candidate is expected to answer on a blank word document, clearly indicating the question number next to the answer. This same principle applies to *write-on examination papers*.

In subjects where both long essay writing and diagrams are required, the candidate may type the long essay answers on the Word Document and handwrite the labelling of diagrams on the hard copy paper. The candidate has to ensure that both papers are handed in at the end of the

examination.

In language subjects, the candidates must create their own shortcuts for any non English alphabet characters. This can be done by selecting the following commands on the Word Document: 'Insert'; 'Symbol'; 'More Symbols'; (choose the symbol e.g. 'ć'); 'Shortcut Key'; (Insert own shortcut keys); 'Apply'. Candidates may ask for the assistance of the computer technician in charge.

The word processor will 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 will not be able to access the Internet at all times.

Candidates are reminded to save their work at short regular intervals to ensure that none of their answers are lost in case of technical problems with the computer.

Printing of material takes place at the end of the examination and does not affect time allowance. The candidate will be asked to sign on a form to confirm that the correct procedure has been followed.

Appendix 3

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 by the ADSC.

Composition of the Referral Board

The Referral Board shall be composed of the following members:

- a) a representative of the Kummissjoni Drittijiet 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 candidate 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 (a), (b) or (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.



Form F

Request to the Referral Board
(Kindly attach the relevant documents)

Candidate's Details

ID. Number:	<input type="text"/>	Date of Birth:	<input type="text"/>
Last Name:	<input type="text"/>	First Name:	<input type="text"/>
Address:	<input type="text"/>		
Locality:	<input type="text"/>	Candidate's Contact No:	<input type="text"/>
Condition/Disability/Impairment	<input type="text"/>		
EAs requested:	<input type="text"/>		

Details of Person filling in this form:

Last Name:	<input type="text"/>	First Name:	<input type="text"/>
Title/Role:	<input type="text"/>		

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:

Appendix 4

Data Policy Statement

The University of Malta shall process the information provided in ADSC application forms in accordance with the provisions of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the Data Protection Act (Chapter 586, Laws of Malta) for the following purposes: to evaluate candidates' requests for examination access arrangements; to keep candidates informed about the outcome of their application; to grant candidates any access arrangement/s they are eligible for; and to ensure that any such arrangements are implemented in practice. Processing is based on Articles 6 (1) (a) and 9 (2) (a) GDPR (candidates' consent).

The information provided herein is accessible to University staff members who are required to process it by virtue of their roles and responsibilities. This includes select employees within the University's MATSEC Support Unit, and the University's Access-Disability Support Unit. Where candidates are granted access arrangements, the University will inform the Ministry for Education and Employment's Examinations Department, which is responsible for all logistics relating to MATSEC examinations, about these arrangements so that they may be effected. Examination invigilators engaged by the Examinations Department to supervise examinations will also be informed about candidates' access arrangements. With candidates' explicit permission, and where this is deemed to be in their best or vital interests or the best or vital interests of third parties, such as cases of epilepsy and hearing impairment the University may also inform the Examinations Department of their specific condition/ impairment.

The University retains data relating to applications for examination access arrangements until the end of the relevant examination session period. Candidates may request access to their personal data held and processed by the University, may request the rectification of inaccurate data concerning them, and where applicable, may request the erasure of their personal data or restriction of processing, may object to processing, and may request data portability.

Candidates may additionally withdraw their consent to the processing of their personal data as described above by sending an email to matsec@um.edu.mt. Candidates are reminded that this processing of their data, including the sharing of information with the relevant entities identified above, is necessary for the provision of the access arrangements service and that the University will be unable to provide this service if the necessary information and/or consent are not provided or are withdrawn.

For queries or concerns relating to the processing of personal data, candidates are welcome to contact the University's Data Protection Officer on dpo@um.edu.mt or +356 2340 3233. If candidates consider that the processing of their personal data has been carried out in an unlawful manner, they may lodge a complaint with the Information and Data Protection Commissioner, Malta. For more information regarding the University's processing of personal information concerning MATSEC candidates generally, please see the 'UM MATSEC Examinations Board and MATSEC Support Unit' Privacy Notice available on the MATSEC website.

Appendix 5

References to website links

MATSEC Support Unit website: www.um.edu.mt/matsec

ACCESS-Disability Support Committee setup:

<https://www.um.edu.mt/about/governance/committees/accessdisabilitysupportcommittee>

Examination Timetables and Deadlines:

<https://www.um.edu.mt/matsec/assessment/timetables>

Examination Access Arrangements Handbook:

https://www.um.edu.mt/_data/assets/pdf_file/0003/277905/AASashandbook-2016.pdf

Statute for the Matriculation and Secondary Education Certificate Examinations:

https://www.um.edu.mt/matsec/regulations/conduct_and_regulations