



# Exams for dyslexic students

**Dyslexic candidates in Scotland are entitled to reasonable adjustments to meet their individual needs in exams. This guide outlines how to arrange appropriate exam support for learners.**

Qualifications Scotland (formerly SQA) is responsible for most school and college exams in Scotland. If a student with dyslexia gets support in class, they should receive the same help during their exams.

Qualifications Scotland provides assessment arrangements to help students show what they know. These must match the usual way of learning. Schools need to provide evidence each year and apply for these supports in advance. It is important for students to practise using these supports well in advance of exams. Parents and teachers should encourage and support this, ideally from S4 or earlier.

For example, if a student uses text-reading or speech-to-text software while studying National 5 Geography, they should have access to similar tools in the exam. Since Geography tests knowledge about geography, not reading or writing skills, this support is fair and doesn't give an unfair advantage.

Reading and writing support, if needed, should be in place all through education. Similarly, if dyslexic learners have memory difficulties affecting maths, they could benefit from a calculator in a non-calculator paper.

Some dyslexic students may be reluctant to use these supports, but teachers and parents and carers should encourage them. Parents and carers should ask schools about exam support, especially before prelims.

You don't need an identification of dyslexia in order to request assessment arrangements.

## **Qualifications Scotland's principles of assessment arrangements are:**

- Assessment arrangements are intended to enable candidates to demonstrate, and not compensate for a lack of, attainment.
- The integrity of the qualification must be maintained.
- Any assessment should reflect, as far as possible, the candidate's way of working in teaching and learning.

## **Examples of assessment arrangements**

- extra time (up to 25%)
- digital exams (a digital device can read out the exam questions and answers can be typed, with or without a spell checker, or spoken)
- a human reader and/or scribe
- use of a computer (and spell check, if evidence for that)
- numerical support – use of a calculator in a non-calculator maths paper
- transcription, with or without correction
- candidate's preferred text size, font and paper size
- coloured paper and/or use of coloured overlays
- a prompter.

Some candidates might find that one strategy works for all of their subjects; others will need to use different support measures in different circumstances.

It is important to note that getting an assessment arrangement in one subject does not automatically mean the student will get this for all subjects.

**See Qualifications Scotland's website  
for information about digital exams  
including past papers.**

