

## Criteria for special conditions supporting documentation: Students with specific learning disabilities

University of Auckland students with specific learning disabilities (ie, dyslexia, dyspraxia, dysgraphia and dyscalculia), attention deficit disorders (ie, ADD and ADHD) and autism spectrum disorders requesting special conditions are required to provide supporting assessment documentation as follows:

1. It should be current (ie, less than three years since the date of assessment<sup>1</sup>).

*Or*

Assessment should have been carried out at 18+ years using tests appropriate to adulthood<sup>2</sup>.

2. Assessment should have been conducted by a registered clinical or educational psychologist, appropriate medical professional, or other suitably qualified specialist.
3. Documentation should include:
  - i. Detailed information about the tests used, results (with standard scores or percentiles) and conclusions.
  - ii. Evidence of cognitive, diagnostic and/or attainment testing, the results of which indicate specific learning disabilities, attention deficit disorders and/or Asperger's Syndrome<sup>2</sup>.
  - iii. Discussion of the impact of the condition on the individual student's academic performance.
4. The assessment could include recommendations related to:
  - i. Academic accommodations (ie, special conditions).
  - ii. Academic and learning skills development.
  - iii. Assistive technology.

Further information can be obtained from Disabilities Services and the Examinations Office.

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<sup>1</sup> Reassessment will be required three years from the date of assessment.

<sup>2</sup> In some cases, further assessment may be recommended.

## Criteria for special conditions: Computers

Access to word processing as a special condition is subject to further internal assessment and moderation<sup>3</sup> by a Learning Disabilities Adviser from Student Learning Services.

### Assessment

1. A three-way comparison of writing modes (verbal, handwritten and typed) will be conducted by way of a free writing assessment on an academic topic.
2. Other assessments may be required (eg, copying speed, processing speed).

### Moderation

1. Results will be compared by way of a quantitative (fluency/speed) and qualitative (style/legibility/flow) analysis.
2. A series of recommendations will be generated and subject to cross-checking by another Learning Disabilities Adviser.

### Extra time and word processing

1. The allocation of extra time depends on identified difficulties with processing speed and/or working memory.
2. Recording mode may impact on the amount of extra time recommended. Word processing tends to remove legibility and (some) automaticity issues whilst easing the editing process therefore, in some cases, no extra time will be granted.
3. When typing speed is assessed as significantly exceeding standard handwriting speed, reduced time may be applied.

### Computer hardware

A range of hardware may be used (depending on resource availability), however, internet access and network connectivity will be disabled.

### Levels of functionality

Decisions regarding functionality are based on level of student need and adjustments are not provided automatically. One of the following levels of functionality will be recommended:

- Word from the Microsoft Office Suite. This includes editing and styling features with spell/grammar check either enabled or disabled.

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<sup>3</sup> Refer "The University of Auckland Policy on Special Conditions for Written Tests and Examinations"

### **Subject specific limitations**

From time to time word processing in an examination will not be practical. For example, Microsoft Office is not ideal for responding to mathematical and scientific questions. A combined reporting mode (eg, handwriting and word processing) will be offered, however, alternative conditions such as the use of a writer or extra time may be preferred. The Examinations Office and Student Disabilities Services must be notified of the proposed variation well in advance of the upcoming test or examination.

### **Language acquisition exams**

Spell and grammar check are not permitted in assessments which evaluate progress in language acquisition and/or comprehension. Proficiency in spelling and grammar are viewed as examinable learning outcomes for these courses.

### **Resource limitations**

While access to computers is assured for final examinations (where deemed appropriate and applied for within acceptable timeframes), access to computers in tests is subject to resource availability. Alternative conditions will be negotiated (eg, use of a writer and/or extra time) should a computer not be available.