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National Reading and Numeracy Tests – Test administration handbook 2016



Guidance

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National Reading and Numeracy Tests – Test administration handbook 2016

Audience	Headteachers, teachers, practitioners, governing bodies of mainstream and special schools; local authorities; church diocesan authorities; national bodies with an interest in education.
Overview	This handbook sets out the arrangements for the National Reading and Numeracy Tests to be taken by all learners in Years 2 to 9 in 2016. It provides guidance on administration of tests and access and disapplication arrangements.
Action required	Headteachers, test administrators and teachers should refer to this handbook for information on the dates of tests, test duration, conditions for administering tests, receipt and storage of tests, personnel administering tests, marking tests and data input.
Further information	Enquiries about this document should be directed to: Infrastructure, Curriculum, Qualifications and Learner Support Directorate Welsh Government Cathays Park Cardiff CF10 3NQ e-mail: NationalReadingandNumeracyTestMailbox@wales.gsi.gov.uk
Additional copies	This document can be accessed from the Learning Wales website at gov.wales/learning

Contents

Introduction	2
Ordering of test papers	4
Planning for test administration	5
Taking the tests	10
After the tests have been taken	14
Annex 1: National Reading and Numeracy Tests – general test administration guidance	17
Annex 2: National Reading Test – test administration guidance	21
Annex 3: National Numeracy Test (Procedural) – test administration guidance	27
Annex 4: National Numeracy Test (Reasoning) – test administration guidance	30
Annex 5: Access and disapplication arrangements	34

Introduction

This handbook forms the National Tests administration handbook ('NT administration handbook') for the purposes of the Education (National Curriculum) (Assessment Arrangements for Reading and Numeracy) (Wales) Order 2013. The assessment timetable given below is the National Tests assessment timetable ('NT assessment timetable') for the purposes of the above regulations. The NT administration handbook sets out the arrangements for the administration of the National Reading and Numeracy Tests to all learners in Years 2 to 9 in 2016. The handbook includes the access and disapplication arrangements at Annex 5. Schools may also wish to refer to the classroom resources on the Learning Wales website which can be used to help prepare learners for the National Tests. These materials give ideas on how to build skills that are tested in the National Tests into other areas of learning to avoid having to dedicate significant lesson time to familiarising learners with test techniques, and also help to ensure schools maintain a broad curriculum in the run-up to the tests.

National Tests assessment timetable

Test administration handbook published	November 2015
National Reading and Numeracy Tests Ordering System available	2 November – 4 December 2015
Final confirmation of test orders	11 January 2016
Tests dispatched to schools ¹	Primary schools: week commencing 25 April 2016 Secondary schools: week commencing 18 April 2016
<i>Schools plan test timetables*: Secondary and middle schools must ensure that Year 7 Reading Tests take place in the second week of the test window.</i>	<i>From October 2015</i>
<i>Familiarisation with test administration requirements*: Use this test administration handbook, access and disapplication guidance and specific test administration guides to plan for the tests. Check with local authority for any relevant dates for data upload and marking, and share the school's planned test dates.</i>	<i>From the date this National Reading and Numeracy Tests – Test administration handbook is published</i>

¹ Middle schools and other settings ordering tests for both primary and secondary learners will receive these on the dates given above for secondary schools.

Schools administer tests	Primary schools: 3–10 May 2016 Secondary schools: 27 April – 10 May 2016 ² Middle schools: 27 April – 10 May 2016 ³
Marking	By date set by local authority for the Welsh National Tests Data Collection (WNTDC)
Data uploaded as part of WNTDC (all tests)	As set by local authority, but by 7 June 2016 at the latest
Results to schools for provision to parents and carers	By the end of the summer term

* Items in italics are suggested timings only.

Purpose of the National Reading and Numeracy Tests and relationship to other tests available to schools

The National Tests have been developed primarily for diagnostic use so that teachers in all schools will have the same information on the reading and numeracy skills of their learners and have a common understanding of strengths and areas for improvement in these skills.

They are focused on understanding learner progress, and not school performance or accountability. This is why National Test results are not included in the set of performance measures for school categorisation.

Eligible learners in maintained schools are required to sit the National Reading and Numeracy Tests ('the Reading and Numeracy Tests'). The Welsh Government in implementing the tests requires that they replace rather than supplement any reading and numeracy tests that were used in schools before their introduction.

² The National Reading Test for Year 7 must be administered during the period 3–10 May as it is the same as the paper taken by Year 6 learners.

³ Middle schools and other settings with learners in Years 2 to 9 may administer the Years 7 to 9 National Numeracy Test (Procedural), National Numeracy Test (Reasoning), and the Years 8 and 9 National Reading Tests from 27 April 2016. The National Reading Test for Year 7 must be conducted during the period 3–10 May 2016 along with the Years 2 to 6 tests in all subjects, as it is the same paper taken by Year 6 learners.

Ordering of test papers

Schools order tests for their learners through the National Reading and Numeracy Tests Ordering System at www.nfer.ac.uk/wgtestorders

This is a secure website requiring use of a unique password and login. Every school eligible to order National Tests will receive a letter with their password and login for use once the system is live. The system will go live on 2 November 2015 and schools will be notified of their password by this date.

All learners in Years 2 to 9 in maintained schools (including community, voluntary aided, voluntary controlled and foundation) are required to take the National Reading Test, National Numeracy Test (Procedural) and National Numeracy Test (Reasoning).

Independent schools have the option to order tests for use with their learners in Years 2 to 9. A charge will be made to cover the costs of print and delivery⁴.

Schools need to order sufficient tests for their learners in the correct language medium for their school context. Details of a named contact must be entered with the test order so that orders can be confirmed and any queries resolved. All orders must be completed by 4 December 2015.

Before placing orders, schools should consider the notes in this handbook on test language medium, access arrangements, and use of modified tests and disapplication.

There will be separate consignments for standard and modified test materials. All consignments will include markschemes, administration guidance and, in the case of the National Numeracy Test (Reasoning), teacher scripts and stimulus materials. Modified tests are supplied with full guidance on their use for administering and marking the modified tests.

⁴ Test results from independent schools cannot be included as part of the WNTDC. Independent schools should use the look-up tables published on Learning Wales in order to calculate learners' scores for diagnostic purposes.

Planning for test administration

Learners are required to take the National Reading Test, the National Numeracy Test (Procedural) and the National Numeracy Test (Reasoning). Tests must be taken during the following periods.

- Primary schools: 3–10 May 2016.
- Secondary schools: 27 April – 10 May 2016.

In 2016 secondary schools have been given a two-week period to allow them to schedule the National Tests flexibly during the busiest period of the examination timetable.

Secondary schools can sit both the National Numeracy Test (Procedural) and National Numeracy Test (Reasoning) for each year group and the Years 8 and 9 National Reading Test at any point in the two-week test window. However, because the Year 7 National Reading Test paper is the same as the paper taken by Year 6 learners, **the Year 7 National Reading Test must be conducted during the period 3–10 May 2016.**

Middle schools and other settings with learners in Years 2 to 9 may administer the Years 7 to 9 National Numeracy Test (Procedural), National Numeracy Test (Reasoning), and the Years 8 and 9 National Reading Test from 27 April 2016. The Year 7 National Reading Test must be conducted during the period 3–10 May 2016 along with the Years 2 to 6 tests in all subjects as it is the same paper taken by Year 6 learners.

Within the restrictions of the test window, schools can choose the dates and times of test administration. In planning test timetables schools should consider how best to space the test sessions to suit the needs of their school and to minimise any potential stress to learners. Practical considerations such as allowing time for the required familiarisation with the stimulus materials for numerical reasoning in advance of the test should also be taken into account. Once a test timetable has been drawn up it **must** be shared in advance with the regional consortium, and should be notified to parents/carers and learners.

The tests should normally be administered to whole classes. The National Reading Test and National Numeracy Test (Procedural) may be administered to a whole class in the classroom or to larger groups in larger rooms, e.g. to a year group in the school hall. The National Numeracy Test (Reasoning), however, must be administered in an environment that allows every learner to readily see and hear the presentation of the stimulus materials that precede each test. This is likely to preclude the use of examination rooms or school halls.

To avoid sharing of information about the test content, under normal circumstances schools should administer the tests so that sittings of an individual test (e.g. the Reading Test for Years 2 and 3, the Year 8 Numeracy Test (Procedural) etc.) take place on the same day. The Numeracy Test (Procedural) and Numeracy Test (Reasoning) for a year group should not be taken on the same day, to avoid test overload for learners.

Each test will come with easy-to-follow test administration guidance, summaries of which are attached at Annexes 2, 3 and 4 in this document.

Tests in Welsh-medium settings

Learners in Years 2 and 3 who are following the Welsh Programme of Study are only required to sit the Welsh National Reading Test, with the English National Reading Test available as an additional option to those in Year 3 only. Learners in Years 4 to 9 who are following the Welsh Programme of Study are required to sit both the Welsh and English National Reading Tests for their year group.

The Numeracy Test (Reasoning) and the Numeracy Test (Procedural) for each year group are available in either English or Welsh. The content of the English and Welsh versions is identical so that learners can access the tests in the language that is most appropriate for them.

Test duration

Figure 1 gives information on the test duration for each test and year group. Further detail on managing time in the tests and on rest breaks is included in the test administration guidance provided for each test and summarised in Annexes 2, 3 and 4.

Figure 1: Duration of the National Reading and Numeracy Tests

Test	Preparation time	Test duration	Notes
National Reading Test Years 2 to 3	25 minutes	60 minutes	Rest break must be given between sections, at the point marked in the test paper
National Reading Test Year 4	20 minutes	60 minutes	Rest break may be given
National Reading Test Years 5 to 9	20 minutes	60 minutes	Test to be taken in one sitting
National Numeracy Test (Procedural) Years 2 to 3	10 minutes	30 minutes	Rest break must be given between sections
National Numeracy Test (Procedural) Year 4	10 minutes	30 minutes	Rest break may be given
National Numeracy Test (Procedural) Years 5 to 9	10 minutes	30 minutes	Test to be taken in one sitting
National Numeracy Test (Reasoning) Years 2 to 3	10–15 minutes for each part of the test	30 minutes	Rest break must be given between parts
National Numeracy Test (Reasoning) Year 4	15 minutes	30 minutes	Rest break may be given
National Numeracy Test (Reasoning) Years 5 to 9	15 minutes	30 minutes	Test to be taken in one sitting

Access arrangements and guidance on disapplication

The tests have been designed to make them accessible to the majority of learners. However, a proportion of learners may need some form of access arrangement to enable them to demonstrate their best attainment on the tests and a small number of learners may, exceptionally, be unable to access them notwithstanding the access arrangements available.

The decision that a learner should not take the tests is for the headteacher to make. When making a decision the headteacher must:

- have regard to this statutory guidance
- have considered whether any of the access arrangements available would support the learner to access the tests (see Annex 5 for full details)
- have sought approval from their responsible regional consortia providing evidence to support their decision.

Annex 5 has full details of access and disapplication arrangements. Any test-specific considerations for access arrangements are included in the test administration guidance booklets which accompany the tests and in Annexes 2, 3 and 4.

Delivery of test materials to schools

The test materials will be delivered in two separate phases prior to the tests.

- Secondary schools will receive all materials for Years 7, 8 and 9 during the week beginning 18 April 2016. If schools have not received Years 7, 8 and 9 materials by 21 April 2016, they should contact the Test Order Helpline on 01753 637270.
- Primary schools will receive all materials for Years 2 to 6 during the week beginning 25 April 2016. If schools have not received Years 2 to 6 materials by 28 April 2016, they should contact the Test Order Helpline.
- Middle schools and other secondary settings ordering tests for both primary and secondary learners will receive all their materials during the week beginning 18 April 2016.

All schools will receive packs of materials containing everything necessary for test administration. The test packs will be assembled using the information submitted by schools to the National Reading and Numeracy Tests Ordering System in November–December 2015.

The packs will contain National Reading and Numeracy Test booklets for your learners, test administration guidance and markschemes, as ordered. Each markscheme delivered will include a spare copy of the corresponding test booklet.

- National Reading Tests – English.
- National Reading Tests – Welsh.
- National Numeracy Tests (Procedural) – English.

- National Numeracy Tests (Procedural) – Welsh.
- National Numeracy Tests (Reasoning) – English.
- National Numeracy Tests (Reasoning) – Welsh.

If modified tests are ordered, they will be delivered separately to the standard school order. The package will include associated materials and guidance, including modified markschemes.

Receiving and storing test materials

When the test materials, including any modified materials, are received the headteacher or their delegate (such as an examinations officer or delegated administrator) must check the delivery against the advice note to ensure that the correct number of test packs has been received. If a delivery is incomplete, a member of staff should contact the Test Order Helpline on 01753 637270 to arrange for the correct number of test packs to be sent to the school.

Test booklets and markschemes must remain confidential until the tests are due to be taken. These items are packed in opaque, coloured polythene. If they are opened to check the quantities enclosed, then they must immediately be re-sealed and stored in a secure place until required for test administration or marking. No learner should have access to or sight of the contents of the test booklets in advance of the test session.

Also included in the consignment of materials are test administration guidance documents for each test and the disks and teacher scripts for the Numeracy Test (Reasoning). These items are non-confidential and are packed in clear film and clearly labelled '**IMPORTANT** This pack contains information on preparing for the tests. It should be opened and then handed to the person responsible for test administration immediately.' These materials are for use prior to the test session.

Once administered, the completed test papers and materials should be kept under secure conditions for at least a year in case of any post-administration enquiries. After a year, the school must arrange for the test papers to be disposed of securely. Unused copies of the test booklets are not confidential once the test window is closed.

Test familiarisation

The test-specific administration guidance should be read and/or reviewed in advance of the test administration.

An essential part of the Numeracy Test (Reasoning) will be the delivery of stimulus materials to inform and support the response to test questions. Those delivering the stimulus sessions must familiarise themselves with these in advance of the test and should ensure that the disk containing the presentation is checked. A script is provided to accompany the visual input, which consists of a PowerPoint presentation. Delivery of the stimulus materials is likely to take 5–10 minutes depending upon the presenter's delivery and the degree of learner interaction.

Information in Annexes 1, 2, 3 and 4 of this document summarises the requirements for test administration across all tests and year groups.

Test administrators will also need to be aware of access arrangements agreed for any learners for whom they will be responsible. Permissible access arrangements are set out in 'Annex 5: Access and disapplication arrangements'.

There are a number of classroom resources on Learning Wales which can be used to help familiarise learners with the type of activities they may encounter in the National Tests. These materials give ideas on how to build skills that are tested in the National Tests into other areas of learning. There is, therefore, no requirement for significant lesson time to be spent on familiarising learners with test techniques.

Learner well-being

The purpose of the tests is primarily diagnostic, enabling teachers to assess how learners' literacy and numeracy skills are developing and to use this assessment to inform teaching.

Drilling for diagnostic tests has the potential to mask difficulties that some learners might be experiencing. While familiarising learners with the format of the tests is good practice, teaching to the tests is not acceptable and all schools are expected to maintain a broad and balanced curriculum throughout the school year.

The tests should not be a source of worry or anxiety for learners and it is very important that schools pay attention to how the tests are presented to ensure that unnecessary stress is avoided. Overemphasis on preparation, 'practising' with past test questions and use of test questions for homework can raise anxiety among learners and are inappropriate in the context of diagnostic tests. This is true for all learners, but particularly the youngest. Ensuring that learners are able to perform to the best of their ability will give more consistent diagnostic benefits to schools and will ensure that learners' well-being is maintained leading up to and during the test period.

Taking the tests

Conditions for administering tests

The tests must be administered under appropriate test conditions and all schools are responsible for administering them to agreed national standards. These conditions and standards are as follows. Schools must ensure:

- that the work produced in the tests is genuinely that of the learners
- that there is appropriate supervision at all times proportionate to the number of learners being supervised
- learners have the test materials and all necessary resources
- that tests are introduced and administered according to the guidance given in this handbook and with regard to the information in the test-specific guidance supplied for each test (see also summary provided in Annexes 2, 3 and 4)
- learners are given the appropriate length of time to complete the test, with reference to the timings given in the test-specific guidance provided in Annexes 2, 3 and 4
- learners do not have access to materials that could, with reference to the test content, give them an unfair advantage, e.g. wall displays or similar classroom resources
- that no additional support, information or help is given to learners with the content of the tests, other than in line with the provisions of the access and disapplication arrangements (please refer to Annex 5)
- that learners do not return to and/or revise their answers to the tests after the allotted time has passed.

Learners should:

- be able to work in comfortable conditions, undisturbed and individually
- not take any recording media into the test, including mobile telephones
- be aware that the work they produce in the tests must be their own and that they should not discuss questions or copy answers.

Scope for delivering tests in parts: Years 2 to 4

During the National Reading and Numeracy Tests, breaks must be provided for learners in Years 2 and 3 to allow them to perform to the best of their ability. The length of the break is at the discretion of the school but learners may leave the classroom during this time. Schools may spread the taking of one test throughout a whole school day should they wish to do so.

Year 4 learners should normally take the tests in one sitting but may exceptionally sit the tests in chunks if the school feels that this is necessary to allow them to do their best work. The same conditions as above apply. Learners in Years 5 to 9 must normally take the tests in one continuous sitting.

Details of how to schedule these breaks are provided in the test-specific test administration guidance (Annexes 2, 3 and 4).

Schools must, however, ensure that the overall time that learners spend working on the test does not exceed that allotted, and that the test is completed in a single day. In between test sittings, part-completed answer booklets/tests must be kept where they cannot be accessed by learners.

Absence during the test period

If it is known that a learner will be absent on the scheduled day of the tests, then that learner must be allowed to take the tests at another time within the specified test window. In these cases, the tests should be sat as close to the scheduled test date as possible and the learner should understand that they should not discuss the content of the tests or the answers with their peer group.

If a learner is absent for part of the test and is unable to complete the rest of the test at a later point in the test window, the school should still mark the test script. The school will be able to use the learner's results to inform reports to parents/carers.

Learners who arrive late for the National Numeracy Tests (Reasoning) and who miss the delivery of the stimulus materials will not be able to join in the test at that time. Arrangements must be made for them to take the test at a later date within the test window. Years 2 and 3 learners who arrive late may be able to access the second section of the test, so long as they are present for the delivery of the second set of stimulus materials.

Learners missing the entire test period must be reported as absent when entering/uploading the test results via the relevant system, i.e. school Management Information System (MIS). Learners who are recorded as absent will be treated as having an age-standardised score of 85 or below for school, local authority and national reporting purposes.

Where a learner is absent for the whole test window, they are able to sit the test informally so that the school has the benefit of diagnostic information for the tests. The school will also be able to use the learner's results to inform reports to parents/carers.

Persons administering the tests

Many schools are likely to have well-established protocols in place for annual testing of learners and should consider whether these arrangements are appropriate for application, with or without modifications, to the National Reading and Numeracy Tests. When making or modifying such arrangements schools must be mindful of the provisions of the Department for Education's *School teachers' pay and conditions document and guidance on school teachers' pay and conditions September 2015* ('STPCD 2015') or in the case of support staff the *National Joint Council for Local Government Services National Agreement on Pay and Conditions of Service* or relevant terms and conditions where they are not part of the NJC.

Where schools are administering both the English-medium and Welsh-medium National Reading Tests, careful consideration should be given to ensuring a fair distribution of administration and marking duties so that these do not fall disproportionately on small groups or single members of staff.

Schools have discretion as to which of their staff administer the tests but must be mindful of the provisions of STPCD 2015 in making any decisions in this regard. Where the tests are administered in class bases, broadly in the context of normal timetabled teaching time, it may be reasonable to ask teachers to administer them.

Conversely, where the tests are sat in conditions which replicate those for external examinations, out of normal teaching time and in discrete examination conditions, such as on a year group basis in an examination hall, schools should be aware that they are likely to fall under paragraph 54.8 of Section 2.

'A teacher should not be required routinely to participate in any administrative, clerical and organisational tasks which do not call for the exercise of a teacher's professional skills and judgement, including those associated with the arrangements for preparing learners for external examinations such as invigilation.'

In this context it is a reasonable expectation that, subject to the agreement of the head of centre (usually the headteacher) a teacher should be present at the beginning of an external examination in their subject area to check the paper and to ensure that there are no problems with it. Those invigilating the examination should be made aware of the procedure for dealing with emergencies and for contacting a teacher in the subject area under examination should any candidate raise a concern or problem with the paper which requires their professional judgement. It may also be appropriate for a teacher to be present at the end of an external examination to ensure its efficient conclusion. When carrying out such tasks, teachers should not be expected to stay in the examination hall/room for any longer than is necessary to perform them.

Schools may employ external invigilators if they so wish.

Where support staff are used to administer and/or mark the tests, schools must ensure that these tasks are appropriate to their level and job description.

With the Numeracy Tests (Reasoning), and particularly in relation to the younger year groups, it is important that the stimulus materials that precede the test are presented by someone who the learners are comfortable with, and who also has an ability to engage learners and ensure their understanding of the stimulus context. Schools should take steps to ensure this and therefore may feel it appropriate for these tests to be administered by teachers or teaching assistants known to learners.

After the tests have been taken

Marking the tests

Markschemes will be supplied with the test packs. Marks are recorded directly onto the test papers. Schools should retain papers once marked and may wish to refer to them for diagnostic purposes. Diagnostic toolkits to support question-by-question analysis will be available and these may also be useful when marking. The toolkits will be published on the Learning Wales website at the beginning of the test window.

Schools have discretion as to which of their staff mark the tests. Markschemes have been designed to be quickly and easily applied and, wherever possible, to minimise the need for professional judgement, but there will remain the need for some judgement to be applied in particular situations. The markschemes for the National Reading and Numeracy Tests also provide a guide to interpreting and building on learner and class performance and schools should be mindful of this, and of the aforementioned provisions of paragraph 54.8 of Section 2 of STPCD 2015, in making any decisions as to who should mark the tests.

It is at schools' discretion whether they choose to give markers dedicated time for the task of marking. The *Notes for teachers*, supplied with the modified tests, include modified markschemes for each test. Markers will need to refer to the modified markschemes and the standard markschemes when marking the modified test papers.

All test papers **must** be marked by **7 June 2016** for the WNTDC in order to allow for timely uploading of scores. Local authorities may have arrangements in place for an earlier completion date.

Malpractice

If an instance is found where a learner's script does not represent that learner's own work for any reason the headteacher **must** be informed and a record kept of which questions and responses might have been affected for the information of the marker, the local authority and any subsequent investigation by the Welsh Government. The headteacher or an appropriate delegate **must** then contact the relevant local authority to notify them and for guidance on the actions that should be taken. The final decision on results in cases where they are in doubt, or appear inaccurate or incorrect, rests with the Welsh Ministers.

Data input and reporting

For information regarding data submission please refer to the *Welsh National Tests Data Collection and reporting arrangements 2015/16*. This will be available on the Welsh Government website in the spring term, before testing begins.

Local authorities will be informed when this document is available.

Upon receipt of the raw scores from the tests, and following standardisation, pupil results sheets for each test will be generated and provided to schools. The test results presented must be shared with parents/carers as part of the normal reporting process. If schools are unable to provide reports to parents/carers by the end of the summer term 2016 these should be provided no later than 30 September 2016.

Pupil results sheets

The pupil results sheets will give an age-standardised score and a progress measure for each of the tests sat by learners. Age-standardised scores that are very high or very low are not always reliable; there is considerably more statistical variation at the end of the score ranges than in the middle and so learners' abilities are not estimated very reliably here. This is because data at the ends of the score ranges are much sparser.

In a few cases the range of difficulty of the questions in the test may mean that it is not possible to register an age-standardised score for a learner whose reading or numeracy skills are developing more slowly than would be expected. In these cases, the age-standardised score can only be given as 'less than 70'. Similarly, very high achievers can only be given an age-standardised score of 'more than 140'.

The progress measure shows whether a learner's improvement in reading or numeracy each year is in line with that of other learners taking the same test. No one performs consistently all of the time. Small changes are most likely due to how the learner performed on this particular test on the particular day of testing. Patterns of change over time may give a stronger indication of the learner's progress.

The Welsh Government's *Reading and Numeracy Tests in Wales: Information for Parents/Carers Years 2–9* (www.learning.wales.gov.uk/resources/browse-all/reading-and-numeracy-tests-information-for-parents-carers/?lang=en) provides further information on the scoring of the tests. The guide sets out that each test is designed to measure achievement across the range expected for each year group and that they will not always give reliable information for learners who are working at the extremes of the range for their age. In these instances parents/carers will be encouraged to discuss their child's progress with their school. All schools use a range of methods to assess how these learners' skills are developing and will report learners' progress to parents/carers.

Headteacher's declaration

Within seven school days of the final date for data submission, the headteacher **must sign** and **submit** a declaration **to the regional consortium** confirming that the test packs were received and stored securely, that the tests were administered correctly according to the requirements set out in the NT administration handbook (this handbook), and that the tests were marked in accordance with the markscheme. A downloadable declaration form is available at www.learning.wales.gov.uk/resources/browse-all/headteachers-declaration/?lang=en

Monitoring of assessment arrangements

Local authorities have a statutory responsibility to monitor the assessment arrangements in at least 10 per cent of their schools. The local authority must ensure that assessment arrangements are in accordance with the test administration timetable, test administration guidance, and guidance included in this handbook. Each year the local authority or regional consortium will carry out a programme of monitoring visits to a sample of schools. The visits may take place during any of the following periods.

- The week before the tests are administered to learners.
- The period during which the tests are administered to learners.
- Up to 20 school days after the last day on which any of the tests have been administered to learners.

Where visits take place either during the test administration period or after testing is complete, the local authority representatives must also ensure that learners' written responses represent their own work and that the tests have been marked in accordance with the relevant markscheme.

Following any monitoring visit, the outcome of the visit will be discussed with the headteacher. If the local authority or regional consortium has any concern that the assessment arrangements are not in accordance with the published guidance or that learners' responses do not represent their own work, they will bring the matter to the attention of the headteacher and report the matter to the Welsh Government.

Headteachers and governing bodies have a duty to permit the local authority or regional consortium to access school premises, inspect or take copies of any documents in relation to the assessment arrangements for the tests, and to provide them with relevant information as requested.

Support

To raise any queries about information in this handbook, schools can contact the Test Support helpline on 01753 637270 or at welsh-test-orders@nfer.ac.uk

Annex 1: National Reading and Numeracy Tests – general test administration guidance

This general test administration guidance should be read in conjunction with the test-specific guidance presented in Annexes 2, 3 and 4.

Note: Test administration guidance giving full details of how to administer each test will be provided to schools with the test materials.

It is very important that tests are administered so that the results will be a reliable and fair reflection of the learners' abilities. The need to administer the test under standardised conditions should not create a stressful or intimidating environment. Since the key purpose of the tests is to provide useful diagnostic information, tests should be presented in a positive and purposeful way, encouraging learners to do their best but not causing them undue anxiety.

Learners should complete the test using a pencil or pen, depending on usual classroom practice.

Before starting a test

Before a test begins the requirements of that specific test should be addressed (as summarised in Annexes 2, 3 and 4 and set out in full in the test administration guidance provided with the test papers).

Preparations to meet any access arrangements should be agreed in advance for individual learners (see access and disapplication arrangements guidance in Annex 5).

Administering the test

Explain to the learners:

- that they must work individually
- that they must not talk to, or copy, each other
- that they should make sure their answers are clear, and should change their answers, if necessary, by crossing out or erasing errors
- that they should show their working out if the paper asks them to
- that if they have problems, they should ask for help by raising their hand
- that if they find a question too hard, they should have a go and then move on to the next one
- the time they have available to complete the test
- if they are being given a break within the test period
- that when they have finished, they should go back and try any questions not yet attempted. Then they should check their work (this should be emphasised).

Give each learner a copy of the test booklet and ask learners to complete the front cover with the following details:

- first name
- last name
- class
- school
- date of birth (an accurate date of birth is needed to calculate age-standardised scores)
- date of test (an accurate date of test is needed to calculate age-standardised scores).

For learners in Years 2 and 3, for reasons of accuracy, you may wish to complete some of the learners' details yourself (e.g. school, date of birth, date of test).

As the learners are working their way through the test, you should check periodically that they understand what they need to do and are working through all the questions.

Learners who finish early should be advised to check their work, but then be allowed to read silently, if this is felt to be appropriate.

Access arrangements

The tests have been designed to make them accessible to the majority of learners in the recommended year groups. However, a small number of learners may need some form of access arrangement to enable them to demonstrate their best attainment on the tests. These are set out in full in 'Annex 5: Access and disapplication arrangements'.

During test administration, access arrangements agreed in advance for individual learners must be taken into consideration.

Questions and answers

Do all learners in the class have to take the test?

The decision that a learner should not sit a test is for the headteacher to make, having had regard to the access and disapplication guidance in Annex 5.

Do the tests have to be delivered to learners in one sitting, or can learners have rest breaks?

For older learners, the tests should be achievable in one sitting, so no breaks are allowed, unless they are given within the context of the specific needs of the individual learner (please refer to the access and disapplication arrangements in Annex 5).

However, for younger learners in Years 2 and 3, it is possible that test performance might be adversely affected by fatigue or lack of concentration. For that reason, test administrators must give learners in those year groups a break at appropriate points in the tests (see Annexes 2, 3 and 4 for what this means in relation to the individual Reading and Numeracy Tests).

A rest break is optional for learners in Year 4, at the teacher's discretion.

Where rest breaks are given, it is important to ensure that:

- the rest break is sufficient to refresh learners
- no more than the designated total time for each test is given
- the learner is given the opportunity to attempt all parts of the paper, so the test properly reflects their attainment
- no information is given to learners during the break that could influence their test performance
- learners are discouraged from discussing the test during a break
- learners are reminded of key points, such as the importance of checking their work, before restarting the test after a break.

What do I do if there is a fire alarm during the test?

Ideally, a fire alarm practice should not be scheduled during the testing period.

However, if this is unavoidable or if a real fire alarm occurs during the test, then the test must be stopped. If it is possible, note how much of the testing period remains at the point when the test is stopped. When the situation returns to normal, the test can be reconvened and the remaining time made available. Learners should be encouraged not to talk about the test content until after the test is completed.

What do I do if a learner arrives late for the test?

Ideally, the tests should be carried out when the whole class is present and there are no interruptions. However, if the late arrival is unavoidable, and the test has not been under way for more than a few minutes, then you may wish to ask the learner to take the test alongside their peers and then provide the additional few minutes at the end of the test period. Alternatively, it may be preferable to ask the learner to engage in another quiet activity and then take the test on another occasion. If this is the case, then the learner should take the test as soon as reasonably possible (ideally on the same day) and should be encouraged not to discuss the test content with their peers until after the event.

It is important to note, however, that if latecomers to the National Numeracy Test (Reasoning) miss the delivery of the stimulus materials that start the test, they will be unable to continue at that time and arrangements will need to be made for them to sit elsewhere during the test, then take it at a later date.

What do I do if a learner asks me a question?

Try to pre-empt any questions about pencils and erasers by telling learners how to obtain extra supplies. In general, follow your usual classroom practice.

Genuine questions asking for clarification of what to do may be answered at the beginning of the test. Once the test is under way, only respond to learners who put up their hands. Go over to them and answer their question privately.

If every learner hears the instructions it should not be necessary to repeat them more than once or twice. If you feel that there are learners who are prone to worry, station yourself near them and answer any questions quietly.

For more detailed and specific guidance on answering questions during the National Reading and Numeracy Tests, please refer to Annexes 2, 3 and 4 or the test-specific test administration guidance provided to schools with the test materials.

Annex 2: National Reading Test – test administration guidance

This guidance relates to the specific requirements of administering the National Reading Test and should be read in conjunction with the general test administration guidance presented in Annex 1.

Structure of the test

The sentence-completion exercise (Years 2 and 3 only), reading texts and associated questions are presented in the same test booklet. Learners are required to respond in a variety of ways to a range of different question types.

Practice questions

A set of 'Practice questions' is provided for learners to complete prior to taking the test. Some learners may not be familiar with, or may need reminding about how to complete, some of the question types used in these tests. It is **vital**, therefore, that you spend time familiarising learners with this section so that they will not be disadvantaged in any way and will be able to demonstrate their best attainment.

For learners in Years 2 to 6, it is recommended that you **read the practice text and questions aloud** and work through each question, checking that learners are clear about how to complete each item.

For learners in Years 2 and 3, there are two 'Practice questions' sections – one for sentence completion and one for the questions about the texts. You may also wish to **remind learners about how to complete different question types following any breaks**.

For learners in Years 7 to 9, you do not have to read the practice text aloud but you must ensure that learners are clear about how to complete each of the different types of question and should discuss the most appropriate answer for each of them. Please note that the practice section is intended to familiarise learners with the different types of question in the test. If learners are familiar with the question types then this period may be relatively brief.

Resources

Each learner will need a pen or pencil (depending on what they usually write with in class) and a copy of the test booklet. You may also wish to supply an eraser.

Learners must **not** use dictionaries or thesauri.

Timing and rest breaks

Information from the trials of the tests indicates that most learners should be able to complete the test within **60 minutes**. If a learner in your class completes the test before 60 minutes have elapsed and you are satisfied that they have had sufficient opportunity to check their work, they should be allowed to read silently, if you feel this to be appropriate.

In addition you should allow up to 25 minutes prior to the test to give test instructions, distribute the booklets and complete the practice questions.

The following timings should be used for this test.

Years 2 and 3	Years 4 to 9
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• give test instructions and distribute test booklets: up to five minutes• review and complete sentence completion practice questions: up to five minutes• learners do sentence-completion task: 10 minutes• review question types and complete practice questions: up to 15 minutes• learners complete the two texts/test sections: 50 minutes (split into two 25-minute sessions)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• give test instructions and distribute test booklets: up to five minutes• review question types and complete practice questions: up to 15 minutes• learners complete test: up to 60 minutes

Note: If learners have not completed a section of the test when you stop the class to move on to the next section, then they **may** return to it later if they have time.

Administering the test

This test-specific guidance should be read in conjunction with the general test administration guidance for the National Tests, presented in Annex 1.

Explain to learners the information presented in the 'Before starting the test' section in the test administration guidance.

Give each learner a copy of the test.

If appropriate, ask learners to complete the cover of the booklet (see Annex 1).

For learners in Years 2 and 3

Explain that the test booklet consists of several sections, and contains a number of different types of question. Ask learners to open to the first page of the test booklet. Read the instructions aloud; you can rephrase the explanation to ensure all learners understand.

- Ask learners to complete the practice questions; you should read the questions aloud, discuss what to do and which of the options is the most appropriate.
- Ensure that learners are clear about how to complete the sentence-completion questions.

In your own words, describe the work entailed in the booklet, but include the following points.

- Learners should work through the next two pages of the answer booklet answering as many questions as they can until they reach the end of the first section; they should stop at this point.
- If they find a question too hard, they should have a go and then move on to the next one.
- If they have problems, they should ask for help by raising their hand.
- They have 10 minutes to complete this part of the test.
- Take a note of the time and start the test.

Encourage learners to move on through the questions, rather than spending too long on questions they cannot answer.

- After 10 minutes, ask the group or class to stop.

You may wish the learners to have a short break at this point.

- Ask the learners to turn to the next section.
- Read the instructions aloud; you can rephrase the explanation to ensure all learners understand.
- It is **vital** that time is spent looking at the practice questions – you should read the text aloud and work through each of the questions checking to ensure that learners know how to complete them. You should read the questions aloud and discuss the appropriate responses.
- You should model how to locate the answer and how to respond.

In your own words, describe the work entailed in the booklet, but include the following points.

- Learners should work through their test booklet answering as many questions as they can until they reach the end of the first section.
- Explain that learners should read all of the boxed text before starting to answer the questions (hold up a test booklet and point to each of the pages with boxed text to show what they need to do – you should just point out one text to start with).
- Once they have read all of the text, they should return to the beginning and start to answer the questions.
- If they find a question too hard, they should move on to the next one and come back to it later.
- Learners can look at the reading text as often as they wish when they are answering the questions.
- If they have problems, they should ask for help by raising their hand – however, you may not read the text or questions to the learners. Take a note of the time and start the test.
- Allow learners 25 minutes to read and answer the questions on the first text.

Learners must have a short break at this point.

- After a break, you may wish to remind learners how to complete different question types.
- Learners should read and answer questions about the second text.
- Again, they should read all of the boxed text before starting to answer the questions (hold up a test booklet and point to each of the pages with boxed text to show what they need to do).
- Once they have read all of the text, they should return to the beginning and start to answer the questions.
- If they find a question too hard, they should move on to the next one and come back to it later.
- Learners can look at the reading text as often as they wish when they are answering the questions.
- If they have problems, they should ask for help by raising their hand – however, you may not read the text or questions to the learners. Take a note of the time and start the test.
- Allow learners 25 minutes to complete this part of the test.

Encourage learners to move on through the questions, rather than spending too long on questions they cannot answer.

When the whole testing time has elapsed, ask learners to finish writing.

Finally, collect in all booklets.

For learners in Years 4 to 9

Explain that the test booklet consists of several sections each with a variety of different questions.

- Ask learners to turn to the first page of the test booklet.
- Read the instructions aloud; you can rephrase the explanation to ensure all learners understand.
- It is **vital** that time is spent looking at the practice questions.

After learners have completed, or are familiarised with, the practice questions and you are satisfied that any queries have been dealt with, continue to the main test administration.

In your own words, describe the work entailed in the booklet, but include the following points.

- Learners should work through their answer booklet answering as many questions as they can until they reach the end.
- If they find a question too hard, they should have a go and then move on to the next one.
- Learners should look at the reading text as often as they wish when they are answering the questions.
- If they have problems, they should ask for help by raising their hand.
- They have up to 60 minutes to complete the test.

Take note of the time and ask learners to begin the test. Encourage learners to move on through the questions, rather than spending too long on questions they cannot answer. Remind them they can go back to them at the end if they have time.

When the whole testing time has elapsed, ask learners to finish writing.

Finally, collect in all booklets.

Responding to questions

You should not read any part of the text or questions to the learners other than the 'Practice questions' section. In monitoring learners as they are doing the test, no help should be given in reading the text or locating the correct answers.

You should answer questions such as 'Is this the right one?' by saying 'Tick the one you think is the correct one' or 'I can't tell you – you need to choose for yourself'.

Access arrangements

This test does not require learners to undertake any extended writing in order to answer the questions. However, for learners with impaired motor control it may be beneficial to provide someone to write down their answers as the learner points to, or otherwise indicates, a specific answer option.

Readers can only help a learner to read general instructions and locate the pages to which they are referred in the questions. No other help with reading should be given.

Annex 3: National Numeracy Test (Procedural) – test administration guidance

This guidance relates to the specific requirements of administering the National Numeracy Test (Procedural) and should be read in conjunction with the general test administration guidance presented in Annex 1.

Structure of the test

Learners are provided with one test booklet.

Resources

Each learner will need a pen or pencil (depending on what they usually use in class), a copy of the test booklet, ruler and eraser.

Learners must **not** use calculators for this test.

Timing and rest breaks

The test must take no more than 30 minutes in total.

Ten minutes should be allowed prior to the test to give test instructions and distribute the booklets.

Where a break is given, booklets should be collected in and returned to learners when the test reconvenes.

Learners who finish early should be advised to check their work, but then be allowed to read silently if the teacher feels this to be appropriate.

For learners in Years 2 and 3

The test period of 30 minutes must be broken into two 15-minute sessions to prevent fatigue or loss of concentration. The length of this break is at the discretion of the teacher but should be sufficient to ensure learners are refreshed before they embark on the second part of the test. Please ensure that during the break no input is given to learners that could influence their test performance. Discourage discussion about the test.

For learners in Year 4

The test period of 30 minutes may be broken into two 15-minute sessions to prevent fatigue or loss of concentration if the teacher considers that this is appropriate. The length of this break is at the discretion of the teacher but should be sufficient to ensure learners are refreshed before they embark on the second part of the test. Please ensure that during the break no input is given to learners that could influence their test performance. Discourage discussion about the test.

For learners in Years 5 to 9

The test should be undertaken in one sitting.

Administering the test

Explain to learners the information presented in the 'Before starting the test' section in the test administration guidance.

Give each learner a copy of the test.

If appropriate, ask learners to complete the cover of the booklet (see Annex 1). Explain to the learners (using your own words):

- you cannot help them answer any of the questions, but if they need help in reading a question, they should raise their hand
- they should always show their working (this should be emphasised)
- they should do their working in the boxes provided, but they can write anywhere on the page. They can also write on diagrams/graphs, etc., if they wish
- if they find a question too hard, they should have a go and then move on to the next one
- they have 30 minutes to complete the test (where a rest break is being given, tell them when this will be)
- when they have finished, they should go back and try any questions not yet attempted. They should check their work and only then indicate by raising their hand that they have completed the test.

Take note of the time and start the test.

As the learners are working their way through the test, you should check periodically that they understand what they need to do and are working through all the questions.

Encourage learners to move on through the questions, rather than spending too long on questions they cannot answer.

When the whole testing time has elapsed, ask learners to finish writing.

Finally, collect in all booklets.

Responding to questions

During the test, help may be given to learners in reading the text but not in providing any explanation of numerical meaning.

You should answer questions such as 'What does xxx mean?' by saying 'What do you think? See if you can work it out for yourself'.

Access arrangements

This test does not require learners to undertake any extended writing in order to answer the questions. However, for learners with impaired motor control it may be beneficial to provide someone to write down their answers as the learner dictates their response.

Providing a reader for learners who have difficulty reading is acceptable for the National Numeracy Tests. Readers must, however, ensure they limit their support to reading the text: care must be taken not to inadvertently help learners understand or respond to the numeracy that is being assessed.

Annex 4: National Numeracy Test (Reasoning) – test administration guidance

This guidance relates to the specific requirements of administering the National Numeracy Test (Reasoning) and should be read in conjunction with the general test administration guidance presented in Annex 1.

It is very important that schools are fully aware of the implications of this guidance in terms of preparing for the tests: delivery of the stimulus materials that start each test requires careful planning and preparation by the test administrator.

It is important to note that the teachers' scripts and slide presentations that accompany the stimulus materials in the main National Numeracy Tests (Reasoning) must not be used for learners using the modified large print (MLP) or Braille modified test materials. Modified scripts and stimulus materials for these learners are included in the *Notes for teachers* that accompany the modified tests.

Structure of the test

Learners are provided with one test booklet.

For Years 2 and 3 only, the test booklet is split into two sections, each relating to a separate set of stimulus materials presented to learners immediately before they embark on the linked questions.

For Years 4 to 9, the initial group of questions link to the stimulus materials presented to learners at the start of the test. There are then further questions with independent contexts.

Resources

Each learner will need a pen or pencil (depending on what they usually use in class), a copy of the test booklet, ruler and eraser.

Years 2 to 4	Learners must not use calculators.
Years 5 to 9	Learners are permitted to use calculators and should be encouraged to use them when appropriate.

Timing and rest breaks

The test must take no more than 30 minutes in total.

Up to 15 minutes should be allowed prior to the test (or part of the test) to give test instructions, distribute the booklets and present the stimulus materials.

Where a break is given, booklets should be collected in and returned to learners when the test reconvenes.

Learners who finish early should be advised to check their work, but then be allowed to read silently, if the teacher feels this to be appropriate.

For learners in Years 2 and 3

The test period must be broken into two 15-minute sections to coincide with the two sets of stimulus contexts and questions. In between sections, learners should be given a break in order to prevent fatigue or loss of concentration. The length of this break is at the discretion of the teacher, but should be sufficient to ensure learners are refreshed before they embark on the second section of the test. Please ensure that during the break no input is given to learners that could influence their test performance. Discourage discussion about the test.

For learners in Year 4

The test period may be broken into two 15-minute sections to prevent fatigue or loss of concentration if the teacher assesses this as appropriate. The length of this break is at the discretion of the teacher but should be sufficient to ensure learners are refreshed before they embark on the second section of the test. Please ensure that during the break no input is given to learners that could influence their test performance. Discourage discussion about the test.

For learners in Years 5 to 9

The test should be undertaken in one sitting.

Preparing for the test

In advance of the test, schools must ensure:

- they can access the stimulus materials on the disk provided. Technical guidance on accessing the stimulus materials will be provided before the test period
- the member of staff presenting the stimulus materials has read through and assimilated the script provided, in conjunction with the presentation on the disk
- the test venue is appropriate for the delivery of the materials, the means for projecting the stimulus materials (computer, not CD player) is present and fully operational, and that each learner can see and hear the presentation, yet work individually once the test has started.

During the presentation of the stimulus materials, learners may sit together, e.g. on the floor, but must move to their allocated place to complete the test.

Administering the test

Explain to learners the information presented in the 'Before starting the test' section in the test administration guidance.

Give each learner a copy of the test.

If appropriate, ask learners to complete the cover of the booklet (see Annex 1). Explain to the learners (using your own words):

- you cannot help them answer any of the questions, but if they need help in reading a question, they should raise their hand
- they should always show their working (this should be emphasised)
- they should do their working in the boxes provided, but they can write anywhere on the page. They can also write on diagrams/graphs, etc., if they wish
- if they find a question too hard, they should have a go and then move on to the next one
- they have 30 minutes to complete the test (where a rest break is being given, tell them when this will be)
- when they have finished, they should go back and try any questions not yet attempted. They should check their work and only then indicate by raising their hand that they have completed the test.

For Years 2 and 3 it is important to ensure that learners are aware that they should not move into the second section of the booklet until they are told to do so. Explain that for the first section of the test, they will only be answering questions until they see 'Stop here'; then they should stop and check their work. For the second section of the test, ask learners to open their booklet at the relevant page of the test. Also tell them that the test includes questions on the back page.

Presenting the stimulus materials

Go through the presentation, using the script provided (for Years 2 and 3, there are two separate presentations linked to the two sections of the test). This should be presented with interest and enthusiasm.

You can use your own words to expand the script if you wish, as it is very important that learners understand and are fully engaged with the scenario.

Encourage engagement with the presentation through questions and peer discussion as appropriate. However, it is essential that this does not inadvertently lead to help being given to learners in the test questions themselves, so please take care to restrict your discussion at this stage (and during the test itself) to the context and content of the actual stimulus materials.

No help can be given with the numeracy that is to be assessed.

Once you have completed the presentation, including the notes within the script reminding learners to show their working, check their work and so on, make a note of the time and start the test.

If all learners in your class complete the test before 30 minutes have elapsed and you are satisfied that they have all had sufficient opportunity to check their work, they should be allowed to read silently, if you feel this to be appropriate.

When the whole testing time has elapsed, ask learners to finish writing.

Finally, collect in all booklets.

Responding to questions

Encourage learners to ask questions during the delivery of the stimulus materials: it is important that they understand the context, so they can readily access the test questions that follow. You should, however, take care not to give them information that directly links to the numeracy that is being tested.

During the test, help may be given to learners in reading the text but not in providing any explanation of numerical meaning. You can remind them of contexts but you should answer questions such as 'What does xxx mean?' by saying 'What do you think? – see if you can work it out for yourself'.

Access arrangements

As indicated in Annex 5, some learners may benefit from working in a separate room.

It is important to remember, however, that arrangements must be made in advance to ensure the learner can access the stimulus materials, either within the large group before moving to a separate room, or individually within the alternative accommodation.

This test does not require learners to undertake any extended writing in order to answer the questions. However, for learners with impaired motor control it may be beneficial to provide someone to write down their answers as the learner dictates their response.

Providing a reader for learners who have difficulty reading is acceptable for the National Numeracy Tests. Readers must, however, ensure they limit their support to reading the text: care must be taken not to inadvertently help learners understand or respond to the numeracy that is being assessed.

Annex 5: Access and disapplication arrangements

The National Reading and Numeracy Tests are designed to support both pedagogy and school improvement, generating data from which teachers can gain an accurate picture of where a learner is in terms of their skills and ability compared to other learners. The tests are diagnostic but also provide data to allow measurement of progress and performance at national level.

The tests, which are taken by learners in Years 2 to 9 in all maintained schools in Wales, have been designed with learners' access in mind. It is expected that nearly all learners will be able to access them without special arrangements. Schools have some discretion as to how they administer the tests, and further guidance on this is provided in Annexes 1, 2, 3 and 4.

We recognise, however, that some learners may face challenges in accessing the tests, and that for some learners it will not be possible to do so. The purpose of this guidance is to assist headteachers and schools in three areas.

- Understanding what arrangements they can make to help their learners access the tests.
- Understanding the range of modified test papers available.
- Identifying and making judgements about those learners who, for a variety of reasons, will not be able to access the tests even with full use of the modifications available.

Proper consideration of the factors laid out in this guidance will enable schools to support as many of their learners as possible to access the tests and to make proper, evidenced decisions in relation to those who cannot.

Access arrangements

Learners who may need access arrangements

The tests are intended to assess learners' ability in a fair and comparable way, with as many learners as possible having access to them. The tests are designed so that many learners with special educational needs (SEN) or disabilities can undertake them in their standard format. However, administrators may need to adapt the administrative arrangements for some learners so that they can fully demonstrate what they know and can do.

Access arrangements are **adjustments based primarily on normal classroom practice for particular needs**. They should neither advantage nor disadvantage individual learners, nor change the demands of the assessment. Those administering the tests should decide whether any access arrangements are appropriate by carefully considering the assessment needs of individual learners.

A learner who is disabled within the meaning of the Equality Act 2010, and at a substantial disadvantage in comparison with a learner who is not disabled, is entitled to a reasonable adjustment to remove or, if that is not possible, to reduce the disadvantage.

For simplicity, in this guidance the term ‘access arrangements’ is used to cover both arrangements for learners without disabilities and reasonable adjustments for learners with disabilities.

Access arrangements may be appropriate for learners:

- with a statement of SEN as described in the Special Educational Needs Code of Practice for Wales
- for whom provision is being made in school using School Action or School Action Plus **and** whose learning difficulty or disability significantly affects access to the tests
- with a disability that does not give rise to a special educational need but requires alternative access arrangements
- who are unable to sit and work at a test for a sustained period because of a disability or behavioural, emotional or social difficulty
- for whom English/Welsh is an additional language and who have limited fluency in English/Welsh.

Adaptations to the tests

Due to the wide range of learners’ needs and circumstances, it is not possible to provide exhaustive rules governing the use of adaptations. Those administering the tests should use their knowledge of individual learners in deciding which adaptations to make, bearing in mind the nature and level of support that these learners receive as part of normal classroom practice. The test handbook and guidance provided to those ordering modified papers give specific advice for particular needs, e.g. visual or hearing impairment needs.

Permissible adaptations include photocopying the tests onto coloured paper, or enlarging any format of the test to a particular size. However, schools should take particular care when modifying papers where there are references to other pages in the tests, or where diagrams have been drawn to scale. Coloured overlays and coloured filter lenses may also be used in the case of learners with dyslexia if this is the normal classroom practice.

It is important to note, however, that the teachers’ scripts and slide presentations that accompany the stimulus materials in the main National Numeracy Tests (Reasoning) should not be used for learners using the modified large print or Braille modified test materials. Scripts and stimulus materials for these learners are included in the *Notes for teachers* that accompany the modified tests.

Scribes

Scribes may be used for any test for learners who would normally receive this type of support in a classroom setting or have the need for a scribe as a result of a recent impairment.

A scribe should only be used to support a learner who meets one of the following criteria:

- the learner is a Brailist
- the learner is physically unable to write down their answers and is unable to use a word processor; or they have a motor impairment or experience physical or mental discomfort when writing; or their writing is extremely slow.

Where a scribe is used a note to this effect should be put on the learner's paper(s).

Readers

In the **Numeracy** Tests, readers may be used in accordance with the test administration guidance supplied with the tests.

In the **Reading** Tests, readers can only help a learner to read general instructions and locate the pages to which they are referred in the questions. No other help with reading should be given.

Mechanical and/or technological aids

Learners can use their mechanical or technological aids in the tests if that is their normal classroom practice, and provided these do not reduce the level of the demand in the tests. Learners must not use screen-reader software or a spell-checker program in the **Reading** Test; under the same principle, in the **Numeracy** Test counting aids are not permitted.

Additional time

Certain learners may have extra time where this follows from either the modified papers they are to use or their normal classroom practice.

Learners using the Braille and MLP versions of the tests can have up to 100 per cent additional time, at the discretion of the school. Learners who are not using the Braille or MLP versions of the tests can have the amount of additional time specified for their normal classroom work, up to 100 per cent. For example, if a learner customarily has an extra 25 per cent of time to complete their work in class, then they can have 25 per cent of time added to the test. This would include learners such as those with language difficulties or with hearing impairments which lead to the need for additional processing time. Schools should have evidence that learners are normally allowed additional time if it is to be allowed in the tests. **No other learners are allowed additional time for the tests.**

Separating tests into sections and provisions of rest breaks where learners have difficulty concentrating or experience fatigue

Some learners may have a SEN which involves difficulty concentrating or leads them to experience fatigue, due to a health problem or to a difficulty in processing information, e.g. learners with a hearing impairment. In such cases, the tests may be split into coherent sections ('chunked') as they would be for younger learners, or the clock may be stopped, to allow for rest breaks. This may, if necessary, be combined with the 'additional time' provision discussed previously.

Use of prompters for learners with severe attention challenges

Learners with severe attention challenges may be supported by a prompter where this is normal classroom practice. Where a prompter is used, the test should be taken in a separate room. The prompter may only draw the learner's attention back to the test; no support or guidance may be given as to the method of taking the test.

Use of separate rooms for one-on-one support

Separate rooms should be used for learners whose SEN warrants this, and also in cases where the nature of a learner's support risks distracting or advantaging other learners taking the test.

Environmental and delivery considerations relevant to learners with SEN

Where schools are administering the tests to learners with SEN, especially those with hearing impairments or on the autistic spectrum, it is particularly important that the tests are administered in a room with good acoustic quality, to enhance their ability to take in instructions. Such learners may also need additional processing time in order to understand and recall these instructions; test administrators should check that they have understood the requirements before proceeding with the test.

Additional considerations for learners with sign language support

Learners who use sign language to access the curriculum may have sign language support in the tests. For the reading tests all the instructions and the practice questions may be signed to ensure the learner understands the procedures. As the reading tests are assessing reading skills, the questions and texts may not be signed. The learner shall normally write their own responses; if they have a scribe under no circumstances may the learner's responses be corrected in transcription. In numeracy tests, the complete test may be signed by/communicated to the learner. The learner may sign their responses to be transcribed by the communicator. Learners must not be in a position to see other learners' signed responses.

Support for learners who find difficulty in engaging with the tests or experience distress

It is good practice to allow learners who are likely to finish the tests early to bring with them a book or a suitable piece of work to occupy themselves with while the others in the class or test group finish the test session.

If a learner has been entered for the tests and, notwithstanding having been properly prepared and supported, becomes distressed, then the practitioners administering the tests should support them in the same way as they would if they became upset over a piece of class work. This could include allowing them to resume sitting the test at a later date within the test window, if appropriate.

The language of the tests and learners' response language

The English and Welsh **Reading** Tests are designed to test learners' ability to read in English and Welsh. The test must be conducted in English or Welsh and learners must respond in English or Welsh, as appropriate.

In **numeracy**, the tests are designed to test learners' numerical knowledge, skills and understanding. Teachers and/or language support staff may translate the test or learners' responses.

Translation of instructions for Reading Tests

It is permissible for the general instructions for the Reading Test to be translated. This may be done in writing, in advance, or by a reader/translator provided for the purpose. Readers or translators may not translate the texts and related questions, or provide assistance in interpreting them.

Translation of Numeracy Test papers

Schools may translate whole Numeracy Test papers for English as an Additional Language (EAL) and Welsh as an Additional Language (WAL) learners and for those who regularly have their work translated. However, the use of written or oral translations for children with EAL or WAL must be normal classroom practice. Schools must be able to justify the decision to provide translation, with reference to evidence to show that resources are routinely committed to providing this support. If translations are provided orally, the test administration guidance must be followed. Headteachers are responsible for making arrangements to assure the quality of any translation made. The use of free web-based translation services is not recommended.

Those administering the tests should also bear in mind that EAL or WAL learners, or learners who use British Sign Language (BSL) or other sign-supported communication, may not be familiar with some subject vocabulary and technical terms in their preferred language.

Mechanical and technical aids and other assistance for EAL/WAL learners

EAL/WAL learners may use dictionaries and electronic translators, where this is normal classroom practice, in relation to the Numeracy Tests only. Dictionaries and electronic translators may not be used in the Reading Tests unless, exceptionally, to help learners understand the general instructions.

Entering learners for tests other than those for their national curriculum year group

Some learners with significant SEN who would be disapplied from one or more of the tests for their national curriculum year group may be able to register some attainment against the tests if they take the Reading or Numeracy Test for the national curriculum year group which best matches their attainment against the annual expectations set out in the National Literacy and Numeracy Framework (LNF). The tests can provide valuable diagnostic information; however, test results for a learner taking an 'out of year' test cannot be included in the school's formal WNTDC submission and should be marked as a 'D' (as disapplied) for this purpose.

Schools will be able to calculate a standardised progress measure for these learners using the look-up tables published on the Learning Wales website to report to parents/carers. Such a decision should be made in the light of advice from the relevant local authority and recorded prior to the delivery of the test packs.

Learners working above their national curriculum year level must sit the test for their correct year group in order to return correct data for this year group. Learners may not take the National Reading and Numeracy Tests for a higher national curriculum year group.

Schools may administer additional 'out of year' tests to specific learners for diagnostic purposes; this may only be done outside the National Reading and Numeracy Test cycle and results **cannot** be included with the data submitted by schools in the WNTDC.

Modified tests

What are the modified tests?

Modified tests are available to support learners with visual impairment or learners who **normally use large print as part of their normal classroom practice**. There is also guidance to support those administering the modified tests to learners with a hearing impairment or who use sign language.

The following modified tests are available.

- **Braille** – Braille grade 2. Diagrams may be provided either as thermoform on plastic or film, or on swell paper.
- **Modified large print (MLP)** – B4-sized, 18 point font, in black and white.
- **Enlarged print (EP)** – B4-sized, 14 point font, in black and white.

What are MLP test papers and which learners will need them?

Learners with severe visual impairment or other significant needs, such as Asperger's, autism or dyslexia, may benefit from using the MLP versions of the tests. However, the MLP format is only suitable if learners are used to being presented with modified materials as part of normal classroom practice. The font size is 18 point, the diagrams are simplified or omitted, and they are printed only in black and white on B4 paper and bound with wire-comb. B4 paper measures 353mm by 250mm.

What are EP test papers and which learners will need them?

Learners with visual impairment or other special educational needs may need EP test papers, if that is how their class materials are generally presented. The EP test papers are an exact enlargement of the standard test papers and they are intended to represent the tests as if they had been enlarged on a photocopier. The font size is approximately 14 point, and they are generally printed in black and white on B4 paper, and bound with wire-comb. B4 paper measures 353mm by 250mm. Exceptionally, some EP test materials for the Numeracy Tests (Reasoning) may be produced wholly or partly in colour, depending on the test content.

EP tests are available for learners in Years 4 to 9.

For learner manageability reasons, learners in Years 2 and 3 requiring EP tests should use the MLP tests.

Why are the EP versions generally in black and white rather than in colour?

While a significant number of learners with visual impairment can access black print on white paper, not all can access colour.

The tests are generally produced in black and white to enable as many learners as possible to access the tests independently. If learners are able to access colour, the colour illustrations in the standard versions of the Reading Tests can be enlarged on a colour photocopier and inserted into the MLP or EP booklets.

Some EP learner booklets for the Numeracy Test (Reasoning) are produced in full colour. This may cause access difficulties for any learner who usually accesses only materials produced in monotone. Schools should contact the Test Order Helpline to discuss whether MLP test papers would better suit the needs of such learners.

Why are the EP and MLP tests printed on B4 paper?

EP test papers have to be on paper larger than A4 because they are enlargements of the standard papers. Similarly, MLP is on larger paper to accommodate the modified diagrams and the larger font size. For learner manageability reasons, it is not desirable to use A3 paper, so B4 is used as it is smaller than A3 but larger than A4.

Can we order two different versions of the tests for one learner?

Yes, you can order two versions of the same test for one learner if their normal class material is a mixture of formats. However, this needs a great deal of care, as the materials may have been modified differently in each format. Test administrators should note that one version may have a slightly different markscheme to the other. Care will therefore be needed while administering and marking tests where a learner has used two different formats. Before the test, you should examine both versions and decide which version would best reflect usual classroom practice. You should not attempt to combine different versions of individual questions, e.g. a standard question with an MLP question or a Braille question with an MLP question. You should also not try to combine reading and question booklets, e.g. a standard reading booklet with an MLP question booklet, or a Braille reading booklet with an MLP question booklet. In the Numeracy Test (Reasoning), it is important that the same version is used for the teacher script and the learner booklet. It is important to note that the teachers' scripts and slide presentations that accompany the stimulus materials in the main National Numeracy Tests (Reasoning) must not be used for learners using the MLP or Braille modified test materials. Modified scripts and stimulus materials for these learners are included in the *Notes for teachers* that accompany the modified tests.

When can we open the modified materials?

Exceptionally, the modified test materials may need to be accessed by a teacher to consider whether adaptations are needed to make specific test items accessible for individual learners. Such adaptations may include re-Brailleing into grade 1 Braille, or further enlarging test papers, or copying onto colour paper. In such circumstances, the confidentiality and security of the test materials must be maintained at all times.

For these reasons, modified test materials may be opened upon receipt or a maximum of five days before the test date.

How much additional time can a learner using the modified tests have?

The same arrangements that apply to takers of the standard tests apply to those taking the modified tests. Learners using the Braille and MLP versions of the tests can have up to 100 per cent additional time, at the discretion of the school. Learners using the EP versions of the tests can have the amount of additional time specified for their normal classroom work, up to 100 per cent. For example, if a learner customarily has an extra 25 per cent of time to complete their work in class, then they can have 25 per cent of time added to the test. Schools should have evidence that learners are normally allowed additional time if it is allowed in the tests.

Are the tests available on coloured paper for learners with dyslexia, or in other formats?

The modified tests are only available in Braille, MLP and EP versions. The MLP and EP versions are only available as black print on white paper. As noted under 'Access arrangements', on page 34, if schools have learners that need the tests in other formats, schools may adapt the tests to suit the individual needs of their learners. This may involve photocopying the tests onto coloured paper, or enlarging any format of the test to a particular size.

Coloured overlays and coloured filter lenses may also be used in the case of learners with dyslexia if this is the normal classroom practice. Some standard test materials, such as the learner booklets for the Numeracy Tests (Reasoning), and some EP learner booklets for the Numeracy Tests (Reasoning), are produced in full colour. This may cause access difficulties for any learner who usually accesses only materials produced in greyscale. Schools should contact the Modified Test Order Helpline to discuss whether MLP test papers would better suit the needs of such learners.

Can the school make their own or further adaptations to the tests?

In exceptional cases, if the needs of a particular learner are not met by the modified tests that are available, schools can adapt the tests to suit the needs of individual learners. Schools should study the *Notes for teachers* that accompany the modified tests for specific guidance on making further adaptations to questions. They may also consult the Modified Test Order Helpline for advice. However, schools should take particular care where there are references to other pages in the tests, or where diagrams have been drawn to scale. It is essential that any adaptations made should not change the content of the question, or inadvertently advantage or disadvantage the learner. It is vital that the content of questions is not amended as part of the school's own/further adaptations.

What is the format of the Braille tests?

The Braille tests are produced in fully contracted Standard English Braille (SEB), Unified English Braille (UEB) or/and Welsh Braille. Schools will be asked to select either SEB or UEB when ordering tests for 2016. The chosen version should match the usual classroom practice for the learner. The text is embossed single-sided and Braille capitals are used. If this format does not suit an individual learner, schools may re-Braille the tests to suit the needs of any individual learner.

Learners can read in Braille and respond in print, and vice versa, if this is the usual classroom practice.

How do I order modified tests?

All modified tests can be ordered via the National Reading and Numeracy Tests Ordering System at www.nfer.ac.uk/wgtestorders at the same time as all other test orders are placed. Refer to page 4 of this guidance for further information.

Modified tests will be delivered to the school in a separate consignment.

How do I mark modified tests?

To mark the Braille and MLP versions, please use the modified markscheme alongside the standard markscheme. The modified markscheme provides details of how to mark questions that have been adapted and to which the standard markscheme can no longer be applied. All other questions should be marked according to the standard markscheme.

Disapplication

For the purpose of allowing learners' progress in reading and numeracy to be tracked, even small steps of progress as measured by the tests will be meaningful. It is vital therefore, that all learners who can access the tests are allowed and supported to do so.

As a statutory part of the assessment framework, the tests have been designed to allow as many learners as possible to have access to them and there is an expectation that nearly all learners will do so. To facilitate this and extend the range of learners able to access the tests, a range of access arrangements are in place to support learners in taking the tests and a suite of modified tests is also available. There may, however, be a small number of learners who, exceptionally, are unable to participate notwithstanding these arrangements. Schools have responsibility for making arrangements to identify learners who are incapable of working at the level of the tests, and those who are working at that level but are (i) unable to access them, or (ii) able to access them but only at a considerable disadvantage. This section of the guidance is intended to assist schools in identifying such learners and discharging this responsibility.

The decision that a learner should not take the tests is for the headteacher to make. When making a decision the headteacher must:

- have regard to this statutory guidance
- have considered whether any of the access arrangements detailed in this section would support the learner to access the tests
- have sought approval from their responsible regional consortia providing evidence to support their decision.

Unlike under former arrangements, it is not necessary for headteachers to make a direction disapplying the national curriculum in order to do this. However, headteachers must have regard to this statutory guidance, consider whether any of the access arrangements available would support the learner to access the tests, and have sought approval from their regional consortia providing evidence to support their decision no later than one calendar month before the test is due to be administered. The use of this facility will be monitored and may be subject to challenge by local authorities if apparently inappropriate patterns of disapplication emerge – therefore supporting evidence must be retained for any decision.

All disapplication decisions must be made individually, rather than en bloc, and on the merits of the case. A learner disappplied from the Reading Test is not automatically disappplied from the Numeracy Tests or vice versa, neither does disapplication from the Numeracy Test (Reasoning) presuppose disapplication from the Numeracy Test (Procedural). Each case must be considered on its merits, depending upon that learner's individual needs.

Learners who cannot access the tests even with modifications

Some learners' additional learning or other needs will be sufficiently significant or severe that, in the view of the headteacher, they will not be able to access one or more of the tests, or would be at a substantial disadvantage, even with full use of the modified tests available and application of the available access arrangements/making of reasonable adjustments. This is particularly likely to be the case for learners with severe learning difficulties or profound and multiple learning difficulties. Headteachers may therefore determine that such learners are not required to take the tests.

For the purposes of deciding whether or not disapplication under this criterion is appropriate, schools should consider whether or not learners are able to demonstrate any of the expectations set out in the LNF for the national curriculum year group the learner is in or, in the case of the Numeracy Tests (Reasoning), the expectations for the relevant phase or key stage. If learners are judged as not being able to meet any of the relevant expectations in the LNF and to be operating at a number of years below the level appropriate for their year group, then disapplication may be appropriate. Appropriate reference can be made to the previous years' National Reading and Numeracy Test papers for an indication of the level of challenge of the relevant paper or papers.

Learners in relation to whom relevant sections of the national curriculum have been disappplied

Some learners may have a statement of SEN which (as provided for in section 113 of the Education Act 2002) modifies or disappplies some or all of the national curriculum. In addition, under sections 113–116 of the Education Act 2002, headteachers may temporarily disappply the national curriculum for a particular learner if, for the time being, it is inappropriate to offer the national curriculum as it currently applies to them. Where such a disapplication has an effect on the literacy and/or numeracy elements of the curriculum such that the learner's ability to undertake the tests would be adversely affected, the headteacher may determine that that learner need not take the test or tests.

Learners entering from different education systems and whose ability to access the tests cannot be established

If a school does not have time to determine a learner's ability to access the tests before the testing cycle commences, e.g. because they have recently arrived from a different education system, the headteacher may determine that that learner need not take that year's tests. This provision applies for that year's tests **only**.

Disapplication and school and local authority statistics

In the interests of inclusion, it is Welsh Government policy to include all learners in the denominator for the calculation of performance indicators, including for teacher assessment results and GCSE and A level results. This also applies to the calculation and reporting of National Reading and Numeracy Test results. Learners who have the tests disapplied will therefore be treated as having an age-standardised score of 85 or below for school, local authority and national reporting purposes.

Welsh Government will monitor rates of disapplication and schools that show unusual patterns of disapplication will be followed up.

Disapplication and disaggregation in relation to EAL/WAL learners

Disapplication in relation to EAL/WAL learners

Disapplication would be appropriate for relatively few EAL/WAL learners. Any decision on disapplication in relation to EAL/WAL learners should be discussed in advance with the relevant regional consortium officer.

Headteachers who take this option must be willing and able to explain and justify their decision to the learner's parents or carers. When making a decision the headteacher must:

- have regard to this statutory guidance
- have considered whether any of the access arrangements detailed in this section would support the learner to access the tests
- have sought approval from their responsible regional consortia providing evidence to support their decision.

Learners who are new to the British education system

Learners from a non-English or non-Welsh-based education system (NEWBES) **may not** be disapplied from the tests solely for this reason. Such learners must sit the tests unless they cannot access them, or the school cannot assess their ability to do so, as outlined previously.

However, their assessment outcomes may be excluded from calculation of aggregate, published school-level and local authority-level statistics. The criteria to identify learners whose results may be excluded are:

- the learner's first language is not English or Welsh
- the learner has arrived from a non-English or non-Welsh-based education system
- the learner entered a United Kingdom (UK) education system on or after the start of the school year preceding that in which the tests are sat (i.e. on or after 1 September 2014).

All three of these criteria must be satisfied.

Disaggregation of NEWBES from school- and local authority-level statistics

Provided schools have declared the relevant learner as NEWBES in their management information systems and entered a valid entry date, the Welsh Government will take this as a decision by the headteacher that the learner is to be excluded from school and local authority statistics. The learner's results must still be submitted in the appropriate manner as part of the WNTDC. Their results, although disaggregated from school and local authority results by this process, will be included in national level statistics.