



DWIGHT SCHOOL

Testing Accommodations

Overview

This document states Dwight School's policy for access and implementation of assessment accommodations. In accordance with United States Federal law, the New York State Education Department (NYSED), and International Baccalaureate (IB) policy, Dwight School believes that all students should be assessed under conditions that are fair and appropriate.

Definition of Learning Disability

A child is diagnosed with a learning disability when he or she does not achieve adequately for his or her age or to meet grade-level standards in one or more of the following areas, when provided with learning experiences and instruction appropriate for the child's age or grade-level standards.ⁱ

- Oral expression
- Listening comprehension
- Written expression
- Basic reading skills
- Reading fluency skills
- Reading comprehension
- Mathematics calculation
- Mathematics problem solving

In order to establish eligibility for accommodations under Federal law, a qualified professional must determine through testing, that the student meets specific criteria to be diagnosed with at least one of the [13 disabilities](#) listed in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act of 2004 (IDEA).ⁱⁱ

Purpose of Test Accommodations

Standard assessment conditions may put students with learning disabilities at a disadvantage by preventing them from appropriately demonstrating their level of attainment.ⁱⁱⁱ The goal of assessment accommodations is to allow each Dwight student a fair chance to demonstrate his or her potential in learning and assessment.

According to NYSED, assessment accommodations are changes to assessment

administration procedures intended to remove barriers or obstacles caused by a student's disability without changing the skill or content that the test is measuring (e.g., the "constructs" of the test).^{iv}

The majority of Dwight School students who qualify for accommodations will have recommendations due to one or more of the following^v:

- Specific learning difficulties including Asperger's Syndrome
- Speech and/or communication difficulties
- Medical conditions
- Physical and/or sensory challenges

Qualifying for Accommodations in School

Dwight School will honor the recommendations for accommodations made in a student's psychoeducational evaluation or IEP/504 Plan. Dwight School requires that the documentation on file be current within five (5) years **for students in grades 6-12 and current within three (3) years for students in grades 2-5.**

Once proper documentation has been provided to the School, the student must take the Accommodations Quiz, and get a score of 95 or better, in order to qualify for accommodations in school. The Accommodations Quiz is based on the information in the Internal and External Special testing documents. The quiz will be sent to the student via email by the Director of Quest and Special Studies upon submission of documentation. Students are permitted to take the quiz as many times as they need to in order to pass and thus qualify for accommodations in school.

Accommodations for Standardized Testing

It is important to note that having a psychoeducational evaluation or IEP/504 Plan that recommends assessment accommodations and receiving those accommodations in school does not guarantee the same accommodations on standardized or IB tests.

The external test bodies, SAT, ACT and IB, all have their own separate application processes. The Director of Quest will provide support to families seeking accommodations on external tests. For more information on qualifying for test accommodations on external exams, visit the **Guide to Apply for External Accommodations in MyDwight's Parent Portals.**

Defining Assessment Accommodations

Assessment accommodations are recommended based on students' individual needs specifically to address the student's documented disability. Assessment accommodations

are changes in the standard administration of the assessment procedure or format. These accommodations are not meant to invalidate the results or to provide an unfair advantage. Assessment accommodations serve to level the playing field by compensating for a diagnosed deficit, enabling a student with a disability to participate in assessment programs on an equal basis with their non-disabled peers.^{vi}

The two most common test accommodations recommended for Dwight students are extra time and use of a laptop or word processor. However, other accommodations are occasionally recommended. Assessment accommodations generally fall into the four categories shown in the table below.

Timing Accommodations	Method of Response Accommodations	Method of Presentation Accommodations	Setting Accommodations	Other
Time and 1/2	Laptop	Reader	Separate Location	Calculator
Double Time	Scribe	Enlarged print	Preferential Seating	Frequent breaks
Unlimited Time (extremely rare)	Oral response	Modified Visual Complexity		Spelling Waived

Assessment Accommodations in Practice

Families providing the appropriate paperwork to the Admissions Department upon acceptance to Dwight School will be added to the internal list for test accommodations. The student’s psychoeducational evaluation or IEP/504 Plan will be kept on file with the school counselor and the Director of Quest and Special Studies. All documentation related to special testing will be kept locked up in a secure location.

The internal list of accommodations will be available to the entire faculty on the School’s Google Drive. Cases where privacy may be an issue will be denoted with a star. Faculty will understand to consult the school nurse in these cases.

Students seeking accommodations of any kind after admission to Dwight School should submit their paperwork to the Director of Quest and Special Studies.

Timing Accommodations

Extra Time

Students qualify for extended or extra time only if their disability causes them to work more slowly than other students.^{vii} Students who qualify for extra time will likely have one or more of the following disabilities; slow cognitive processing, limited attention span, severe reading disorder, or limited physical stamina.^{viii} If a student is usually able

to complete school-based tests in the allotted time, or if the student's inability to complete tests is not related to a disability, then extended time will not be recommended.

The amount of extra time provided varies from student to student. Extended time options include:

- Time and a half, or 50% additional time
- Double time, or 100% additional time
- Unlimited time (very rare)

Note: IB will occasionally approve 10% or 25% extra time based on their interpretation of the student's psychoeducational evaluation.

Specific Points for Implementing Extra Time at Dwight School

1. Students qualifying for extra time need to identify themselves to the classroom teacher at least **48** hours prior to the **initial** assessment date to allow the teacher adequate time to check the list. Upon confirmation, the student and teacher will work together to arrange how the extra time will be taken. **Additionally, students will need to confirm arrangements for this accommodation with the classroom teacher via email 48 hours in advance of each assessment during the course of the school year.**
2. Classroom teachers will be responsible for coordinating extra time with students. Classroom teachers can use Quest to monitor extra time during lunch periods and after School, if needed.
 - **Classroom teachers choosing to have students test in Quest will need to confirm any students testing during the specific times with the Director of Quest via email at least 24 hours in advance. Classroom teachers need to state the period the student will test, how much time the students are to be allocated, and bring all necessary test materials to Quest. One Quest teacher each specified period will be designated as the "extra time" monitor. Students can submit completed tests to Quest teachers, who will return them to the appropriate classroom teacher.**
3. Extra time must be taken on the same day of the test.
4. **Students will be responsible for using their own free time to take extra time. This may be before or after School, during lunch or a study hall.** Quest periods may **not** be used to take extra time on assessments without prior approval of the Quest teacher.
 - In accordance with the NYSED policy, adjustments to the start time of assessments may be made solely at the discretion of the individual classroom teacher, Department Head, and Director of Quest.
5. Students who fail to identify themselves to the teacher and make arrangements for extra time prior to the class period may not receive their extra time.
6. Students should not miss time in other classes to take their extra time for the class where the test is being given.
7. Any student in need of support advocating for an accommodation should contact the Director of Quest.

Note: The extra time accommodation applies to *timed assessments*. It does not apply to assigned deadlines. Students are free to request extended deadlines on assignments, but extended deadlines are not covered by the extra time accommodation and classroom teachers are under no obligation to grant extensions.

Method of Response Accommodations

Laptop

Students with a physical disability that impairs writing, such as Dysgraphia, or a severe language-based learning disability may qualify for a laptop or word processor.^{ix}

Teachers and families should be aware that poor handwriting does not necessarily mean a student has Dysgraphia and will qualify for a laptop accommodation.^x

Specific Points for Implementation of Laptop at Dwight School

1. Students qualifying for laptop need to identify themselves to the classroom teacher at least **48** hours prior to initial laptop usage to allow the teacher adequate time to check the list. **Classroom teachers may require students to use the DigiExam platform for assessments. Additionally, students will need to confirm arrangements for this accommodation with the classroom teacher via email 48 hours in advance of each assessment during the course of the school year.**

2. Students will be required to use school-issued laptops for all assessments and classroom activities.

- In the event the student repeatedly violates School policy on appropriate laptop use, the teacher may require the student use a laptop issued by the School with limited Internet access.

3. Classroom teachers have the right to require students with the laptop accommodation to sit in such a way that the screen is visible to the teacher.

5. Personal laptops will never be permitted **during school-based activities or on any IB or standardized tests.**

6. Laptops may be used only to record essay and responses requiring multiple sentences. They may not be used for multiple-choice sections or short-answer responses requiring a single word or short phrase.

7. Use of spell-check, grammar-check, word prediction, and cut-and-paste features must be disabled, unless specifically recommended in the psychoeducational evaluation and/or IEP/504 Plan.

- In order to be eligible for a spelling waiver a student must show evidence of a standard score that is below 90 on spelling in a psychological test.^{xi}

8. Any student in need of support advocating for an accommodation should contact the Director of Quest.

Scribe

When a student's handwriting is illegible, a scribe may be recommended. A scribe is a teacher who writes down the dictated response of the student for the requirements of an assessment and may be permitted for all forms of assessment where a student is unable to provide a handwritten response or use a computer.^{xii} The scribe will literally write exactly what the student says. The student will be asked to point out where to place punctuation and spell difficult words. A scribe can also be used to transcribe answers from a test booklet to an answer sheet.

Specific Points for Implementation of a Scribe at Dwight School

1. Students qualifying for a scribe need to identify themselves to the classroom teacher at least **48** hours prior to the assessment to allow the teacher adequate time to check the list and make the necessary arrangements. **Additionally, students will need to confirm arrangements for this accommodation with the classroom teacher via email 48 hours in advance of each assessment during the course of the school year.**
2. Classroom teachers will work with the Director of Quest and Special Studies to arrange for the provision of a scribe as needed.
3. Scribes must write word-for-word what the student dictates, leaving out punctuation and asking the student to spell difficult words. During the assessment, the scribe will show the student the written response and ask him or her to indicate where capitalization, punctuation, and paragraphing should be used.
 - If the psychoeducational evaluation and/or IEP/504 Plan waive spelling, punctuation, and/or paragraphing requirements, the scribe may record answers as spoken without asking the student to add punctuation or spell words.
4. Prior to completion, the student should read the completed transcription and be given a chance to indicate if there are any further changes to be scribed.
5. Upon completion, the student will sign the assessment confirming the scribed answers have been reviewed and approved for submission.
6. Any student in need of support advocating for an accommodation should contact the Director of Quest.

Method of Presentation

Reader

Students with a severe language-based learning disability may qualify for the reader accommodation. A reader is a teacher who will read the assessment question and related material to the student. The reader will read the entire test must be read including reading passages, questions, multiple choice items, etc. The reader will not paraphrase or answer any questions for the student. In accordance with NYSED policy, a reader should be a low-incidence accommodation for students with severe reading disabilities.^{xiii}

Specific Points for Implementation of a Reader at Dwight School

1. Students qualifying for a reader need to identify themselves to the classroom teacher at least **48** hours prior to the assessment to allow the teacher adequate time to check the list and make the necessary arrangements. **Additionally, students will need to confirm arrangements for this accommodation with the classroom teacher via email 48 hours in advance of each assessment during the course of the school year.**
2. Classroom teachers will work with the Director of Quest and Special Studies to arrange for the provision of a reader as needed.
3. The Reader accommodation will be administered individually rather than in a group setting to limit distraction for the other students.
4. Content must be read word for word, in a neutral manner, without intonating, emphasizing or otherwise drawing attention to key words and phrases.
5. The reader may not offer clarification or explanation of assessment items.
 - On teacher-made tests or quizzes, the teacher can make a determination as to the extent to which any clarification may be provided without compromising test validity.^{xiv}

8. Any student in need of support advocating for an accommodation should contact the Director of Quest.

9. Some students with the recommendation for a reader choose to forgo this accommodation for most School-based assessments but choose to use the reader for final exams. All students with this accommodation will receive a survey in May in advance of final exams requiring the student to formally request or decline the use of a reader for final exams. No reader will be scheduled unless formally requested through the survey.

Note: A reader does not have to be familiar with the content of the subject being assessed.

Enlarged Print/Modified Visual Complexity

Students with visual processing disabilities or a severe language-based learning disability may qualify for enlarged print or modifications to the visual complexity of assessments. Standard modifications of font sizes are 18, 24, and 36 points.^{xv} This accommodation should only be given when changes to the appearance of the assessment can be achieved without compromising the validity and objective of the assessment.

Specific Points for Implementation of Enlarged Print/Modified Visual Complexity at Dwight School

1. Students qualifying for **Enlarged Print/Modified Visual Complexity** need to identify themselves to the classroom teacher at least **48** hours prior to the assessment to allow the teacher adequate time to check the list and make the necessary arrangements. **Additionally, students will need to confirm arrangements for this accommodation with the classroom teacher via email 48 hours in advance of each assessment during the course of the school year.**

2. Classroom teachers can work with their Head of Department and the Director of Quest and Special Studies to make the necessary changes to the layout and appearance of the specific student's assessment.

- The content of the assessment will not be altered. For example, a modified math test may have fewer problems per page in a larger font, but the content of the problems will be unchanged.

3. Any student in need of support advocating for an accommodation should contact the Director of Quest.

Flexibility in Setting

Separate Location

Separate location is an accommodation for students with severe attention issues. The separate location accommodation means a student is administered the assessment in a separate room apart from the standard setting.^{xvi}

Specific Points for Implementation of Separate Location at Dwight School

1. Students qualifying for a **separate location** need to identify themselves to the classroom teacher at least **48** hours prior to the assessment to allow the teacher adequate time to check the list and make the necessary arrangements. **Additionally, students will need to confirm arrangements for this accommodation with the classroom teacher via email 48 hours in advance of each assessment during the course of the school year.**
2. Classroom teachers will work with the Director of Quest and Special Studies to arrange for the provision of a separate location as needed.
3. In accordance with NYSED policy, a small group taking an assessment with the accommodation of separate location will not exceed 5 students.^{xvii}
4. Any student in need of support advocating for an accommodation should contact the Director of Quest.

Preferential Seating

Preferential seating is an accommodation for students with attention issues. The Preferential seating accommodation means a student is administered the assessment in a seat close to the teacher or proctor. In accordance with IB policy, these students are eligible for prompts to stay on task during the assessment at the teacher's discretion.^{xviii}

Specific Points for Implementation of Preferential Seating at Dwight School

1. Students qualifying for a **preferential seating** need to identify themselves to the classroom teacher at least **48** hours prior to the assessment to allow the teacher adequate time to check the list and make the necessary arrangements. **Additionally, students will need to confirm arrangements for this accommodation with the classroom teacher**

via email 48 hours in advance of each assessment during the course of the school year.

2. The chosen “preferential seat” should be in close proximity to the teacher and afford easy access for quiet prompts as needed.

3. Any student in need of support advocating for an accommodation should contact the Director of Quest.

Other

Calculator

The graphing calculator is an important tool to enhance a student’s learning of mathematics. Students will be using the TI 83 or TI 84 graphing calculator in grades 6-12.

When permitted, the calculator may be used for classwork, homework, and assessments. However, there will be times when the teacher of a course decides that it is more appropriate that the investigation or assessment be completed without the calculator. On the IB mathematics examinations, there are papers where the calculator may not be used. Even when calculator work is permitted, it may be necessary to show all work, or at least the syntax input that was typed into the calculator.

Accommodations for calculator use will be made if indicated in a student’s 504 or IEP.

Students are expected to use the graphing calculator appropriately. Inappropriate use may include, but not limited to:

- Sharing a calculator during an assessment
- Storing formulas, notes, programs, or applications that are not authorized
- Playing games during class

Calculator use is an accommodation for students with math disabilities, such as Dyscalculia, or a severe language-based learning disability. When recommended, calculator use is permitted in class, and on homework and assessments.

Calculator use is not meant to be a substitute for memorizing basic math facts or understanding how to carry out arithmetic operations. In accordance with Dwight School’s Math Department policy, students are expected to memorize basic addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division facts. As appropriate, students are also expected to memorize the squares of whole numbers 1-12 and the accompanying square roots. The calculator is not meant to replace simple mental math. Classroom teachers will give strategies for mental math expected of students with math-specific learning disabilities.

Final Note

Accommodations recommended in a psychoeducational evaluation or IEP/504 Plan are not meant to limit common sense accommodations and support provided by classroom

teachers. Below is a list of approved accommodations a Dwight School teacher may provide without official authorization^{xix}:

- Students are permitted to take assessments in a separate room if it is in the best interests of the student or other students in the class. Arrangements can be made through the Head of Department and Director of Quest and Special Studies as needed.
- Students with severe attention issues may be prompted to stay on task during an assessment to ensure the student pays attention to the assessment. The prompts should not disturb other students. The teacher should only prompt the student and not provide any form of assistance.
- Extended deadlines on individual assignments.
- Rest breaks due to medical, physical, psychological, or other conditions.
- Use of noise buffers such as headphones, as needed.

If students, parents, or classroom teachers have any questions about assessment accommodation policy or implementation, please contact the individual Head of Department or the Director of Quest.

ⁱ "IDEA - Building The Legacy of IDEA 2004." *IDEA - Building The Legacy of IDEA 2004*. N.p., 1 Oct. 2006. Web. 25 July 2014.
<<http://idea.ed.gov/explore/view/p/,root,dynamic,TopicalBrief,23,>>.

ⁱⁱ Individuals with Disabilities Education Act of 2004, Pub. L. no. 108-446, 118 Stat 2647 (2004). Web. 30 July 2014.

ⁱⁱⁱ "Candidates with assessment access requirements." . International Baccalaureate Organization, 1 Sept. 2013. Web. 23 July 2014.
<<http://www.ibo.org/programmes/pd/special/documents/dpspecialassessment.pdf>>.

^{iv} " NYSED's policy guidance on test access." *Test Access and Accommodations*. NYC Dept. of Education, 1 May 2006. Web. 23 July 2014.
<<http://www.p12.nysed.gov/specialed/publications/policy/testaccess/guidance.htm#pres>>.

^v "Candidates with assessment access requirements." . International Baccalaureate Organization, 1 Sept. 2013. Web. 23 July 2014.
<<http://www.ibo.org/programmes/pd/special/documents/dpspecialassessment.pdf>>.

^{vi} " NYSED's policy guidance on test access." *Test Access and Accommodations*. NYC Dept. of Education, 1 May 2006. Web. 23 July 2014.
<<http://www.p12.nysed.gov/specialed/publications/policy/testaccess/guidance.htm#pres>>.

vii "Services for Students with Disabilities: Ensuring Accommodations on College Board Exams." *Accommodations for Test Takers with Disabilities – The College Board*. College Board, 1 Jan. 2014. Web. 23 July 2014. <<https://www.collegeboard.org/students-with-disabilities>>.

viii "NYSED's policy guidance on test access." *Test Access and Accommodations*. NYC Dept. of Education, 1 May 2006. Web. 23 July 2014. <<http://www.p12.nysed.gov/specialed/publications/policy/testaccess/guidance.htm#pres>>.

ix "Candidates with assessment access requirements." . International Baccalaureate Organization, 1 Sept. 2013. Web. 23 July 2014. <<http://www.ibo.org/programmes/pd/special/documents/dpspecialassessment.pdf>>.

x "Services for Students with Disabilities: Ensuring Accommodations on College Board Exams." *Accommodations for Test Takers with Disabilities – The College Board*. College Board, 1 Jan. 2014. Web. 23 July 2014. <<https://www.collegeboard.org/students-with-disabilities>>.

xi "Candidates with assessment access requirements." . International Baccalaureate Organization, 1 Sept. 2013. Web. 23 July 2014. <<http://www.ibo.org/programmes/pd/special/documents/dpspecialassessment.pdf>>.

xii "Candidates with assessment access requirements." . International Baccalaureate Organization, 1 Sept. 2013. Web. 23 July 2014. <<http://www.ibo.org/programmes/pd/special/documents/dpspecialassessment.pdf>>.

xiii "NYSED's policy guidance on test access." *Test Access and Accommodations*. NYC Dept. of Education, 1 May 2006. Web. 23 July 2014. <<http://www.p12.nysed.gov/specialed/publications/policy/testaccess/guidance.htm#pres>>.

xiv "NYSED's policy guidance on test access." *Test Access and Accommodations*. NYC Dept. of Education, 1 May 2006. Web. 23 July 2014. <<http://www.p12.nysed.gov/specialed/publications/policy/testaccess/guidance.htm#pres>>.

xv "Candidates with assessment access requirements." . International Baccalaureate Organization, 1 Sept. 2013. Web. 23 July 2014. <<http://www.ibo.org/programmes/pd/special/documents/dpspecialassessment.pdf>>.

xvi "NYSED's policy guidance on test access." *Test Access and Accommodations*. NYC Dept. of Education, 1 May 2006. Web. 23 July 2014. <<http://www.p12.nysed.gov/specialed/publications/policy/testaccess/guidance.htm#pres>>.

xvii "NYSED's policy guidance on test access." *Test Access and Accommodations*. NYC Dept. of Education, 1 May 2006. Web. 23 July 2014. <<http://www.p12.nysed.gov/specialed/publications/policy/testaccess/guidance.htm#pres>>.

xviii "Candidates with assessment access requirements." . International Baccalaureate Organization, 1 Sept. 2013. Web. 23 July 2014.

<<http://www.ibo.org/programmes/pd/special/documents/dpspecialassessment.pdf>>.

xix "Candidates with assessment access requirements." . International Baccalaureate Organization, 1 Sept. 2013. Web. 23 July 2014.

<<http://www.ibo.org/programmes/pd/special/documents/dpspecialassessment.pdf>>.