

Notification of Computer Use by Students for the 2020 NCEA Examinations

Key Messages

NZQA has initiated a staged process to make the use of a computer for external NCEA examinations available to all students, not only SAC students. Stage one of this process starts in 2020.

Given the resourcing and logistical implications of this development, schools should carefully consider how this should be implemented for their students in 2020. Schools are strongly recommended to consider relevant SAC students first before possibly extending to other students, bearing in mind resourcing requirements. Schools set their own policy on how this will be implemented for their students in 2020.

Notification process

1. For the 2020 NCEA examinations, students who only require the use of a computer will not need a Special Assessment Conditions (SAC) application to be submitted by the school to NZQA for approval. For planning and logistical purposes, schools will need to notify NZQA of all students who will be using computers for the external NCEA examinations. This is not required for students sitting a digital examination delivered online by NZQA.
2. A decision about extending access of computer use to all Scholarship candidates will be made after consultation in 2020. In the meantime, students with a SAC entitlement to computer use may continue to use a computer for the New Zealand Scholarship examination in 2020.
3. Wherever possible, students who wish to use a computer for external NCEA examinations should be entered into the available digital examinations. These students will be treated the same as other non-SAC students should they move to paper during the digital examination for any reason.
4. The notification process will only apply if a student wishes to use a computer (with small group separate accommodation) and no other SAC (eg. reader, isolated separate accommodation, etc.). Students with multiple SAC requests will need to be processed through the current full SAC application process.
5. No evidence will need to be submitted to NZQA in support of this computer use notification.
6. Students for whom the school has lodged a computer use notification will not be able to change computer use for a writer or extra time for certain examinations. If a student requires this flexibility, then the current full SAC application process should be used.
7. Students must type for themselves. Those who need to use a Typist will have to be approved through the current full SAC application process.
8. Notifications will have to be completed by schools using the current SAC online tool which has been amended to accept notifications.
9. All computers used by students for examinations (whether approved through the SAC process or through a notification) must be securely set up to the same specifications currently applying for SAC students.
10. From mid-2020, schools will need to attach computer use to the students' NCEA examination sessions in the same way as SAC entitlements are attached to examination sessions.
11. When considering which students to submit notifications for, schools should be particularly mindful of resourcing implications such as sufficient devices, printers, rooms, supervisors and IT support. A discussion with the Exam Centre Manager may be appropriate.
12. Queries should be directed to the school's School Relationship Manager or a member of the NZQA SAC Team on **0800 697 296** or at **sac@nzqa.govt.nz**

Guide for the Provision of SAC Entitlements for Digital External Exams, MCAT, and DT & HM CATs

- Schools should carefully consider whether Digital External Exams are appropriate for SAC students dependent on their specific circumstances and resourcing/logistical implications.
- This guide is intended to assist schools in the application of these SAC entitlements when students are entered for any of the Digital External Exams.

Entitlement	
Computer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As all Digital External Exams require the use of a computer, no additional accommodations are provided. However, computers used by SAC students should be set up in the same way as if they were not sitting the Digital External Exam as these students may opt out of all or part of the digital exam and revert to “ordinary” SAC computer use.
Small Group Separate Accommodation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If this has been granted only because the student also has an entitlement for computer use, then the student is accommodated like any other student doing the Digital External Exam. If this has been approved for a reason other than computer use alone, then you must decide whether you can manage this entitlement in a Digital External Exam room or the students still need separate rooming (eg availability of room, supervisor, etc.).
Isolated Separate Accommodation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> You must decide whether you can manage isolated separate accommodation for a Digital External Exam (eg availability of room, supervisor, etc.).
Writer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Although it is possible for a writer to type for a student in a Digital External Exam there seems to be little point in doing this. We recommend that students needing a writer sit the paper-based exam. The decision for a writer to type is made by the writer, not the student. You must decide whether you have the resources to manage a writer/typist for a Digital External Exam (eg availability of a typist, room, supervision, etc.).
Reader	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is currently no text to voice capability in the Digital External Exams so in most cases we recommend students sit the paper-based exam. While a reader can be used for the digital exam, we do not recommend this unless it has been trialed, so both the student and the reader are confident. You must decide whether you have the resources to manage a reader for a Digital External Exam (eg availability of room, supervisor, etc.).
Extra Time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extra writing time is granted as for paper-based exams.
Rest Breaks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rest breaks are granted as for paper-based exams.
Special Papers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students have the ability to change the font size in their typed responses. Students will not be able to change the font size of a question but can use the zoom function of the browser to increase its size. It will not be possible to change the background screen colour.
Complex Issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If a student has complex issues requiring specialised support, please contact the NZQA SAC team at sac@nzqa.govt.nz.
MCAT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As this is administered by schools and not a November exam, you will not find it on the SAC exams processing lists for your students. However, you do need to provide SAC for this assessment. Provide a reader and/or writer/typist if the student wants to use them. Extra time entitlements: provide 10 minutes as it is a one-hour exam. Rest breaks: as needed, up to 10 minutes extra. A student may opt to swap computer and writer for extra time.
Digital Technologies CATs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As these are administered by schools and not November exams, you will not find them on the SAC exams processing lists for your students. However, you do need to provide SAC for these assessments. Provide a reader and/or typist or reading and/or speech-to-text software if the student wants to use them. Extra time and/or rest break entitlements: there are two one-hour standards at each level but as each session is 3 hours the third hour will be sufficient for extra time and rest breaks if needed.

A digital supervisor can monitor from a central location, up to ten students who are separately accommodated with an exam assistant or those who need to be isolated.