**Cambridge Assessment**
English

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**Guidance Notes for Teachers: Special Arrangements Reading and Use of English Papers**

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Please read through the following information about Braille and Modified Large Print versions of Reading and Use of English papers and make sure the test-taker:

- is familiar with the tasks and task instructions in these versions
- practises with any sample material available.

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**Braille versions of Reading and Use of English Papers**

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**What changes are made?**

**1. Separate Question and Text Booklets**

**Longer texts** e.g. *C2 Proficiency* Reading and Use of English, Parts 5-7, are always placed in a separate **Text Booklet**, with the questions in the **Question Booklet** (so that a blind candidate can leave the questions open while checking through several pages in the Text Booklet).

**Shorter texts** may be placed immediately before or after the questions in the Question Booklet, as they are unlikely to take up more than one page of Braille and candidates can more easily refer backwards and forwards while completing the task.

If using assistive technology such as a screen-reader, the candidate may use the ALT-TAB keys on the computer to 'toggle' or switch between the two booklets.

Below is a typical rubric for one task in a Braille version of a Reading paper (rubrics are the instructions at the beginning of each task or part).

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Answer questions **1 – 7** by reading the magazine article on page **2** of the separate booklet about hotels in Britain. Choose the most suitable heading from the list **A – I** (below) for each part (**1 – 7**) of the article.  There is one extra heading which you do not need to use. There is an example at the beginning **(0)**. The answer is written in italics.

Write your answers **on the separate answer sheet.**

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**Note that:**
Rubrics (instructions) in the Question Booklet refer to page numbers in the Text Booklet. Braille page numbers will be different from the page numbers given in the print version. If you are making your own brailled versions of sample Special Arrangements papers for students, change the page number references in texts and questions as necessary.

Example answers are signalled in Braille with an italics indicator, so candidates are reminded of this in the rubrics.

**2. Visuals (pictures/photographs) are removed**

All visuals (pictures/photographs) are removed. Occasionally a visual helps the reader understand a word or the subject of a text. If this is the case, a gloss (definition) of the word illustrated is given.

For example, there is a picture of a koala at the top of a text about Australia. For the Braille version, the picture is removed and the new rubric reads:

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Answer questions **16 – 22** by reading the magazine article about koalas on page **4** of the separate booklet. A koala is an Australian animal which looks like a small bear.

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### 3. Changes are made to rubrics

**NB Teachers should make sure candidates using Braille versions of Reading and Use of English papers are familiar with the rubrics for the following five task types which commonly occur in these papers.**

### (a) Gapped (or Cloze) texts

Here is the rubric for a *C2 Proficiency* Reading and Use of English, Part 2 gapped (cloze) text and the first sentence of the text.

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For questions **16 – 30**, read the text below and think of the word which best fits each space. Use only one word in each space. There is an example at the beginning (**0**). The answer is written in italics.

Write your answers on the separate answer sheet.

SUMMER CAMPS

Every year, eight million children across **(0)** *the* United States spend some time at a summer camp.

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Answers to examples are normally inserted into gapped texts like this in italics.

### (b) 'Transformation' sentences

In these tasks, candidates are asked to write a sentence which has a similar meaning to another given sentence, often using a 'key' or 'prompt' word e.g. *C2 Proficiency* Reading and Use of English, Part 4.

A typical rubric:

For questions **25 – 30**, complete the second sentence so that it has a similar meaning to the first sentence, using the word given in brackets after this sentence. **Do not change the word given.** You must use between **three** and **eight** words, including the word given. Here is an example (**0**).

**Example:**

**0**   Do you mind if I watch you while you paint?

  **(objection)**

  Do you ……………………………………………… you while you paint?

The gap can be filled by the words 'have any objection to my watching', so you write:

**0**   *have any objection to my watching*

Write **only** the missing words **on the separate answer sheet**.

Note that the 'prompt' word, 'objection', is placed in brackets.

### (c) Word transformation exercises

For word transformation exercises e.g. *C2 Proficiency* Reading and Use of English, Part 3, the target words to be transformed are similarly given **in brackets** at the end of each relevant line of the text.

For example:

But it's hard to play the piano if you lack the **(60)** _____ .        **(ABLE)**

### (d) Gapped text tasks

For gapped text tasks e.g. *C2 Proficiency* Reading and Use of English, Part 6, the paragraph or sentence **options** are normally placed in the Question Booklet.

Below is a typical rubric for this type of task:

Answer questions **37 – 43** by reading the magazine article about Buckingham Palace on page **4** of the separate booklet. Seven paragraphs have been removed from the article. Choose from the paragraphs **A – H** (below) the one which fits each gap (**37 – 43**).
There is one extra paragraph which you do not need to use. There is an example at the beginning (**0**). The answer is written in italics.

Write your answers **on the separate answer sheet.**

**(e) Multiple-matching tasks**

For multiple-matching tasks e.g. *C2 Proficiency* Reading and Use of English, Part 7, the **question number comes before** each sentence or statement and the numbered spaces for answers after each sentence or statement are removed.

For example:

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**Part 7**

**QUESTIONS 44 – 53**

Read the article about cooking on page **4** of the separate booklet.

For questions **44 – 53**, choose from the paragraphs (**A – E**). The paragraphs may be chosen more than once.

Write your answers **on the separate answer sheet**.

**In which paragraph is it stated that**

44. both boys and girls benefit from learning how to cook?

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**4. Extra headings are inserted to make sure blind candidates can easily locate the correct information**

For example, in *C2 Proficiency* Reading and Use of English, Part 1, the set of options are headed:

**OPTIONS FOR QUESTIONS 1 – 15**

and the set of eight paragraphs in Part 6 are headed:

**PARAGRAPHS A – H FOR QUESTIONS 37 – 43**

**Other important points about Braille versions:**

**1. Extra time**

Reference to the candidate's additional time allowance is made on the cover/first page:

**TIME: 50 minutes plus your additional time allowance.**

Please contact your local centre to discuss the amount of extra time your student will require.

### 3. Candidates can apply to read the paper using assistive technology

Blind candidates can apply to use various types of assistive technology to enable them to read the paper.

Please see *Special Arrangements – 'I have visual difficulties'*.

http://www.cambridgeenglish.org/help/special-requirements/

### 4. Candidates can apply to write their answers in alternative ways

Blind candidates can choose to write their answers on a Braille sheet or using a computer. Candidates must make sure that each answer is clearly numbered or that it is clear which option they have chosen.

Please see *Special Arrangements – 'I have visual difficulties'*.

http://www.cambridgeenglish.org/help/special-requirements/

### 5. Candidates can apply to dictate their answers

Candidates who are blind can ask for permission to speak their answers to a person who will write their answers down. This person is called an amanuensis or scribe. The amanuensis or scribe will ask the blind candidate to spell some less common words.

### 6. What about dictionaries?

Blind candidates are not allowed to use Braille dictionaries or electronic dictionaries in any Cambridge Assessment English examination.

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### Modified Large Print versions of Reading and Use of English Papers

**What are Modified Large Print (MLP) versions?**

Modified Large Print versions of Reading and Use of English papers contain adapted material, a simplified layout and standardised fonts.

**Who are these versions for?**

Modified Large Print versions are designed for candidates with visual difficulties, and candidates who have a physical difficulty which makes it hard for them to read smaller print, or focus on pictures/photographs. Candidates with a range of other disabilities may find MLP versions more accessible. Candidates with specific learning difficulties e.g. dyslexia, may also request enlarged material.

**What are the main changes made to Modified Large Print versions?**

**All Modified Large Print versions** of Reading and Use of English papers include the following features:

**1.** The same **enlarged print** (**font**) **size** is used throughout. It looks like this:

# Arial 18 point bold.

**2.** As far as possible, all instructions and texts on a page are **aligned left**.

**3.** The following are generally placed in **capital letters:**

- **headings, titles and section indicators** e.g. **PART 1**

- **words in bold** in the original standard question paper

- **italicised words** in the original standard question paper e.g. titles of newspapers or books

- **short sub-headings** above texts which are italicised in the original standard question paper

- **emphasised words** which are in italics in the original standard question paper.

**4.** Some numbers are underlined to make sure candidates notice them. For example:

# Answer questions 13 – 19 by referring to the magazine article on pages 8 – 10 of the separate booklet. Choose the answer (A, B, C or D) which you think fits best.

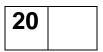**5. Page numbers** are placed at the centre and **bottom** of each page.

**6. TURN OVER** is only placed at the bottom of a page where absolutely necessary in order to make sure candidates do not miss a small final part of the question placed on the next page, e.g. a whole final sentence of a text or the final question in a set.

**7.** Occasionally candidates may be given a more detailed instruction, which is placed at or near the top of a blank page, for example:

# DO NOT TURN OVER UNTIL YOU ARE TOLD TO DO SO.

**8. Number/answer boxes are generally simplified like this:**

Standard version

| 20 | |
|----|--|

Modified Large Print version

**20 _____**

**9. Frames around texts** are usually removed.

**10.** Generally, tasks which have been modified in Braille versions will also be used in Modified Large Print versions if this will also help partially-sighted candidates and other candidates using these versions, e.g. a bar chart or graph will usually be presented in written or list form.

**11. Dotted lines** ……. in gaps, etc, in the original version are changed to **solid lines**.

For example:

John decided to (1) ………………… in Bedford.

# John decided to (1) _____ in Bedford.

**Other important points:**

**1. Line references are set out differently.**

**Line references,** if used, are placed to the **left** of the text, and **not in italics**. For example:

# Line 13 and went down the road to buy some coffee from the supermarket.

**2. Layout of options**

Options for multiple-choice gapped (cloze) texts, e.g. *C2 Proficiency* Reading and Use of English, Part 1, are usually presented like this:

# 1 A praise
# B remark
# C cheer
# D celebrate

**3. Extra headings inserted to ensure candidates can easily locate the correct information**

For example, in *C2 Proficiency* Reading and Use of English, Part 1, the options are headed:

# OPTIONS FOR QUESTIONS 1 – 15

and the eight  paragraphs in Part 6 are headed:

# PARAGRAPHS A – H FOR QUESTIONS 37 – 43

**4. Candidates can write their answers in different ways**

Candidates can choose to write their responses on the standard computer-read answer sheet. Severely partially-sighted candidates may choose to write their answers on separate answer sheets provided by the exam centre or dictate their answers to an amanuensis who will complete an answer sheet.

Candidates taking Special Arrangements papers are not required to use a particular type of pen or pencil when writing their answers on a separate blank sheet of paper. However, if candidates want to write their answers on the standard computer-read answer sheet themselves, they must use a pencil.

Candidates with specific learning difficulties are not allowed to have an amanuensis but may apply for a copier (transcriber) if their handwriting is difficult to read. This means that someone copies (makes a transcript of) the candidate's work at the end of the exam. The

candidate will read out their answers to the copier, including all the spelling and punctuation. The copier will write down an **exact copy** of the answers, including any mistakes in grammar, spelling or punctuation.

**5. Visuals/Pictures may be enlarged or removed**

Visuals may be removed from Modified Large Print versions if enlarging makes it difficult to identify what is being shown. If removed, extra information may be added to the task instructions.

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| **FAQs** |
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**How much extra time is allowed?**

Blind candidates are allowed up to 100% extra time.

Candidates using Modified Large Print versions are normally allowed 25% extra time but can be allowed more depending on the severity of their condition or difficulty.

Candidates with specific learning difficulties are also normally allowed 25% extra time but may apply for more if their difficulty is severe.

If appropriate, candidates who are deaf or hard of hearing may also apply for extra time when taking a Reading and Use of English paper (normally 25%).

Please contact your local exam centre for more details.

**Are candidates with visual difficulties allowed to use screen-reading software in reading exams?**

As an alternative (or in addition) to printed question papers, candidates may apply to use screen magnifiers and other reading devices.

If using a computer to write their answers, candidates **must not use** spellcheck, grammar check or thesaurus functions.

For reasons of test security, in the first instance the exam centre's hardware should be used e.g. PC, laptop.  However, use of the candidate's own laptop may be permitted where necessary, if all security restrictions can be shown to be complied with (please refer to your local exam centre for further advice).

Please note, however:

- there are important restrictions on the use of screen-reading software in Reading papers. Candidates with physical difficulties will not be given permission to use screen-reading software or a human reader to read out the **texts** in a Reading paper, unless they are **unable** to read the question papers **themselves** e.g. a recently blind candidate who has not yet learned to read Braille, or a candidate with very severe cerebral palsy.

- please contact your local exam centre for more information on using screen-reading software and Special Arrangements applications. Candidates with specific learning difficulties are **not** permitted to use human readers, or screen-reading software (unless used solely to magnify texts and questions).

Please see *Special Arrangements – 'I have visual difficulties'*.

http://www.cambridgeenglish.org/help/special-requirements/


**Can candidates request use of coloured overlays?**

Yes, candidates can request permission to use their own coloured overlays.


| Preparation Tips for Teachers |
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1. Most of the advice applicable to standard versions of Reading and Use of English papers will be relevant and useful for preparing candidates for Special Arrangements versions.

2. Make sure your student practises with any sample papers available so they are familiar with:
- changed instructions (rubrics) in Braille or Modified Large Print versions
- layout of Questions and Texts (i.e. in separate booklets).

These can be converted to Braille using a Braille embosser, or accessed in Braille via a Braille display linked to a computer. Students may also access the Reading and Use of English papers using a screen-reader.

3. Students should note how many marks are set aside for each question and not spend too much time on one part (or text). If your student has been allowed extra time, they should practise managing their time allowance and be careful not to spend too much time (or energy) on one task.

4. Before the date of the exam, students must decide if they would prefer to write their answers on a separate blank sheet of paper (rather than on the answer sheet).  Please ensure the exam centre is aware of this decision.

5. For multiple-matching tasks e.g. *C2 Proficiency* Reading and Use of English, Part 7, students should start with the questions and refer to the text booklet for each question.


Currently available sample Braille and Modified Large Print versions can be downloaded from: http://www.cambridgeenglish.org/help/special-requirements/

Further advice and support can be obtained through your local centre, or by contacting the Helpdesk (https://support.cambridgeenglish.org).