



Accommodation Guidelines for the assessment of Children with Disabilities – NEA 2021



Bhutan Council for School Examinations and Assessment
Royal Government of Bhutan

Accommodation Guidelines for the assessment of Children with Disabilities – NEA 2021



**Assessment and Monitoring Division
Bhutan Council for School Examinations and Assessment
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Contents

1. Introduction	6
1.1 Rationale	6
1.2 Scope	6
2. Types of accommodations	6
2.1 Presentation Accommodations	7
2.1.1 Test Accessibility and Modification Inventory (TAMI)	8
2.1.2 Sample English Reading Literacy Item	11
2.1.3 Sample Dzongkha Reading Literacy Item	13
2.1.4 Sample Mathematical Literacy Item	15
2.1.5 Sample Student Questionnaire Item	16
2.2 Response Accommodations	17
2.3 Scheduling Accommodations	18
2.4 Setting Accommodations	18

1. Introduction

National Education Assessment (NEA) is a triennial large-scale assessment conducted at various key stages of learning (III, VI and IX) in Bhutan with an objective to improve the overall student learning achievement and to enhance the education system.

Accommodation Guidelines for the Assessment of Children with Disabilities is a document which is designed to guide to customize the assessment instructions, directions, instruments, materials, conditions and timing, considering the special educational needs of Children with Disabilities (CWDs) to increase their accessibility to the assessment so that they can demonstrate their learning competencies.

This document entails the types of accommodations and the processes that could be followed to facilitate the participation of CWDs in NEA and also to keep up with the inclusive nature of the assessment. This is one of the NEA related documents developed among others with the financial support from Global Partnership for Education (GPE), USA. With every cycle of NEA, the document being dynamic in nature, it will be reviewed and updated.

1.1 Rationale

The following rationales are considered to address the inclusive nature of National Education Assessment Framework (NEAF):

1. This document should guide the process of adaptation of the test items for the assessment of English Reading and Writing Literacy, Dzongkha Reading and Writing Literacy, Mathematical Literacy and Scientific Literacy besides student contextual items;
2. This document should guide to create appropriate assessment conditions and timing for the CWDs to enhance their accessibility and to complete the assessment; and
3. This document should help ensure consistency, reliability and validity of the assessment across NEA cycles.

1.2 Scope

In alignment with the NEAF, the adaptation of the test and contextual instruments are done for the participating CWDs taking national curriculum with necessary accommodations and CWDs accessing adapted or specialised curriculum. However, children with severe disabilities who are on Individual Education Plan (IEP) requiring extensive resources and intensive care are excluded from the NEA.

2. Types of accommodations

Accommodations are practices and procedures of making adjustments to the assessment presentation, response, scheduling and setting to provide equitable access during the assessment of CWDs. Such adjustments are intended to reduce if not eliminate the effects of disabilities. An accommodation does not affect the integrity of the examination (MoE, 2018). Adaptation and modifications of test items for CWDs must be done without compromising the learning outcomes.

In consonance with the existing special educational services; assistive devices, classroom settings, teaching learning practices, assessment practices and support services in inclusive schools and special institutes (Wangsel Institute for the Deaf and Muenselling Institute of Khaling), the NEA has considered presentation, response, scheduling and setting accommodations to meet the varied needs of CWDs for their participation in assessment.

However, since the accommodations offered for the assessment are expected to expand with more resources being made available in inclusive schools and special educational institutes, this document will have a placeholder for updating such changes in future.

The types of accommodations provided in NEA are explained below:

2.1 Presentation Accommodations

In the context of NEA, presentations are tailor-made adjustments made to the assessment instructions, directions, instruments and materials depending on the special needs of CWDs to increase their accessibility to the assessment.

Since test items are presented visually in a written format, it can limit some CWDs from demonstrating what they know with respect to what is intended to be measured. Presentation format can be altered in a variety of ways to enable them access the test. The presentation of the assessment instruments is determined by the learning needs of CWDs. While a particular presentation format could be suitable for one type of disability, it may not be relevant to the other. For ex., assessment instruments adapted for students with deafness may not be appropriate to the students with visual impairment and vice versa. The response format of the assessment instruments can be modified in various ways. They are often made on the stimulus and distractors of MCQ items and the language load and complexity without compromising the item intent.

The presentation accommodations provided to CWDs in NEA are given in Table 1.

Table 1: Presentation Accommodations Provided to CWDs in NEA

	Children with Deafness	Children with visual impairment	Children with other disabilities
1	<p>Task adaptations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use nouns instead of pronouns • Use synonyms • Familiar font (comic Sans MS) • Use minimum 2.0 line spacing • Use colours and enlarge the images/graphics • Use close brackets for numbering the items and distractors • Avoid unnecessary lines between the items • Remove item ID • Reduce the number of distractors from 4 to 2 • Provide clues in the closed text • Simplify the language of the test items and stimulus of the MCQ • Maintain gender neutrality • Provide bubbles instead of ticking in the contextual questionnaire • The order of responses to be kept close to the order of premises in matching • Maintain a minimum font size of 14 • Read questions by invigilators/ teachers if required • Bold and highlight key words • Increase the space for writing CRT response 	<p>Task adaptations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use nouns instead of pronouns • Use synonyms • Familiar font (comic Sans MS) • Use minimum 2.0 line spacing • Use colours and enlarge the images/graphics • Use close brackets for numbering the items and distractors • Avoid unnecessary lines between the items • Remove item ID • Reduce the number of distractors from 4 to 2 • Provide clues in the closed text • Simplify the language of the test items and stimulus of the MCQ • Maintain gender neutrality • Provide bubbles instead of ticking in the contextual questionnaire • The order of responses to be kept close to the order of premises in matching • Maintain a minimum font size of 14 • Read questions by invigilators/ teachers if required • Bold and highlight key words • Increase the space for writing CRT response 	<p>Task adaptations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use nouns instead of pronouns • Use synonyms • Familiar font (comic Sans MS) • Use minimum 2.0 line spacing • Use colours and enlarge the images/graphics • Use close brackets for numbering the items and distractors • Avoid unnecessary lines between the items • Remove item ID • Reduce the number of distractors from 4 to 2 • Provide clues in the closed text • Simplify the language of the test items and stimulus of the MCQ • Maintain gender neutrality • Provide bubbles instead of ticking in the contextual questionnaire • The order of responses to be kept close to the order of premises in matching • Maintain a minimum font size of 14 • Read questions by invigilators/ teachers if required • Bold and highlight key words • Increase the space for writing CRT response

2	Hearing-aid	Hearing-aid	Hearing-aid
3	Magnifying devices	Magnifying devices	Magnifying devices
4	Amanuensis/human reader/ scribe	Amanuensis/human reader/ scribe	Amanuensis/human reader/ scribe
5	Sign language interpreter to interpret item and text	Large paper size (A3)	
6	Read aloud for hard of hearing students	Braille/dark or raised lines/ tactile aid	

2.1.1 Test Accessibility and Modification Inventory (TAMI)

Test Accessibility and Modification Inventory is an evaluation tool that provides practical guidance to facilitate the adaptation of items through the analysis of items to ensure optimal access of CWDs. The TAMI Rating Descriptions are as given in Table 2.

Table 2: TAMI Rating Descriptions for CWDs in NEA

Level	Description	Heuristic
4	Maximally accessible for almost all CWDs	Optimal accessibility for between 95-99% of sampled CWDs
3	Maximally accessible for most CWDs	Optimal accessibility for between 90-95% of sampled CWDs
2	Maximally accessible for some CWDs	Optimal accessibility for between 85-90% of sampled CWDs
1	Inaccessible for many CWDs	Optimal accessibility for fewer than 85% of sampled CWDs

Table 3 shows the TAMI Rating Matrix with a scale ranging from 1 - 4 (4 being the highest and 1 the lowest).

Table 3: TAMI Rating Matrix for CWDs in NEA

	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
Passage/ Item stimulus	Contains many words that are not essential for responding to the item(s).	Contains some words that are not essential for responding to the item(s).	Contains a few words that are not essential for responding to the item(s).	Contains only words that are essential for responding to the item(s).
	The majority of text is likely to be difficult to understand for some CWDs.	A large portion of text is likely to be difficult to understand for CWDs.	Some text is likely to be difficult to understand for CWDs.	Text is minimal in length and written as clearly as possible.
	Vocabulary and sentence structure are not grade appropriate.	Vocabulary and sentence structure are mostly grade appropriate.	Vocabulary and sentence structure are mostly grade appropriate.	Vocabulary and sentence structure are grade appropriate.
	Directions/pre-reading text highly complex, very confusing.	Directions/pre-reading text overly complex, confusing.	Directions or pre-reading text not as clear as possible.	Directions/pre-reading text clear with minimal length.

Item Stem	Pronouns are used instead of nouns	Some pronouns are used instead of nouns	Most pronouns are used instead of nouns	Nouns are used instead of pronouns where ever necessary.
	The entirety of the stem is overly complex.	Much of the stem language is overly complex.	Contains some text that could be simplified.	Text is minimal in length and written as clearly as possible.
	Does not reflect intended content learning outcome(s).	Reflects intended content learning outcome(s).	Reflects intended content learning outcome(s).	Reflects intended content learning outcome(s).
	Stem directive or question is very confusing.	Stem directive or question is somewhat confusing.	Target construct is evident.	Target construct is evident.
	Uses 'not or except'.	Uses 'not or except'.	Positively worded.	Positively worded.
	Written in the passive voice.	Written in the active voice.	Written in the active voice.	Uses active voice.
Visuals (applies only to items with pictures, charts, tables, or figures)	Visuals are irrelevant, unnecessary, and may cue the CWDs to an incorrect response.	Visuals are irrelevant and unnecessary, possibly distracting some CWDs from attending to essential item content.	Visual(s) are quite relevant for responding to the item.	Necessary and relevant visual are included for responding correctly.
	Visuals contain a large amount of extraneous complexity and text that may distract CWDs.	Visual(s) contain some extraneous complexity and text that may distract some CWDs.	Visual(s) contain some extraneous complexity and text that may distract few CWDs.	Visual(s) and texts are simple and relevant that may keep CWDs focused on the assessment.
	Pictures and visual items are without colours.	Some pictures and visual items are in colours	Most pictures and visual items are in colours	All the pictures and visual items are in colours
Answer Choices (applies only to MCQs)	Contains many nonessential words.	Contains some nonessential words.	Contains one or more nonessential words.	Does not contain nonessential words.
	Answer choices are overly complex.	Answer choices complex.	Answer choices are written plainly.	Answer choices are minimal in length, written as clearly as possible.
	Key and distractors are unbalanced with regard to order, length, or content in a manner that is likely to cue CWDs to an incorrect response.	Key and distractors are unbalanced with regard to order, length, or content in a manner that may cue a response.	Key and distractors are unbalanced with regard to length, order, or content.	Key and distractors are balanced with regard to length, order, and content.
	One or more distractors is implausible.	Few distractors are implausible.	Many distractors are plausible.	All distractors are plausible.
	More than one answer choice may be correct.	Only one answer is correct.	Only one answer is correct.	Only one answer is correct.
Contains more than four distractors.	Contains four distractors.	Contains four distractors.	Contains two distractors.	

Page/Item layout	Almost all the items are spread across multiple pages requiring to flip while responding.	Most of the items are spread across the pages.	Some items are presented in one page while others are spread across the pages.	Entire item and all necessary information for responding is presented on one page, with visuals integrated with the item stem.
	Page and/or item layout appears very cluttered and confusing; font sizes are too small.	Page and/or item layout appears cluttered.	Page/item layout appears mostly clean and uncluttered, but not as well-organized as possible.	Page/item layout is well-organized and presented in a manner that facilitates responding.
	Space between lines are cluttered and not reader friendly.	Space between lines are somewhat cluttered.	Space between lines are mostly sufficient for facilitating access to necessary item elements.	Line spacing of minimum 2.0 is maintained to facilitate comprehension of necessary item elements.
	Text and item elements are very small and not readable.	Text and item elements are quite readable.	Text and item elements are readable.	Text and item elements are large and readable with a minimum of letter size 14.
	Fonts used are not familiar.	Some fonts used are familiar.	Most fonts used are familiar.	Font used is familiar (Comic Sans MS/DDC Uchen).
	Item numbers do not have close brackets.	Some of the items numbers have close brackets.	Many of the items numbers have close brackets.	All the items numbers have close brackets.

2.1.2 Sample English Reading Literacy Item

Regular Item

MOUNT EVEREST



Mount Everest is the highest mountain in the world. It is in Nepal. It is 8848 meters tall. In 1953, Edmund Hillary and Tenzing Norgay Sherpa were the first people to climb Everest. As one climbs higher, the air becomes thinner. So, climbers find it difficult to breathe. Even plants and animals do not survive there. Every year lots of people from across the world try to climb the mountain but only a few reach the top.

People find it difficult to breathe when climbing Mountain Everest because

- A reaching the top is difficult.
- B there is less air.
- C only Nepalese are allowed to climb Mount Everest.
- D the air is made dirty by people.

Adaptations made:

- Mount Everest changed to Mountain Everest
- Thinner air changed to lesser air
- Removed Edmund Hillary
- Image without colour changed to image with colour
- Number of distractors reduced from 4 to 2
- Line spacing increased from 1.0 to 2.0
- Font style changed from Times New Roman to Comic Sans MS
- Item ID removed
- Numbering of distractors changed from A to A)

Adapted Item

MOUNTAIN EVEREST



Mountain Everest is the highest mountain in the world. It is in Nepal. It is 8848 meters tall. In 1953, Tenzing Norgay Sherpa was the first people to climb Everest. As one climbs higher, the air becomes less-er. So, climbers find it difficult to breathe. Even plants and animals do not survive there. Every year lots of people from across the world try to climb the mountain but only a few reach the top.

People find it difficult to breathe when climbing Mountain Everest because

- A) there is less air.
- B) the air is made dirty by people.

2.1.3 Sample Dzongkha Reading Literacy Item

Regular Item

བྱ་བཀྲ་ཤིས།

༣ བཀྲ་ཤིས་འདི་ བམ་བཟང་པོའི་ ཨ་ལུ་ཅིག་ཡིན། ཁོ་ རྩོ་པ་ ཉ་སྐག་ལོངས་ཞིན་མ་ལས་ ཁ་ལག་
འཕུ་སྟེ་ མཚོན་པ་སྟེ། བསང་བཏང་། ཐུན་ འཇམ་དབྱངས་གསོལ་འདེབས་གཏང་མ་ཡིན།

ཐུན་བཏང་ཚར་ཕ་ཅིག་ དཔེ་ཆ་ལྟ་བུ་ཡིན། དེ་ལས་ ཁོ་གིས་ སློབ་གྲྭ་ནང་ ཏུས་ཚོན་ཁར་ གིག་གི་སྤྲོ་སོང་
ཞིན་མ་ལས་ སློབ་གྲྭའི་ལས་རིམ་ཚུ་ནང་ལུ་ཡང་ སློབ་བསྐྱེད་མི་ཅིག་ཡིན།



ལོག་ཁྱིམ་ནང་སློན་པ་ཅིག་ བཤའ་མ་འགྱོ་བར་ཁྱིམ་ལུ་ཚུ་འབད་འོང་། མ་ཤེས་པ་ཅིན་ ཕོ་ཁྱེན་མ་ལུ་ རྩིས་ཏེ་
ལྟ་བུ་ཡིན་པས། ཕོ་ཁྱེན་མ་འདི་ སློབ་རིམ་ ༥ པ་ནང་ ལྟ་བུ་མི་ཅིག་ཡིན་པས། ཁོ་གིས་ བམ་དང་ཁྱེན་ཤོས་
ཚུ་ལུ་ གུས་ཞབས་འབད་མ་ཡིན།

ལན་གདམ་ཁ་ཅན་གྱི་རྩི་བའི་དཔེ།

བཀྲ་ཤིས་འདི་ དཔེ་ཆ་ མ་ཤེས་པའི་སྐབས་ལུ་

- ༡ བམ་ལུ་རྩིས་ཡིན་མས།
- ཁ ཕོ་ཁྱེན་མ་ལུ་རྩིས་ཡིན་མས།
- ག ཤེས་མི་ཚུ་ལུ་རྩིས་ཡིན་མས།
- ང ཆ་རོགས་ཚུ་ལུ་རྩིས་ཡིན་མས།

ལན་སྤྱད་གྱི་རྩི་བའི་དཔེ།

ལཱ་ལོག་པ་ འབད་བ་ཅིན་ རང་ལུ་ གཞོན་པ་ ག་ཅི་རང་ཡོད་གོ?

དབང་པོ་སྐྱོན་ཅན་ཚུ་གི་དོན་ལུ་ མཐུན་འགྱུར་བཟོ་ཡོད་པའི་ རྫོང་ཁའི་འབྲི་ལྷན་གྱི་ཤེས་ཡོན་གྱི་ དྲི་
ཤོག།

- ✓ ལན་གདམ་ཁ་ཅན་གྱི་དྲི་བ་ཚུ་ནང་ལུ་ ཡེངས་བྱེད་ ༤ རེ་ཡོད་ས་ལས་ ༡ ལུ་མར་ཕབ་
འབད་ཡི།
- ✓ མིང་ཚབ་ཚུ་གི་ཚབ་ལུ་ དངོས་མིང་ཚུ་ ལག་ལེན་འབབ་ཡོད་པ།
- ✓ ཡིག་ཐུག་བར་གྱི་ས་སྤོང་(Point 2) ལུ་བསྐྱར་བཅོས་འབད་ཡི།
- ✓ པར་གྱི་རིགས་ཚུ་ སྤོམ་བཟོ་ཐོག་ལས་ ཚོས་གཞི་ཡོད་པ་སྤེ་ བཟོ་ཡོད་པ་ཨིན།
- ✓ ཡིག་ཐུག་མ་ག་ར་ནང་གི་ གལ་ཅན་གྱི་མིང་ཚོག་ཚུ་ གནག་ཐུག་ (Bold) རན་འགྱུར་
བཅོས་འབད་ཡི།
- ✓ སྤོབ་ལྷན་ཚུ་ མགོ་མི་འཐོམ་ནིའི་དོན་ལུ་ དྲི་བའི་དབྱེ་ཨང་ཚུ་ མེད་པ་སྤེ་བཞག་ཡོད།
- ✓ ཡེངས་བྱེད་ ཀ་རྟགས་གྱི་མཐའ་མར་ལུ་ གྲག་ཤད་བྱེད་ཀ་བཀོད་ཡོད་པ་ཨིན།

Adapted Item

བྱ་བུ་གི་ཤེས།

༣ བུ་གྲ་གིས་འདི་ ཕམ་བཟང་པོའི་ ཨ་ལོ་ཅིག་ཨིན། བུ་གྲ་གིས་ རྫོ་པ་ ཉ་སུག་ལོངས་ཞིན་མ་ལས་ ཁ་
ལག་འབྲུ་སྤྱི་ མཚོད་པ་སྤུལ། བསང་བཏང་། ཐུན་ འཇམ་དབྱེད་ས་གསོལ་འདེབས་གཏང་མ་ཨིན།



ཐུན་བཏང་ཚེས་ཅིག་ དཔེ་ཆ་ལྟ་བུ་ཡིན། དེ་ལས་ བཟང་གིས་གིས་ གློ་བ་གྲུ་ནང་ ཏུས་ཚོད་ཁར་ གིག་གི་སྡེ་
སོང་ཞིན་མ་ལས་ གློ་བ་གྲུ་འི་ལས་རིམ་ཚུ་ནང་ལུ་ཡང་ གློ་བ་བསྐྱེད་མི་ཅིག་ཡིན།

ལན་གདམ་ཁ་ཅན་གྱི་དྲི་བའི་དཔེ།

བཟང་གིས་འདི་ དཔེ་ཆ་ མ་ཤེས་པའི་སྐབས་ལུ་

- ཀ) རོ་རྒྱན་མ་ལུ་དྲིམ་ཡིན་མས།
- ཁ) ཤེས་མི་ཚུ་ལུ་དྲིམ་ཡིན་མས།

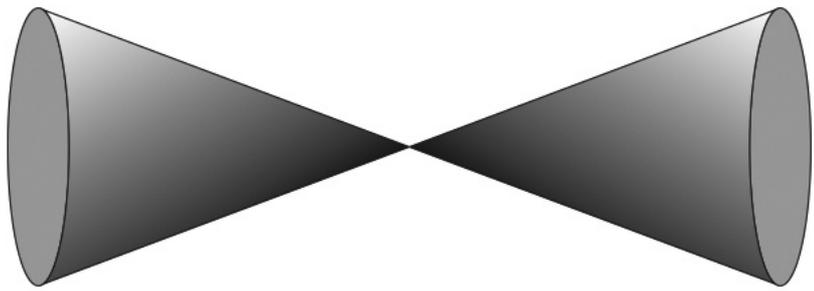
ལན་ཐུང་གི་དྲི་བའི་དཔེ།

ལཱ་བློན་ལ་ འབད་བ་ཅིན་ རང་ལུ་ གཞོན་པ་ ག་ཅི་རང་ཡོད་གོ་?

2.1.4 Sample Mathematical Literacy Item

Regular Item

Karma makes a toy by joining two shapes, as shown below.



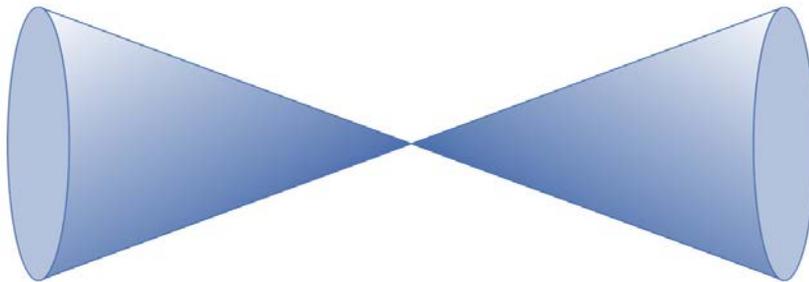
- What shape did he use?
- A cube
 - B cone
 - C triangular prism
 - D triangular pyramid

Adaptations made:

- Image without colour changed to image with colour
- Number of distractors reduced from 4 to 2
- Line spacing increased from 1.0 to 2.0
- Font style changed from Times New Roman to Comic Sans MS
- Item ID removed
- Numbering of distractors changed from A to A)

Adapted Item

Karma makes a toy by joining two shapes, as shown below.



What shape did Karma use?

- A) cone
- B) triangular prism

2.1.5 Sample Student Questionnaire Item

Regular Item

Every day I -

(Fill one circle for each line.)

	Never	Sometimes	Many times	Always
a.	I get to use clean toilets			
b.	the campus is clean			

Adapted Item

In my school –

(Fill one circle for each line.)

		Never	Sometimes	Many times	Always
a.	I get to use clean toilets (Not applicable for MIK students)	<input type="radio"/> ₁	<input type="radio"/> ₂	<input type="radio"/> ₃	<input type="radio"/> ₄
b.	the campus is clean (Not applicable for MIK students)	<input type="radio"/> ₁	<input type="radio"/> ₂	<input type="radio"/> ₃	<input type="radio"/> ₄

2.2 Response Accommodations

Response accommodation can be defined as providing considerations to CWDs based on their needs to respond to the assessment items through the use of relevant response modes to demonstrate their learning competencies.

Since NEA is a pencil-and-paper based assessment (English/Dzongkha script), taking into account the diverse needs of CWDs, it could limit their ability to respond to the best of their knowledge which might result in their actual learning abilities and competencies being misconstrued. Therefore, they may need other relevant response modes (sign language or braille or oral) in the assessment. The response accommodations provided for CWDs are shown in Table 4.

Table 4: Response Accommodations for CWDs in NEA

	Response Accommodations
1	Calculator
2	Sign language interpreter
3	Scribe to transcribe their responses
4	Amanuensis/human reader
5	Reinforcement for task completion
6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mechanical pencils/pencil or pen with grips/pen or pencil with rubber • Nonabrasive erasers • Pencils, markers, or crayons of different diameters, pencils with softer lead, and softer crayons • High-contrast writing tools, such as markers and felt-tipped pens
7	Gridded paper
8	Braille
9	Tactile material

2.3 Scheduling Accommodations

Timing and scheduling accommodations refer to the change in time allocation, scheduling, and time management to complete the assessment by CWDs within the specified time frame (25% additional time allowance as established in NEAF). This will give students the time and the breaks they need to address issues related to effort, rate of performance, attention, and the ability to monitor and manage time during the assessment. The list of scheduling accommodations provided in the NEA are as given in Table 5.

Table 5: Scheduling Accommodations for CWDs in NEA

	Scheduling Accommodations
1	Time extension
2	Multiple or frequent breaks
3	Change Schedule (time of the day when the student is most likely to demonstrate peak performance)
4	Change testing schedule or order of subtests
5	Separating assessment tasks (contextual questionnaire)

2.4 Setting Accommodations

Setting accommodations refer to the arrangement of location or the assessment conditions to address the accessibility issues, behavior management, and problems with organization of space and materials. Such accommodations can benefit students who are easily distracted in large group settings and who concentrate best in a small group or individual setting. Setting accommodations provided in NEA include the list shown in Table 6.

Table 6: Setting Accommodations for CWDs in NEA

	Setting accommodations
1	Spacious and well ventilated assessment rooms with appropriate room temperature
2	Comfortable chair and tables
3	Reduced glare or avoid direct light
4	Task lamp (specialized lighting)
5	Acoustical treatments (quiet background)
6	Separate assessment room/individual setting
7	Attach proctor/class teacher
8	Seating arrangement to be done in front of the classroom/near assessor's desk
9	Assessment room to be arranged in the ground floor and near the toilet
10	Intercom/wall clock to remind time

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