

MTB Special Needs Policy

MTB Exams recognise that candidates with special needs may require additional support to enable them to complete the requirements of a practical examination. Teachers marking examinations taken by candidates with special needs should send a note with the mark sheets they submit detailing the candidate's special needs, providing supporting documentation where possible [such as an educational psychologist or specialist teacher report, letter from the relevant SENCO (Special Educational Needs Coordinator), or a letter from the LEA (Local Education Authority) or a head teacher]. They should also detail the provision they have made to facilitate the pupil taking the examination.

Because each case is different, MTB Exams will treat each entry from candidates with special needs individually and teachers should feel free to contact MTB Exams to discuss the requirements of the candidate and the measures they intend to put in place to ensure the candidate is treated fairly. Examples of such measures may be to provide larger musical notation, the use of colour tints or paper, giving pupils plenty of time between elements of the examination, providing suitable seating arrangements, ensuring pupils who are deaf or have hearing impairments can see the accompanist and are given a visual as well as aural indication of the pulse in the reading skills tests and are able to clearly see their duet partner in ensemble tests. For pupils with learning difficulties such as dyslexia, allowing a second or third attempt to play scales if they become confused, making sure the teacher/examiner takes extra care to state very clearly which scale or element of the examination they are asking for, allowing extra time for pupils to process the instructions and therefore making allowances for how promptly the candidate responds.

For pupils with physical disabilities, ensuring they do not expect the inclusion of pedaling if not physically possible or making allowances for unconventional posture and fingerings. Providing suitable notation and provision for blind or partially sighted pupils. For pupils with disorders such as ASD (autistic spectrum disorders) providing extra time between the elements of an exam, speaking clearly and slowly to help the pupil understand what is being requested, ensuring they are made to feel relaxed and encouraged, minimising the stress of the examination situation where possible. Candidates may be accompanied into the examination if they require the supervision or assistance of a carer to help with mobility or equipment for example.

There are of course many other suitable ways to accommodate pupils with various special needs and these are to be encouraged as long as they are clearly stated on the accompanying note and/or by contacting MTB before the examination. Finally, teacher/examiners should bear in mind their knowledge of the candidate's special needs taking a sympathetic approach to this when marking the examination.