



Voice-to-Text Tools for Secondary School Students (including access arrangements)

The following voice to text tools may be used to support secondary school students who experience barriers to writing. Some are JCQ compliant and suitable for those with Access Arrangements for GCSE and A-Level exams. It is recommended that schools check their current approved list of tools with their exam provider.

Tools by Texthelp:

Read&Write

- JCQ-compliant for use as a computer reader and dictation tool
- Includes Talk&Type for speech-to-text dictation
- Has an exam mode that restricts features to meet exam regulations
- Works with PDFs and paper-based exams
- Requires advance approval via Access Arrangements Online
- Widely used in UK schools

Orbitnote

- For students using Chromebooks
- Dictation features can be used in line with JCQ access arrangements

ClaroRead

- Supports reading and writing
- Includes dictation features

Dragon NaturallySpeaking

- Voice recognition software
- Works offline and therefore no internet required
- Suitable for students with SEND and motor skill difficulties
- Requires familiarisation training but effectiveness improves over time
- Must be purchased and installed separately

Crick Software DocsPlus

- Comprehensive writing support tool designed to support students in their normal way of working, including during assessments
- Can be used as a computer reader, scribe and word processor and is JCQ compliant
- Text to speech features
- No internet required



Everway ExamWritePad

- Secure writing platform designed specifically for exams and controlled assessments
- Responses are dictated directly into the software
- JCQ compliant software

Microsoft Dictate / Windows Speech Recognition

- Built into Windows and Microsoft 365 apps (Word, Outlook, OneNote)
- Free and easy to use
- Good accuracy rate and minimal setup required
- Windows Dictation (Win + H) is user-friendly but requires internet access

Google Docs Voice Typing

- Free and accessible via Chrome browser
- Ideal for Chromebook users
- Easy to use with Google Workspace for Education
- Not suitable for exams as requires internet access

Apple Dictation / Siri

- Built into iPads, iPhones, and Macs
- Free and simple to enable
- Works well with Notes, Pages, and Mail
- Some are not suitable for exams as internet access required

Alternative to Human Readers

C-Pen Exam Reader 2

- JCQ compliant offline device that reads printed text aloud
- No internet or computer required
- Cannot store or load unauthorised content
- Ideal for reading exam questions aloud without assistance
- Helps students stay in the same room as peers during exams – use headphones/earbuds

Key JCQ Guidelines

- Speech recognition tools can be used if they reflect the student's normal way of working.
- Schools must provide evidence of need and ensure tools are used appropriately.
- Software that relies on an internet connection is not suitable for exams.
- A document (forms 8 or 9) needs to be completed and signed by the SENCO to confirm the arrangement via Access Arrangements Online.