



Qualifications and
Curriculum Authority

Oral language modifiers

Scoping the demand – initial questionnaire analysis

Research and evaluation team

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Executive summary

The Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) removed the provision of oral language modifiers (OLMs, formerly called oral communicators) for deaf candidates from its regulations in 2004. The regulatory authorities take the view that OLMs are a reasonable adjustment in public examinations. Currently, a set of projects is underway to investigate the implications of allowing OLMs as a reasonable adjustment for students with certain types of language comprehension difficulty, and thereby to facilitate the drafting of clear JCQ regulations for OLM use in 2008 examinations. One part of this research has been a questionnaire to investigate the scope of demand for OLMs. This document reports findings from that questionnaire survey.

The questionnaire was sent to a representative sample of centres in England. From that sample, 149 centres returned the questionnaire. This amounts to approximately 2 per cent of all schools in the country. As such, the findings summarised below are indicative only. Further, the proportion of special schools in the responding sample is slightly higher than the proportion of special schools nationally. However, since such schools are likely to have valuable insights about the use of OLMs, this over-representation should not reduce the validity of conclusions unduly.

The percentages of responding centres that reported having at least one student with a specific type of disability were as follows:

- deaf : 56 per cent
- dyslexic: 73 per cent
- aphasic: 13 per cent
- other comprehension disabilities¹: 39 per cent.

The number of students with the particular disability in each centre that reported as having at least one such student varied considerably. In general, there tended to be few students with either deafness or aphasia in any one centre. In contrast, there could be more students with dyslexia in any one centre.

¹ The likely demand for OLMs for this group of disabled learners is still unclear. While some teachers did report on demand from people with speech and language difficulties (9.4 per cent of respondents said they had at least one candidate with this), the way in which the questionnaire was phrased may have led other centres not to predict this type of demand. It was also noted that the self-reporting of 'other comprehension disabilities' may have led to under-reporting of the demand for OLMs from candidates with other disabilities (for a list of these please see Annex 3).

Eighty one of the respondents' centres offered GCSEs. Of these centres:

- fifty three (65 per cent) said they had at least one deaf candidate
- seventy one (88 per cent) said they had at least one dyslexic candidate
- thirteen (16 per cent) said they had at least one aphasic candidate
- thirty nine (48 per cent) said they had at least one candidate with an 'other' disability.

The number of students in each centre that would need an OLM tended to be small (less than ten), although the maximum number in one centre was 100 students.

The percentage of centres **both** having candidates with a particular disability **and** offering GCSE that believed they would request an OLM for a specific examination subject ranged between 27 per cent and 69 per cent. However, in general, this percentage tended to be less than 50 per cent.

Thirty five of the respondents' centres offered GCEs. Of these centres:

- twenty one (60 per cent) said they had at least one deaf candidate
- thirty two (91 per cent) said they had at least one dyslexic candidate
- four (11 per cent) said they had at least one aphasic candidate
- seventeen (49 per cent) said they had at least one candidate with an 'other' disability.

The number of centres which would request an OLM for their GCE candidates was much less than with GCSEs. The number of candidates in each centre was also on the whole less than seen with GCSEs.

The relative lack of reported demand for OLMs for GCE candidates is confirmed by the percentages for specific subjects and disabilities. Most percentages were less than 30 per cent.

The main body of this document concludes by reporting trends from the free-text responses to the last item of the questionnaire. The small number of responses involved and the general lack of strong trends means that strong interpretations should not be made on the basis of these qualitative responses.

The free-text responses seemed to suggest that respondents had varying degrees of experience of OLMs. Some appeared to be well-versed in their use, others appeared unsure of the difference between OLMs and readers in examinations.

Respondents spoke out in favour of the use of OLMs. Some such respondents were strongly in favour of OLM use, others' support was milder.

There were also text responses that conveyed reservations about the use of OLMs. A few such reservations were about the fundamental fairness of OLM use in examinations. However, others concerned the practicality of OLM use (for instance the difficulty of providing separate exam rooms) or were really positive statements supporting the respondents' current arrangements.

The role of oral language modifiers for general qualifications

JCQ removed the provision of OLMs for deaf candidates from its regulations in 2004. This was partly because the provision was available only to a particular group of candidates and not to all with potential language comprehension difficulties, and partly because of concerns about the rigour of the arrangements that could be exacerbated by extending their use.

The regulatory authorities' position is that OLMs are a reasonable adjustment. Regulators have not seen sufficient evidence to suggest that OLMs would be required for a much wider cohort of disabled candidates.

All parties have agreed to a pilot that will test the validity of these assumptions, the outcome being to include clear regulations and guidance for the use of OLMs in JCQ regulations for 2008 examinations.

To test these assumptions and concerns and to feed into the 2008 JCQ regulations, the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) undertook a study of the OLM pilot which took place in the summer 2007 examination session.

This questionnaire is one aspect of the above project.

Oral language modifiers scoping questionnaire

This questionnaire was developed to help the Oral Language Modifiers Project Group to anticipate the potential demand for OLMs in centres, in terms of candidate numbers, location and type of centre, for deaf candidates and for candidates with a variety of other disabilities which may affect their reading comprehension.

The sample

Between 16 May and 12 June 2007, 500 questionnaires were sent to a representative sample of centres across England. The sample was selected from a database of all centres in England (Edubase). The sample was proportionally representative of centre type and location.

For more information about this sample please see Annex 1.

One hundred and forty nine centres responded to the questionnaire, a response rate of 29.8 per cent.

The following analysis is based on the returned questionnaires.

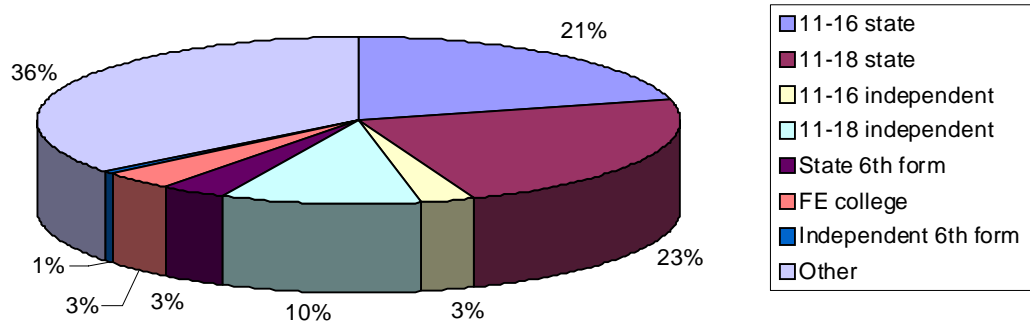
It is important to note when reading this analysis that the findings can only be considered indicative of possible demand for OLMs.

The sample was taken from a list of 7,293 centres (based on inclusions and exclusions outlined in Annex 1) and a response rate of 149, therefore, is a mere 2 per cent of this total. This should be kept in mind when drawing any conclusions.

Respondent centres

Type of school or college

The most common type of centre responding to this questionnaire was 11–16 and 11–18 state schools.



Of the 36 per cent (53 respondents) of centres who specified 'other', the majority said they were a special school or a pupil referral unit.

Of the 149 respondents, 29 per cent (43 respondents) said that their centre was a special school/centre for disabled learners or had a resourced unit for disabled learners. These special schools ranged from being for students with emotional and behavioural disorders, to those with severe learning difficulties, to hearing and language centres embedded in mainstream schools.

A list of centre descriptions can be found in Annex 2.

As a result of the self-selecting nature of the respondents, the percentage of special schools is over-represented in this analysis (a representative sample would include approximately 20 per cent of special schools including community special, non-maintained special, other independent special and foundation special schools). This should be kept in mind when reading this analysis. However, these centre types are most likely to require OLMs for their students, and can therefore provide valuable insights about the use and potential demand for OLMs.

Numbers of disabled candidates

Deaf

Slightly more than half of the responding centres (84 or 56 per cent) said that they had at least one deaf student. The vast majority of these centres were ones that said they were **not** special schools.

Numbers of deaf students varied. If centres did have deaf or hearing-impaired candidates, they were most likely to have either one or two students in the centre. Centres rarely had more than six candidates.

Dyslexic

One hundred and eight centres (73 per cent) said that they had at least one candidate with dyslexia in their centre. Again, the majority of centres were not special schools. As with deaf candidates, the number of dyslexic candidates varied but centres were more likely to report much higher numbers of dyslexic candidates (anything from one to 300).

Aphasic

Compared to the number of centres who reported having deaf or dyslexic students (both special and non-special schools), the number that reported having aphasic students was much lower, with a total of only 19 (13 per cent) saying they have aphasic students.

Where it was reported, the numbers of students in a centre ranged between anything from one to 45.

Other comprehension disabilities

Fifty eight centres (39 per cent) reported having students with 'other' comprehension disabilities. The most common disability reported by centres was autistic spectrum disorder, and again the number of candidates ranged from one to 150. A full list of reported 'other' comprehension disabilities can be found in Annex 3.

Grouped number of candidates in centres	Number of centres with the corresponding grouped number of candidates		
	Deaf	Dyslexia	Aphasia
None	65	41	130
One	17	2	3
Between 2 and 9	60	37	11
Between 10 and 19	6	19	3
Between 20 and 49	1	33	2
Between 50 and 100		13	
More than 100		4	
Total	149	149	149

The table confirms the information in the text commentary above. That is, where there are deaf/hearing-impaired and aphasic students in centres, there are relatively few in each centre. In contrast, the distribution of students with dyslexia in centres is more extended. For example, there are 50 centres with 20 or more dyslexic students. There are only one and two centres with 20 or more deaf or aphasic students, respectively.

Scoping the demand for oral language modifiers

We asked respondents to tell us how many candidates could, on the basis of their disability, request an OLC in their examinations. The five subjects listed for each qualification type were those with the highest candidate entry in 2006.

General Certificates of Secondary Education (GCSEs)

Eighty one (54 per cent) of the respondent centres said they offered GCSEs, 24 (16 per cent) said they did not offer GCSEs, and 43 (29 per cent) gave no response.

Of these centres:

- fifty three (65 per cent) said they had at least one deaf candidate
- seventy one (88 per cent) said they had at least one dyslexic candidate
- thirteen (16 per cent) said they had at least one aphasic candidate
- thirty nine (48 per cent) said they had at least one candidate with an 'other' disability.

In the majority of cases, OLMs would be requested for either one or two students, rarely (apart from with dyslexic candidates) more than 10. In the minority of cases where centres said multiple candidates would require an OLM, the number of candidates ranged from 11 to 100 candidates.

Double award science

Deaf: 24 centres (45 per cent of the centres that had at least one deaf candidate and offered GCSEs) said they would request an OLM for at least one of their students for this examination.

Dyslexic: 34 centres (48 per cent of the centres that had at least one dyslexic student and offered GCSEs) said they would request an OLM for at least one of their students.

Aphasic: seven centres (54 per cent of the centres that had at least one aphasic student and offered GCSEs) said they would request an OLM for at least one of their students.

Other: 22 centres (56 per cent of the centres that had at least one student with 'other' disabilities and offered GCSEs) said they would request an OLM for at least one of their students.

Mathematics

Deaf: 27 centres (51 per cent of the centres that had at least one deaf candidate and offered GCSEs) said they would request an OLM for at least one of their students for this examination.

Dyslexic: 43 centres (61 per cent of the centres that had at least one dyslexic student and offered GCSEs) said they would request an OLM for at least one of their students.

Aphasic: eight centres (69 per cent of the centres that had at least one aphasic student and offered GCSEs) said they would request an OLM for at least one of their students.

Other: 26 centres (67 per cent of the centres that had at least one student with 'other' disabilities and offered GCSEs) said they would request an OLM for at least one of their students.

History

Deaf: 17 centres (33 per cent of the centres that had at least one deaf candidate and offered GCSEs) said they would request an OLM for at least one of their students for this examination.

Dyslexic: 30 centres (42 per cent of the centres that had at least one dyslexic student and offered GCSEs) said they would request an OLM for at least one of their students.

Aphasic: six centres (46 per cent of the centres that had at least one aphasic student and offered GCSEs) said they would request an OLM for at least one of their students.

Other: 17 centres (44 per cent of the centres that had at least one student with 'other' disabilities and offered GCSEs) said they would request an OLM for at least one of their students.

Geography

Deaf: 14 centres (27 per cent of the centres that had at least one deaf candidate and offered GCSEs) said they would request an OLM for at least one of their students for this examination.

Dyslexic: 30 centres (42 per cent of the centres that had at least one dyslexic student and offered GCSEs) said they would request an OLM for at least one of their students.

Aphasic: six centres (46 per cent of the centres that had at least one aphasic student and offered GCSEs) said they would request an OLM for at least one of their students.

Other: 16 centres (41 per cent of the centres that had at least one student with 'other' disabilities and offered GCSEs) said they would request an OLM for at least one of their students.

Religious studies

Deaf: 17 centres (33 per cent of the centres that had at least one deaf candidate and offered GCSEs) said they would request an OLM for at least one of their students for this examination.

Dyslexic: 32 centres (45 per cent of the centres that had at least one dyslexic student and offered GCSEs) said they would request an OLM for at least one of their students.

Aphasic: seven centres (54 per cent of the centres that had at least one aphasic student and offered GCSEs) said they would request an OLM for at least one of their students.

Other: 20 centres (51 per cent of the centres that had at least one student with 'other' disabilities and offered GCSEs) said they would request an OLM for at least one of their students.

Thus, the percentage of centres that had students with a particular comprehension disability and offered GCSEs that said they would request an OLM ranged from 27 per cent having one or more deaf student (14 centres – geography) to 67 per cent with other comprehension disabilities (26 centres – mathematics).

In general, less than half of those centres which both had students with the particular type of disability and who offered GCSEs thought that they would request an OLM.

General Certificate of Education (GCE)

Thirty five (23 per cent) of the respondent centres said they offered GCEs, 68 (46 per cent) said they did not offer them, and 46 (31 per cent) gave no response to the question.

Of these centres:

- twenty one (60 per cent) said they had at least one deaf candidate
- thirty two (91 per cent) said they had at least one dyslexic candidate
- four (11 per cent) said they had at least one aphasic candidate
- seventeen (49 per cent) said they had at least one candidate with an 'other' disability.

The number of centres saying they would request an OLM for their candidates was much less than with GCSEs. The number of candidates in each centre was also on the whole less than seen with GCSEs.

General studies

Deaf: five centres (24 per cent of the centres that had at least one deaf candidate and offered GCEs) said they would request an OLM for at least one of their students for this examination.

Dyslexic: six centres (19 per cent of the centres that had at least one dyslexic candidate and offered GCEs) said they would request an OLM for at least one of their students.

Aphasic: no respondents said they would request an OLM for their aphasic students.

Other: one centre said they would request an OLM, for a candidate with semantic pragmatic disorder.

Mathematics

Deaf: five centres (24 per cent of the centres that had at least one deaf candidate and offered GCEs) said they would request an OLM for at least one of their students for this examination.

Dyslexic: 11 centres (34 per cent of the centres that had at least one dyslexic candidate and offered GCEs) said they would request an OLM for at least one of their students.

Aphasic: only one centre who offered GCEs said they would request an OLM, for one aphasic candidate.

Psychology

Deaf: three centres (14 per cent of the centres that had at least one deaf candidate and offered GCEs) said they would request an OLM for at least one of their students for this examination.

Dyslexic: 11 centres (34 per cent of the centres that had at least one dyslexic candidate and offered GCEs) said they would request an OLM for at least one of their students.

Aphasic: only one centre who offered GCEs said they would request an OLM, for one aphasic candidate.

Biology

Deaf: four centres (19 per cent of the centres that had at least one deaf candidate and offered GCEs) said they would request an OLM for at least one of their students for this examination.

Dyslexic: ten centres (31 per cent of the centres that had at least one dyslexic candidate and offered GCEs) said they would request an OLM for at least one of their students.

Aphasic: only one centre who offered GCEs said they would request an OLM, for one aphasic candidate.

History

Deaf: three centres (14 per cent of the centres that had at least one deaf candidate and offered GCEs) said they would request an OLM for this examination.

Dyslexic: eight centres (25 per cent of the centres that had at least one dyslexic candidate and offered GCEs) said they said they would request an OLM for at least one of their students.

Aphasic: only one centre who offered GCEs said they would request an OLM, for one aphasic candidate.

The relative lack of reported demand for OLMs from centres for their GCE candidates is confirmed by the percentages for specific subjects and disabilities. Most percentages are less than 30 per cent. None of the centres offering GCE general studies **and** having aphasic students believed they would request an OLM.

Free-text responses

The last item in the questionnaire asked respondents to make additional comments on the subject. The full text of all the responses is included as Annex 4 to this report. Additionally, the following section of the report pulls out some apparently salient themes from the free-text responses.

The responses are fairly disparate, displaying quite a range of opinions and experience. When considering information from the responses, readers should not over-interpret the findings proposed below.

Disparateness of experience of oral language modifiers

Respondents to the open-response item seemed to have a very varied extent of experience of OLMs. A few respondents appeared to have detailed knowledge of their applicability. For example:

‘The college follows code of practice for communicators: Interpreters. Also the college have a code of ethics which is applied. The college complies with to part IV DDA & SENDA (Special Education Needs Discrimination Act)’

However, there appeared to be rather more respondents whose experience of OLMs was more limited. Several appeared unclear of the difference between OLMs and readers in examinations. The following are examples:

‘Our centre normally use readers because many students cannot physically read fast enough to participate in GCSE's – do these double up as OLMs?’

‘Will OLMs be able to re-phrase exam questions? It would be useful to have some examples of where an OLM would be used + how.’

Similarly, several of the respondents did not appear to distinguish between the issues surrounding the use of OLMs to support young people in class, and in the exam hall.

Comments in favour of using oral language modifiers

Several commentators were strongly in favour of the provision of OLMs for examinations. Such OLM supporters envisaged their use for several types of disability:

‘OLMs would be a massive help for Autistic & Dyslexic pupils. Sometimes scribes are not appropriate for all pupils and the length of time it takes disrupts their train of thought.’

‘OLMs are vital for many youngsters with learning difficulties. Sometimes in the role of a confidence booster. They can be fearful & suffer a feeling of inadequacy which is calmed in the presence of an adult.’

‘OLMs would also be useful for visual impaired students whose reading comprehension in large print or Braille has been delayed.’

Other comments in favour of the use of OLMs were more muted – suggesting that schools did not currently employ them, but could see their potential:

‘Arrangements for a “reader” are currently made for some dyslexic students and pupils with reading difficulty to provide support during assessment. If OLMs are allowed to rephrase/interpret a question this option could be helpful.’

‘Generally speaking – those whose reading is so far delayed (by hearing problems or whatever other reason) would not be capable of doing language based GCSEs. In [some] cases an OLM “could” be useful – subjects such as Mathematics and Art, but would be unlikely to make much difference elsewhere.’

‘I feel we do not have hearing impaired students at the present time, who would require OLMs, although this would have been a useful provision in previous years. We do however, have several students with Semantic Pragmatic Disorder, for whom this provision may be appropriate.’

‘I think they would help some students on the Autistic spectrum – we haven’t applied to use them before.’

Reservations about the use of oral language modifiers

Several comments suggested the respondents’ reservations about OLMs being available for examinations. Such reservations had varying causes. In a few cases the reservations were fundamental concerns that the provision of OLMs might undermine the integrity of qualifications. In other cases, the concern was not that the use of OLMs was unfair in itself, but rather that the provision would cause further practical problems for hard-pressed centres. A further set of reservations about OLM use was more a positive statement about centres’ current arrangements, rather than a criticism of the concept of OLMs.

Concerns about the fairness of OLM use included:

‘The dyslexics who are low ability may seem to gain an unfair advantage if questions are explained. So strict criteria will need to be devised to ensure this does not happen.’

Responses that foresaw practical difficulties with the use of OLMs included:

‘Rooming + staff to perform oral communication could cause difficulties if big numbers of students were included i.e. because of dyslexia – we would be very keen for hearing impaired students.’

‘We do have increasing difficulty finding separate rooms for such students as we have had 37 students needing such arrangements this year.’

Several responses spoke in favour of their current arrangements. In particular, these emphasised how students benefited from being acquainted with the staff who gave them appropriate support in exams.

‘We use our teaching assistants as amanuensis. It is better for our students to have staff who understand their particular, individual needs.’

‘Unless a student specifically used SSE (Sign Supported English) we would use our own ‘readers’. Students would feel more comfortable working with familiar staff.’

Annex 1: sample specifications

The sample was based on a download from Edubase on 30 April 2007.

Deleted from the sample are:

- All closed centres
- Open but proposed to be closed
- Proposed to be open
- Overseas (LA 701–708)
- Primary schools
- Nursery schools
- Middle deemed primary
- Middle deemed secondary
- Welsh establishments
- Highest age less than 16
- TOE description – overseas schools
- HEIs
- Playing for success.

From the remaining sample all types of establishments which made up **less than 1** per cent of the sample were removed:

Academies	0.80 per cent
CTCs	0.16 per cent
Foundation special	0.25 per cent
Misc	0.87 per cent
Off shore	0.56 per cent
Secure units	0.43 per cent
Sixth form colleges	0.48 per cent

It was decided that the sample would be representative of national numbers in terms of centre type and location (which for this sample is based on the proportions in the original Edubase download):

Community	32 per cent
Community special	13 per cent
Foundation	9 per cent
Further education	7 per cent
Independent schools	1 per cent
Non-maintained special	1 per cent
Other independent	16 per cent
Other independent special school	4 per cent
Pupil referral unit	6 per cent
Special college	1 per cent
Voluntarily aided	9 per cent
Voluntarily controlled	1 per cent

	Actual	Sample
East England	11.4 per cent	11.8 per cent
East Midlands	9.2 per cent	8 per cent.
London	12.4 per cent	13.4 per cent
North East	5.1 per cent	4.6 per cent
North West	14.4 per cent	14.6 per cent
South East	16.3 per cent	17.2 per cent
South West	10.6 per cent	10.2 per cent
West Midlands	10.7 per cent	10.2 per cent
Yorkshire and the Humber	9.9 per cent	9.6 per cent

Annex 2: centre description (if ‘other’)

In annexes 2, 3 and 4, question marks show where the transcriber has been unable to decipher a respondent’s handwritten comments.

Description	Number of centres reporting
10–19 independent residential school	1
11–16 community special	1
11–16 EBD residential school – special school	1
11–16 non-maintained special	1
11–16 pupil referral unit	5
11–19 community special	1
11–19 secondary special school for moderate learning difficulties and/or autistic spectrum disorders	1
11–16 independent special school	1
13–16 pupil referral unit	1
13–18 independent school	1
13–18 state foundation school	2
13–18 state school	2
14–16 pupil referral unit	3
14–18 independent school	1
15–16 (Y 11) independent pupil referral unit	1
16–18 community school	1
16–25 special visual impairment college	1
16–99 independent specialist college (FE)	1
2–19 independent nursery – 6th form	1
2–19 severe learning difficulties	1
2–19 state special school	2
3–16 independent	2
3–19 community special	3

3–19 state school	1
3–19 state special school	1
4–16 community special	1
4–18 independent school	1
4–19 state special school	1
5–16 community special	1
5–16 special needs school with 16–18 provision	1
5–18 pupil referral unit	2
5–19 special non-maintained, independent, (?)	1
8–16 special school, state	1
11–18 mixed secondary comprehensive, Catholic, voluntary aided	1
Foundation grammar	1
Independent 'alternative education'	1
Residential BESD School 10–16 years, co-ed	1
16–99 specialist designated college (SDC)	1
Special school	3
8–18 specialist music school – independent	1

Annex 3: reported other comprehension disabilities

Comprehension disability	Number of centres reporting
Autistic spectrum disorders (ASD)	19
Speech and language difficulties	15
Severe learning difficulties (SLD)	7
Asperger's syndrome	6
Dyspraxia	5
Visual impairment	5
Moderate learning difficulties (MLD)	4
Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD)	3
Down's syndrome	2
General learning difficulties	2
MLD/SLD/ASD	2
Semantic pragmatic disorder	2
Agnosia	1
All severe emotional behaviour disorder (SEBD)	1
All students have sensory/cognitive communication disabilities	1
And/or cognitive ability [?]	1
Behavioural problems	1
Complex learning	1
Dyscalculia	1
English as an additional language (EAL)	1
English as a foreign language (EFL)	1
Following removal of brain tumour	1
Literacy difficulties	1
Mild specific learning difficulties	1
Part of several learning disabilities	1

Poor reading/listening skills	1
Profound learning difficulties	1
Reading	1
Students with learning difficulties or disabilities (SLDD)	1
Slow processing/weak basic skills	1
We have a number of students who use alternative means of access, including (?) computers and voca's	1
Writing	1

Annex 4: respondents' comments

Respondents were given the opportunity to comment on the future use of OLMs. Below is a table collating their responses.

We need [?] entry level accreditation.
Our young people struggle with the written word - but spoken can answer correctly. This is part due to the high level of pupils with visual impairment for who enlarged/modified scripts is not always the answer. We only have a very small number of students taking GCSE's in any one year - but where oral communication is used as 'normal' classroom practise I feel this should be cautioned in an examination.
We do not feel that any of our current students would benefit from an OLM. Our learning impaired students do not have severe problems and cope well in our school environment
A reader is considered acceptable for students who have low comprehension due to Dyslexia issues. Our current students with hearing impairments are good readers. In September we have our first young person who is so deaf that she will require a communicator.
Actually Dyslexic pupils would require OLMs we have one possible pupil (?)
All our pupils are working at entry level or below.
All our staff receive specific training in communication strategies (multi-sensory approaches) with our students. Assessments are designed to take into account student's individual capabilities.
All pupils sitting GCSE have 25 per cent more reading time and access to reader support
Although we run at approx 30 per cent SEN, we do use readers but have not used OLMs, as have not felt the need to apply this to any pupil.
Arrangements for a "reader" are currently made for some dyslexic students and pupils with reading difficulty to provide support during assessment. If OLMs are allowed to rephrase/interpret a question this option could be helpful.
As a selective school we do not have on roll students with the kind of disabilities, which require an OLM. This is not to say that there are no students of the appropriate abilities with disabilities, just that we have not, to date, had any in this school.

<p>At present, we think that our hearing impaired students would be covered by either a) modified papers b) use of CSW [clinical social worker] or C) reader if RA below is ss85. We cannot predict the needs of students in the future. Will OLMs be able to re-phrase exam questions? It would be useful to have some examples of where an OLM would be used + how.</p>
<p>Because the pupils have poor literacy skills and their ability through OLMs is much higher in both content and national levels then their written word would portray.</p>
<p>Each year we apply (?) the exam boards for one of two students (?) have a reader in their exams. This is due (?) low reading age of the students.</p>
<p>Each year we claim special arrangements for the vast majority of our (?) students taking exams. This would be readers, scribes, etc. We don't wish to be excluded from e.g. Maths, Science, or Business studies.</p>
<p>Extra time and for more severe learning difficulties the use of readers and scribes adequately meet the centre's requirements.</p>
<p>For students with Dyslexic tendencies failure to be able to read the students a word. Could lead to low grades in their examinations. Such disability could be eased by allowing students to have 1 word read them; as opposed to a reader; which in the majority of cases they would not be allowed.</p>
<p>From September 2007 we will be using an OLM with a year 7 pupil, who is significantly deaf</p>
<p>Generally speaking - those whose reading is so far delayed - by hearing problems or whatever other reason - would not be capable of doing language based GCSE'S. In the cases on OLM "could" be useful - subjects such as Mathematics and Art, but would be unlikely to make much difference elsewhere. N.B. we are currently without an exams officer.</p>
<p>Given the nature of our school, this would be unlikely.</p>
<p>Happy to (?) item.</p>
<p>I feel we do not have hearing-impaired students at the present time, which would require OLMs, although this would have been a useful provision in previous years. We do however have several students with Semantic Pragmatic Disorder, for this provision may be appropriate.</p>
<p>I think they would help some students on the Autistic spectrum - we haven't applied to use them before. As exams officer I have used them for SATs for hearing impaired students at previous school.</p>

<p>If the learner required an OLM, would we certainly want to use one under (?) conditions/assessments. OLMs are vital for the success and (?) access and equal opportunities of our learners.</p>
<p>If we had a student that required an OLM we would, naturally, apply for one. Currently we have not had a situation where that need has arisen.</p>
<p>If we had a student/s who needed one we would make provision.</p>
<p>I'm not sure an OLM would be helpful to people with Autism</p>
<p>In 2009 we may need an OLM for a student with a severe language impairment.</p>
<p>In question 1 you ask 'in which type of school do you teach?' I, like many exam officers, do not teach.</p>
<p>In some cases an OLM would be helpful for those who can read the print but unless they hear the words, struggle with understanding.</p>
<p>It is difficult to answer this question. The guidelines and criteria are not available to be able to tell if any of our candidates would be suitably legible for this arrangement.</p>
<p>It is extremely rare to have a student who has a hearing impairment and is capable of sitting a GCSE. Since we have been offering maths GCSE, we have not had any hearing impaired students who have been entered for this course. However, this is not to say in the future that this will always be our position.</p>
<p>May give an OLM to a visually impaired student if enlarged papers + ICT (Information Communication technology) use not suitable. Students on the Autistic Spectrum - if academic ability was suitable for GCSE's.</p>
<p>Most of our children use BSL (British Sign Language) communicators in exams. If we had partially deaf children with English as their first language we would definitely use OLMs.</p>
<p>Most of our pupils are working below NC level 3 with a significant proportion working below level 1. It is unlikely we would need an OLM in the future.</p>
<p>Neighbouring (?) offers specialist provision in their HI unit - as a result few HI students arrive at this college unless Catholicism specifically applies.</p>
<p>New School</p>

Not really applicable to PRU
Not seen as future requirement. Our 'Sister' school is far more likely/suitable/resourced.
OLM would be massive help for Autistic & Dyslexic pupils. Sometimes scribes are not appropriate for all pupils and the length of time it takes disrupts their train of thought. Oral assessment often used in the classroom.
OLMs are vital for many youngsters with learning difficulties. Sometimes in the role of a confidence booster. They can be fearful & suffer a feeling of inadequacy which is calmed in the presence of an adult.
OLMs would also be useful for visual impaired students whose reading comprehension in large print or Braille has been delayed
Our (?) for communication and ASD students, will leave a (KS4?) (?) (?) next year, exam year 08/09. These students have high levels of communication needs.
Our centre normally use readers because many students cannot physically read fast enough to participate in GCSE's - do these double up as OLMs?
Our needs with Dyslexia students are currently met by the provision of a reader. Would readers (?) + OLMs remain distinct.
Over the past 20 years we have only twice had students whose reading and writing comprehension are so weak that we have been granted permission to use a reader and a scribe. We would obviously have no objection to using an OLM if a student required (?) and the exam board agreed.
Rooming + staff to perform oral communication could cause difficulties if big numbers of students were included i.e. because of dyslexia - we would be very keen for hearing impaired students.
Sorry to have almost no applicable data
Still unclear as to the difference between a Reader and an OLM. Would an OLM rephrase/simplify questions?
The college follows code of practise for communicators: Interpreters. Also the college have a code of ethics, which are applied. The college complies with to part IV DDA [disability discrimination act] & SENDA (Special education needs discrimination act)

<p>The current student intake does not merit 'OLMs' in the strict sense you describe tending currently to be those students whose reading comprehension is below average. However, with current (?) (?) it is increasingly likely that there would be a need in the future.</p>
<p>The dyslexics who are low ability may seem to gain an unfair advantage if questionnaires are explained. So strict criteria will need to be devised to ensure this does not happen. Where will the communicators come from? I'm not sure this will make a difference - except for learning impaired students.</p>
<p>The only student assessed with hearing impairment can have modern language exams (listening) read by her teacher rather than listening to the tape. She has no need of an OLM in written exams, as her comprehension is not affected.</p>
<p>The pupils at this school at present would not require the use of an OLM.</p>
<p>The students we have at present do not require an OLM. Our hearing impaired student is currently taking AS exams and coped well in GCSE's with extra time.</p>
<p>The students who attend this centre all tend to have reading comprehension age that is above their chronological age. This is often by quite a substantial amount.</p>
<p>The two hearing impaired children are in year 10 so I know which GCSE subjects they will take. But the Dyslexic children are in Years 7 - 9 so I don't yet know which options they will choose. At the moment they do all subjects.</p>
<p>The use of OLMs would improve the chances of the students involved and (?) the barrier to success that specific learning difficulties can present.</p>
<p>This is the (?) time to (?) a questionnaire to a school exam (?). PLEASE DON'T GO FORWARD WITH THIS SCHEME. OLMs would not help our students - we do not have any deaf students at this time. In our centre we only have 2 (?) students with dyslexia and comprehension difficulties and they manage with the (?) (?) (?) in place. Our centre has an (?) (?) special needs department and to allow OLMs for any (?) other than the deaf would (?) (?) (?) competition. Many thanks.</p>
<p>Unless a student specifically used SSE (Sign Supported English) we would use our own 'readers'. Students would feel more comfortable working with familiar staff.</p>
<p>Using an OLM would mean that pupils with these kinds of difficulties are not starting from a disadvantage. They are more likely is be able to access the curriculum or exam papers and so perform to their full potential.</p>

<p>We allocate readers to students when the specialist teachers' report recommends that they need one and having applied to the appropriate exam board. We do have increasing difficulty finding separate rooms for such students as we have had 37 students needing such arrangements this year.</p>
<p>We apply for reading assistance in line with regulations relating to access arrangements. This is enormously important to pupils whose specific learning difficulties would otherwise substantially impede achievement.</p>
<p>We are a special school - our pupils are disapplied</p>
<p>We are guided entirely by the recommendations listed in the Educational Psychologist's report, that has been privately commissioned by the parents. If they recommend the use of an OLM and we could provide one, then we would use one in assessments.</p>
<p>We are increasingly including students with hearing difficulties - raised number in catchment area and a reduction in the amount of students being taught out of borough. We envisage in the future being grateful for the use of OLMs to enable our future to (?) deaf students access to exams. It would benefit in the issuing of instructions in oral exams and in the request of assistance and aid far more quickly.</p>
<p>We currently offer foundation tier GCSE mathematics for a small number of students. This number is decreasing due to our redesignation from MLD to PSC (Profound severe complex). At this time, and for the foreseeable future, there is little or no need for the facility of OLMs with regards to the student base and GCSE's offered.</p>
<p>We do not envisage (?) near future (?) need for OLMs.</p>
<p>We do not have students with a physical disability who might need an OLM. Occasionally we have a student who needs a reader - a different role.</p>
<p>We have 72 students on role - they all have communication difficulties</p>
<p>We have a profoundly deaf student joining 6th form next year we would use OLM. Has not been a major issue at this centre, which has few students with special needs.</p>
<p>We have fully trained staff on site in the centre that manage the communications (?) the public and internal examinations.</p>
<p>We have many basic skills students that need readers. (?) (?)</p>

<p>We have not used OLMs and it is very difficult to judge if we ever would need one.</p>
<p>We may, in the future, request an OLM.</p>
<p>We need more information about the criteria on which this would be based - the difference between carrier/technical language. Would OLMs only be allowed where comprehension is low - often dyslexic pupils have good understanding - our present cohort would not require this! We feel this gives insufficient information to make our responses valid!</p>
<p>We offer ASDAN qualification along with AQA unit accreditation. Pupils with learning difficulties do not have problems (?) the requirements. All students have literacy support in academic and vocational education.</p>
<p>We use oral communication when delivering all examinations for those students who are unable to read the text. (Entry level students). We do not give clues just read the question. However it may/would be useful to on, occasion change the vocab (but no the meaning of the question) into a simpler phrase e.g. maths add instead of total - to those with limited understanding of language Total is a petrol station.</p>
<p>We use our teaching assistants as amanueasis. It is better for our students to have staff who understand their particulars, individual needs.</p>
<p>We would only expect to have one or two students who may need to use this facility; in most cases a reader or extra time would suffice.</p>
<p>We would use an OLM if appropriate but we have not yet come across a situation in which a pupil through either physical or educational needs required one.</p>
<p>We would use OLM in internal test to ensure pupils can assess the test. OLMs would not be used for students who's reading age was above 10 years - baseline set by exam boards despite their comprehension difficulties. We would also not us an OLM if the reading was being the main point of the assessment.</p>
<p>We would use them for (KS3?) SATs + Key skills exams</p>
<p>We would usually use readers who are familiar with the subjects students study.</p>
<p>We would welcome the use of OLMs especially for hearing impairment but this is not a significant issue as we have only had 1 in the last 7 years.</p>
<p>Whilst we have students with hearing difficulties, they all wear hearing aids and sit at the front of the room for exams where appropriate. The only exams we may have to make special</p>

arrangements for are listening exams, but we have not found it necessary to date.

Would use an OLM to provide expression & suitable pauses - allowing a child with a reading comprehension difficulty a chance to understand meaning (especially implied meaning).

Would use if needed for specific individuals needs. We have 4 students who have the use a reader for exams as their reading comprehension is poor due dyslexia. Also 1 who required a scribe.