

Text-to-speech assistive technology, Literacy and Numeracy co-requisite digital assessments – overview

What's happening

Schools/kura will be able to use text-to-speech assistive technology with the Writing (32405) and Numeracy (32406) assessments in 2025 event one, 19 - 30 May, and event two, 1 - 12 September 2025.

Assistive technology can't be used in the English Reading standard (32403) while the Ministry of Education conducts research into the suitability of using text-to-speech with Reading assessments.

To be eligible to use text-to-speech assistive technology in the 2025 Writing and Numeracy assessments, students must:

- Be entered in the Writing (32405) and/or Numeracy (32406) standards for the 2025 digital assessments event one and/or two.
- Regularly use text-to-speech assistive technology to support their learning in the classroom and/or internal assessments.
- Be using assistive technology that has been approved by NZQA. [Text-to-speech for co-requisite assessments - NZQA](#)

The school can also provide a reader who can offer back up support if there are issues with using the assistive technology during the digital assessment (for those students that are entitled to a reader) or to give confidence to students who may be nervous about using assistive technology in an assessment. Students who are entitled to a writer for their assessments may use their text-to-speech to listen to the assessment text being read aloud while asking the writer to support them with writing in the assessment.

You can access further information about BYO text-to-speech including instructions and FAQs in the Assessment Guidance folder in your MyNZQA portal.

Who

We're inviting any school/kura that has students entered in the 2025 English Literacy Writing and Numeracy digital assessments event one and/or two to use their assistive technology in the Writing and Numeracy assessments.

When

During the Writing and Numeracy digital assessments event one (19 - 30 May) and event two (1 - 12 September) in 2025.

What's involved

At this stage only text-to-speech assistive technology can be used in the assessments as this is what was trialled in 2023. We are still testing other types of assistive technology and expect there will be future opportunities to trial voice-to-text and spelling and grammar technologies.

Students should practise using their assistive technology with the past writing or numeracy assessments [Find past digital external assessments » NZQA](#) (access code 0000).

They should also practise during one of the times when the full assessment functionality is available on the digital assessment platform. More information about this is available in the documents about using assistive technology that has been sent to Principal Nominees (PNs) and Special Education Needs Coordinators (SENCOs) at schools and kura. The documents are also available from the NZQA school portal.

This will help them build confidence with using their assistive technology in an assessment and identify any potential issues before undertaking their writing and numeracy digital assessments.

Students will need to use headphones, since text-to-speech applications are audible.

What do you need to do?

If you would like your students and ākonga to use text-to-speech assistive technology in the assessments, you need to:

- make sure your student is using assistive technology approved by NZQA.
[Text-to-speech for co-requisite assessments - NZQA.](#)
- Give your students access to the instructions for using assistive technology in digital assessments. You can access the instructions in the Assessment Master Guidance in your MyNZQA portal.
- Ask your students to practise using their assistive technology before the assessment using past writing or numeracy assessments. [Find past digital external assessments » NZQA](#) (access code 0000).
- For students that don't have a log in for past digital assessments you can access the credentials at the school's NZQA portal via the Access Copyright Past Exam content and Past Digital Exams link.

Make sure your students practise using their assistive technology at least once while full assessment functionality is available so they understand what to expect when in the assessment. More information about this is available in the documents about using assistive technology that has been sent to the PN and SENCOs at schools and kura or through the NZQA school portal.

- Remind students to bring their headphones to the assessment.
- Organise a reader or writer for the student/s if they need extra support.

Assistive technology (text-to-speech) that can be used

At this stage we can advise the following text-to-speech applications have passed basic testing with our digital assessment platform and are suitable to be used as part of Literacy and Numeracy digital assessments:

- Texthelp Read and Write including Google Read and Write (text-to-speech function only)
- Accessibility tools that are available from your Microsoft, Apple or Android device. This includes Microsoft Narrator, Spoken Content (Apple) and Google Text-to-Speech.

Related information – Polly (text-to-speech)

Polly (the built-in text-to-speech tool available in the digital assessment platform) will also be available during the 2025 English Literacy Writing (32405) and English Numeracy (32406) co-requisite digital assessments. Students can use Polly or their own assistive technology in the assessments but not both. Polly is ideal for students who don't have their own assistive technology.

[Text-to-speech for co-requisite assessments - NZQA](#)