A photograph of a classroom with students in school uniforms sitting at desks. In the foreground, a young Black woman is focused on writing in a notebook with a yellow pencil. Behind her, a young man and another student are also looking down at their work. The background is a warm, wood-paneled wall.

Can you help us shape the future of modified exam papers?

Here at Pearson, we're always looking for ways in which to improve our services, support schools and colleges and make our qualifications and assessments accessible to all students. In the first half of 2022, we carried out some research about modified GCSE exam papers. Read our initial findings and find out how you and your students can get involved with the next phase of our research and make a real difference to the future of modified exam papers.

About modified papers and our research

What are modified exam papers?

Modified exam papers are papers with reasonable adjustments designed to support students with various learning needs during high-stakes exams. Examples of these papers include enlarged paper sizes, enlarged fonts, and interactive PDFs.

Pearson is the only awarding organisation to use interactive PDFs in modified papers.

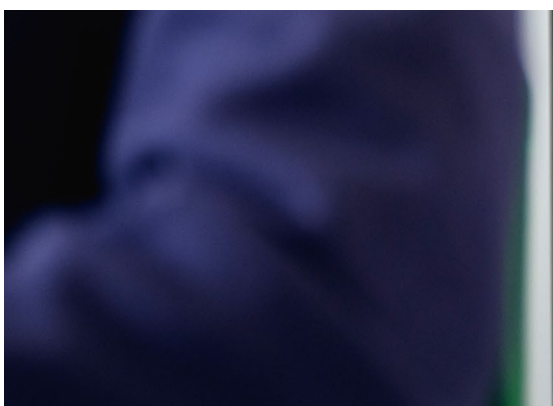
Take a look at our past papers in modified formats ►

What would we like to find out?

- How modified papers are accessed and used by schools and students.
- How students are engaging with different types of modified papers, including modified large prints and interactive PDFs.

How will this research help?

We will use students' and teachers' direct experience to help shape and improve the accessibility and inclusivity of future GCSE exam papers.



Our findings to date

What have we done so far?

We sent out an online survey to UK schools and received 134 responses and have also visited a centre where we invited two students to share their experiences with us about modified papers.

What did we learn from this initial research?

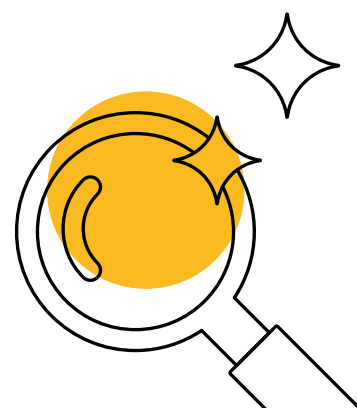
1. Well-designed features boost students' confidence to take exams by themselves. For example, the listening function effectively reduces students' reliance on other human readers and allows them to repeatedly listen to the questions.
2. Exams Officers reported difficulty in using large (A3 size) exam papers as students need to sit across two desks and find it hard to turn the pages.
3. Centres are keen to learn more about different types of modified papers, including interactive PDFs, and how best to support their students.
4. Training for new Exams Officers is necessary to ensure that students and centres have the best experience possible.
5. Centres reported different styles of modified papers used by different exam boards and asked for more standardisation.
6. Centres requested more standardisation in ordering modified exam papers for different qualifications.



What changes have we already made?

We've recently released bite-size **Exams Officer Training modules** that:

- provide a general refresher about modified papers
- demonstrate the ordering process of different qualifications step by step
- explain the difference between non-interactive and interactive PDFs.





How to get involved

How can you help us?

We want to hear more from students who have used modified exam papers so they can help us to understand what more we can do to make these papers more inclusive and accessible.

From October to December 2022:

- we'd like to invite Year 9, 10 and 11 students who have used modified exam papers to take part in an **online survey** which takes about 10 minutes to complete and will be fully anonymised. The survey closes on Saturday 31 December 2022 so please do encourage your students to complete it by then.

Complete the online survey ►

- We'd also like to invite students for a short and informal interview at their school with one of our researchers – please do contact us at **researchuk@pearson.com** for further details on this.

Why help us?

We'll use the feedback and information gathered from students to help us identify ways in which we can make further improvements to GCSE modified exam papers to ensure they are even more accessible and inclusive.

As a thank you, we'll be giving away £100 Amazon vouchers to schools whose students participate in our interviews. Students will also be able to opt into a draw where they could* win between £10 and £50 in Amazon vouchers. We'll send the winning students' vouchers via their schools.

If your school is interested in participating in student interviews or you'd like to find out more about this research, please contact us at: **Researchuk@pearson.com ►**

* Terms and Conditions apply.