



The Netherhall School & Sixth Form Centre

**EXAMINATION ACCESS ARRANGEMENTS
GUIDANCE DOCUMENT**

JANUARY 2018

Rationale

This Examination Access Arrangements Guidance Document details the actions taken to ensure inclusive access to examinations and assessment at The Netherhall School and Sixth Form Centre. This includes those with formally diagnosed Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND). The guidance aims to support the Netherhall philosophy of Inspiring, Individual and Inclusive.

Definitions

Disability

Section 6 of the Equality Act 2010 defines disability as a '*physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long term adverse effect on someone's ability to carry out normal day to day activities*'. Long term is defined as '*lasting, or likely to last, for at least 12 months*'.

Special Educational Needs

A candidate has "special educational needs" as defined in the SEND code of practice (2015). Children have special educational needs if they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for them. The Equality Act 2010 definition of disability includes substantial and long-term sensory impairments such as those affecting sight or hearing, mental health difficulties and long-term health conditions such as asthma, diabetes, epilepsy and cancer. Children and young people with such conditions do not necessarily have SEN, but there is a significant overlap between disabled children and young people and those with SEN.

What are Access Arrangements?

Access arrangements must be agreed before any assessment takes place. They allow students to demonstrate their skills, knowledge and understanding without changing the demands of the assessment. The intention behind access arrangements is to meet the particular needs of a candidate without affecting the integrity of the assessment. They must also demonstrate a candidate's 'normal way of working' within the centre.

Access arrangements are the principal way in which awarding bodies comply with the duty under the Equality Act 2010 to make 'reasonable adjustments.'

Access Arrangements at Netherhall

Netherhall aims to ensure that all students have equal access to examinations and are neither advantaged nor disadvantaged over their peers by any long term, substantial SEND which fall into the following four categories as identified within the SEN Code of Practice (2014):

1. Communication and interaction.
2. Cognition and learning.
3. Social, emotional and mental health
4. Sensory and/ or physical needs.

We will do this by applying the rules for Access Arrangements as set out in the most recent Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ guidelines). We believe it is important to abide by the JCQ regulations, so that there is parity in how access arrangements are awarded throughout a student's secondary schooling and into post-16 provision.

We will use every opportunity to identify students' needs from their first contact with the school. Professional reports are requested that demonstrate a SEND and a recommendation for a reasonable adjustment to be made to meet the student's needs and the type of access arrangements that are appropriate. Access arrangements reflect the support that is usually given to the student in the classroom, internal exams and mock examinations. This is commonly referred to as 'normal way of working.'

When might students need to be given Exam Access Arrangements?

An Exam Access Arrangement (EAA) is a provision or type of support given to a student (subject to exam board approval) in an exam, where a particular need has been identified and is provided so that the student has appropriate access to the exam.

Types of Access Arrangement

There are several different types of Access Arrangement;

Online Applications through JCQ Access Arrangements Online

- Extra time – 25%, 50%, 50%+
- Computer reader / reader
- Scribe / Voice activated software
- Oral Language modifier
- Practical Assistant
- Exemption

Centre delegated

- Supervised rest breaks
- Read aloud
- Word processor
- Transcript
- Prompter
- Live speaker
- Sign Language Interpreter
- Alternative accommodation
- Bilingual dictionaries
- Separate room

	What is it?	Criteria
<p style="text-align: center;">SCRIBE <i>Online application</i></p>	<p>A trained adult writes for the student. The student would dictate their answers. The scribe would write exactly what they say.</p>	<p>Student has a physical disability;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where her/his writing:- is illegible and may hamper their ability to be understood. • Speed is too slow to be able to complete the exam in the allotted time. <p>In MFL, the student must dictate every word in the target language and must do so letter by letter.</p>
	<p><i>Scribes must write exactly what is said to them in such cases, including spelling and punctuation. In any exams that include marks for spelling, punctuation and grammar, a student would score 0 for any such marks.</i></p>	
<p style="text-align: center;">READER <i>Online application</i></p>	<p>A trained adult who would read the question and any relevant text (with the exception of Section A of an English GCSE Exam) for the student. The student would then write the answer/s themselves.</p>	<p>A student has a standardised score of 84 or below in a test delivered by Specialist Assessor (100 is the average).</p>
	<p><i>A reader can read instructions and questions to the student; read the whole paper if necessary or the student may prefer to just ask for some specific words to be read to them.</i></p>	
<p style="text-align: center;">PROMPTER <i>Centre delegated</i></p>	<p>A trained adult can prompt them with a few permitted phrases to refocus, move the student on to the next question or indicate how much time is left.</p>	<p>A student who persistently loses concentration/focus, and is not aware of time and this can also be put in place for students who are affected by OCD (Obsessive Compulsive Disorder). Students with OCD often focus on one question in</p>

		particular rather than moving onto look at other questions in the exam paper.
	What is it?	Criteria
TRANSCRIPT	NO LONGER PERMITTED UNDER JCQ REGULATIONS 2016/17	
	What is it?	Criteria
READ ALOUD <i>Centre delegated</i>	Where a candidate is reading difficult text he/she may work more effectively if they can hear themselves read.	A candidate who persistently struggles to understand what they have read, but who does not qualify for a reader, to read aloud.
	<i>The arrangement must reflect the candidate's normal way of working in internal school tests and mock examinations.</i> <i>A candidate who reads aloud to himself/herself must be accommodated separately within the centre.</i>	
	What is it?	Criteria
SEPARATE ROOM <i>Centre delegated</i>	A student with a medical condition such as epilepsy/diabetes where it isn't appropriate for them to sit an exam in the main exam hall. Students who are agoraphobic/have a psychological condition may also need to sit an exam in a separate room. Medical evidence must be provided in advance to support this arrangement and then be approved by the SENCo.	
	What is it?	Criteria
MODIFIED PAPER <i>Centre delegated</i>	Individually prepared papers for candidates. The modification of papers involves additional resources. Therefore centres are required to provide the awarding bodies with early notification that a candidate will require a modified paper.	Students for who other access arrangements are unsuitable.
	<i>Modified papers must be ordered in advance of a specific examination series.</i> <i>Centres must not order papers for candidates unless they intend to enter them for the relevant examination series.</i> Access arrangements online allows centres to place orders for GCSE and GCE modified papers.	
	What is it?	Criteria
LAPTOP <i>Centre delegated</i>	Access to a laptop for an exam (if appropriate – not for subjects such as Maths) so the student would word process their answers. Spelling and grammar checks would be disabled and a special exam account would be used with no internet access.	The provision to use a laptop is put in place to address an underlying difficulty such as: Speed of handwriting; medical condition; physical disability; sensory impairment; planning and organisational difficulties or poor legibility.
	<i>The use of a laptop in exams reflects the student's normal way of working at the school and has been agreed as appropriate to the student's needs. The use of a laptop cannot be granted to a student simply because this is their preferred way of working.</i> <i>Centres are allowed to provide a word processor with the spelling</i>	

	<p>and grammar check facility/predictive text disabled (switched off) to a candidate where it is their normal way of working within the centre and is appropriate to their needs.</p> <p>For example, the quality of language significantly improves as a result of using a word processor due to problems with planning and organisation when writing by hand. (This also extends to the use of electronic brailers and tablets.)</p>	
	What is it?	Criteria
<p>REST BREAKS</p> <p><i>Centre delegated</i></p>	<p>Students are permitted to stop for short break/s during the exam and the time stopped is added to the finish time, with the effect of elongating the exam but not actually using any extra time. Students are not permitted to have exam materials with them during rest breaks.</p>	<p>A student has a physical disability which prevents them from concentrating for long periods of time.</p>
	<p><i>This is now the recommended option from the exam boards before considering extra time.</i></p> <p>Rest breaks are not included in any Extra Time allowance that the student may have.</p> <p>The amount of time awarded is granted at the discretion of the SENCo.</p>	
	What is it?	Criteria
<p>EXTRA TIME</p> <p><i>Online application</i></p>	<p>Students may be entitled to an allowance of 25% depending on the history of evidence of need and the recommendation of the Designated Specialist Teacher or Teaching Assistant.</p> <p>Extra time between 26 and 50% can be granted in extraordinary circumstances.</p>	<p>Students will have an assessment to determine their speed of processing. A standardised score of 84 or below (100 being average) can qualify for extra time.</p> <p>In exceptional circumstances, a candidate may require more than 50% extra time in order to manage a very substantial impairment.</p>
	<p><i>There are cases where students get a score of more than 84. In these cases more evidence is needed to prove that a student should receive extra time. This could be in the form of an extensive history of need, formal diagnosis of a significant learning difficulty, or evidence of a substantial long term adverse effect on the performance of a child's speed of working.</i></p> <p>The amount of time that students should receive is decided by the Specialist Assessor and based upon their processing speeds.</p>	
	What is it?	Criteria
<p>LIVE SPEAKER</p> <p><i>Centre delegated</i></p>	<p>A live speaker for pre-recorded examination components, e.g. MFL listening examinations, to a candidate where it is their normal way of working within the centre.</p> <p>The live speaker will speak or read aloud the contents of the CD or tape in a Listening examination.</p>	<p>Students who have persistent and significant difficulties in following speech at normal speed.</p>
	What is it?	Criteria
	<p>A responsible adult who may clarify the carrier language used</p>	<p>Students whose disability has a very substantial and long term</p>

<p>ORAL LANGUAGE MODIFIER <i>Online application</i></p>	<p>in the examination paper when requested to do so by a candidate. The Oral Language Modifier must not explain technical terms or subject specific terms. The ability to understand these terms is part of the assessment. If such terms are explained to the candidate then the demands of the question will have been compromised and may constitute malpractice.</p>	<p>adverse effect resulting in very persistent and significant difficulties in accessing and processing information.</p>
<p><i>An Oral Language Modifier must be seen as a rare and exceptional arrangement.</i> <i>An Oral Language Modifier is an adjustment of last resort so an application must only be made once all other relevant access arrangements have been considered and found to be unsuitable or unworkable. There must be a very strong justification as to why an Oral Language Modifier is required.</i> <i>An Oral Language Modifier may also act as a reader.</i> <i>An Oral Language Modifier will not be allowed to read questions or text in a paper (or a section of a paper) testing reading.</i> <i>A candidate who would normally be eligible for an Oral Language Modifier, but is not permitted this arrangement in a paper (or a section of a paper) testing reading may be granted up to a maximum of 50% extra time.</i> <i>An approved application for an Oral Language Modifier will allow the centre to grant the candidate up to a maximum of 50% extra time in a paper (or a section of a paper) testing reading.</i></p>		
<p>What is it? Criteria</p>		
<p>BILINGUAL DICTIONARY <i>Centre delegated</i></p>	<p>Only to be used by student's whose first language is not English, Irish or Welsh. The bilingual dictionary must be held in the centre to ensure no unauthorised information e.g. notes/ revision is enclosed or written inside.</p>	<p>Should reflect the student's normal way of working.</p>
<p>Such dictionaries must not be used in English Language, Irish Language or Welsh Language examinations or Modern Foreign Language examinations testing one of the languages of the dictionary or a similar language, for example, a Portuguese dictionary in a Spanish examination. The use of a bilingual translation dictionary.</p>		
<p>What is it? Criteria</p>		
<p>SIGN LANGUAGE INTERPRETER <i>Centre delegated</i></p>	<p>A trained adult who presents the questions in a different language without:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changing the meaning; • Providing any additional information; or • Providing an explanation as to what the question requires of the candidate. 	<p>Students whose 'normal way of working' requires sign language interpretation.</p>
<p>A Sign Language Interpreter is not a reader. However, the same person may act as a reader and a Sign Language Interpreter.</p>		

	<p>Permission must have been given for the use of a reader and a Sign Language Interpreter.</p> <p>The Sign Language Interpreter can sign the instructions and questions to candidates taking written papers except in Modern Foreign Languages or English, Irish or Welsh Language examinations.</p> <p>The Sign Language Interpreter may repeat the translation if requested to do so by the candidate. An alternative translation of the carrier language may be provided. However, under no circumstances may an explanation of the question or clarification of the carrier language be given. These actions would be deemed as giving the candidate an unfair advantage and may constitute malpractice.</p> <p>Candidates may only sign their answers in question papers or in controlled assessment/coursework where it is possible to finger spell the answers or where the answers involve single words. Sign Language interpretation is done 'live' in the presence of the candidate during the examination in order to allow for the candidate's regional variations in BSL/ISL signs.</p> <p>Consequently, sign language interpretation cannot be checked by the awarding body for accuracy. Great care must be taken not to disadvantage or advantage the candidate.</p> <p>Candidates requiring the use of a Sign Language Interpreter may need to be accommodated separately in which case a separate invigilator will be required.</p>
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What is it?	Criteria
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<p style="text-align: center;">ALTERNATIVE SITE</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Centre delegated</i></p>	<p>The candidate will be sitting his/her examination(s) at a residential address or at a hospital which is a non-registered centre due to, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A medical condition which prevents the candidate from taking examinations in the centre; or • Social, Mental and Emotional Needs. 	<p>The candidate has:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An impairment which has a substantial and long term adverse effect giving rise to persistent and significant difficulties; or • A temporary illness or injury at the time of the examination(s).
	<p>The centre must be satisfied that the candidate is able to take examinations.</p> <p>The SENCo, or a senior member of staff with pastoral responsibilities, must produce written evidence confirming the need for an alternative site arrangement to a JCQ Centre Inspector upon request.</p>	

What is it?	Criteria
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<p style="text-align: center;">PRACTICAL ASSISTANT</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Online application</i></p>	<p>Is not a reader or a scribe. The same person may act as a practical assistant, a reader and/or a scribe as long as permission has been given for these arrangements.</p> <p>The regulations for the use of each arrangement must be strictly adhered to.</p>	<p>Students with: poor motor co-ordination or/and severe vision impairment.</p>
	<p>A practical assistant must not be allowed to carry out physical tasks or demonstrate physical abilities where they form part of the</p>	

	<p>assessment objectives. A practical assistant will not normally be permitted in subjects such as Art & Design, Design & Technology and Music.</p> <p>Candidates using a practical assistant in externally set practical or written examinations may need to be accommodated separately, in which case a separate invigilator will be required.</p> <p>The invigilator must be made aware, prior to the examination, of the particular task(s) the practical assistant will be performing.</p>	
	What is it?	Criteria
<p>EXEMPTION</p> <p><i>Online application</i></p>	<p>An exemption is an agreement reached by an awarding body, before the examination, for a disabled candidate to miss a component or components.</p> <p>An indication will be placed on the candidate's certificate to show that not all of the assessment objectives were accessible.</p> <p>An exemption will not be granted if an alternative and accessible route through a qualification is available to the candidate.</p>	
	<p>The centre in the first instance should select 'Other'. This will result in an automatic rejection. The centre must then make a referral to the relevant awarding body.</p> <p>The centre must indicate the candidate's disability in order that an awarding body has the necessary information to hand when considering an application for an exemption. The awarding body must be assured that the exemption is an arrangement of the last resort.</p> <p>In Functional Skills English where barriers to access remain, candidates can be exempted from up to two of the three assessed components. Such an arrangement does not apply to Functional Skills ICT and Mathematics qualifications, as these qualifications consist of only one component.</p>	
	What is it?	Criteria
<p>OTHER ARRANGEMENTS</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amplification equipment • Braille • Closed circuit television (CCTV) • Colour naming by the invigilator for candidates who are Colour Blind • Coloured Overlays (this would also include reading rulers, virtual overlays and virtual reading rulers) • Low vision aid/magnifier • Optical Character Reader (OCR) scanners • Separate invigilation within the centre 	<p>Centres must note that candidates are only entitled to the above arrangements if they are disabled within the meaning of the Equality Act.</p> <p>The candidate is at a substantial disadvantage when compared with other non-disabled candidates undertaking the assessment and it would be reasonable in all the circumstances to provide the arrangement.</p>
	<p>In the case of separate invigilation, the candidate's difficulties are established within the centre and known to a Form Tutor, a Head of Year, the SENCo or a senior member of staff with pastoral responsibilities.</p> <p>Separate invigilation reflects the candidate's normal way of working in internal school tests and mock examinations as a consequence of a long term medical condition or long term social, mental or emotional needs.</p>	

What evidence is needed to apply for EAA?

There are a number of pieces of evidence that can be used to apply for EAA to Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ):

- Form 8 report from Specialist Assessor or Specialist Teaching Assistant
- Previous EAA from Primary Schools/ 11-16 schools and other Education Providers*
- Subject teachers – examples of work as appropriate
- Results of baseline tests e.g. reading/comprehension age, writing tests

* Please note that only an original, hand-signed Form 8 can be accepted as evidence for Access Arrangements for GCE students transferring from GCSE.

Private Educational Psychologists Reports

A growing number of parents are having their children assessed by private educational psychologists and submitting the reports to the SENCo as evidence that their child should be awarded extra time, or EAA.

Private educational psychologist's reports cost a significant amount of money. This therefore means that parents who are unable to obtain a private report through their financial circumstances are put at a disadvantage. As an exam centre we must be consistent in our decisions and ensure that no student is '**either given an unfair advantage or be disadvantaged by any arrangements put in place**'. Often private educational psychologists, recommend that children should receive EAA which can be in conflict with what the centre tester (Specialist Assessor) recommends and can also be in conflict with the current JCQ regulations.

As a centre we request that if parents wish to undertake a private assessment that they contact the SENCO in the first instance to establish whether such a report can be used for access arrangements purposes.

We will also look for evidence of a history of need. This will be from subject teachers and previous education institutions.

Medical letters

Medical letters can help to provide an evidence of need for a student, but a note from a medical professional does not mean an automatic entitlement to EAA. As with private Educational Psychologist reports, medical notes often provide recommendations to schools that are in conflict with the JCQ regulations. However, we will also require further evidence of need.

Procedures

How students would be identified for Exam Access Arrangements:

- They would have had EAA at KS2 for their SAT's
- They received EAA for GCSE exams and have commenced in the Sixth Form
- From baseline testing completed in Key Stage 3
- Parental Referral
- Subject Teacher Referral
- Information from previous schools

KS2 SAT EAA

Students who have EAA at KS2 will be screened for EAA at KS3 for KS4. Although they may have received EAA at KS2, it doesn't necessarily mean that they automatically receive it in secondary school because their needs may have changed. For example, a student who had a Reader for KS2 may not qualify for a Reader at KS4 because their reading has improved to the extent it does not meet the exam board criteria.

Baseline Testing in Year 7

All students in Year 7 are tested for Reading and Spelling in Years 7, 8 and 9. These tests can help identify learning difficulties such as dyslexia. The SENCo will contact parents where this is the case, do further testing, and if necessary put appropriate interventions into place.

Parent Referral

Parents can contact the school to ask for advice about testing if they have concerns with the progress and learning of their child. Once contact has been made with the parent, the SENCO will investigate

their concerns by contacting the student's teachers to gain information. Following this, a decision will be made as to whether it is appropriate to test a student.

Teacher Referral

As with Parent Referrals, teachers can refer a student to the SENCo where they have concerns about the learning and progress of a student in their class. All of the student's current teachers will be asked to give feedback to gain information, and following this a decision will be made as to whether to test a student for EAA. Where a teacher thinks that a student requires extra time, they are asked to get the student to change the colour of the pen that they are using once the allotted time is up, and continue writing until they are finished. This is then used as proof to JCQ and the exam boards of a history of need. Teachers are asked to refer students to the SENCo initially if they feel that a child may be dyslexic rather than contacting parents about their concerns. The SENCo will then contact the parents if the concerns are founded.

How do staff and parents know whether a student has Exam Access Arrangements?

Teaching and support staff can access the list on the Data System. It is updated whenever students become entitled to it. The information about results of assessments for EAA are kept confidentially in line with school policy, are shared on a need to know basis.

Staff can visit the Data System and go to **Student Lists > Student Groups > Acc. Arr** to see a list of all students with Access Arrangements.

Access Arrangements are also listed on an individual's summary page and in the SEN/D tab of the individual.

Staff can also check on students with Access Arrangements in class lists on the register. Students with Access Arrangements will have the following symbol:



Parents will be informed of any tests results via a letter home which states what they are entitled to, why and when.

How are Exam Access Arrangements applied for?

Access Arrangements last for approximately 26 months. Therefore students who are tested at the end of Year 9 / start of Year 10 as the EAA would then be in place for GCSE examinations. Similarly, testing of Sixth Form students would ensure that the EAA would be in place for the duration of their courses.

There are two main methods for applying for Access Arrangements – through testing by a Specialist Assessor or through a Centre File record.

Specialist Assessment

The SENCo will work with a Specialist Assessor to complete the JCQ 'Form 8'. Section A is completed by the SENCo, in conjunction with school staff, prior to testing. Section C is where the Assessor would list test scores following Assessment and the identified Access Arrangements are listed in Section B of Form 8.

The Specialist Assessor will assess students using a variety of nationally recognised tests which could include:

- Wechsler Individual Achievement Test (WIATT II)
- Detailed Assessment of Speed of Handwriting (DASH)
- British Picture Vocabulary Scales (BPVS)
- Comprehensive Test of Phonological Processing 2 (CTOPP)
- Phonological Assessment Battery

The tests that the Specialist Assessor uses are replaced/upgraded periodically in line with current practice. The test that the Specialist Assessor uses depends very much upon the type of barrier to learning that the student may have. Should the student need further testing to assess for other learning issues or further EAA, the Specialist Assessor will arrange this. Following a report produced by the Specialist Assessor an application is made to the Exam Boards for permission to implement the specified arrangement/s.

Students are tested formally in April/May of Year 9 in order to comply with the 26 month rule; so that any permitted exam access arrangements are in place for the full GCSE period of both Year 10 and 11.

Centre File Note

A Centre file note is a method that does not require Specialist Assessment or a Form 8. Centre File notes need to evidence clearly the need of the student and evidence that it is a normal way of working

for that student. A Centre File note must demonstrate 'a substantial and long term adverse effect on that person's ability' and a 'persistent and significant difficulty'. Evidence must be obtained from teaching staff for this.

Centre File notes are used rarely in determining Access Arrangements.

What support is given to students with EAA?

Students with EAA are encouraged to use their EAA during internal assessments and exams so that they gain practice at using it effectively.

Students who have access to a reader or scribe are shown how to use them appropriately in exam situations, and it is explained to them what they can and can't do with the reader/scribe during the exam, and how much support the adult is allowed to give. Students with extra time are given sessions with a teaching assistant on how to use the additional time allowance effectively. They then need to apply the techniques and strategies given to them in internal exams and assessments.

The Inclusion faculty are happy to host students with EAA for internal school tests so that the students can use their arrangements. We request at least two weeks' notice so that support can be provided for students who require it during the tests/exams.

What are the procedures for processing an application?

Once any tests have been conducted and there is a recommendation from the Assessor for EAA, the SENCo, in conjunction with the Exams officer then applies to the exam boards through the JCQ online application. The feedback is instant and at this point the EAA is added to the list of students and the parents are informed of the EAA by letter.

The application will require evidence of need, and the centre needs to hold evidence in its files that can be inspected at short notice. This can include:

- Recommendations by teachers
- Educational psychologist reports
- Letters from outside agencies such as CAMHS (Children and Adolescent Mental Health Services), hospitals or doctors
- Information from SALT (Speech and Language Team)
- Statement of Educational Need or Education, health & Care Plans (EHCP)

Permission from the exam boards for the arrangement/s

- A signed copy of the Form 8 report by the designated tester
- A data protection form signed by the student
- For Extra Time – history of evidence of need in the form of copies of work where a student has regularly used more than the allotted time.

Deadlines for submitting applications for access arrangements and modified papers on-line for GCSE and GCE qualifications

Access arrangements may cover the entire course and for GCSE and GCE qualifications must be processed using access arrangements online as early as possible. Arrangements must be processed and approved before an examination or controlled assessment/coursework as per the deadlines in the 'JCQ Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments' document.

The decision to apply for access arrangements is based on evidence of a history of need, history of provision and a specialist teacher access arrangements report. The final decision on whether to apply for Access Arrangements is determined by the SENCo, in conjunction with the Principal and Director of Sixth Form.

G B Crick, SENCO
January 2018

Review: February 2019