Provincial Assessment Program

Protocols for Accommodations and Exemptions

New Nouveau
Brunswick

Provincial Assessment Program

Protocols for Accommodations and Exemptions

Table of Contents

New Brunswick Provincial Assessments
Protocols for Accommodations and Exemptions

Preface

This document replaces the October 2022 version of *Protocols for Accommodations and Exemptions*.

The *Protocols for Accommodations and Exemptions* document was developed in collaboration with New Brunswick teachers, Educational Support Teachers and the Educational Support Services (ESS) Branch of the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (EECD) and is based on best practices for inclusion.

Provincial assessments are compulsory for all students enrolled in New Brunswick schools. Students who have a Personalized Learning Plan (PLP) are given the opportunity to participate and demonstrate the full extent of their knowledge and skill. As these assessments are meant to be inclusive, a host of accommodations are provided for students. Accommodations fall into two broad categories: universal and justified. Accommodations should be fully explored before an exemption is considered.

In certain circumstances, it is necessary and appropriate for students to be exempted from participating in provincial assessments if the testing format does not support the demonstration of learning, even with accommodations. Typically, academic exemptions are sought for students following individualized goals and outcomes in their PLP. Exemptions may also be considered for students in the beginning stages of learning English as an additional language.

Accommodations

Definition

Accommodations are supports, methods and practices that enable a student to participate as independently as possible. Within the context of provincial assessments, *universal* or *justified* accommodations can be used to support students.

Universal accommodations are those strategies, technologies or adjustments (good teaching strategies) that enable a student to reach the prescribed outcomes and can be used as needed. These accommodations are not documented within the PLP.

Justified accommodations are documented strategies, technologies or adjustments without which the student would not be able to demonstrate knowledge. These accommodations are documented within the PLP, are part of the student's daily functioning, and require prior approval to be accessed during provincial assessments.

For the purpose of large-scale assessments, accommodations are alterations that do not jeopardize the integrity or content of the assessment yet give students an equal opportunity to demonstrate what they know and can do as part of the assessment process.

Types of Accommodations

Accommodations in presentation affect the way directions and content are delivered to students. Students with visual, hearing or learning difficulties are much more able to engage in the content when it is presented in a form they can understand.

Accommodations in response offer different ways for students to respond to assessment questions. They help students with visual and hearing impairments, physical disabilities, and organizational problems to structure, monitor, or put words directly on paper.

Accommodations in setting affect either where a test is taken or the way in which the testing environment is set up. Changing the environment can be especially helpful to students who are easily distracted.

Accommodations in timing or scheduling allow flexibility in the timing of the assessment. Generally, these are chosen for students who may need more time to process information or who need breaks throughout the testing process to regroup and focus.

Provincial Assessment Universal Accommodations

Accommodation	Description	Type	Applicable Assessment
Extra time	Student may take longer than the time allowed. Up to double the allocated assessment time is considered a *universal* accommodation. If more than double time is required, it is considered extended time and a *justified* accommodation is required through the Provincial Assessment Protocol Accommodation and Exemptions (PAPAE) site.	Timing	All
Breaks	An appropriate break from the assessment is allowed as it is typically administered without breaks.	Timing	All
Individual setting	The student is assessed separately from other students.	Setting	All
Small group setting	The student is assessed in a small group separate from other students.	Setting	All
Carrel setting	The student is assessed while seated in a study carrel.	Setting	All
Separate room	The student is assessed in a separate room.	Setting	All
Seating	The student is assessed in a specifically designated location, usually in close proximity to the assessment administrator.	Setting	All
Minimize distractions	The student is assessed in a quiet environment.	Setting	All
Increase/decrease movement	The student is assessed in an environment that allows for increased or decreased movement (e.g., The student may be allowed to walk around).	Setting	All
Read instructions aloud	The assessment instructions are read to the student. Reading comprehension passages and accompanying questions may **not** be read aloud to students.	Presentation	All
Sign-interpret directions	Instructions are presented via sign language.	Presentation	All
Repeat /re-read	Instructions may be repeated for the student.	Presentation	All
Familiar examiner	Assessment is administered by someone with whom the student is familiar/comfortable within the educational setting.	Presentation	All
Encouragement	Assessment administrator may motivate or encourage the student to continue or remain on task.	Presentation	All
Page turner	The student with mobility limitations receives assistance turning the pages of the assessment booklet.	Presentation	All
Text to speech	The assessment is read to the student using software (e.g., Dragon, etc.).	Presentation	Science and Math all grades
Translation device (*See Appendix B, page 20*)	English language learners / Multi lingual learners, particularly those at or below the B1 level of the Common European Framework of Reference for Language (CEFR) may use paper bilingual dictionaries or contact Linda O'Blenis for permission to use electronic translation devices.	Presentation	Science and Math only
Computer or word processor	The student uses a computer or word processor (e.g., DANA, NEO), but the spellcheck and autocorrect options must be disabled.	Response	All
Communication device	Various devices (e.g., Symbol boards) may be provided for the student to use in giving responses. *(This does not include text-to-speech)*	Response	All

Provincial Assessment Justified Accommodations
Must be documented in the student's PLP and be part of student's regular routine

Accommodation	Description	Type	Applicable Assessment
Extended time	If more than double time is required, it is considered extended time and a *justified* accommodation is required.	Timing	All
Centres of Excellence or medical setting (hospital, rehabilitation centre)	The student is assessed when out of school due to illness, medical conditions, or other circumstances. *Special circumstances require professional/additional documentation.*	Setting	All
Paper booklet	All parts of the assessment are provided in a paper booklet.	Presentation	All
Enlarged print*	All parts of the assessment are provided in enlarged print.	Presentation	All
Specialized font*	All parts of the assessment are printed in Dyslexie font or other specialized font documented in the student's PLP.	Presentation	All
Coloured paper*	All parts of the assessment are printed on coloured paper.	Presentation	All
Reading aloud**	The assessment instructions, text/passages, questions, and response choices are read to the individual student.	Presentation	**High School**: language assessments
Text to speech**	The assessment is read to the student using software (e.g., Dragon, etc.).	Presentation	**High School**: language assessments
Braille	All parts of the assessment are converted to braille.	Presentation	All
Brailler	The student is provided with a device or computer that generates responses in braille. The auto-correct function will be disabled.	Response	All
Speech to text	The student's verbal responses are transferred to text via a speech/text device (e.g., Dynavox). Word prediction software (student select) is permitted.	Response	All
Scribe *(see "A Guide for Scribes", page 10)*	The student responds verbally and a scribe transcribes this to the booklet/answer sheet verbatim.	Response	All
Answers written in assessment booklet	Responses may be written in the assessment booklet rather than on the bubble answer sheet.	Response	All
Word-prediction software	This software is available to students using assistive technologies (e.g., Word Q).	Response	All

*Enlarged print, Dyslexie font and coloured paper accommodations must be requested <u>only for</u> students requiring a paper booklet. These accommodations are available for all students in the online platform.

**Text-to-speech or reading aloud may be used <u>at the high school level</u> when assessing reading comprehension under the following circumstances: (1) a related learning disability is diagnosed and documented, (2) the dyslexie font is not suitable for the student, (3) and the accommodation is normally available to the student in daily work at school. This accommodation is not available to students in earlier grades who are still learning to read.

Accommodations for Online Assessments

Provincial assessments are now online. This eliminates the need for schools to manage the safekeeping, distribution, and shipping of boxes of test booklets and will lessen the environmental impact. It is expected that all participating students will complete the assessment online unless there is a compelling reason to request a paper booklet for an individual student. Requests for paper booklets can be made through the PAPAE site.

Most accommodations have been incorporated into the online platform and are available to all students, only the following accommodations must be requested through the PAPAE site:

STUDENTS COMPLETING ASSESSMENTS ONLINE

- More than double time to write the test
- Text to speech for language assessments at the high school level
    - (text to speech for math and science is built into the online platform for all grade levels)
    - (text to speech is not permitted for language assessments for elementary and middle school grades)
- Scribe
- Braille
- Paper booklet
- Alternative setting

STUDENTS COMPLETING ASSESSMENTS ON PAPER

For students who need a paper booklet and also require one of the following accommodations, these must be requested through the PAPAE site:

- Large print
- Coloured paper
- Specialized font (e.g., Dyslexie font)

Note: Large print, coloured paper, and specialized font need only be requested through the PAPAE site for students completing assessments using paper booklets. These requests and the need for a paper booklet must be documented as requirements in the student's PLP.
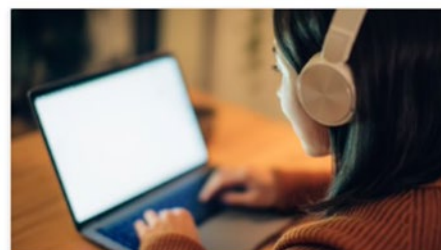
Accommodations Procedure

Provincial Assessment Universal Accommodations

Universal accommodations are available to any student at the school's discretion. It is not necessary to apply for these or to provide any documentation for these accommodations for any provincial assessment. Refer to list of *Universal Accommodations* on page 4.

Provincial Assessment Justified Accommodations

1. Requests for justified accommodations must be submitted through the PAPAE site. This site can be found on the Provincial Assessment Hub under the *Accommodation and Exemption Requests Tile.*

2. Under *Request for Justified Accommodation* on the PAPAE site, fill in all applicable areas, including grade level and date, including the year.

3. Once an online request is completed at the school level, including verification from the administrator, it is received by the appointed district ESS Coordinator. On approval, the request will be forwarded to the *Assessment, Analysis and Design Services Branch* for approval.

Accommodation and Exemption Requests

4. Confirmation of requests will be sent electronically from the *Assessment, Analysis and Design Services Branch* to the ESS Coordinator at the district. Please check the PAPAE site for the status of requests.

Note: Check the due dates identified in the assessment timetable sent to your school's administrators.

Unless otherwise communicated, <u>requests for printed and braille booklets must be submitted by the deadlines published in the assessment timetable to meet printing and shipping deadlines</u>. It will likely not be possible to accommodate late requests.

Exemptions

Definition

In certain circumstances, it is appropriate for a student to be exempted from participating in a provincial assessment. Any decision to exempt a student must be made in collaboration with the student's parent(s) or guardian(s).

Exemptions are permitted under the following circumstances:

- Learners have individualized goals and outcomes outlined in either the learner's PLP-I or Individualized Behaviour Support Plan (PLP-IBSP). For students who are not following a PLP-I and require an academic exemption, documentation must accompany the application detailing the necessity for exemption. Typically, these students are following adjusted curriculum outcomes (PLP-A).

- Students experiencing unforeseen circumstances* (e.g., serious illness, sudden bereavement, or other unusual circumstances requiring an exemption that could not be predicted prior to the administration of the assessment).

- Students at A1 – A2 levels of English, as per the *Common European Framework of Reference for Language* (CEFR), are generally exempted from the ELPA. There may be cases where it is in the best interest of a student who is at the A2 level to attempt it; please discuss these cases with the EAL specialist or team. Students receiving an exemption based on current language proficiency do not require a PLP or a *Newcomer Support and Transition Plan* (NSTP) to qualify for an exemption. However, documentation (as per the NSTP, or other data) must accompany the application detailing the necessity for exemption, along with parental/guardian acknowledgement. Students at B1 level should attempt the ELPA with universal accommodations.

Exemptions Procedure

1. Requests for exemption must be submitted through the PAPAE site. This site can be found on the [Provincial Assessment Hub](#) under the *Accommodation and Exemption Requests Tile.*

2. On the *Request for Exemption*, fill in all applicable areas, including grade level and date, with the year.

3. Confirmation of exemption requests will be sent from the *Assessment, Analysis and Design Services Branch* via the [PAPAE](#) site to the district ESS Coordinator.

Unforeseen Circumstance Exemption? Follow this protocol:

• Parent/guardian must be informed for approval. If parent/guardian permission is not received, the request for exemption due to unforeseen circumstances will not be granted. The student's results will be reported as a Did Not Write (DNW).

• Principal, District ESS Coordinator, District EAL Lead/Coordinator (where appropriate), and the appropriate EECD Learning Specialist must be informed via email.

• The unforeseen circumstances exemption must be entered on the PAPAE site, following all protocols, including signed parent/guardian permission.

Exemptions from the *English Language Proficiency Assessment* (*ELPA*)

The following two types of exemptions have been developed specifically for the *ELPA* since it is a graduation requirement in New Brunswick. These exemptions must be submitted, following the proper procedures, on the PAPAE site.

Temporary exemptions: This type of exemption can be selected on a year-by-year basis. Students who will not be participating in the *ELPA* this year, but wish to write in the future, may be granted a temporary exemption. Reasons for temporary exemptions can range from academic readiness to absence during the time of writing. All required signatures must be present before the temporary exemption can be considered for approval. If a student is approved for a temporary exemption, they will be registered for the next administration of the *ELPA*. Potential graduates are not eligible for a temporary exemption.

Permanent exemptions: Students who will not write the *ELPA*, at any point, may be granted a permanent exemption. These exemptions must be substantiated through a PLP. Once a permanent exemption is approved, there is no need to resubmit in any subsequent year. The student's permanent exemption will be listed in the EECD database.

Process to reverse a permanent exemption:
- Request parent/guardian permission in writing
- Inform principal of request
- Request permission from district ESS Coordinator
- Originator of Permanent Exemption request (the staff member who entered the request to the PAPAE site) must be the one to cancel it; if the originator of the request is no longer at the school, please contact Kathy McCormack (kathy.mccormack@gnb.ca) at the *Assessment, Analysis and Design Services Branch* of EECD.
- Please notify the ELPA/R Learning Specialist and Kathy McCormack at EECD once the permanent exemption has been cancelled.

Please note: the original permanent exemption no longer applies to the student once reversed.

A Guide for Scribes

Do

be patient and make sure the student feels no undue pressure.

write down exactly and only what the student asks to have written.

ask the student to include directions for equation writing and punctuation, including periods, symbols, etc.

read back to the student what you have written.

make changes, only if the student requests them.

Do Not

explain or elaborate upon the question.

interpret or paraphrase.

make suggestions or offer advice.

imply that the student could/should write more or change an answer.

"help" the student with the problem or question, even if they request it.

Please remember that the student's work should be as much their own as if they were writing it. Your part in the process should simply be a facilitator for the mechanical task of writing.

Note: All sessions that occur between a scribe and a student, in connection with administration of this assessment, must be recorded and the audio recording then provided to EECD along with the student's other assessment materials. See Appendix A for instructions on how to do this.

Appendix A

Recording, Saving, and Uploading Audio Recordings

All Read Aloud and Scribe Accommodation sessions must be recorded in their entirety. For consistency of recording file type, use the Voice Recorder on your desktop or laptop. The laptop computer microphone is sufficient provided the reader and student are in close proximity to the laptop. Desktop computers will require a separate external microphone. Regardless of the device used, it is highly recommended to test the volume by saving a test recording and listening to the playback volume.

If the recording is interrupted during the assessment period (e.g. fire drill, or recess, lunch or washroom breaks), use the pause functionality of the Voice Recorder. If the recording is stopped completely before the assessment has been completed, a second recording will be needed to complete the assessment. Two recordings of the assessment need to be submitted separately following the prescribed naming format with part 1 and part 2, and so forth added to the end. (e.g. Smith, Ashley - Grade 10 Math part 1; Smith, Ashley - Grade 10 Math part 2).

To locate the recording software:
1. Click the Windows icon in the bottom left corner of the screen.
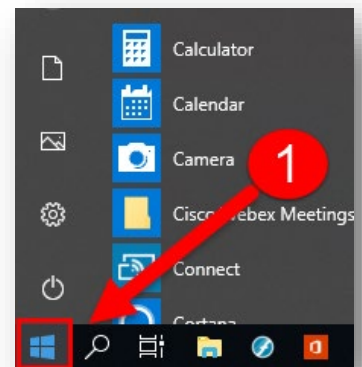
2. *Scroll down through the list of apps and select Voice Recorder.*
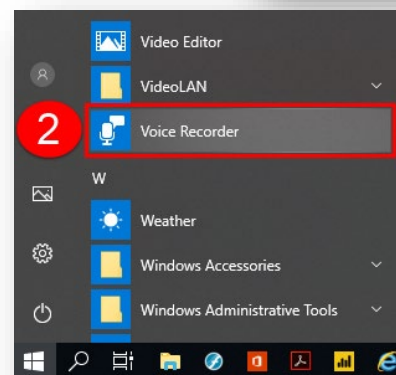
Ensure both the student and the educator providing the accommodations are near the laptop (or microphone) and that they both speak clearly. Make a sample recording and test the playback volume to ensure all participants can be heard.

To start recording:

1. Click on the "Microphone". At the start of the recording say the students' name, grade and school.
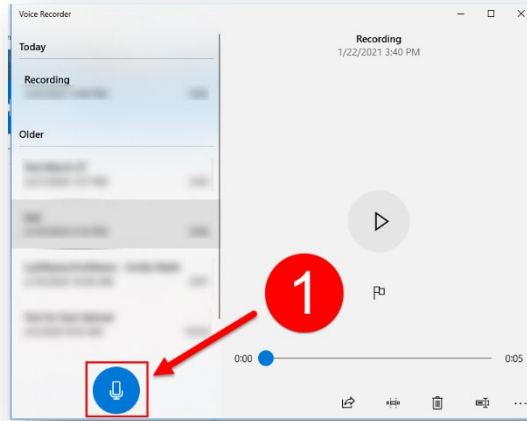
2. If the assessment session is interrupted, click the Pause button to stop the recording. Click it a second time to resume.
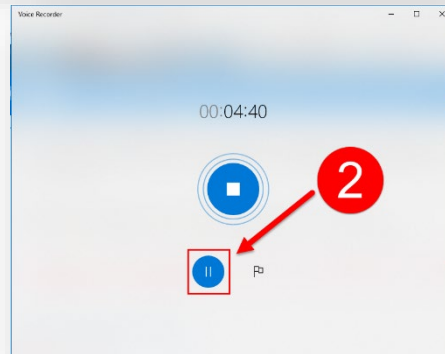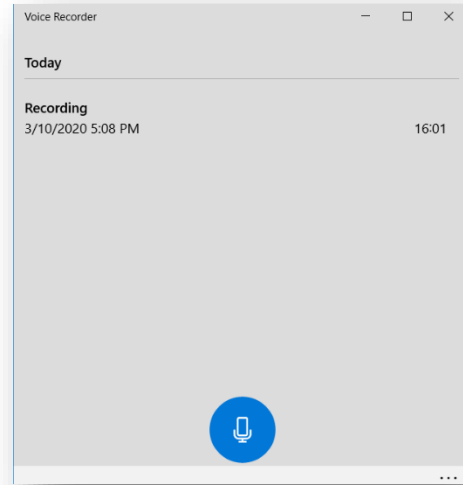
3. When this component of the assessment is complete, click the stop "Button".
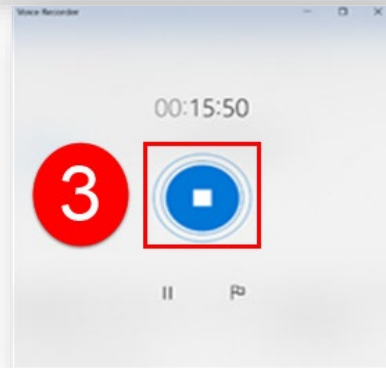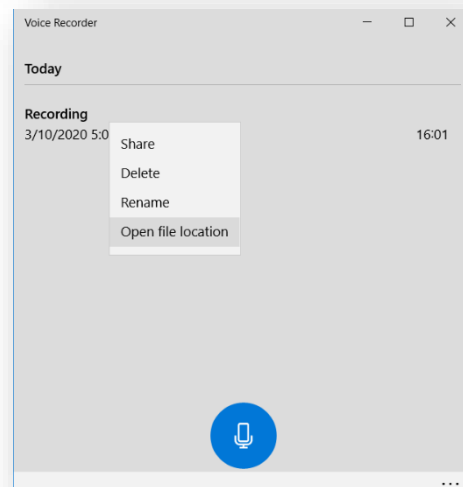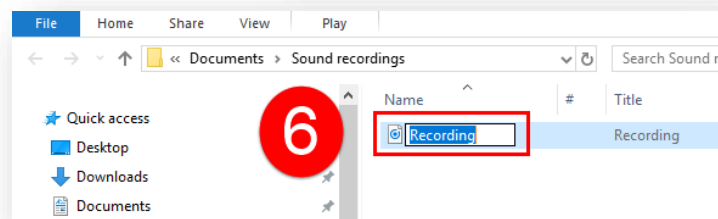
4. The recording will be saved automatically.

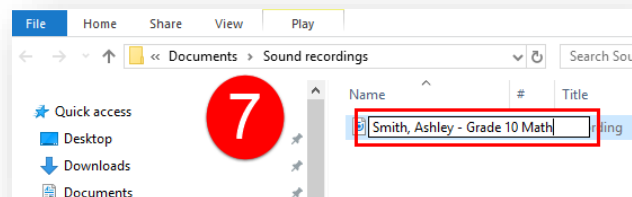5. "Right-click" on the recording to "Open file location"
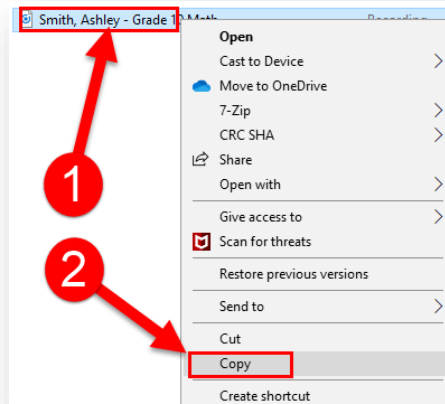

6. Click on the name of the file "Recording".

7. Rename LastName, FirstName – Grade level Subject (i.e. Smith, Ashley - Grade 10 Math).

If the teacher is performing a read-aloud for two or more students at a time, the recording will have to be duplicated and one file created, named accordingly, and saved for each student separately.
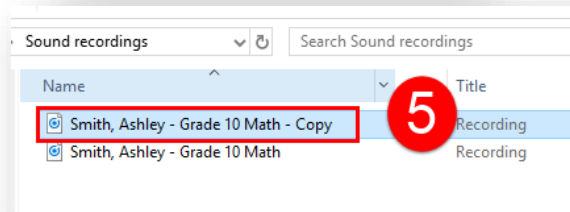
1. Right click on the file to be duplicated.
2. Select Copy.

3. Right click anywhere on the white space below the file(s).
4. Select Paste.
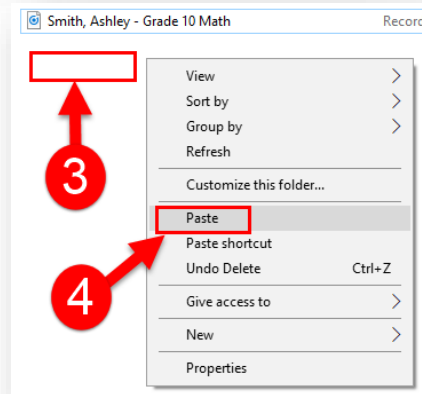
5. Pasting will create a copy of the orginal file.

6. Click on the copied file and rename accordingly.
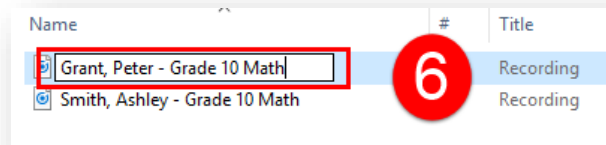
The file is ready to be uploaded to the Provincial Assessment Drop Off Site. We recommend you place the file on the server right away to avoid accidently losing or overwriting the file.

1. Navigate to the Audio Drop Box Site https://nbed.sharepoint.com/sites/AudioPOC
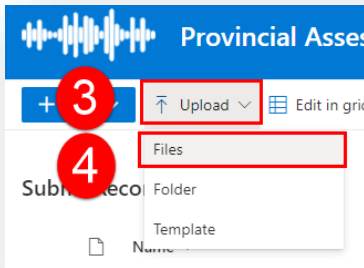
2. Click the Submit Audio Files button.
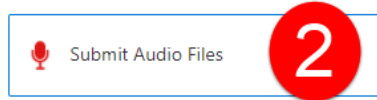
On the SubmitRecording page:

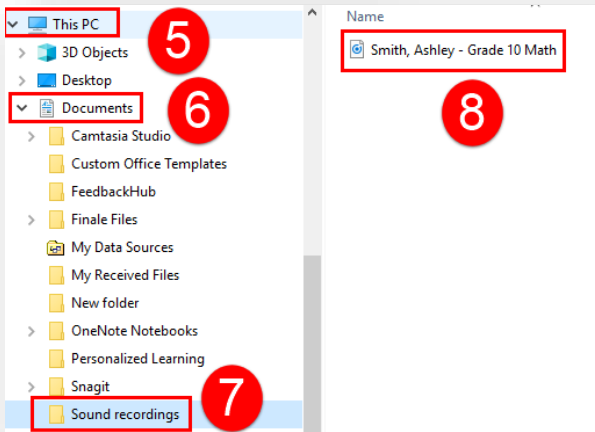3. Click the Upload button
4. Select Files.

From the Files Manager window:
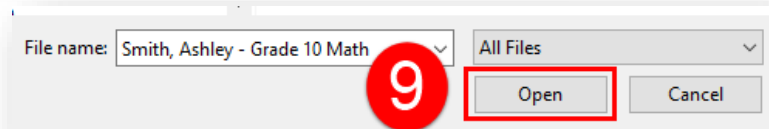
5. Select This PC.
6. Select Documents.
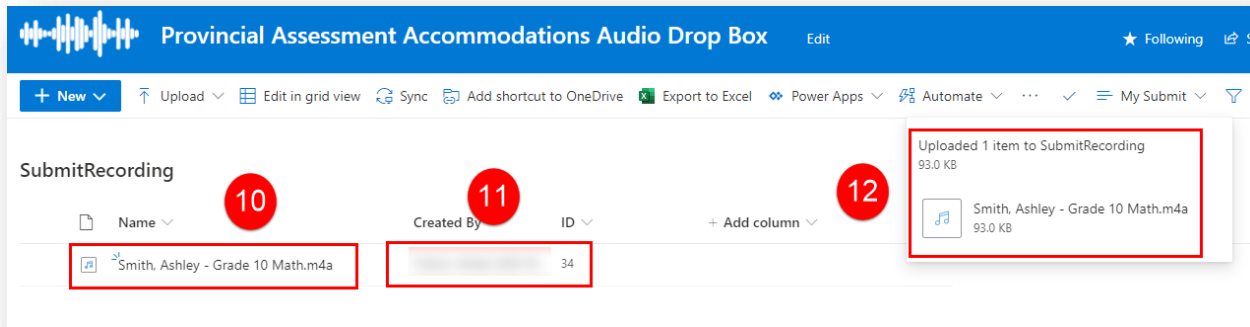7. Select Sound recordings.
8. Select the relevant file.

9. With the file selected, click open at the bottom of the File Manager window.

Once the file has been uploaded, the Audio Drop Box page will reappear.

10. The file name will be displayed.
11. The creator of the file will be recorded.
12. A notification of action will appear.

Please note: A security function has been added to this page which will move this file from the SubmitRecording page to a secure folder. If you return to this page at another time, do not be alarmed to see the files are no longer listed; the security feature has moved the files. No files have been deleted.

Appendix B

Electronic Translator Use For Mathematics and Scientific Literacy Assessments

Electronic translators are permitted on the Mathematics and Scientific Literacy Assessments **only**.

Their use must adhere to the following:

1) Microsoft Electronic Translator app on an iPad is the **only one permitted**. (Google translate, phones, etc. are not).
2) Ensure the app is set to the appropriate language before beginning.
3) The iPad **must** be set to **Guided Access**. Note: When the iPad is turned off, Guided Access is also turned off and must be re-set prior to the next use.
4) Electronic translation is to be used with the online platform, so two devices will be required, (a booklet will not be provided for this use).
5) Students attempting the assessments should be at the B1 level of English. "Students at A1 – A2 levels of English, as per the *Common European Framework of Reference for Language* (CEFR), are generally exempted". Please refer to the *Provincial Assessment Online Administration Guide,* Page 4.

Bilingual dictionaries are also permitted.

Please email Linda O'Blenis (linda.o'blenis@gnb.ca) for approval and to provide the name of students for whom this accommodation is requested.