

# Interactive Assessor Recommendations Guide

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## Introduction - What is Sensory Readable?

Sensory Readable® is an innovative software suite that assists with reading and writing. Sensory Readable is particularly effective within Microsoft Office/Office 365, Microsoft Edge and Google Chrome browsers as well as with PDF files. It is installed locally on a computer and, therefore, requires no internet connection to work. Sensory Readable offers a secure, offline installation. The software installs locally on Windows (MSI installer) and can be run in a fully offline mode, which is especially important for secure environments like exams or workplace networks with restricted internet access. No user data, documents, or voice recordings are sent to external servers, ensuring full privacy and data protection compliance.

A Mac version is also available

#### **System Specifications for Sensory Readable Suite for Windows**

Recommended Minimum Specification: Intel i5 processor, 8GB RAM, 365GB HDD. Where a student's own device falls below these minimum specifications, a DSA-funded WKH laptop will be required to ensure full functionality of the Sensory Readable Suite.

<u>Please Note</u>: If a user only requires usage elements of the Readable Suite, for example, **Sensory PDF Reader**, then the following minimum specification is recommended: **Intel i3 processor, 4GB RAM, 365GB HDD**.

## **Key Features of Sensory Readable**

#### Text-to-Speech with Natural Voices:

Sensory Readable includes high-quality, natural-sounding voices that operate completely offline. Users can adjust the speaking/reading rate, pitch, and voice to suit their individual preferences and reading comfort. Having a local, offline speech engine ensures smooth, lag-free performance and avoids the privacy concerns associated with cloud-based text-to-speech services.

#### Point & Speak:

This intuitive feature allows users to easily hover the mouse/pointer over any accessible text on a webpage, PDF, or document and have this read aloud instantly. There's no need to select or copy text manually. This "hover-to-read" capability provides immediate support for users with dyslexia, visual stress, or concentration difficulties, helping students with these difficulties to follow digital content naturally and efficiently.

#### • Underline-Highlight for Reading Focus:

As the software reads aloud, each word or sentence is highlighted or underlined in real time, making it easier to track the content visually. This is particularly helpful for individuals with dyslexia, ADHD, or visual tracking difficulties, and where visual stress can be considered under the relevant DSA funding guidance when assessing the need for this functionality. The highlighting style and colour can be customised for personal comfort, ensuring a balance between visibility and minimal visual distraction.

#### • Readability Tools for Visual Stress/Visual Support:

Sensory Readable includes a suite of visual comfort tools designed to reduce eye strain and improve focus. Where visual stress can be considered under the relevant DSA funding guidance, supportive features includes:

- Sensory Tint to provide colour screen tinting to apply colour overlays or filters to the entire display. Night and contrast modes are available in addition to adjustments for individuals with colour-vision sensitivities. Any tint can be set, including mono view, night mode and colour vision options.
- Sensory Ruler is masking vari-width screen ruler. This offers a movable reading ruler or mask to help maintain position while reading.
- Sensory PDF Reader is an accessible PDF reader. It is an
  accessible PDF reading tool that allows users to change the
  background colour of a PDF and have the text read aloud,
  provided the file is accessible. It can also function as a computer
  reader during exams, where permitted. This fully meets JCQ
  accessibility requirements.
- PDF Convert can convert inaccessible images of text, either scanned or photographed pages into accessible PDF files that maintain the original image.

These tools make extended reading sessions more comfortable and accessible for users with visual stress or other sensory sensitivities.

#### Dedicated PDF Reader:

A built-in Sensory PDF Reader means that it is possible to read, annotate, and listen to PDF documents directly, without third-party software. Sensory PDF also contains speech controls, colour backgrounds, simple annotations, zoom adjustments, and OCR for inaccessible PDFs. This feature supports academic reading, exam environments (where permitted in line with university/HEP guidelines), and document review tasks where accuracy and security are essential.

#### • OCR (Optical Character Recognition):

Built-in OCR technology enables Sensory Readable to convert inaccessible or image-based text (such as scanned PDF documents or screenshots) into selectable, readable content. The process is performed locally, ensuring that private or sensitive materials remain

secure. This functionality extends accessibility to a much wider range of learning materials and documents.

#### Writing and MS Word Support Integration:

The software integrates seamlessly with Microsoft Word, Office 365, and other common writing environments. Assignment text can be read aloud to aid proofreading, verifying dictated input, and enhancing comprehension. This feedback loop helps users to identify spelling, grammar, or structural issues by hearing work aloud, thereby improving accuracy and writing confidence.

#### Voice typing:

Readable supports writing via voice (voice typing) created by Voice Access or Dragon Pro. This facilitates writing composition, making it quicker and reducing cognitive load. The text can be proof read immediately by either echoing back each phrase or proof the whole dictation. This builds confidence and accuracy.

#### • Accessibility:

Sensory Readable has been designed from the ground up with accessibility and simplicity in mind. Its clean interface, large icons, and intuitive menus minimise learning time and maximise usability. Spoken prompts, notifications, and predictive text aids further enhance the user experience, supporting independent use across a range of ability levels.

#### • Ambient Sounds for Concentration:

A feature unique to Sensory Readable is its inclusion of ambient sounds for concentration, such as white noise, rainfall, and soft focus tones. These sounds can be blended with the reading voice using built-in audio controls, allowing users to create a calm and balanced listening environment. This feature helps to reduce distractions and improve focus, making it particularly beneficial for users with ADHD or sensory processing differences who may find background sound enhances their ability to concentrate during reading or study tasks.

## Who will benefit from Sensory Readable

#### Sensory Readable can support students with:

#### Neurodivergence

- Dyslexia
- Dyspraxia or Developmental Coordination Disorder (DCD)
- o Dyscalculia
- Dysgraphia
- Speech and language difficulties
- Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)
- Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) / Aspergers

Neurodivergent students, including individuals with dyslexia, ADHD, autism, dyspraxia, or sensory processing differences can often encounter unique barriers to effective studying, reading, and writing. Many neurodivergent students require more time to process information, understand complex sentences, or remember what has just been read. Limitations in working memory can make it harder to hold multiple pieces of information in memory at once, making it hard to remember key points while reading or writing, often leading to frustration and slower task completion.

Maintaining attention can be difficult, particularly when working online or in distracting environments. Text-heavy materials, screen glare, and poor contrast can cause discomfort and fatigue, reducing the ability to sustain reading for long periods. Environmental distractions such as background noise, bright lighting, or visual clutter can also heighten anxiety or reduce concentration even further. Difficulty following lines of text or visually tracking reading progress may also impact, and affect comprehension and increase cognitive load. There may also be difficulties switching between programs, tabs, or multiple documents interrupting focus and making tasks feel fragmented.

**Sensory Readable** provides a suite of tools that make reading, studying, and processing information more accessible for neurodivergent learners, including those with SpLD, ASC, and ADHD. Its features combine visual and auditory support to reduce cognitive load and improve focus.

#### Mental Health conditions

- Anxiety
- Depression
- Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)
- Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD)
- Borderline Personality Disorder (BPD)

Students who experience mental health conditions often face challenges that can directly impact their ability to study effectively. These difficulties may vary in severity but commonly include reduced concentration and focus and /or intrusive thoughts or low motivation, making it difficult to sustain attention on reading or writing tasks. Symptoms of depression or the side effects of medication can reduce stamina and processing speed and bring fatigue and low energy. Mental health conditions can also affect short-term memory, working memory, and information recall. Long reading sessions, reading demands, or dense academic materials may increase anxiety and cognitive overload, and students may feel discouraged or doubt their academic abilities. Stress and anxiety can often heighten sensitivity to light, noise, or visual clutter, making screens uncomfortable to use. Fluctuating mental health can also disrupt study routines and time management.

**Sensory Readable** provides calm, structured, and accessible tools that help mitigate these difficulties by supporting focus, reducing sensory overload, and promoting independent, manageable learning routines.

#### Physical disabilities/Unseen disability

- Arthritis
- Scoliosis
- Sciatica
- Raynaud's syndrome
- o Fibromyalgia
- ME / Chronic Fatigue Syndrome (CFS)
- Sickle cell anaemia
- Long Covid
- Multiple Sclerosis (MS)
- Brain injury

- Sickle cell anaemia
- Postural orthostatic tachycardia syndrome (POTS)

Students with physical disabilities (such as limited mobility, reduced dexterity, repetitive strain injury, or chronic pain) and those with unseen or fluctuating conditions (such as chronic fatigue syndrome, fibromyalgia, ME, or long-term health conditions) can experience a range of barriers that affect the ability to study consistently and comfortably.

Common challenges include fatigue and low energy that make concentration or extended study difficult. Problems sustaining focus or working at a computer for long periods can be common due to pain, medication side-effects, or sensory strain; physical discomfort or pain can also impact writing or typing and make it difficult to sit at a computer for prolonged periods. Reduced dexterity or motor control, making text selection, scrolling, or note-taking difficult. Fluctuating symptoms can lead to inconsistent performance and reduced productivity. Anxiety or frustration may arise, caused by limited physical control, interruptions in workflow, or reduced independence.

**Sensory Readable** provides practical, accessible tools that reduce physical and cognitive effort, improve comfort, and help students maintain independence in their academic work.

#### Visual difficulties/Low Vision

- Glaucoma
- Keractaconus
- Migraine (with aura)
- Diabetic retinopathy
- Multiple sclerosis
- Strabismus

Students with visual conditions can often experience fluctuating or restricted vision, which can significantly affect their ability to study comfortably and independently. Common challenges include visual fatigue and eye strain when reading for long periods. Blurred or distorted vision that can make small fonts or dense text difficult to read. Visual discomfort from bright screens or high

contrast may also be present. There can be difficulties tracking lines of text or maintaining visual focus. Due to visual limitations, the rate of reading can be slower, and this can impact comprehension. Headaches or migraines may occur, triggered by glare, screen brightness, or visual stress. There may also be challenges using standard software interfaces that rely heavily on visual precision.

**Sensory Readable** can help to address these barriers through its flexible, multi-sensory approach, combining text-to-speech, customisable visual settings, and offline accessibility to support comfort, comprehension, and independence.

#### Hearing loss

- Bilateral hearing loss
- Tinnitus
- Misophonia
- Phonophobia

Students with hearing loss, partial hearing, or auditory processing difficulties may encounter barriers that affect how they receive and process information across their studies. These challenges can include accessing spoken information in lectures, seminars, or video content. Reliance on visual reading for comprehension may cause fatigue during long study sessions. There can be reduced access to tone and emphasis in spoken feedback or discussion, affecting interpretation and understanding. There may also be increased cognitive load when trying to lip-read, read captions, or process visual and written information simultaneously.

**Sensory Readable** provides accessible, multi-sensory tools that reinforce visual comprehension, written clarity, and independent learning, supporting students who primarily process information visually.

## Areas of study where Sensory Readable can be recommended

## Neurodivergence

#### Reading and Research

- Sensory Readable can support working memory and processing speed deficits. Text-to-speech and real-time highlighting features allow students to listen while following the text visually, reinforcing understanding through dual input (auditory and visual). By hearing content read aloud, students can process information more efficiently, retain key details for longer, and reduce the strain on working memory. The ability to replay text also enables students to review material at their own pace aiding retention.
- Text-to-Speech means content can also be processed without using the screen. Text-to-Speech provides a second input helping readers stay engaged with content. Save to Audio also allows for offline listening.
- The Point & Speak and OCR features ensure that all text, even image-based or scanned materials can instantly be read aloud. This allows students to access information from a wide range of sources, whether reading online content, digital textbooks, printed handouts, or notes captured from a phone. The built-in OCR converts printed or photographed text into readable digital content, enabling students to listen, understand, and engage with materials from multiple formats.
- Where there are difficulties processing reading material in images or 'locked' PDF files, Sensory Readable's *Text Extractor* extracts text from images and documents into Text-to-Speech or the clipboard.
- Additionally, the Sensory Readable iOS app extends accessibility to mobile devices, making it possible to capture text using a smartphone's camera and hear it read aloud instantly. This flexibility means students can study anywhere, in class, at home, or on the go, and remain independent when working with both digital and paper-based materials. Together, these tools remove many of the

barriers neurodivergent learners face when dealing with varied study resources, improving comprehension and supporting consistent, confident learning.

- Where difficulties arising from visual stress are considered under the relevant DSA funding guidance, built-in visual support tools, such as Sensory Tint (screen overlays) and the Sensory Ruler, can reduce glare and support visual tracking across lines of text.
- Ambient sounds to aid concentration, such as white noise or rainfall, can be balanced with the reading voice to create a calm and focused study environment.

Together, these features make reading and research tasks more accessible, less fatiguing, and more efficient, supporting comprehension, focus, and independence across different reading materials and study settings.

#### Writing and Reviewing Academic Work

- Many neurodivergent students can experience challenges with spelling, grammar, sentence structure, and working memory, particularly when composing or reviewing written work.
   Sensory Readable directly supports the writing, editing and proofreading process through auditory feedback and reading support tools. Integration with Microsoft Word and Office 365 helps to identify spelling or grammatical errors, improve sentence flow, and refine academic tone. Silent proofreading can be particularly challenging for individuals who experience reading difficulties or who are easily distracted as part of their diagnosis.
- This read-aloud process enhances proofreading accuracy and writing confidence, enabling students to produce clearer and more cohesive written work independently. Text-to-Speech makes errors audible when proofreading and highlights "wordiness", redundancy and repetition in writing.
- Sensory Readable includes voice typing. This can be used to dictate text into any application without requiring an internet connection. This feature can be activated using the Dictate/Microphone button or via voice.
- The combination of visual and auditory feedback supports students

with neurodivergence by engaging multiple senses, which can help compensate for challenges with working memory, attention, and self-monitoring. Hearing the text read aloud enables students to detect errors or inconsistencies they might miss when reading silently, allowing for more accurate and confident editing in real time.

 Sensory Readable includes a range of additional reading tools designed to support accessibility and study, such as Sensory Tint, Sensory Ruler, and Underline-Highlight for reading focus. These features can enhance engagement, improve concentration, and help neurodivergent users detect errors more effectively.

#### **Note-taking in Lectures and Seminars**

- Neurodivergent learners often find note-taking and summarising information challenging, particularly when processing information quickly during lectures or while reading. Sensory Readable can support these learners by allowing them to listen to complex material while following highlighted text, enhancing comprehension and retention. This makes it a valuable tool for reviewing handouts before or after lectures, engaging with content on the VLE, or accessing supporting library materials. Additionally, Sensory Scribe (another application available from Sensory App House Ltd.) can be used during teaching sessions to capture spoken content, providing an accessible way to revisit and consolidate learning.
- The OCR and IOS mobile app tools make it easy to extract notes from printed materials, screenshots, or handwritten pages and convert them into editable text for study use.
- This promotes more effective and organised note-taking, especially when dealing with varied or inaccessible resources.

### Time management and organisation

- For students who struggle with focus, organisation, or managing study time, **Sensory Readable** provides a more structured and less cognitively demanding way to engage with academic work.
- The offline functionality ensures that reading and writing support is always available, without the distractions or inconsistencies of

cloud-based tools.

- Features like highlighted reading, audio feedback, and ambient sound balancing help maintain concentration during longer study sessions.
- By reducing reading fatigue through its accessibility features, and simplifying access to content, students can work more efficiently, manage their time better, and complete academic tasks more confidently.

#### Access to and use of technology

- Sensory Readable is designed with **a**ccessibility, simplicity, and privacy at its core, ensuring that technology enhances, rather than complicates, the study experience.
- The software operates entirely offline, ensuring data privacy and security. No personal or academic data is sent to external servers.
- The clean and intuitive interface uses clear icons and straightforward menus, reducing the cognitive load associated with navigating complex systems.
- Compatibility with Microsoft Edge, MS Word, Google Chrome, and PDF documents allows seamless integration with common academic resources.
- The software is lightweight and optimised to run smoothly on educational laptops meeting DSA-recommended specifications, ensuring reliable performance without slowing down other assistive tools.
- Visual comfort tools such as *Sensory Tint*, *Sensory Ruler*, and highlight tracking reduce eye strain and help maintain concentration.
- Readable intelligently detects and announces other relevant information if chosen, such as menus, buttons, links, word prediction or tool tips, that might aid in understanding the content and navigating applications more effectively.

#### **Examinations and Timed Assessments**

- Challenges such as information overload, poor working memory and time pressure can impact performance and confidence in examination preparation.
- During Examination Preparation students can listen to study materials, revision notes, or practice questions using text-to-speech to reinforce understanding through auditory learning.
- Visual aids such as Sensory Tint and Sensory Ruler can help to maintain focus during long revision sessions, reducing eye strain.
- The ability to replay key content allows learners to revisit complex material multiple times without fatigue, improving information retention.
- Ambient sound options can create a calm study environment, reducing anxiety and supporting longer, more focused revision periods.
- The **IOS mobile app** supports flexible, on-the-go revision by allowing users to capture and listen to notes or printed resources anywhere.
- Sensory PDF Reader is an accessible PDF reader. Sensory PDF
  Reader is an accessible PDF reading tool that allows users to change
  the background colour of a PDF and have the text read aloud,
  provided the file is accessible to aid revision. Sensory PDF Reader
  can also function as a computer reader during exams, where
  permitted in line with HEP guidance.

#### **Mental Health conditions**

#### Reading and Research

- Students with symptoms of anxiety, low mood, and/or concentration difficulties often find it challenging to focus on long reading sessions or absorb complex information. Sensory Readable makes reading less overwhelming and more comfortable through a combination of audio support, visual comfort tools, and customisable settings. By hearing content read aloud, students can process information more efficiently. The ability to replay text also enables students to review material at their own pace, aiding retention.
- The text-to-speech and Point & Speak features enable students to listen to material rather than relying on visual reading alone, which can reduce fatigue and anxiety around comprehension.
- Underline-highlighting synchronises spoken words with visual tracking, improving engagement and helping users maintain attention.
- Sensory Tint and Sensory Ruler provide soft background colours and focus tools to promote a calmer reading experience.
- Ambient sound options (e.g., gentle white noise or nature sounds)
  can create a soothing environment that supports focus and reduces
  anxiety.
- The OCR feature and IOS mobile app make it easy to access materials in multiple formats, including printed handouts or online sources, supporting flexibility and autonomy.
- By combining sensory control and multi-modal reading, Sensory Readable helps students stay engaged with study materials without feeling overwhelmed.
- Sensory Readable's Text-to-Speech feature allows content to be processed audibly, reducing the need to focus visually on the screen. This can be particularly helpful during periods of fatigue, stress, or low concentration. Listening to text provides an additional sensory input, helping students to stay engaged and connected with the material even when reading feels overwhelming.

- The Save to Audio option enables users to convert written material into audio files for offline listening. This flexibility supports wellbeing by allowing students to review content in a more comfortable setting such as while resting, or taking a break from screen time, helping to manage workload and reduce anxiety.
- The Point & Speak and OCR features ensure that all text, even image-based or scanned materials can instantly be read aloud. This allows students to access information from a wide range of sources, whether reading online content, digital textbooks, printed handouts, or notes captured from a phone. The built-in OCR converts printed or photographed text into readable digital content, enabling students to listen, understand, and engage with materials from multiple formats.
- Where there are difficulties processing reading material in images or 'locked' PDF files, Sensory Readable's *Text Extractor* extracts text from images and documents into Text-to-Speech or the clipboard.

Together, these features make reading and research tasks more accessible, less fatiguing, and more efficient, supporting comprehension, focus, and independence across different reading materials and study settings.

#### Writing and Reviewing Academic Work

- Writing can be particularly challenging for students with mental health conditions due to difficulties including low motivation, fatigue, intrusive thoughts, or reduced confidence. Sensory Readable helps by making the writing and proofreading process more manageable, focused, and less stressful.
- **Sensory Readable** includes voice typing. This can be used to dictate text into any application without requiring an internet connection. This feature can be activated using the Dictate/Microphone button or via voice. This can be helpful where there are difficulties presenting work in written form, or a fear of the blank page and making a start on assignments is problematic.
- Integration with Microsoft Word and Office 365 allows students to have their work read aloud, providing instant feedback and reassurance while helping to identify errors in spelling, grammar, or

structure.

- Hearing text spoken back helps students detect mistakes they might overlook visually, improving accuracy and confidence in their written work.
- Underline-highlighting draws gentle attention to each word or sentence as it is spoken, supporting sustained focus and reducing the likelihood of missing key details during review.
- The Sensory Tint feature enables students to customise the background colour of the screen, helping to ease fatigue and create a more soothing, less stressful workspace that supports sustained concentration and wellbeing.
- The combination of Sensory Tint and highlight tracking helps maintain visual focus, reduces overstimulation, and encourages steady progress through editing tasks.
- Listening to text also allows students to hold and process information more effectively without relying solely on visual reading.
- These tools collectively provide a multi-sensory proofreading environment that helps students stay calm, focused, and confident while managing their written work.
- By combining calm visuals, audio feedback, and error detection through read-aloud, Sensory Readable can help to transform the writing and editing process into a more comfortable, supportive experience that reduces stress and enhances clarity and self-assurance.
- Sensory Readable includes voice typing. This can be used to dictate text into any application without requiring an internet connection. This feature can be activated using the Dictate/Microphone button or via voice.

#### **Note-taking in Lectures and Seminars**

 Students with mental health conditions may find it difficult to keep up with the pace of lectures or seminars due to reduced concentration, slower processing speed, fatigue, or memory difficulties. These challenges can make it hard to absorb spoken information in real time or take effective notes. **Sensory Readable** supports both preparation before lectures and consolidation afterwards, helping students manage workload and learning more effectively.

Students can use Sensory Readable to read and listen to materials in advance of lectures, such as presentations, readings from the Virtual Learning Environment (VLE), journal articles, or digital handouts. Hearing the material beforehand improves understanding and builds confidence going into taught sessions. Additionally, **Sensory Scribe** (another application available from Sensory App House Ltd.) can be used during teaching sessions to capture spoken content, providing an accessible way to revisit and consolidate learning.

• Using the OCR tool and Sensory Readable iOS app it is possible to convert text from printed books, photocopies, or lecture handouts into accessible digital text that can be read aloud. This makes it easier to engage with required readings or reference materials that are not in an accessible digital format. This can promote more effective and organised note-taking, especially when dealing with varied or inaccessible resources. By allowing students to prepare in advance and review afterwards, Sensory Readable encourages more confident participation in lectures, reduces anxiety about missing information, and supports effective note-taking and study habits.

#### Time management and organisation

- Students with mental health conditions may struggle with motivation, concentration, and maintaining consistent study patterns due to fluctuating energy levels, low mood, anxiety, or fatigue. These factors can make managing time, prioritising tasks, and sustaining focus over long periods particularly challenging. Sensory Readable helps students develop more structured, manageable, and less stressful study routines by supporting focus, consistency, and pacing across their work.
- The software's text-to-speech functionality allows students to engage with reading or research materials even when concentration or energy is low, enabling progress without the same mental effort required for visual reading.
- Visual comfort tools such as Sensory Tint and the Sensory Ruler help

students work for longer periods with reduced fatigue, improving comfort and endurance during study sessions.

- Ambient sound features (such as white noise or soft focus tones) help create a calm, distraction-free environment, supporting sustained attention and reducing the anxiety that can interrupt concentration.
- By allowing content to be read aloud or replayed, Sensory Readable helps students review material efficiently and maintain productivity, even on days when focus fluctuates.
- The software's offline operation ensures it is always available, helping students maintain momentum without relying on an internet connection or complex logins.
- Because Sensory Readable is intuitive and easy to use, students can quickly access what they need without wasting time navigating menus or troubleshooting technology.

Together, these features help students **s**tructure their study sessions more effectively, reduce cognitive load, and manage their time in a way that supports wellbeing and consistency. By lowering stress and removing unnecessary barriers, Sensory Readable encourages steady progress and helps students maintain confidence in their ability to keep up with academic demands.

#### Access to and use of technology

- Sensory Readable is designed with accessibility, simplicity, and privacy at its core, ensuring that technology enhances, rather than complicates, the study experience.
- The software operates entirely offline, ensuring data privacy and security. No personal or academic data is sent to external servers.
- The clean and intuitive interface uses clear icons and straightforward menus, reducing the cognitive load associated with navigating complex systems.
- Compatibility with Microsoft Edge, MS Word, Google Chrome, and PDF documents allows seamless integration with common academic

resources.

- The software is lightweight and optimised to run smoothly on educational laptops meeting DSA-recommended specifications, ensuring reliable performance without slowing down other assistive tools.
- Visual comfort tools such as Sensory Tint, Sensory Ruler, and highlight tracking help maintain concentration.
- Sensory Readable intelligently detects and announces other relevant information if chosen, such as menus, buttons, links, word prediction or tool tips, that might aid in understanding the content and navigating applications more effectively.

#### **Examinations and Timed Assessments**

- Exams and timed assessments can trigger significant stress and anxiety for students with mental health conditions. Sensory Readable provides essential support for exam preparation promoting calm, focus and self-confidence.
- During examination preparation students can listen to revision notes and study materials instead of reading visually, reducing fatigue and improving comprehension.
- The *ambient sound features* can help to create a calm, focused study atmosphere to manage anxiety during revision sessions.
- The ability to replay and review key material can support memory consolidation and build confidence in understanding content.
- Sensory Tint and Sensory Ruler reduce fatigue and visual strain during long study periods, helping maintain comfort and stamina.
- The **IOS mobile app** supports flexible, on-the-go revision by allowing users to capture and listen to notes or printed resources anywhere.
- The software's offline mode allows secure use in controlled examination environments, where permitted, ensuring full functionality without internet access.

## Physical disabilities/Unseen disability

#### Reading and Research

- Students with physical or unseen disabilities may find it difficult to sit for long periods to engage with readings. It may be challenging to use a mouse, or scroll through digital documents. Fatigue, visual strain, or pain can further reduce reading stamina. Sensory Readable minimises physical and cognitive effort and increases accessibility through powerful audio, visual, and mobile tools that make reading more flexible and less physically demanding.
- Text-to-speech and Point & Speak allow users to listen to materials without needing to scroll, select, or manually move through text, reducing reliance on fine motor control.
- The underline-highlighting and Sensory Tint features make text easier to follow and reduce visual fatigue, common with many conditions, enabling longer, more comfortable reading sessions.
- OCR technology converts printed materials, textbooks, or scanned documents into readable digital text, removing the need to handle heavy books or printed resources.
- With the **Sensory Readable iOS app** it is possible to take a photo of text and have it read aloud immediately. This offers greater flexibility and accessibility for those who may find it difficult to use a computer, turn pages, carry heavy books, or sit at a desk for long periods.
- The Save to Audio feature enables students to convert text into MP3 audio files. Readings can then be reviewed/listened to offline through headphones or a mobile device. This helps manage fatigue and supports flexible study, particularly when visual reading or screen time is challenging.
- Ambient sound options create a calm and supportive environment that helps maintain focus without physical strain.
   By enabling students to listen rather than read visually, and by reducing mouse and keyboard input, Sensory Readable® helps conserve energy, reduces physical discomfort, and promotes independent, accessible learning, even during periods of pain or

fatigue.

#### Writing and Reviewing Academic Work

- Students with physical difficulties may experience pain, stiffness, or limited dexterity, making typing or using traditional editing tools difficult. For those with unseen disabilities, fatigue, medication side effects, or cognitive fog can impact attention and accuracy. Sensory Readable provides accessible tools that reduce physical effort and improve accuracy through feedback and visual comfort features.
- Sensory Readable has easy access to dictation which means
  the keyboard can be bypassed altogether, if needed. Sensory
  Readable includes voice typing. This can be used to dictate text
  into any application without requiring an internet connection. This
  feature can be activated using the Dictate/Microphone button or
  via voice.
- The software offers intuitive navigation with adjustable text spacing and integrated one-click tools for spell checking, word lookup, and thesaurus access.
- To assist with proofreading, *underline-highlighting* guides the eye to each spoken word, helping to track content easily while reviewing written work, without unnecessary scrolling or visual strain.
- Integration with Microsoft Word and Office 365 allows students to have their writing read aloud, providing immediate feedback and reassurance without relying on extensive manual editing.
- The Sensory Tint overlay reduces screen glare and helps maintain focus, particularly during long writing or proofreading sessions.
- Hearing written text read aloud supports error detection, allowing students to identify spelling or grammatical issues without extensive keyboard corrections.
- The multi-sensory feedback of audio, highlighting, and tinting reduces stress, supports accuracy, and allows students to complete writing tasks comfortably and independently, even on days when fine motor skills are limited and/or energy is low.
- Integration with Microsoft Word and Office 365 allows students to

have their work read aloud, providing instant feedback and reassurance while helping to identify errors in spelling, grammar, or structure.

- Hearing text spoken back helps students detect mistakes they might overlook visually, improving accuracy and confidence in their written work.
- The Sensory Tint feature enables students to customise the background colour of the screen, helping to ease fatigue and create a more soothing, less stressful workspace that supports sustained concentration and wellbeing.
- The combination of Sensory Tint and highlight tracking helps maintain visual focus, reduces overstimulation, and encourages steady progress through editing tasks.
- Listening to text also allows students to hold and process information more effectively without relying solely on visual reading.
- These tools collectively provide a multi-sensory proofreading environment that helps students stay calm, focused, and confident while managing their written work.
- Sensory Readable includes voice typing. This can be used to dictate text into any application without requiring an internet connection. This feature can be activated using the Dictate/Microphone button or via voice.

#### **Note-taking in Lectures and Seminars**

- Students with physical or unseen disabilities may find traditional note-taking difficult due to pain, fatigue, or reduced hand coordination. Maintaining consistent notes can also be challenging when symptoms fluctuate. Sensory Readable supports students in preparing for and reviewing lectures with minimal physical effort.
- Students can use **Sensory Readable** to read and listen to materials in advance of lectures, such as presentations, readings from the Virtual Learning Environment (VLE), journal articles, or digital handouts, reducing the need for rapid note-taking during sessions.

Hearing the material beforehand improves understanding and builds confidence going into taught sessions. Additionally, **Sensory Scribe** (another application available from Sensory App House Ltd.) can be used during teaching sessions to capture spoken content, providing an accessible way to revisit and consolidate learning.

 The OCR and iOS app allow printed handouts, books, or lecture notes to be converted into accessible text for listening and annotation.

By allowing students to prepare in advance and review afterwards, Sensory Readable reduces the physical strain and mental pressure associated with fast-paced learning environments, promoting steady and independent study. **Sensory Readable** supports both preparation before lectures and consolidation afterwards, helping students manage workload and learning more effectively.

#### Time management and organisation

- Students with physical and unseen disabilities may experience fatigue, variable pain levels, or medication side effects that affect concentration, productivity, and routine. Sensory Readable supports students in managing time and study energy more effectively by reducing effort and simplifying access to materials.
- Text-to-speech tools allow students to engage with readings even when typing or screen use is difficult, enabling progress on low-energy days.
- Visual comfort tools such as Sensory Tint and Sensory Ruler reduce visual fatigue/eye strain and help sustain attention without overexertion.
- Offline functionality ensures access to key features anytime, without relying on internet connectivity or complex logins, supporting flexibility around fluctuating health.
- Ambient sound features (such as white noise or soft focus tones) help create a calm, distraction-free study environment that supports pacing and concentration.
- Because **Sensory Readable** is easy to navigate, students can focus

on study tasks rather than managing technology, preserving valuable time and energy.

- The software's offline operation ensures it is always available, helping students maintain momentum without relying on an internet connection or complex logins.
- Because Sensory Readable is intuitive and easy to use, students can quickly access what they need without wasting time navigating menus or troubleshooting technology.

Together, these features help students **s**tructure their study sessions more effectively, reduce cognitive load, and manage their time in a way that supports wellbeing and consistency. By lowering stress and removing unnecessary barriers, Sensory Readable encourages steady progress and helps students maintain confidence in their ability to keep up with academic demands.

#### Access to and use of technology

- Technology use can be physically and mentally demanding for students with limited mobility, pain, fatigue, or fluctuating health. Tasks such as prolonged typing, mouse use, or navigating complex interfaces can increase discomfort and reduce study efficiency.
   Sensory Readable is designed with accessibility, simplicity, and privacy at its core, ensuring that technology enhances, rather than complicates, the study experience.
- Sensory Readable is designed to make technology access low-effort, allowing students to engage independently and confidently with their studies. It has a clean, uncluttered interface with large, clearly labelled icons. This minimises the number of clicks and physical movements required to access key features. This helps students who experience pain, tremors, or reduced hand dexterity.
- Customisable keyboard shortcuts and simple navigation controls can support users who may use adaptive devices or alternative input methods, such as switches or touch controls.
- The software operates entirely offline, ensuring data privacy and security. No personal or academic data is sent to external servers.

- Compatibility with Microsoft Edge, MS Word, Google Chrome, and PDF documents allows seamless integration with common academic resources.
- The software is lightweight and optimised to run smoothly on educational laptops meeting DSA-recommended specifications, ensuring reliable performance without slowing down other assistive tools.
- Customisable display settings, including Sensory Tint and font adjustments, make the screen easier to view and interact with, further reducing visual and physical strain.
- Sensory Readable can detect and announce other relevant information, if chosen, such as menus, buttons, links, word prediction or tool tips, that might aid in understanding the content and navigating applications more effectively.

#### **Examinations and Timed Assessments**

- Examinations can be particularly challenging for students with physical difficulties or fluctuating health conditions due to pain, fatigue, or reduced dexterity under time pressure. Sensory Readable provides vital support to make exam preparation more accessible and less physically demanding.
- During preparation, students can listen to revision notes or readings using text-to-speech rather than manually reading for long periods.
- The *ambient sound features* can help to create a calm, focused study atmosphere to manage anxiety during revision sessions.
- The ability to replay and review key material can support memory consolidation and build confidence in understanding content.
- Sensory Tint and Sensory Ruler reduce fatigue and visual fatigue during long study periods, helping maintain comfort and stamina.
- The **IOS mobile app** supports flexible, on-the-go revision by allowing users to capture and listen to notes or printed resources anywhere.
- The software's offline mode allows secure use in controlled

examination environments, where permitted, ensuring full functionality without internet access.

#### Visual difficulties

#### Reading and Research

- Students with visual conditions may struggle to read digital text clearly, follow lines of text/track reading progress, and find glare and contrast problematic. Through its range of features, **Sensory Readable** can make reading a more accessible experience.
- Both the text-to-speech and Point & Speak features enable students to listen to material rather than relying on visual reading, reducing eye strain and fatigue.
- *Underline-highlighting* and the *Sensory Ruler* help guide the eye across text, improving focus and reducing tracking difficulties.
- Sensory Tint makes it possible to apply a soft background colour to reduce glare and ease migraine or light sensitivity.
- Customisable zoom and font options make it easier to enlarge text for clearer visibility.
- The Save to Audio feature enables users to convert readings into MP3 files, allowing them to listen to study materials through headphones rather than viewing the screen, especially useful during flare-ups, such as with migraine, or when vision is limited.
- OCR functionality converts printed or scanned materials into accessible digital text that can be read aloud.
- The **iOS** app lets students capture and listen to text instantly from printed books or handouts without straining to read fine print.
  - By combining audio output with adjustable visual presentation, Sensory Readable supports reading and research in a way that reduces visual stress, prevents fatigue, and ensures full access to study materials.

#### **Writing and Reviewing Academic Work**

- Writing and proofreading can be difficult for students with vision loss due to reduced clarity, visual distortion, or sensitivity to screen brightness. Tasks such as scrolling through long documents or visually scanning text to detect errors can cause additional strain and fatigue. Sensory Readable provides auditory and visual tools that make writing and editing more accessible, less visually demanding, and more efficient.
- Integration with Microsoft Word and Office 365 allows written text to be read aloud, helping students detect spelling, grammar, and structural errors that may be difficult to see visually.
- Sensory Readable includes voice typing. This can be used to dictate text into any application without requiring an internet connection. This feature can be activated using the Dictate/Microphone button or via voice.
- The *underline-highlighting* feature tracks each spoken word on screen, guiding the eyes naturally and reducing the need for manual scrolling or visual searching through text.
- Sensory Tint softens the screen display and reduces glare, making it easier for students with light sensitivity or migraines to review their work for longer periods.
- The ability to adjust colour, contrast, and text size provides flexibility for a range of visual needs, improving comfort and accessibility during extended writing sessions.
- Listening back to written work allows students to identify subtle errors, check sentence flow, and ensure accuracy without relying on sustained visual effort.
- Ambient sound options can be used to create a calm, low-stimulation workspace, helping reduce visual fatigue and supporting concentration.

This multi-sensory feedback process allows students to edit confidently, manage long documents with less scrolling, and maintain accuracy without visual overexertion. By combining audio support, highlighting, and visual comfort tools, **Sensory Readable** enables

students with visual conditions to complete written work more comfortably, accurately, and independently.

#### Note-taking in Lectures and Seminars

- Students with visual impairments can often find fast-paced lectures, dense slides, or complex diagrams difficult to process visually.
   Sensory Readable can offer support by allowing students to prepare and review materials without overreliance on visual reading. Students can use text-to-speech to listen to lecture slides, readings, or materials on the VLE in advance of lectures, improving familiarity with content.
- The OCR tool and iOS app allow printed materials to be captured and read aloud, removing barriers posed by small or inaccessible text. Replay and adjustable speech speed controls let users process information at a comfortable pace and revisit key content after lectures.
- Sensory Tint and Sensory Ruler can be used to highlight specific lines or reduce contrast, supporting more comfortable review sessions.

These features allow students to prepare independently, participate more confidently in class, and reduce the visual stress associated with intensive reading.

Additionally, **Sensory Scribe** (another application available from Sensory App House Ltd.) can be used during teaching sessions to capture spoken content, providing an accessible way to capture, revisit and consolidate information.

#### Time management and organisation

- Visual conditions often cause fatigue or variable vision, making it difficult to sustain study effort and/or meet deadlines. Sensory Readable supports effective time management by reducing visual effort and enabling consistent study routines.
- Text-to-speech and audio playback allow students to study using

auditory methods when vision is strained or when screen use is uncomfortable.

- Save to Audio provides portable access to readings, enabling revision through listening while resting the eyes.
- Sensory Tint and other customisable settings allow students to adjust the visual display to reduce glare, eye strain and/or headaches during long sessions.
- The software's offline operation ensures it is always available, helping students maintain momentum without relying on an internet connection or complex logins. Offline functionality ensures that all features remain available without needing to navigate online platforms, saving time and reducing visual load.
- Because Sensory Readable is intuitive and easy to use, students can quickly access what they need without wasting time navigating menus or troubleshooting technology.
- By providing flexible ways to study without constant screen use,
   Sensory Readable helps students manage their workload around visual fatigue and maintain steady progress.
- Sensory Readable includes voice typing. This can be used to dictate text into any application without requiring an internet connection. This feature can be activated using the Dictate/Microphone button or via voice.

#### Access to and use of technology

- Many standard software interfaces require precise mouse use, small visual targets, and long periods of screen interaction, which can be challenging for users with reduced vision. Sensory Readable simplifies access through intuitive design and vision-friendly features.
- Sensory Readable is designed to make technology access low-effort, allowing students to engage independently and confidently with their studies. It has a clean, uncluttered interface with large, clearly labelled icons. This minimises the number of clicks and physical movements required to access key features.

- Customisable display settings, including Sensory Tint and font adjustments, make the screen easier to view and interact with, further reducing visual strain.
- Sensory Tint, high-contrast modes, and adjustable brightness allow users to set display preferences that reduce visual strain, glare, or migraine triggers.
- Customisable keyboard shortcuts and simple navigation controls can support users who may use adaptive devices or alternative input methods, such as switches or touch controls.
- Sensory Readable can detect and announce other relevant information, if chosen, such as menus, buttons, links, word prediction or tool tips, that might aid in understanding the content and navigating applications more effectively.
- The software operates entirely offline, ensuring data privacy and security. No personal or academic data is sent to external servers.
- Compatibility with Microsoft Edge, MS Word, Google Chrome, and PDF documents allows seamless integration with common academic resources.
- The software is lightweight and optimised to run smoothly on educational laptops meeting DSA-recommended specifications, ensuring reliable performance without slowing down other assistive tools.

#### **Examinations and Timed Assessments**

- Examination preparation can be challenging for students with visual impairments due to small print, screen glare, or time pressure caused by slower reading speeds. **Sensory Readable** ensures that exam preparation becomes accessible and manageable.
- During Preparation, students can use Save to Audio and text-to-speech to revise through listening rather than reading, reducing eye strain.
- Sensory Tint and Ruler allow comfortable visual presentation during revision sessions.

- OCR tools make printed exam resources or practice papers accessible.
- The *ambient sound features* can help to create a calm, focused study atmosphere to manage anxiety during revision sessions.
- The ability to replay and review key material can support memory consolidation and build confidence in understanding content..
- The **IOS mobile app** supports flexible revision by allowing users to capture and listen to notes or printed resources anywhere.
- The software's offline mode allows secure use in controlled examination environments, where permitted, ensuring full functionality without internet access.

## **Hearing Loss**

#### Reading and Research

- Students with hearing loss or partial hearing may experience difficulties in reading comprehension. This may be due to reduced exposure to sound-based learning, particularly phonics and auditory word recognition during early education. This can often result in slower reading speeds, limited decoding ability, and greater cognitive effort when processing text. Where there is a reliance on prolonged visual effortful visual reading, this can be tiring, and may also lead to eye strain, fatigue, and reduced concentration. Sensory Readable helps to address these challenges by providing structured, visual, and multi-sensory reading support that reinforces understanding without relying on auditory phonics.
- The underline-highlighting feature tracks each word as it is read aloud on screen, linking visual text with sound and supporting word recognition for students who benefit from visual phonics reinforcement.
- Text-to-speech and Point & Speak features will allow students to follow text visually while listening, helping to strengthen vocabulary, spelling familiarity, and reading fluency through repeated exposure to accurate word pronunciation.
- The Save to Audio feature enables materials to be converted into MP3 format for later listening, supporting gradual reinforcement of text comprehension and language rhythm, even for those with residual or aided hearing.
- OCR functionality allows printed or scanned materials to be transformed into accessible text, ensuring all reading materials are available in a consistent, clear format.
- Adjustable speed, pitch, and voice clarity settings allow students to control speech output to match their comfort level, helping them process auditory content at a manageable pace.
- The Sensory Readable iOS app makes it easy to capture printed pages and listen or follow along visually, promoting independent

reading and study on the move.

By pairing audio and visual reading reinforcement, **Sensory Readable** can help students with partial hearing or phonics-related reading difficulties improve comprehension and reading confidence. Its flexible visual aids and customisable auditory feedback reduce fatigue, promote consistent understanding, and support long-term literacy development alongside academic study.

- Students with hearing loss may also find independent online research particularly challenging. Increasingly, it is necessary to supplement traditional research content with independent online resources such as webinars, YouTube videos, educational podcasts, or recorded research talks. These resources frequently lack accurate captions or accessible transcripts, making it difficult to follow complex academic discussions or extract key details. For students with hearing loss, captions are essential for making audio-visual content accessible. Sensory Scribe (another application available from Sensory App House Ltd.) can help by automatically recording and generating high-quality transcripts from online content, allowing students to access the spoken information in a clear, written format. The transcript can then be used for reading, note-taking, referencing, or cross-referencing during academic research. Because the text can be saved, searched, or highlighted, it supports efficient organisation and helps students locate key concepts quickly. By also offering accurate captions, Sensory Scribe enhances comprehension by allowing students to read while watching and later review the transcript for clarification or deeper understanding. This combination of visual and textual access reduces reliance on auditory information and supports independent learning.
- Sensory Scribe can enhance accessibility by converting audio from online content into searchable, transcripts. Sensory Scribe (another application available from Sensory App House Ltd.) can record and transcribe spoken content from webinars, lectures, and videos.

#### **Writing and Reviewing Academic Work**

- Students with hearing loss may rely more heavily on written communication and feedback, making accuracy, structure, and clarity in their academic writing especially important. However, reduced access to auditory input can sometimes result in spelling difficulties linked to limited phonological awareness or inconsistent exposure to sound patterns in language. Additionally, background noise or sensory distraction can make focusing on writing tasks more challenging, particularly in shared study spaces. Sensory Readable can offer support by enhancing visual clarity, minimising distractions, and making the writing and proofreading process more accessible and effective.
- Sensory Readable includes voice typing. This can be used to dictate text into any application without requiring an internet connection. This feature can be activated using the Dictate/Microphone button or via voice.
- For students with auditory processing difficulties, seeing each word highlighted in sequence reinforces sentence structure and grammar patterns, improving written fluency and comprehension.
- Ambient sound controls allow background noise to be muted, reduced, or replaced with calming sensory sounds, helping maintain concentration in noisy environments or when external distractions impact focus.
- Integration with Microsoft Word and Office 365 provides on-screen visual feedback while text is read aloud, helping students to detect spelling, grammar, and punctuation errors that may be missed through visual checking alone.
- The *underline-highlighting* feature visually tracks each word as it is spoken, improving concentration and reducing the need for extensive scrolling or searching through large documents.
- Sensory Tint reduces glare and visual strain, supporting longer writing and proofreading sessions by making the screen more comfortable to view.
- The ability to adjust colour schemes, contrast, and font size helps

maintain attention and reduces visual fatigue during extended editing.

- Listening back to written work supports visual reinforcement of spelling and grammar, helping students learn correct word patterns over time, even when auditory feedback is limited.
- Sensory Readable includes voice typing. This can be used to dictate text into any application without requiring an internet connection. This feature can be activated using the Dictate/Microphone button or via voice.

This combination of multi-sensory feedback, distraction control, and spelling reinforcement enables students with hearing loss to proofread and refine their work with confidence. By promoting visual accuracy and focus, **Sensory Readable** reduces stress, improves written clarity, and supports greater independence throughout the writing process.

#### **Note-taking in Lectures and Seminars**

- Students with hearing loss or auditory processing difficulties may find it challenging to listen and take notes simultaneously during lectures or seminars, particularly when information is delivered quickly, multiple speakers are present, or background noise interferes with clarity. As a result, advance preparation becomes essential for effective learning and confidence during live sessions. Sensory Readable provides tools that support both preparation before lectures and consolidation afterwards, ensuring students can access information clearly and at their own pace.
- Students can use Sensory Readable to review lecture slides, reading lists, and materials from the Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) in advance. This allows them to familiarise themselves with key topics before class, reducing anxiety and cognitive load during live teaching. Replay and adjustable reading speed controls allow for slower, more deliberate review of complex material, supporting comprehension and long-term retention.
- The OCR feature and Sensory Readable iOS app enable printed handouts, textbooks, or handwritten notes to be converted into accessible digital text that can be read or listened to using on-screen

highlighting.

- *Underline-highlighting* and *Sensory Ruler* guide the eyes along text, supporting reading accuracy and helping students visually track content that they may have missed in real time.
- Sensory Tint and other display adjustments can reduce visual fatigue, making extended reading and reviewing more comfortable.
- By supporting advance preparation and structured review, Sensory
  Readable enables students with hearing loss to participate more fully
  in lectures and seminars. These tools help ensure that key learning
  points are understood, notes are complete and accurate, and study
  time is used efficiently, reducing stress and improving overall
  academic performance.
- Sensory Scribe (another application available from Sensory App House Ltd.) will also support students with hearing loss by converting spoken instruction/teaching into accurate, accessible transcripts, removing barriers to note-taking, and enabling independent, inclusive learning. Students with hearing loss often experience significant barriers in traditional teaching environments where much of the information is presented verbally.

#### Time management and organisation

- Students with hearing loss or auditory processing conditions may require extra time for reading, reviewing, or clarifying content that others access through listening. Sensory Readable supports time management by helping students study more efficiently using customisable visual presentation and structured engagement.
- Underline-highlighting and Sensory Ruler help maintain focus and pace during reading tasks, improving speed without sacrificing comprehension.
- Visual comfort tools such as Sensory Tint reduce fatigue, allowing students to sustain concentration for longer periods.
- The software's offline functionality ensures it is always available, supporting study consistency in quiet or low-distraction environments.

 The Save to Audio function allows students to share converted text with interpreters or note-takers, enhancing accessibility and collaboration while saving preparation time.

Through its visual clarity and flexible design, **Sensory Readable** helps students manage study time effectively, reducing fatigue and maintaining steady progress.

#### Access to and use of technology

**Sensory Readable** provides a simple, accessible interface that supports visual comprehension and sensory comfort.

- The clean, intuitive design reduces visual noise and distraction, supporting concentration and navigation.
- Large, clearly labelled icons make features easy to locate, helping students with visual focus or cognitive fatigue.
- Customisable display settings allow users to adjust brightness, colour contrast, and text size for maximum visual clarity.
- Keyboard shortcuts and low-click operation minimise physical effort and make interaction faster and simpler.
- Audio controls can be muted or adjusted to accommodate students with partial hearing or sound sensitivities.
- Because Sensory Readable works completely offline, students can use it securely and privately without relying on sound alerts or cloud-based voice features.

These accessibility features ensure that students with hearing loss or auditory sensitivities can use assistive technology confidently and independently.

#### **Examinations and Timed Assessments**

- Sensory Readable supports exam preparation. Students can visually review practice papers, notes, or VLE materials using highlighting to support clear reading.
- The Sensory Tint feature helps reduce visual stress during long

revision sessions.

• The Save to Audio tool can be used to create transcripts or text files that can be shared with interpreters or NMH support staff for revision support.