Special Examination Arrangements for the ATAR Course Examinations
Information for Candidates

This leaflet is designed to inform candidates who have special examination needs about how particular arrangements are administered during the ATAR course examinations.

If you have a special examination need – whether it is related to a physical condition, vision impairment, hearing loss, medical condition or a specific learning disability – you should read this leaflet and discuss it with your parents, year adviser, teacher or school counsellor.

What are special examination arrangements?

The School Curriculum and Standards Authority has developed a special provisions policy to assist identified candidates in completing the ATAR course examinations. The special provisions policy includes guidelines for special examination arrangements for candidates with a disability.

The Authority aims to offer practical support to candidates through arrangements such as special examination papers, extra time to rest, scribes or access to food/drink/medication. The role of special arrangements is to provide reasonable access to the ATAR course examination. Each application is considered individually, with the decision based on the nature of each examination to be sat by the candidate.

Applying for special examination arrangements

Special examination arrangements application forms are sent to schools in February in the year you sit your ATAR course examinations.

If you wish to be considered for special examination arrangements, you should see your year advisor or school counsellor. The school will need to complete the application for you and lodge it with the Authority.

When completing the application form the following information will be required:

1. The provisions for which you are applying.
2. How your special examination need resulting from your disability affects your work in examination situations, as outlined by the school representative.
3. Evidence of your special examination need including diagnosis of your disability must be included (e.g. a medical report, psychologist’s report, timed essay samples and/or reading test results).

It is important that your school return the completed application form to the Authority by the due date in May, as specified on the form. Forms should be submitted well before this date if possible. As forms are processed in order of receipt, it is in your best interest for you to submit all information to the school as early in the year as possible to assist them to meet this deadline.

If all the necessary information is not supplied, the Authority will need to contact your school to request missing information. This will delay the process of considering your application and of advising you of the special examination arrangements which the Authority has approved. Until your application has been approved, any special arrangements in place at school must be considered as temporary and subject to change.
When a final decision has been made, the Authority will notify your school of the approved arrangements. It is the school’s responsibility to convey the decision to you.

Review of an application

If you are not satisfied with the Authority’s decision to decline a provision for which your school has applied, or you wish to change the provision approved for you, you should discuss the situation with the case coordinator at your school. They will consider your request. It is their responsibility to communicate with the Authority.

If new evidence has become available to support your application, your school may request a review of the arrangements granted for you, in light of the new information. This must be information that could not reasonably have been available prior to the application deadline.

If you wish to change or withdraw from approved provisions, your school case coordinator will contact the Authority in writing. Such requests should be received before the end of August.

Appeal procedures

If no new evidence is available, your school may decide to submit an appeal against the decision. The appeal must state the reason why it is considered that the Authority’s decision is unsuitable and make reference to the evidence supplied in the original application. Appeals should not be lodged just because you do not like the decision.

No appeals can be received by the Authority after the specified date in Term 3.

The Authority will conduct an independent assessment of appeals and a letter advising of the decision will be sent to your school. The decision of the appeals committee is final.

A note to parents

If you are concerned about whether special examination arrangements are relevant for your child, you should contact the year adviser or school counsellor at your child’s school. The school is in the best place to see any impact of your child’s disability in the examination environment.

The application form must be completed and submitted by your child’s school, as it requires specific information regarding the difficulties your child may experience in an examination situation. This does not mean, however, that you should not be involved in the application process. All negotiation related to special examination arrangements will be through the school. When a decision has been made, the Authority will notify the school of the approved arrangements through the student record system. It is the school’s responsibility to convey the decision to your child. It is the school’s responsibility to communicate with the Authority.

Information about special provisions is available from the website at http://senior-secondary.scsa.wa.edu.au/assessment/examinations/special-provisions
Extra Time to Rest

Procedures for the use of extra time to rest in the ATAR course examinations

This leaflet is for candidates, examination supervisors and Year 12 coordinators.

What is extra time to rest?

Extra time to rest is non-working time (rest breaks) granted to candidates who are unable to sustain a sitting position or work uninterrupted for three hours. It is to allow them to stretch, move, rest, receive medical treatment or take toilet breaks. Candidates can use the extra time to refocus and process information, to plan in their mind their next response. The rest breaks are extra time without access to the examination paper or candidate responses. The amount of time allowed is usually calculated as 5 minutes per half hour, to a maximum of 25 minutes. No allowance is calculated in the last half hour. Please see over the page for the use of rest time during mathematics examinations.

Does the extra time have to be taken at half-hourly intervals?

No. The candidate can determine the times at which rest breaks are taken but must advise the examination supervisor whenever they wish to take a break. Unless approved otherwise, this non-working time is to be taken at the candidate’s discretion in blocks of no more than 10 minutes. Extra time to rest cannot be taken in the last 15 minutes of the candidate’s examination. The supervisor is to record the amount of time taken to rest and add it to the total examination time, up to the maximum time allowed. Approximately 15 minutes prior to the expected conclusion of the examination, candidates are to be advised of the calculated end of their working time. The candidate’s total amount of working time is not affected by these breaks.

What happens to the examination papers and candidate responses during extra time to rest?

The candidate’s examination papers and responses are to be turned over by the candidate or supervisor at the beginning of the extra time to rest. No reading or writing is permitted, nor is access to other examination materials such as maps, dictionaries or calculators.

May candidates leave the examination room during breaks?

Yes, if they wish, but they do not have to. Candidates may leave the room under supervision, however they may not communicate with any person during this time.

Where do candidates with extra time to rest sit their examinations?

Candidates approved for extra time to rest are required to sit their examinations at a venue designated by the School Curriculum and Standards Authority. In most cases, this venue will allow for candidates to sit with a reduced number of candidates so their rest time can be easily monitored.
Should candidates practise with extra time to rest in examination situations?

Yes. It would be of most benefit to candidates to be aware of how to use the rest break provision to best suit their examination needs. For example, some candidates may require the time to organise their thoughts at the beginning of the examination after reading the examination questions. Other candidates may benefit from the provision by resting in between essays. An awareness of the examination format and individual examination needs will assist candidates in using rest breaks to their best advantage.

How does the use of extra time to rest operate during Mathematics Applications, Mathematics Methods and Mathematics Specialist examinations?

1. **Calculator-free section**
   The time available for this section of the examination paper is 50 minutes. A maximum of 5 minutes extra time to rest is available.

2. **Calculator-assumed section**
   The time available for this section of the examination paper is 100 minutes. All candidates in the examination room will commence the calculator-assumed section at the same time. A maximum of 15 minutes extra time to rest is available. Rest time cannot be taken in the last 15 minutes of the examination.

If you have further questions on special examination provisions, please contact Senior Consultant – Special Provisions on 9273 6316.
Extra Time to Work

Procedures for the use of extra time to work and extra time at discretion in the ATAR course examinations

This leaflet is for candidates, examination supervisors and Year 12 coordinators.

What is extra time to work?

Extra time to work is an extension to the total amount of time allowed for the candidate to complete the examination. The use of this additional time is at the candidate’s discretion. During this time the candidate may continue reading, plan essays, complete questions or use the time in any other way. The amount of time allowed is usually calculated as 10 minutes per hour, to a maximum of 30 minutes.

In the Mathematics Applications, Mathematics Methods and Mathematics Specialist examinations a maximum of 8 minutes is allowed in the calculator-free section and 16 minutes in the calculator-assumed section. All candidates in the examination room will commence the calculator-assumed section at the same time.

What is extra time at discretion?

As for above, but this term is used to emphasise that the candidate will need to spend some of the extra time on activities not related to the examination, e.g. resting, stretching or accessing medication or medical treatment. These activities count as part of the total examination time.

Does the extra time to work have to be taken?

No. Normal examination rules apply. This means the candidate may decide to leave the examination at any time except during the first hour of working time, or the final fifteen (15) minutes. For candidates approved with extra time to work or extra time at discretion, the specified examination working time is extended by the amount approved.

May candidates leave the examination room?

Yes, if they need to. Candidates may leave the room under supervision, however they may not communicate with any person during this time and no additional time will be granted for time spent away from the examination paper.

Where do candidates with extra time to work sit their examinations?

Candidates approved for extra time to work or extra time at discretion are required to sit their examinations at a venue designated by the School Curriculum and Standards Authority. In most cases, this venue will allow for candidates to sit with a reduced number of candidates who will be scheduled to finish their examination at the same time.
Should candidates practise with extra time to work in examination situations?

Yes. It would be of most benefit to candidates to be aware of how to use the additional time. An awareness of the examination format and individual examination needs will assist candidates in using the examination time to their best advantage.

If you have further questions on special examination provisions, please contact Senior Consultant – Special Provisions on 9273 6316.
Scribe

Procedures for the use of a scribe in the ATAR course examinations

What qualities should a scribe have?

- A facility for English, including sound spelling.
- An understanding of the course(s) being examined.
- Clear, legible handwriting.
- Patience and sensitivity to the candidate’s special needs.
- An understanding of the need to maintain confidentiality and an ability to do so.

What a scribe can and cannot do:

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<tr>
<th>Can (✓)</th>
<th>Cannot (✗)</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Scribe</strong></td>
<td><strong>Scribe</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>✓ Write the candidate’s answers exactly as dictated by the candidate.</td>
<td>✗ Interpret the question or advise the candidate in any way.</td>
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<tr>
<td>✓ Ask the candidate to repeat a word or sentence.</td>
<td>✗ Make comments on the candidate’s work.</td>
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<td>✓ Ask the candidate to spell difficult or obscure words.</td>
<td>✗ Alter the candidate’s work or write words that the candidate has not dictated.</td>
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<tr>
<td>✓ Punctuate and use capital letters without the specific direction of the candidate.</td>
<td>✗ Re-write a candidate’s written work (i.e. a candidate cannot write out their answers and then have the scribe re-write them).</td>
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<tr>
<td>✓ Operate a calculator at the candidate’s direction.</td>
<td>✗ Type for the candidate (unless permission has been granted).</td>
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<td>✓ Rule lines as directed by the candidate.</td>
<td>✗ Draw (if the candidate is unable to draw, please contact the Authority).</td>
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<td>✓ Re-read the last two sentences that have been written, to enable the candidate to regain their place in their work.</td>
<td>✗ Keep the candidate ‘on task’ or direct the order of work.</td>
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<th>Can (✓)</th>
<th>Cannot (✗)</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Candidate</strong></td>
<td><strong>Candidate</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>✓ Dictate his/her answers exactly as he/she wishes them to be written down.</td>
<td>✗ Ask to have the question interpreted.</td>
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<tr>
<td>✓ Advise the scribe when to start a new paragraph, when to put something in brackets or inverted commas, and when to underline something.</td>
<td>✗ Ask the scribe’s advice on any matter.</td>
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<tr>
<td>✓ Regularly read over what the scribe has written.</td>
<td>✗ Write or make notes while the scribe is writing. (A shared pen should be used.)</td>
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<tr>
<td>✓ Practise using a scribe as often as possible.</td>
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<tr>
<td>✓ Make notes, essay plans or jot down ideas during the writing time.</td>
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<tr>
<td>✓ Candidates can use a scribe for part of the exam and write the other parts for themselves.</td>
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**NB** Both the scribe and the candidate should have a copy of the examination paper. All answers must be entered only into the paper with the candidate’s number label attached.

If you have further questions on special examination provisions, please contact Senior Consultant – Special Provisions on 9273 6316
Personal Computer

The rules and procedures for use of a personal computer in the ATAR course examinations

This leaflet is for candidates, examination supervisors and Year 12 coordinators.

Important – Please note:

Additional information regarding the School Curriculum and Standards Authority’s requirements for setting up the computer before the start of examinations, as well as the procedures to be followed by the candidate and supervisor upon completion of each examination, will be provided to schools at a later date.

Who provides the personal computer?

To ensure strict security and maintain integrity of the examinations, all equipment associated with the use of a personal computer is to be provided by the School Curriculum and Standards Authority, independent support services or the school. Only in exceptional circumstances will the candidate be permitted to use his or her own equipment. If this is necessary, the school will need to make representation to the Authority detailing the reasons.

What type of personal computer can be used?

Usually a stand-alone desktop computer with keyboard and mouse, connected to a printer. If a laptop is used, the candidate should, if at all possible, be seated near a power point and the laptop plugged in. If this is not possible, the candidate must ensure that the battery is fully charged before the start of the examination. **The computer must be set up in the examination room and ready for use before the examination start time.**

Should the candidate be seated in a separate room? Where should the supervisor sit?

Candidates approved the use of a personal computer are required to sit their examinations at a venue designated by the School Curriculum and Standards Authority. The supervisor should sit where he or she can see the screen(s), without intimidating or distracting the candidate(s).

What computer functions can the candidate use?

The candidate will use a basic word processing package, such as WordPad. Access to functions should be limited to those which can be replicated by handwriting. Candidates will not be able to use spell-check or grammar-check.
How should the candidate present his or her answers on a personal computer?

Before the start of reading time, the candidate should create and save a document to use. The candidate should also check that the document view option is set to ‘wrap to ruler’. The candidate should regularly save his or her work throughout the exam. If the examination has multiple sections, additional documents should be created. **All documents should be left open for use.** If accidentally closed, documents must only be opened with WordPad.

**Styles**

The candidate should use an easy-to-read font such as Arial. The point size should not be smaller than 11. The font should not be italicised, except for the titles of texts, which should be either italicised or underlined. Quotes should be put in quotation marks (‘…’).

**Setting out**

The candidate should record their student number on each page. They must **not** use their name. The section number should always be clearly noted at the top of the page and/or question. When told to use a separate writing booklet for each question, the candidate should start a new document for each question. The question number should also be noted at the top of each page.

Multiple choice answers should be recorded on the separate sheet where ever possible. Short answers may be hand written in the standard examination books if preferred. Some candidates may choose to use the computer only for long answers and essays.

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<th><strong>Multiple choice questions</strong></th>
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<tr>
<td>The question number should be put on the far left of the page, followed by a full-stop, followed by a short space, followed by the candidate’s answer, e.g.:</td>
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<td>1. a</td>
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<td>2. c</td>
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<td>3. b</td>
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<th><strong>Short-answer questions</strong></th>
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<tr>
<td>The setting out depends on the way the questions are set out. See examples below.</td>
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<td>2. 64%</td>
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<tr>
<th><strong>Essay questions</strong></th>
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<tr>
<td>The candidate should put the question number at the top of the page.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Create a new document for each essay to ensure it starts on a new page.</td>
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Saving work during an examination

Candidates should remember to save their work regularly during their examination. Unsaved work that is lost is a candidate’s responsibility.

Printing candidate responses

At the completion of the examination the candidate must print their work onto A4 paper. The sheets are to be fastened securely into the candidate’s Question/Answer Booklet at the page corresponding to the relevant question or section. After a hard copy has been printed, the candidate’s file is to be fully deleted from the computer (this includes removal of the deleted file from the rubbish bin).

Security declarations

Any candidate granted the use of a personal computer will need to sign a declaration at the end of each examination stating that he or she did not use any functions other than those permitted, or did not transfer any data from the hard-drive or any other source. The candidate should be given this declaration by the supervisor to read before the start of the examination, but should not sign it until after the examination has finished.

Trouble shooting

What happens if the computer crashes during the exam?

Should a computer crash during an examination, the supervisor must call the School Curriculum and Standards Authority immediately on 9273 6309. If it is possible to retrieve the candidate’s work, an Authority officer may approve, if appropriate, for the candidate to be given the time lost during the incident to allow them the full examination working time allowance to complete the examination. Please note that this does NOT mean additional working time. It is very important that candidates remember to save their work regularly during the exam. Unsaved work lost in a crash is the candidate’s responsibility.

If it is not possible to complete the examination, or if a candidate is able to complete the examination following a crash but feels that their examination performance has been affected, he or she may submit an application for sickness/misadventure consideration. Submission of a sickness/misadventure application does not mean the Authority will automatically approve the request. Responsibility rests with the candidate to obtain information to support their claim for sickness/misadventure consideration and to submit the application direct to the Authority. Application forms will be available from the examination centre. Please note, sickness/misadventure provisions are not available to non-school candidates.

What if the supervisor sees the candidate opening another file or document, or transferring information from a pre-existing file or document into his or her answers?

Candidates are reminded that any breach of examination rules or malpractice may seriously jeopardise their examination mark. Should a breach of rules occur, the supervisor must follow the procedures for breach of examination rules as described in the supervisor’s handbook.

If you have further questions on special examination provisions, please contact Senior Consultant – Special Provisions on 9273 6316.
What are diabetic provisions?

Diabetic provisions include provisions most commonly required by diabetic candidates. Should a candidate require provisions other than those listed below, a specific request should be made on the special examination arrangements application form and be accompanied by the appropriate supporting documentation.

Candidates may apply for the following diabetic provisions:

- **Bite-size food/drink** – this may be taken into the examination room in clear containers/wrapping.
- **Monitor blood sugar** – candidates may take a glucometer and test strips or electronic monitor into the examination room. Up to five minutes non-working time can be taken to conduct blood tests. The candidate may sit their exams in their normal examination room.
- **Medication** may be taken into the examination room and be administered as needed. This includes the use of an insulin pump.
- **Out-of-order seating** – candidates may request to be seated near an exit, to leave the room if necessary; or be seated at the back of the room, for privacy when testing blood; or to be seated at the front of the room.
- **Non-working time** – up to 25 minutes to test blood and take remedial action if required. Candidate may leave the room under supervision if necessary.
- **Time at discretion** – up to 30 minutes to complete the examination while undertaking constant management of Type 1 diabetes demonstrated to require constant monitoring.

How is Hypoglycaemia (low blood sugar) treated?

Treatment of hypoglycaemia requires immediate consumption of sweet food or drink, followed by slowly absorbed carbohydrate, e.g. a sandwich or banana.

How is Hyperglycaemia (high blood sugar) treated?

Hyperglycaemia will cause frequent urination and thirst, leading to the need to drink and toilet frequently. Additional insulin is needed to reduce the blood sugar level (given either by injection or insulin pump).

What happens if a candidate becomes unwell during the examination?

If, after using their approved arrangements, a candidate is unable to adequately control their diabetes during an examination, and as a result cannot complete the examination, they may submit a sickness/misadventure application. If the candidate wishes to complete the examination after a diabetic episode, they may do so, in addition to lodging the sickness/misadventure application. No additional working time is provided beyond what is approved. The candidate’s blood sugar readings must be included as part of the medical evidence in the sickness/misadventure application.

Please note, sickness/misadventure provisions are not available to non-school candidates.

If you have further questions on special examination provisions, please contact Senior Consultant – Special Provisions on 9273 6316.
Directions for Oral or Sign Support People Assisting Hearing Impaired Candidates in the ATAR Course Examinations

While most examinations do not have a listening component, some candidates with a hearing impairment may need assistance for the presentation of examination instructions, which are read aloud by the supervisor at the start of each examination. It is the School Curriculum and Standards Authority’s practice to provide a copy of these instructions in writing, on request, to candidates with a documented hearing impairment. For many candidates these written instructions will effectively accommodate their needs.

Who may apply for oral or sign support?
Any candidate with a severe to profound hearing loss whose needs extend beyond access to the supervisor’s instructions may apply. The candidate’s dependence on oral or sign support will be considered.

Who approves the use of oral or sign support?
The use of oral or sign support during the external examinations can only be approved by the Authority after consideration of a special examination arrangements application and supporting evidence.

Applications for special examination arrangements are to be submitted on the forms sent to schools. Applications must be submitted to the Authority by the due date. Before this time, arrangements may be made at a school level to use oral or sign support for in-class assessment and examinations. This does not guarantee that school-elected provisions will apply in the ATAR examinations, as each application is assessed individually.

What is the purpose of oral or sign support?
The purpose of oral or sign support is to assist candidates with severe to profound hearing loss to access examination questions at a level comparable to their peers.

Who can provide oral or sign support?
The person must be skilled in providing oral or sign support for hearing impaired candidates; for example, an education support assistant or itinerant support teacher. However he/she should not be someone with a conflict of interest created by a prior relationship with the candidate. The supervisor must be a separate person and not perform the role of oral or sign support person.

What are the seating arrangements for oral or sign support people?
The seating of the oral or sign support person should be negotiated with the candidate.

What is the oral or sign support person able to do?
Access to examination paper
The oral or sign support person is permitted access to the examination paper up to 15 minutes before the start of the examination, to familiarise him/herself with the content. During this time, the oral or sign support person must remain strictly supervised and may not communicate with the candidate or any other person.
Directions to candidates

It is permissible for the support person to read or sign verbatim the Instructions to candidates. However as candidates are also provided with a written set of the supervisor’s instructions, this is rarely needed. As with other sections of the paper, the support person may explain words or phrases to the candidate. Under no circumstances is the support person or the supervisor to advise the candidate as to the selection of questions.

Body of the examination paper

All questions may be paraphrased. The support person may give the meanings of words and phrases in the instructions, questions and stimulus material, provided that such explanations do not lead to answers. Vocabulary specific to the subject should not be explained, e.g. bisect would not be explained in a mathematics examination.

The need for access to an oral or sign support person for more than during the designated reading time will be assessed individually, based on the severity and demonstrated impact of the candidate’s hearing impairment in the examination situation.

Stimulus material

The support person is not to read or sign stimulus material and/or passages in their entirety. The support person may simplify the structure of a sentence grammatically or give meanings of individual words or phrases.

Multiple-choice questions

The support person may explain the initial question but not each of the alternative answers. If the candidate is perplexed by the answer choice, explanation of individual vocabulary may be given, provided that this does not lead to the correct response.

Great care should be taken by the oral or sign support person to not indicate the correct answer in multiple-choice questions by facial expression or body language that may indicate to the candidate the correct answer.

Essays

Essay questions may be rephrased. The candidate may write this rephrasing on the printed examination paper. The candidate may check their understanding of the essay question with the support person. The candidate should plan and write the essay independently and without intervention. Once the candidate has started planning the essay, no further assistance can be sought from the support person.

If you have further questions on special examination provisions, please contact Senior Consultant – Special Provisions on 9273 6316.