

Disability Services, Student Services

Guidelines for Scribes Working in Examinations

What is a Scribe?

A scribe (sometimes referred to as an 'Amanuensis') is a person who writes or word processes a student's dictated answers in exams.

Scribes need to be familiar with the subject area and terminology and to have neat and legible handwriting, or, if using a computer, they should be proficient in word processing.

Who is eligible to have a Scribe?

Generally, students who have an impairment that restricts the ability to hand-write, type or maintain the posture required for writing, or students who, as a result of an impairment, present information better in oral than written form, may require an amanuensis. Students should have a Personal Learning Support Plan (PLSP).

Remember: the use of a Scribe should neither advantage nor disadvantage the student!

Before the Examination

Wherever possible, you will be expected to have a practice session when working with a new student. This session should be long enough to provide you with an opportunity to practise scribing a 'typical' exam answer. Take this opportunity to identify effective working arrangements with the student, for example: whether or not the student is to dictate punctuation.

Generally, it is reasonable for the Scribe to ask a student how to spell unusual names. However, if the student has dyslexia, and / or another Specific Learning Difference (SpLD), then this may not be appropriate. Your practice session is an opportunity for you to ask students their needs and preferences. A student may wish to show you a copy of their Personal Learning Support Plan (PLSP).

You should be informed which member of staff to contact if problems arise during the examination, for example, in the event of a breakdown in communication. Ordinarily this will be the person in the School who put the arrangements in place.

During the Examination

- If handwriting the answers, remember to bring a selection of pens with you.
- Arrive in good time, at least 15 minutes before the start of the exam. If using a computer, familiarise yourself with the equipment so you are ready to start typing at the beginning of the exam.
- The room should be quiet and equipped with suitable furniture. Other candidates should not be able to hear what is being said.
- Unless also assigned to the role of Reader, do not read out exam questions.
- You must neither give factual help nor offer any suggestions
- You must write down or keyboard answers as dictated.
- The student should be in charge of the exam, so generally you should speak only when spoken to. However, it is acceptable to ask the student to repeat something or to let them know if you are unable to keep up with their rate of dictation.
- You may, at the student's request, read back what has been recorded and change the recorded material as requested by the student.
- You must draw or add to maps, diagrams, graphs and tables strictly in accordance with the student's instructions.
- There will ordinarily be an additional 25% extra time allowance for each examination (and print off time after the finish of the examination, if a computer is used).

Questions?

The Exams office (examinations@bangor.ac.uk) or an Adviser in Disability Services (disabilityservice@bangor.ac.uk) will be able to answer any queries you may have regarding the provision of Scribes.

Note:

For candidates requiring a Reader and a Scribe, the same person may act as both.