



cmetb

Bord Oideachais agus Oiliúna
an Chabháin agus Mhuineacháin
*Cavan and Monaghan
Education and Training Board*

Reasonable Accommodation in Assessment Resource

Guidelines for the Use of Readers, Scribes and Computers in Examinations

Version 2.1, QA – Aug 2019

Section One: Duties of a Reader

1. The role of a reader in examinations is to read the examination instructions and questions only. It is not the role of the reader to explain or clarify.
2. The reader should be an independent person and not familiar to the student/ learner/Apprentice where possible to ensure the integrity of the exam is upheld. Relatives, friends of the candidate are not permitted to act as a reader.
3. The reader should be able to read accurately and at a reasonable rate.
4. The reader may enable a visually impaired learner to identify diagrams, graphs and tables but must not give factual information nor offer any suggestions, other than that information which would be available on the paper for sighted learners.
5. The reader may read numbers printed in figures as words (e.g. 252 would be read as two hundred and fifty-two but at the point of reading the number it should also be pointed to on the paper). An exception would be when the question is asking for a number to be written in words (e.g. Write the number 3675 in words.).
6. The reader must not decode symbols and unit abbreviations (e.g. 2^2 should not be read as two squared but the function simply pointed to by the reader since part of the assessment is recognising what the superscript 2 means. Similarly, if the symbol $>$ is printed, it should not be read as 'greater than' but simply pointed to by the reader.).
7. The reader may read back, when requested, what has been written in the answer.
8. The reader may, if requested, give the spelling of a word which appears on the paper but otherwise spellings must not be given.
9. The reader should not provide content to the student/ learner/ apprentice or offer any suggestions.
10. The reader should not advise the student/ learner/ apprentice on which questions to attempt, when to move on the next question, or the order in which questions should be attempted.
11. Instructions given on the examination paper can only be repeated when the reader is specifically requested to do so by the student/ learner/ apprentice.
12. The reader should make no other comment or use any intonation which emphasises any part of the examination questions, nor make any interpretation of the examination question(s).
13. The reader should not discuss any matter with the student/ learner/ apprentice during the examination unless it relates to the re-reading of an examination question (having been requested to do so by the student/ learner/ apprentice).
14. Sometimes a student/ learner/ apprentice may require a reader and a scribe. In such instances the same person may act as both.

15. In some instances the reader may also act as the invigilator for the examination e.g. where there is just one student/ learner/ apprentice. The reader should familiarise themselves with such duties.

16. It is important that the reader abides by the guidelines since failure to do so could lead to the disqualification of the learner.

Section Two: Duties of a Scribe

a. The scribe is required to produce an accurate record of the student/ learner/ apprentice's answers.

b. The scribe should be an independent person and not familiar to the student/ learner/Apprentice where possible to ensure the integrity of the exam is upheld. Relatives, friends of the candidate are not permitted to act as a scribe.

c. The scribe should be relaxed. This may help to alleviate any anxieties the student/ learner/ apprentice may have in relation to the examination.

d. The scribe should arrive before the commencement of the examination, allowing sufficient time to establish a rapport with the student/ learner/ apprentice, to make seating arrangements and to agree guidelines for:

a. Presentation

b. Spelling

c. Punctuation

d. New paragraphs etc.

e. The scribe must draw or add to maps, diagrams and graphs strictly in accordance with the student/ learner/ apprentice's instructions, unless the student/ learner/ apprentice is taking a design paper, in which case a scribe will only be permitted to assist with written parts of the paper.

f. The scribe must immediately refer any problems in communication during the examination to the examination supervisor.

g. The scribe must not give factual help to the student/ learner/ apprentice or indicate when the answer is complete

h. The scribe must not advise the student/ learner/ apprentice on which questions to do, when to move on to the next question, or on the order in which questions should be answered.

i. The scribe must not expect to write throughout the examination, if supervised rest breaks have been permitted.

j. The scribe may, at the student/ learner/apprentice's request, read back what has been recorded.

k. Scribes should have proficient typing skills if typing a student/ learner/ apprentice's dictated answers, and should be capable of writing legibly at appropriate speed if writing a student/

learner/ apprentice's dictated answers.

l. The scribe should advise student/ learner/ apprentices as to the duration of the examination, the number of questions to be answered and any additional instructions.

m. It may be a requirement that the examination script is submitted in electronic format and that the examination material is recorded on an official computer located in the institution, not on a laptop belonging to the student/ learner/ apprentice or scribe.

n. If using a computer, the scribe should ensure the computer is set to automatically save work regularly (every 3 to 5 minutes). If using Microsoft Word, go to Tools/Options/Save and select the preferred time.

o. A student/ learner/ apprentice may elect to write sections of the paper themselves.

p. If the student/ learner/ apprentice writes notes, essay plans or illustrations, these should be included with the examination script. For example, the student/ learner/ apprentice might draw rough diagrams from which the scribe will draw a final version and include both copies with the examination script.

q. Additional time of ten minutes per hour and a separate venue will be provided when using a scribe.

r. The scribe must abide by the guidelines since failure to do so could lead to the disqualification of the learner.

s. In some instances the scribe may also act as the reader or invigilator for the examination. The scribe should familiarise themselves with such duties.

Section Three: Using a Computer:

A computer:

i. Must only be used by a student/ learner/ apprentice who has applied and is approved for a reasonable accommodation e.g. presents handwritten communication that is illegible, incomprehensible or produced at below average speed.

ii. Must be cleared of any previously stored data.

iii. Must be in good working order at the time of the examination.

iv. Must either be connected to a printer so that an answer paper can be printed off or have the facility to print from a portable storage medium¹. This may be done after the examination is over, not in the extra time. The student/ learner/ apprentice should be present to verify that the work printed is his or her own. Word processed answer paper must be attached to any answer book which contains some of the answers.

v. Must be connected to mains electricity.

vi. Must be used to produce answer papers under secure conditions, otherwise they may be refused.

- vii. Must not give the student/ learner/ apprentice access to other applications such as calculators, spread sheets etc.
- viii. Must not include graphic packages or computer aided design software unless permission has been given to use these.
- ix. Must not include voice-activated software unless the student/ learner/ apprentice has permission to use a scribe or relevant software.
- x. Must not be used to perform skills which are being assessed.
- xi. Must not be connected to an Intranet or any other means of communication.
- xii. Must reflect the student/ learner/ apprentice's normal method of producing written work except in cases where temporary injury gives rise to the need for a word processor.

Read, Write, Gold as an alternative to a reader

Student/ learner/ apprentices with disabilities who require specialist examination supports such as assistive technology (e.g. Read, Write, Goldⁱⁱ) must attend training in the use of such accommodations. It is the student/ learner/ apprentice's responsibility to be proficient in the use of technology for examinations. Training is made available to the student/ learner/ apprentices during the academic year. The Read, Write, Gold software is solely to aid student/ learner/ apprentices to read the exam paper. If student/ learner/ apprentices want to word process their examination then he/she must have same granted by the College/ Centre/ Programme and must make an application.

i - Any portable storage medium used such as memory sticks must be cleared of any previously stored data and can be used by an examinations officer/ invigilator only to take the completed work to a printer. Once the learner has signed off on the printed material, the device should be securely stored until after the appeals process at which time the information should be deleted.

ii - Read Write Gold is an assistance technology that assists students with their reading and writing.