

University of Ulster

Information for Candidates and Staff on the use of a Scribe or Amanuensis in Examinations

The role of an exam scribe is to produce a verbatim transcription of a student's dictation of answers to exam questions in either a typed or handwritten format. Exam scribes may be asked to read transcribed answers back to the student and make amendments as dictated.

The skill of dictating answers to examination questions under examination conditions must not be underestimated and consequently not requested lightly by Disability Services. Extra time will usually be allowed for the examination which will take place in an individual room with appropriate invigilation.

All exam scribes must work within examination conditions and follow instructions from examination invigilators. They must **not** provide the student with help relating to the content or structure of examination answers.

Below are the key principles which exam scribes are asked to adhere to when scribing for a student:

- Do agree with the student before the exam begins how the dictation is going to work, find out if the student is going to write any of the paper themselves (essay plan etc) or whether you are needed to transcribe everything.
- Do ask the student about punctuation & spelling. Will they punctuate the paper or are you required to do this?
- Do speak to the invigilator if there are any difficulties with the room – furniture, clock etc.
- Do write down everything that the student says, even if you know it to be incorrect.
- Save work regularly if you are typing the paper, at least after each question.
- Do ask the student to repeat a word or sentence if you are unsure of what was said.

- If you need to take a short break or go to the bathroom be considerate and endeavour to do this at the end of a question before beginning a new question.
- Do check through the paper at the end of the exam for any errors made on your part.
- Don't ask the student to spell words if they have dyslexia.
- Don't make any corrections on behalf of the student or write down anything they have not dictated to you.
- Don't panic if there is a problem with technology or you feel unwell or the fire alarm goes off; speak to the invigilator.
- Don't make any comments about the student's performance during or after the exam to anyone.

The candidate may be able to write some notes on paper. These notes must be handed in with the examination answer book.

If you have any queries regarding the support provided by an amanuensis or scribing generally please discuss with Disability Services.