



Assessment Arrangements Explained

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Assessment arrangements explained

This section provides details of how and when to contact SQA, and describes some of the most commonly requested assessment arrangements. It is not a comprehensive list. You should work from the need of the individual candidate in identifying the most appropriate assessment arrangement rather than from a fixed list of options. Again, where particular examples of disabilities are used, they are just examples and not a list of all eventualities. Candidates must be considered on an individual basis.

Each candidate's assessment needs must be considered in relation to the assessment being undertaken. As assessment requirements vary depending on the Unit or Course specifications, a candidate's need for a particular assessment arrangement may also vary.

Some candidates may require more than one assessment arrangement. For example, candidates who have a visual impairment may require both adapted papers and extra time.

We have also provided guidance on the following pages for you to photocopy and give to your candidates and to any people involved in delivering the assessment arrangements, ie scribes, readers, prompters.

SQA is not responsible for the payment of any fees and/or expenses to scribes, readers, practical helpers, communicators or prompters.

When to contact SQA

External assessments

You must submit a request to SQA for any assessment arrangement in an external assessment.

You should submit requests electronically using the Assessment Arrangement Request Submission software. You will be provided with access details and user guides each year. Please contact the Assessment Arrangements team in our Dalkeith Office if you require more information.

If you are in any doubt as to whether a particular assessment arrangement would be acceptable in an external assessment, you should contact us for advice as soon as possible.

Requests must be submitted by the published deadline — these are published annually on our website. It is very important that we receive requests as early as possible, for example, where the production of an adapted paper is required.

Assessment arrangements explained

In most schools, any assessment arrangements required will, for the majority of candidates, have been identified for some time and will be well established, so there should be no reason for requests to be submitted late.

In colleges, and where candidates are new to the centre, there may be some delay in gathering evidence for verification, but all centres are asked to do their utmost to meet the deadline and to contact us if there are any concerns.

Internal assessments

You only need to contact us to request an assessment arrangement in an internal assessment if the arrangement changes the published assessment requirements in any significant way. For example, you should contact SQA to request the use of a scribe in a Unit assessment which directly assesses written communication skills.

If you are in any doubt as to whether a particular assessment arrangement does significantly change the assessment requirements, you should contact us for advice as soon as possible, and before the candidate undertakes the assessment.

You should submit details in writing to the Assessment Arrangements team in our Dalkeith Office or e-mail them at aarequests@sqa.org.uk.

Note

Pages marked with this symbol can be photocopied and distributed freely to staff, candidates or those acting as readers, scribes, prompters etc.



Adapted question papers in digital format

Introduction

Question papers in digital format allow candidates with reading and/or writing difficulties to utilise speech recognition technology and, where the format of the question paper is a question/answer book, complete their examinations on screen. In this way candidates can access and complete question papers independently.

An evaluation into the use of digital question papers found that candidates were more independent, confident and motivated using the digital papers than with traditional methods of support such as a reader or scribe.

Guidelines for centres

It is your responsibility to:

- ◆ ensure that candidates cannot access any other electronic sources. These sources include the internet, locally-stored files, network shares, thumb drives, CDs, DVDs, e-mail and instant messaging systems, or any other digital media sources accessible either locally or over a wired or wireless network
- ◆ ensure that there has been sufficient time and training for candidates to use the digital question papers effectively
- ◆ make sure your candidates know how to enter their personal details, how to access/read the digital papers and, if appropriate, insert answers and save files
- ◆ test all PCs and ensure they are operational
- ◆ install relevant software prior to the examination
- ◆ update AAR system if a candidate chooses not to use the digital question paper and tell us what assessment arrangements they will use
- ◆ provide separate suitable accommodation if any candidate using the digital question papers is likely to distract other candidates. (Remember to take account of the need for additional invigilation)
- ◆ provide the candidate with a print copy of the question paper in addition to the digital paper
- ◆ ensure that, where possible, an auto-save facility is available
- ◆ print out the candidate's saved work
- ◆ delete any material saved on the hard drive once the candidate's work is printed and you are satisfied with the hard copy

Adapted question papers in digital format

- ◆ remove the CD from the machine at the end of the examination and submit all of the examination materials to SQA. This includes: the printout of the candidate's work, any word-processed work, if applicable, and any additional written or graphical work produced by the candidate. The original CD containing the digital question paper may be retained

You will have access to the digital file up to one hour prior to the exam in order to save the file to the correct folder on the candidate's PC and to 'spot check' the content. This check must ensure that:

- ◆ the file opens
- ◆ the questions are readable
- ◆ the speech technology is working

Remember: If a candidate is taking two papers on the same day, you may need to make arrangements to delay the starting time of the second exam to ensure all checks are made. If this is the case, you may need to make arrangements for the supervision of your candidates.

Please visit our website, www.sqa.org.uk/assessmentarrangements, for the most up-to-date guidance and more technical step-by-step instructions for using digital question papers, including:

- ◆ installation and set-up of the software
- ◆ testing the digital question paper
- ◆ advice for reading the digital question paper and inserting and reviewing answers
- ◆ saving and printing answers



Adapted question papers in digital format: guidance for candidates

Do you know what to expect?

- ◆ You need to know how to enter your personal details.
- ◆ You need to know how to access/read the digital paper, and how to insert answers and save files.
- ◆ You will be provided with a print copy of the question paper in addition to the digital paper.
- ◆ You may use this paper copy for questions requiring any drawing or handwritten work, eg Mathematics.
- ◆ When your work is printed and your centre is satisfied with the hard copy, all material saved on the hard drive will be deleted.
- ◆ At the end of the examination, the CD will be removed from the PC and all of the examination materials will be sent to SQA. These include: the printout of your work, any word-processed work, if applicable, and any additional written or graphical work produced by you.

Remember: Save work as you go through the exam. At the end of the exam and before your answers are printed, do a final file save.

Assistance in aural assessments

Any technological aid which amplifies (but does not distort) sound may be used in an aural assessment.

An aural test, which is normally presented to candidates on CD, may be presented live to enable the candidate to lip-read. In Modern Languages assessment the live presentation should, where possible, be given by someone whose first language is the language being assessed.

Where extra time is required for aural assessments, it may be possible to request a version of the assessment CD with extended pauses.

Example

Magda has a hearing impairment and lip-reads. Her school asks for a live presentation in the external assessment of Listening in Standard Grade German. This is done by the teaching assistant, who is German.

Extra time

The amount of extra time requested should accurately reflect the candidate's needs. While the candidate will always have the option of using the extra time (or not), you should monitor the overall use of extra time and use this information to check the accuracy of your assessment of need.

External assessment

If a candidate requires extra time in any external assessment, you must submit a request for this. If requesting over 50%, comments must be inserted into the AAR system.

Internal assessment

You only need to submit a request for extra time in internal assessments where the performance of a task in a specified time is an assessment requirement. For example, in the Unit *Word Processing 1* at Intermediate 2, Outcome 5 states that the candidate can 'produce mailable copy of approximately 300 words in a one-hour working period'.

Remember: Too much extra time in an assessment may be tiring for the candidate and ultimately disadvantage them.

Examples

Patricia has a mild dyslexic condition affecting speed of processing. The centre requests 25% extra time based on their evidence of her need for extra time to finish writing her papers.

John is blind and is using Braille papers. There is a great deal of text to read in Higher History and there are diagrams and tables in Higher Mathematics. His centre requests that John be allowed 100% extra time to complete his examinations in these two subjects.

ICT

Introduction

These guidelines are for disabled candidates and/or those with additional support needs. For other candidates using ICT please see the most up-to-date information in the *Conditions and Arrangements* document on our website www.sqa.org.uk.

For many disabled candidates and/or those with additional support needs, computers and other forms of assistive technology (including screen readers, voice recognition/activated systems) provide an effective means of communication. ICT can often allow candidates to demonstrate their attainment more effectively and independently than would be possible with support such as readers and scribes.

It is important, however, that where ICT is used, it is appropriate to candidates' needs and that there has been sufficient time and training to ensure that they are able to use it effectively.

Guidelines for centres

It is your responsibility to:

- ◆ ensure that there has been sufficient time and training for the candidate to use ICT effectively. The arrangements for the use of ICT should reflect the candidate's usual way of working in the classroom. However, this might not always be the case — for example, in an external assessment, the centre would have to ensure that the candidate could not access the internet — so may not reflect fully normal classroom practice
- ◆ ensure that candidates cannot access any other electronic sources. These sources include the internet, locally-stored files, network shares, thumb drives, CDs, DVDs, e-mail and instant messaging systems, or any other digital media sources accessible either locally or over a wired or wireless network
- ◆ provide separate suitable accommodation if the use of ICT is likely to distract other candidates. Remember to take account of the need for additional invigilation
- ◆ make the necessary arrangements for the provision of ICT. Remember to ensure that, where possible, an auto-save facility is available, and that contingency arrangements are in place to deal with any technical problems
- ◆ ensure that you meet all of the requirements for using ICT that are detailed in *Conditions and Arrangements*. For example, all software such as spellchecks, predictive software etc, must be disabled, unless it has been approved by SQA. If you have a candidate with speech difficulties who needs to use augmentative speech equipment, you must give us details of how the candidate will use it in a particular assessment
- ◆ make sure the candidate's word-processed work is printed out, and any additional or graphical work produced by the candidate is submitted to SQA in the normal way

Remember: The use of ICT must not compromise the validity of the qualification. If you are in any doubt, please contact us for advice.

Example

A centre requests the use of ICT for Robert, who has dyslexia. SQA approves the use of ICT with spellcheck facility for all his examinations.

Linguistic support

Linguistic support is a general term which includes a number of arrangements which are designed to overcome a candidate's substantial difficulties in reading (for example, reading accuracy and/or reading speed) and in writing (for example, spelling, handwriting speed and/or legibility) where this is because of a disability/additional support need. Linguistic support can be permitted in both internal and external assessments. The arrangements available include:

- ◆ the use of information and communication technology (ICT)
- ◆ a reader to read the assessment material to a candidate
- ◆ a scribe to write down verbatim a candidate's dictated responses
- ◆ the use of a tape recorder for a candidate to record responses
- ◆ transcription, with correction of spelling and punctuation, of a candidate's completed work
- ◆ transcription without any correction of a candidate's completed work

The following pages provide detailed guidance on the use of these arrangements.

The use of linguistic support in the assessment of writing in Modern Languages and Gaelic

In the assessment of writing in these subjects, the overall quality of the written language, particularly spelling accuracy, is being assessed, therefore the use of some types of linguistic support is restricted.

The use of a scribe

The scribe must follow explicit instructions from the candidate with regard to spelling and the placement of diacritics, eg accents, umlauts, graves. This is because marks can only be awarded for the candidate's ability to spell. If the spelling of a word indicates a particular tense, this would be important in marking, for example, if the candidate says 'passer', this sounds the same as 'passez', 'passé', 'passée', 'passés' — the candidate would need to spell out the correct one because the scribe cannot assume that the candidate knows how to spell the word using the correct tense.

For the same reason, transcription with correction and the use of a tape recorder are not allowed.

Readers

Introduction

The use of a reader is allowed to meet the needs of candidates who have substantial difficulties with reading written communication, and who cannot decode written text independently.

A reader is a responsible person who reads text to a candidate. This may involve reading all instructions and questions to the candidate, or the candidate may request only certain questions or words to be read. The candidate may also ask that their responses are read back to them.

Guidelines for centres

It is your responsibility to:

- ◆ make the necessary arrangements for providing a reader
- ◆ select the readers on the basis of their ability to work effectively with the candidates
- ◆ ensure that the reader does not have a personal interest in the success of the candidate, ie a relative or a teacher who is involved in the candidate's study of the subject. There may be exceptions, but you must contact us before the examination to discuss this
- ◆ ensure that both the candidate and the reader are well prepared for working together, and that the candidate has had previous practice in working with the reader. Candidates using a reader should have been using this arrangement during their Course, and you should ensure that they are trained on how to work effectively with a reader under the various constraints which might apply in an external timed examination
- ◆ ensure that the candidate and reader are clear about the limitations of the reader's role in the assessment situation
- ◆ provide separate, suitable accommodation when a reader is used. Remember to take account of the need for additional invigilation
- ◆ ensure that readers are able to read accurately, intelligibly and at a reasonable rate, and have sufficient knowledge of the subject to read technical terms effectively

Computer software which reads out an electronic version of the paper may also be used.

Example

Anne has a visual impairment and her centre requests an enlarged paper for her Modern Studies exam, which is provided. By the time of the exam, the condition has deteriorated and Anne has very little sight left. The centre request a reader to read the question paper to Anne as this is now the most appropriate arrangement to allow Anne to access the exam.

Contacting SQA

You should submit a request for the use of a reader in any external assessments where a reader is required and request extra time, if required. You must also contact SQA if a reader is required in internal assessments where reading skills are being assessed.



Information for readers: what to do (and what not to do)

You should ensure that the candidate is clear about your exact role in the assessment. For example, you may say 'I can only read what you ask me to read. I cannot explain anything to you, but I can read things as many times as you like.'

Before you start, you should decide, with the candidate, which side to sit on so that you are both comfortable.

You must only:

- ◆ read as requested by the candidate. Candidates will indicate to you those instructions, questions or parts of questions they wish to have read. When a dictionary is allowed, you may consult this at the candidate's request and read out entries
- ◆ read the exact wording (instructions and questions) of the question paper. You must not give meanings of words, rephrase, or interpret anything

You must not:

- ◆ direct the candidate in any way, eg when to move on to another question

Remember: If asked to, you can read back the candidate's answers.

Candidates should have the option of reading some parts of the assessment themselves and having others read to them.

Although the candidate should study and interpret any diagrams, graphs or pictorial material themselves, they can ask you to read out any text associated with such material.

A separate invigilator is required when a reader is used and the invigilator may need to be positioned alongside you. You should discuss this with the invigilator before the start of the assessment.

You must refer any problems in communication (or any doubt you might have over any other matter) during the assessment to the invigilator.



Information for candidates: are you working with a reader this year?

You will have had practice using a reader before the assessment. The reader will make sure that you are clear about his/her exact role. For example, your reader may say 'I can only read what I am asked to read, I cannot explain anything to you, but I can read things as many times as you like.'

Before you start, or during a practice session, your reader will decide with you which side to sit on so that you are both comfortable.

During the assessment you can read some parts of the assessment yourself and have others read to you.

You must study any diagrams, graphs, or pictures yourself. You can ask your reader to read out any text or captions in them.

You should tell your reader the instructions, questions or parts of questions you wish to have read. (If you are allowed a dictionary, you can ask your reader to look something up for you and read it.)

Your reader can also read back your answers to you.

Your reader can only read the exact wording of the paper, and cannot give meanings of words, rephrase questions, or interpret anything for you.

Your reader cannot direct you in any way, for example, when to move on to another question.

An exam invigilator may need to be positioned beside your reader.

Scribes

Introduction

The use of a scribe is allowed to meet the needs of candidates who have substantial difficulties with written communication, and who cannot produce written communication by any other means, eg ICT.

A scribe is a responsible person who writes down or word processes a candidate's dictated answers to the questions. This may involve scribing all the candidate's responses or the candidate may request only certain questions or words are scribed. The scribe cannot add refinements to the candidate's responses, but discretion may be used regarding spelling and punctuation.

Guidelines for centres

It is your responsibility to:

- ◆ make the necessary arrangements for the provision of scribes
- ◆ ensure that scribes are able to produce an accurate record of candidates' responses. They must be able to write legibly and at a reasonable rate, and have sufficient knowledge of the subject to be able to record technical terms including place names or names of characters in literary texts effectively
- ◆ select the scribes on the basis of their ability to work effectively with the candidates
- ◆ ensure that the scribe does not have a personal interest in the success of the candidate and is not a relative or a teacher who is involved in the candidate's study of the subject. There may have to be exceptions to this, but you must contact SQA to discuss
- ◆ ensure that both the candidate and the scribe are well prepared for working together and that the candidate has had previous practice in working with the scribe. Candidates using a scribe should have been using this arrangement during their Course and you should ensure that they are trained on how to work effectively with a scribe under various constraints, which might apply in a timed external examination
- ◆ ensure that the candidate and the scribe are clear about the limitations of the scribe's role in the assessment situation
- ◆ provide separate, suitable accommodation when a scribe is used. Remember to take account of the need for additional invigilation
- ◆ ensure that when a candidate dictates answers onto a tape, you produce a hard copy

Computer software which produces a hard copy of the candidate's dictated speech can be used.

Example

Steven has cerebral palsy and no use of his hands and indistinct speech, which prevents him using ICT. He uses a scribe who understands his speech to write his responses for all examinations except for the writing papers in Modern Languages. In the assessment of writing in Modern Languages, the overall quality of the written language, particularly spelling accuracy, is being assessed.

Contacting SQA

You should submit a request for the use of a scribe in all external assessments, and request extra time, if required. You must also contact SQA if a scribe is required in internal assessments where writing skills are being assessed.

If you need further advice on the use of a scribe, please contact us.



Information for scribes: what to do (and what not to do)

You should ensure that the candidate is clear about your exact role in the assessment. For example, you may say, 'I can only write what you dictate to me. I cannot explain anything to you, but you can tell me to change anything I have written.'

Before you start, decide, along with the candidate, which side to sit on so that you are both comfortable.

You should ensure you are familiar with any technical terms (including place names, names of characters in literary texts, etc) the candidate is likely to use.

You must only record responses exactly as they are dictated by the candidate. You may use your discretion regarding spelling and punctuation, except Modern Languages. You may read back what you have written when asked to do so by the candidate.

You must not:

- ◆ give any advice regarding which questions to answer, which order the questions should be answered in, etc
- ◆ add refinements to the candidate's responses
- ◆ produce any diagrammatical or graphical material — if the candidate is unable to draw maps, graphs, diagrams etc, you may be allowed to assist, but this must have been agreed beforehand with SQA

Remember: The candidate can write some responses and dictate others.

A separate invigilator is required when a scribe is used, and the invigilator may need to be positioned beside you. You should discuss this with the invigilator before the start of the assessment.

You must refer any problems in communication (or in any other matter) that arise during the assessment to the invigilator.



Information for candidates: are you working with a scribe this year?

You will have had practice using a scribe before the assessment.

Your scribe will make sure that you are absolutely clear about their role in the assessment.

Before you start, or during a practice session, decide which side your scribe should sit on so you are both comfortable.

During the assessment you can write some responses and dictate others if you like, and you might also want to write or draw something extra. This will be submitted to SQA with your script.

You must produce any diagrams, maps or graphs by yourself. If you are unable to draw these, your scribe may be allowed to assist, but only if this has been agreed with SQA beforehand.

An exam invigilator may need to be positioned beside your scribe.

Transcription with correction of spelling and punctuation

Introduction

This arrangement is designed to meet the needs of candidates who have substantial difficulties with written communication, but who need to write their responses because they are unable either to use ICT or dictate their responses.

Guidelines for centres

In Units or internally assessed components where writing skills are not being assessed, you do not need to seek approval from SQA.

In Units or internally assessed examination components where writing is being assessed, you must contact SQA. You must also make a request to SQA for any candidate who requires this arrangement in an external assessment — whether writing skills are being assessed or not. If you are in any doubt, please contact us for advice.

- ◆ The transcriber must only correct errors of spelling and punctuation. The transcript must otherwise be an exact copy of the candidate's original script.
- ◆ The transcriber should be familiar with the candidate's handwriting, but must not have any personal interest in the success of the candidate or be a relative or a teacher who is involved in the candidate's study of the subject. There may be exceptions to this, but you must contact us to discuss.
- ◆ The transcriber should be familiar with the correct spelling of any technical terms (including place names, names of characters in literary texts, etc) the candidate is likely to use.
- ◆ The candidate should not be present during the transcription.
- ◆ The transcript must be produced under secure conditions as soon as possible after the assessment. An invigilator does not need to be present. Where there is a delay involved, scripts must be secured overnight and completed the following morning.
- ◆ The transcript may be handwritten or word-processed. If the transcript is to be handwritten, the transcriber should have legible handwriting. In either case, the transcriber should be able to correct spelling and punctuation competently.
- ◆ Diagrammatical material should not be transcribed. Assessment of such material will be based on the candidate's own work.

Remember: The transcript must be produced separately and be a word-for-word transcription with only spelling and punctuation errors corrected. It should be attached to the back of the candidate's script, and both should be passed to the Chief Invigilator for despatch to SQA in the normal way. The transcriber must not sign the transcript or inform the Marker of the reason why a transcription was necessary.

Modern Languages and Gaelic

As it is the overall quality of the written language (particularly spelling accuracy) that is being assessed in these subjects, transcription with correction is not permitted.

Transcription without correction

Guidelines for centres

This arrangement is designed to meet the needs of those candidates who have illegible handwriting but who are unable to use ICT.

It is your responsibility to ensure that:

- ◆ any errors of spelling and punctuation are not corrected. The transcript must be an exact copy of the candidate's original script
- ◆ any diagrammatical material is not transcribed. Assessment of such material will be based on the candidate's own work
- ◆ the transcriber is familiar with the candidate's handwriting but does not have any personal interest in the success of the candidate and is not a relative or a teacher who is involved in the candidate's study of the subject. There may be exceptions, but you must contact us to discuss
- ◆ the candidate is not present during the transcription
- ◆ the transcriber does not sign the transcription or inform the Marker why a transcript was necessary. An invigilator does not need to be present
- ◆ the transcript is produced under secure conditions as soon as possible after the assessment. Where a delay is involved, scripts must be secured overnight and completed the following morning

The transcript may be handwritten or word-processed. If it is to be handwritten, the transcriber must have legible handwriting

Remember: The transcript must be produced separately and be a word-for-word transcription. The transcript should be attached to the back of the candidate's script, and both must be passed to the Chief Invigilator for despatch to SQA in the normal way. The transcriber must not sign the transcript or inform the Marker of the reason why a transcription was necessary.

Omission of an Element

Standard Grade

A candidate with a substantial difficulty may be permitted to omit an Element in a Standard Grade Course where no other assessment arrangement can be put in place to allow the candidate to demonstrate attainment. The subject award is based on the Element(s) which have been satisfactorily completed and the omitted Elements will not be reported on the candidate's certificate.

Example

Aaron has severe speech difficulties and is unable to demonstrate attainment of the criteria for Speaking in Standard Grade French. It is not possible to make any reasonable adjustment to the assessment.

In discussion with SQA and with Aaron, the school decides to request omission of the assessment for the Speaking Element in Standard Grade French. Aaron achieves the Standard Grade Course award based on his results for the other Elements — Reading, Listening and Writing. The Element of Speaking is not reported on Aaron's Scottish Qualifications Certificate (SQC).

Practical helpers

Introduction

A practical helper is a responsible person who carries out practical tasks at the instruction of the candidate. This is permitted for candidates who have difficulties that prevent them carrying out practical assessments safely and independently. Approval to use this arrangement depends on the published assessment criteria and the degree of assistance provided by the practical helper.

Guidelines for centres

It is your responsibility to:

- ◆ make the necessary arrangements for providing a practical helper. The helper should be familiar with the requirements of the subject concerned but must not have any personal interest in the success of the candidate or be a relative or a teacher who is involved in the candidate's study of the subject
- ◆ ensure that the candidate is clear about what the helper can and cannot do. A candidate using a practical helper should have had practice using this arrangement during their Course, but you must also ensure that they are trained on how to work effectively with the practical helper under the various constraints which might apply in an assessment situation
- ◆ prepare clear written instructions for the practical helper on the assistance they are able to give to a candidate in a particular assessment. For invigilated assessments, a copy of these instructions must be available for the invigilator

Example

Mary has hemiplegia affecting her left side. She is right-handed. She needs a practical helper in Standard Grade Chemistry to hold equipment still while she performs practical tasks. Mary does not lose any marks for implementation because the skills which are being assessed are performed by her.



Information for practical helpers: what to do (and what not to do)

You should:

- ◆ be familiar with the requirements of the subject and assessment, but you must not have any personal interest in the success of the candidate or be a relative or a teacher who is involved in the candidate's study of the subject
- ◆ carry out instructions exactly as they are given, unless to do so would cause a hazard. Do not give factual help or make suggestions regarding what has to be undertaken. If you do not understand the candidate's instructions, you may ask for clarification
- ◆ aim to ensure that the candidate is not substantially disadvantaged by their difficulty, but you must not provide the candidate with an unfair advantage. The object is to enable a true assessment of the candidate's attainment to be made without the Unit or Course requirements being significantly compromised

Assistance may not be required throughout the whole assessment, as there may be parts of the assessment that the candidate can do without help.

Any problems arising during a practical assessment must be referred immediately to the invigilator or the teacher/lecturer in charge.



Information for candidates: are you using a practical helper this year?

Things you should know:

- ◆ Your helper should know the subject and assessment, but will not have any personal interest in your success.
- ◆ Your helper will carry out your instructions exactly as you give them (unless to do so would cause a hazard).
- ◆ Your helper will not be able to give you any factual help or tell you what you have to do.
- ◆ If your helper does not understand your instructions, they might ask you to explain them further.
- ◆ Your helper might not need to help you throughout the whole assessment, as there may be parts of the assessment that you can do without help.
- ◆ You should have been using a helper during your Course, and you should know how to work with your helper in an exam.

Prompters

Introduction

A prompter may be required where a candidate has little or no sense of time, or has concentration difficulties. The prompter may sit beside the candidate to keep their attention on the assessment.

Guidelines for centres

It is your responsibility to:

- ◆ make the necessary arrangements for providing a prompter
- ◆ provide separate, suitable accommodation when a prompter is used. Remember to take account of the need for additional invigilation
- ◆ ensure that the prompter is someone who is familiar enough with the candidate to know the difference between a real attention lapse and, for example, periods of thinking
- ◆ ensure that the prompter does not have a personal interest in the success of the candidate and is not a relative, close friend or a teacher who is involved in the candidate's study of the subject. There may have to be exceptions, but you must contact us to discuss this
- ◆ ensure that the candidate and prompter are clear about the limitations of the prompter's role in the assessment situation

Before the examination, make sure that the invigilator is fully informed of the methods to be used to prompt the candidate. Methods can include verbal prompts, the use of cue cards, a tap on the desk. The invigilator must be informed of the method beforehand. If the invigilator has any concerns about the appropriateness of the prompt, this should be discussed immediately with SQA so it can be agreed before the assessment.

Example

David has Asperger's syndrome and loses sense of time. The prompter sees that David is doing nothing so she taps on the desk to bring his attention back to the answer he was writing.



Information for prompters: what to do (and what not to do)

Normally, you will be familiar enough with the candidate to know the difference between a real attention lapse and periods of thinking. You should not, though, be a close friend or relative of the candidate.

Before the exam you should:

- ◆ agree with the candidate where you should sit, and the method you will use to bring back his/her attention, eg light tap on the desk, use of a cue card

During the exam you should:

- ◆ only draw the candidate's attention back to the assessment task — you do not need to be in a position to read the candidate's responses

If any problems arise during the examination, speak to the invigilator.

Remember: The invigilator is there to ensure that the correct procedures are followed, and that the assessment process is fair and valid. The invigilator should be fully informed of the method you will use to regain the candidate's attention.



Information for candidates: are you working with a prompter this year?

Your prompter will normally be someone you know, but he/she cannot be a relative or close friend.

Before the exam, agree with the prompter how he/she will prompt you and where they will sit.

During the exam, the prompter will only draw your attention back to the task, and will not be able to explain any questions to you.

Referral of a script to the Principal Assessor

In certain subjects, where the answers are in the form of an extended written response, candidates who have a substantial difficulty with written communication can have their examination scripts referred to the Principal Assessor (PA).

All scripts are marked against set criteria, and referring a script to the PA does not change this. For example, if marks are allocated for spelling, punctuation and grammar, all candidates will be subject to the same criteria, regardless of their particular difficulties. Referral to the PA is, though, useful for candidates whose scripts may be very difficult for a Marker to interpret.

The list of subjects where this arrangement is allowed is available on the Assessment Arrangements Requests System.

Please note this list is subject to review.

Example

Amy is deaf and does not use sign; she has an idiosyncratic use of English that means a Marker might have some difficulty in interpreting her written responses. Her school decides that the most appropriate assessment arrangement is to refer her Higher Modern Studies and English papers to the Principal Assessor.

Specific arrangements for candidates with visual impairment

Adapted print question papers

You can request the following types of adapted question papers:

- ◆ question paper printed on a specified colour
- ◆ standard large print question paper — this is the original question paper enlarged to N18, in standard SQA font, on A3 white paper
- ◆ modified large print question paper — this is produced using the following sizes: N14; N18; N24; N36 and N48; and in the following font styles: SQA Standard; Arial; or Comic Sans font. In addition, modified content may be requested. This involves simplifying visual complexity and layout and, where necessary, reducing visual content (while still meeting the same assessment objectives as the original paper).
- ◆ Braille question paper — this involves reducing visual complexity, with the paper then being produced in Braille
- ◆ raised diagrams — simple tactile diagrams are produced using heat expanded Minolta paper. These are supplied with Braille papers, but can also be supplied with a modified print paper

To maintain the quality of the adapted question papers and to ensure that they are delivered in time, you should select from the options above using the AAR. Also, due to the time and cost involved in the production of these papers, it is essential that you submit your requests as early as possible, and that the modification required is correctly identified. If your requirements change, please update the AAR as soon as possible.

Internal assessments

You do not need to apply to us to produce large print or Braille assessment material in your centre, provided the adapted material still meets the same assessment objectives as the original.

If there is any concern that you have changed the nature of the assessment, please contact us for advice.

A range of National Assessment Bank (NAB) items is available in Braille. If you would like further information about what is available, or would like copies, please contact the Dalkeith Office on 0131-561 6939.

Supervised breaks or rest periods

Rest periods and supervised breaks are permitted either inside or outside the assessment room. The time taken for the break does not count towards the time allowed for the assessment.

It is your responsibility to supervise the candidate when they are out of the room. This is not the invigilator's responsibility.

Example

Christopher has ME. Support for Learning staff gave him rest breaks of 15 minutes in each hour for each of his prelims. This works well for Christopher; even though the extended time can be tiring; the school decides to request this arrangement for Christopher's Standard Grades and asks for rest breaks of up to 25%.

Using sign

Introduction

Deaf candidates may have the contents of a question paper in an external exam signed to them by a sign communicator, with the exception of English, Gaelic or Modern Languages.[†] For internal assessments you do not need to contact us for approval to sign the assessment material to a candidate unless by doing so you are significantly changing the assessment criteria. Where an Outcome is concerned only with communicated knowledge and understanding of a subject, this may be conveyed by signing. However, where an Outcome is concerned with oral or aural skills, you must contact us.

Guidelines for centres

You are responsible for:

- ◆ making the necessary arrangements for providing a sign communicator
- ◆ making sure that both the candidate and the sign communicator are advised of, and sufficiently well prepared for, this arrangement
- ◆ ensuring that the sign communicator has the right level of knowledge of the subject and skill in sign language — for example, in a Higher Chemistry exam, the sign communicator's skills need to be sufficient to reflect the candidate's breadth of knowledge and ability
- ◆ preparing one video (either tape or digital) per candidate per subject, and clearly labelling it with centre, candidate, and subject and level details
- ◆ ensuring the candidate is comfortable with, and has had practice of, being videoed
- ◆ providing all the video equipment, including camera and playback facilities, and the operation of this equipment during the assessment
- ◆ ensuring that candidates, and where appropriate parents or guardians, have agreed to the video recording of the assessment event and are aware of how it will be used by SQA
- ◆ providing separate accommodation. The room must be suitable for filming and signing. This means that there should be adequate space and appropriate lighting to video the candidate in the most unobtrusive way possible
- ◆ requesting additional invigilation
- ◆ preparing a transcript in English of each candidate's signed responses as recorded (on video). This translation/transcription should be carried out within the centre by someone with the appropriate level of skill in signing
- ◆ ensuring that the candidate is aware of, and has been prepared to work within the time constraints of the examination (including any agreed extra time allowance)

Please visit our website, www.sqa.org.uk/assessmentarrangements for further guidance and examples of good practice on using sign.

[†] The rubrics in these exams, ie the instructions on the front cover of the exam paper may be signed to the candidate.



Guidelines for sign communicators: what to do (and what not to do)

Preparation

It is very important that you have had the opportunity to prepare for signing in any assessment. For the external exam you will (under supervision of an invigilator) have access to the question paper up to one hour before the start of the exam. (If you think you may need more time for a particular paper, this must be negotiated with SQA beforehand.) During this preparation time you may consult with another sign communicator if you are uncertain, or if you have any concerns about any aspect of the translation of the question paper.

In the external exam

To carry out the role of sign communicator successfully, **you must:**

- ◆ be able to communicate effectively with the candidate
- ◆ have a good working knowledge of the subject you are being asked to translate
- ◆ only translate under instruction from the candidate
- ◆ allow the candidate to study and interpret any reference maps, diagrams, graphs independently, but you may sign any labels or text connected with such material

You must not:

- ◆ take the lead or initiative
- ◆ give any additional explanation or assistance

You should have had previous practice in working with the candidate, and both of you should be well prepared for working together under the examination conditions that will apply.

Remember: Candidates can ask for parts of the question paper to be signed again as often as necessary, but you must not suggest or choose which parts.



Guidance for candidates: working with a sign communicator

Do you know that there are certain things **you should** and **shouldn't do**?

You should have had previous practice in working with your sign communicator, and both of you should be well prepared for working together under exam conditions.

You **must**:

- ◆ clearly indicate to your sign communicator which questions (or parts of questions) you wish to have signed. You can ask for parts of the question paper to be signed again as often as necessary, but the sign communicator cannot suggest or choose which parts
- ◆ study and interpret any reference maps, diagrams, graphs etc, on your own. Your sign communicator can sign any labels or text to you

You **will**:

- ◆ have the option of writing some responses and signing others. You may also supplement your signed response with additional written or graphic material

If you choose to sign your responses in your exams, SQA will require your signed responses to be recorded on videotape, so you must be comfortable with, and have had practice of, being filmed.

Remember: Your sign communicator will take great care when signing a question to you. No additional explanation or assistance will be given. Remember that what your sign communicator does in the exam will be different from what they do in the classroom.

Support for you

Who to contact for more information

If you have a query about a particular assessment arrangement please contact the Assessment Arrangements team on 0131-561 6890 or e-mail them at **aarequests@sqa.org.uk**.

For further up-to-date information on assessment arrangements please visit **www.sqa.org.uk/assessmentarrangements**.

If you have a general enquiry about SQA or its qualifications, please call our Customer Contact Centre on 0845 279 1000 or e-mail them at **customer@sqa.org.uk**.

Glossary

Braille	Braille is a writing system consisting of raised dots which people read by touch.
ICT	Information and Communication Technology. Some candidates may need the support of information and communication technology (ICT) to take assessments and examinations. Using the particular type of ICT must not create a misleading impression of the candidate's attainment.
Lip-reading	A form of communication used by some deaf people who use English as one of their communication choices.
Practical helper	A responsible person who, in coursework and/or in an examination, carries out practical tasks at the instruction of the candidate. In an examination this might be holding a ruler or turning the pages of the script. In practical assessments, the helper might pour liquids, weigh solids, or hold equipment for the candidate. The candidate must not be credited with marks for any skill which has been performed by the practical helper.
Prompter	A prompter is a responsible person who may sit beside the candidate in order to keep their attention on the assessment.
Reader	A responsible person who will read all or part of the assessment material to the candidate and, if asked by the candidate, the candidate's written responses.
Scribe	A responsible person who writes down verbatim a candidate's dictated responses to questions or coursework.
Sign communicator	A person who translates any assessment (normally presented in written or spoken English) into the sign language preferred by a deaf candidate.
Transcription	Transcription means two things: A written record of signed language. The transcriber works from recorded material, translating Sign Language into English, and writing it down. Copying (rewriting or typing) exactly a candidate's work if the candidate's handwriting is illegible or so difficult to read that it would cause difficulties for the Marker.
Transcription with correction	As transcription, but where the candidate's difficulties with spelling or punctuation make it necessary to transcribe the work with these corrected.