

Tips for Scribes prior to examinations

It is highly recommended before the day of the examination (or if this is not possible, 15 mins prior to the examination) that the scribe and student should take the opportunity to meet and clarify some of the processes that will be used during the exam. The list below is some of the suggested questions the scribe should discuss with the student to avoid (as much as possible) clarifying issues during the exam.

- Does the student intend to do some writing during the exam?
- If handwriting the exam, would the student like you to write on every second line to allow for amendments?
- What does the student expect you to do if you are unsure of the spelling of a word?
- Does the student want to abbreviate long technical terms?
(Where long technical terms are used throughout the exam, abbreviations should initially be indicated and then used to refer to the particular term, e.g. socio-economic status = SES.)
- If the student cannot think of a particular word, do they want to substitute another word which they can change later or leave a space (i.e. a dotted line)?
- How does the student want text to be crossed out?
- If diagrams need to be drawn, how will the student direct you to do this?
- How will instructions other than straight dictation be managed?
- Does the student prefer that you look away whilst they are thinking?
- How will the student end sentences (i.e. will the student say 'full stop' or will you rely on intonation?)
- How will new paragraphs be indicated (i.e. will the student say, 'new paragraph?')
- Does the student want to develop a rough plan for answering essay-response questions?
- Does the student want to use a heading system to help develop structure in essay responses?
- How will you let the student know that there is a need to slow down/rest your hand?
- Check that the seating arrangements will work for you and the student (e.g. side-by-side or face-to-face across the table).
- Encourage the student to speak at a pace that allows the scribe to write at a comfortable pace.
- Follow all instructions given by the examiner and/or provided on the examination paper.
- Accurately complete the student's details on the exam booklet (or type the client's full details if doing the exam on a PC)
- Do not discuss any aspect of the exam except when seeking to clarify something the student has dictated.
- Write/type only and exactly what the student dictates, including grammatical and spelling errors (even if there is a concern about whether it is correct).
- Ensure you remain neutral at all times - take care not to indicate an opinion (positive or negative).
- For multiple choice, it is good practice to read the question and choices before selecting the student's answer.
- Ensure that the student is satisfied that the final copy represents their response(s) accurately.