

## Guidelines on the Use of Amanuenses

### What is an Amanuensis?

An amanuensis (or scribe) is someone who writes down or types a student's dictated answers to questions under examination conditions. It is important that the amanuensis accurately records only the words dictated by the student.

If a student requires an amanuensis for examinations this should be detailed in the student's Learner Support Agreement (LSA), a follow up memorandum from Student Support Services (SSS) or in instances of temporary disability, a medical report.

An amanuensis should have a basic understanding of the subject in which they are scribing and is normally recruited from the Postgraduate body of the relevant School/Department; the amanuensis must not be sitting any exams of their own. The amanuensis should also not be the student's lecturer, tutor, friend or relative. It is preferable that the amanuensis is the same person who has worked as a note-taker for the same student during the academic year.

An amanuensis should:

- Write precisely what the student dictates
- NOT alter the content of the students given answer in ANY way
- NOT give any indication to the student of the appropriateness of their answer
- NOT be acting as an invigilator in the same exam
- Ensure that they arrive at the designated examination venue a minimum of fifteen minutes before the start of the exam

Everything written by the amanuensis or the student should be submitted at the end of the examination.

### Notes for Guidance

#### **Prior to the Examination**

Prior to the first examination session the School/Department should:

- Arrange a familiarisation session between the amanuensis and the student, at this stage the amanuensis should remind the student that they can ask that the dictated script be read aloud as often as is needed during the exam
- Ensure that the amanuensis checks with the student how they wish to use their support (different students may have different preferences in terms of how they will dictate their answers etc.)
- Ensure that the amanuensis familiarises themselves with these notes for guidance and the University's Codes of Practice on the Conduct of Centrally Co-ordinated Formal Written Examinations.

NB. It is important that the amanuensis adopts the approach and pace preferred by the student

## **During the Examination**

During the examination the amanuensis should:

- Write down or word process answers exactly as they are dictated, including punctuation as stipulated by the student
- Write eligibly
- Require the student to provide spellings for specialist or technical terms used in his/her answer
- Allow the student on request to review and seek correction of the script

The amanuensis should not:

- Give any factual help to the student or offer any suggestions
- Give advice to the student on which question to answer or in which order
- Give advice to the student regarding when to move onto the next question

The student is permitted to use an answer book to make any rough notes if required.

## **At the End of the Examination**

The amanuensis must ensure that the student's details are completed on the front of each answer book and that all written work is handed in. Any rough work, which the student does not wish to be marked, should be crossed through.

All discussions between the amanuensis and the student are strictly confidential. The amanuensis should not discuss students outside the working environment.

## **Student Responsibilities**

Students are responsible for notifying their Schools/Departments immediately of any alternative examination requirements. Any late notification will require at least 48 hours for appropriate arrangements to be made.

If a student requiring an amanuensis is unable to attend an examination they should advise the School/Department as soon as possible.

## **School Responsibilities**

Schools/Departments are responsible for appointing an amanuensis and for providing a separate venue for the examinations sitting.

Given the need for some degree of expertise in the subject area Schools/Departments are responsible for finding an amanuensis, should they experience any difficulty in finding a suitable nominee advice can be sought from SSS and the Examinations and Congregations Office (ECO).

Schools/Departments should arrange an initial briefing session prior to the examination to facilitate a practice or familiarisation session. This will allow the student to clarify their mode of working without eroding into the session of the examination.

The School/Department should provide the amanuensis with a copy of these guidelines prior to the start of the examination.

ECO will only meet the costs for centrally administered examinations during the main summer and supplementary examination periods. The home School/Department will need to meet the cost for an amanuensis, if required, for any class tests or examinations, which fall outside these periods.

In instances where a student states that they require an amanuensis but this does not form part of an LSA agreement then please contact SSS in the first instance.

### **Examinations and Congregations Office Responsibilities**

ECO will pay the invigilation costs of an amanuensis for centrally administered examinations done during the Main Summer and Supplementary Examination Periods.