

Appendix C: Protocol for the Use of the Scribe Accommodation and for Transcribing Student Responses

Scribing a student’s responses by an adult Test Administrator is a response accommodation that allows students to provide test responses to an adult Test Administrator who writes or types the responses directly onto the assessment for the student. Students receiving the scribe accommodation may respond to assessment items either:

- verbally,
- using a speech-to-text device or other augmentative/assistive communication device (e.g., picture/ word board),
- signing (e.g., American Sign Language, signed English, Cued Speech),
- gesturing,
- pointing, or
- eye-gazing

Note: Scribing may include manipulating technology-enhanced items, such as “dragging and dropping” selected response items, as appropriate.

The scribe accommodation is appropriate for students with a physical disability that *severely limits or prevents* the student’s motor process of writing, typing, or recording responses during testing. This includes students with reduced ability to record responses due to pain, fracture, paralysis, loss of function, or loss of endurance, as well as students whose handwriting is indecipherable or illegible. Scribes are also an appropriate accommodation for students who have a documented disability in the area of written expression which results in significant interference in their ability to express their knowledge in writing/keyboarding, even after varied and repeated attempts to teach the student to do so.

If a student requires a scribe due to a recently occurring, though temporary, illness or injury, an Emergency Accommodations Request Form must be completed, submitted to OSSE, and kept on file at the school. This form can be accessed in [Appendix G: Use of an Emergency Accommodation on an Assessment](#) or on OSSE's website at <https://osse.dc.gov/service/testing-accommodations>.

If a student requires a scribe due to an ongoing inability to express their responses through writing/ keyboarding, this should be documented in evaluation summaries from locally-administered diagnostic assessments, and must be listed in the student’s IEP or 504 plan. The student should be receiving ongoing, intensive instruction and/or interventions to learn written expression, as deemed appropriate by the IEP team or 504 Plan Coordinator.

The use of a scribe is permitted in the following assessments:

- DC Math assessments
- DC Science assessments
- DC ELA assessments for Evidence Based Selected Response, and Technology Enhanced Constructed Response items
- DC ELA assessments for Prose Constructed Responses. **Note:** For this accommodation, refer to selection and administration guidelines in the *DC CAPE Accessibility Features and Accommodations Manual*

Qualifications of the Scribe

Individuals who provide the scribe accommodation to a student must:

- be trained by the school or district, as indicated in the Test Administrator Manuals, and OSSE Test Security Guidelines and
- be fluent in receptive and expressive American Sign Language (ASL), signed English, or other sign system, for students who are deaf or hard of hearing.

Preferably, the scribe will already be familiar with and have experience scribing for the student. If the scribe is unfamiliar with the student, then scribe and student should have the opportunity to practice the scribing process together prior to taking the assessment.

Administering the Scribe Accommodation

- A scribe may administer the scribe accommodation only to one student at a time during a test. The student must be tested in a separate setting.
- The scribe must write legibly, if transcribing a student's response into a test book.
- The scribe must transcribe responses verbatim from the student, and may not prompt or question the student, or correct a student's responses. The scribe may ask the student to restate (or sign) words or parts, as needed.
- A student using a scribe must be given the same opportunity as other students to plan and draft a constructed response. The scribe may write an outline, plan, or draft exactly as directed by the student without any cueing and guidance to the student.
- The scribe should be informed of the preferred method or format for recording the student's response before the date of the assessment. During testing, the student may dictate constructed responses either:
 1. Directly to a human scribe who records the responses at the time they are given (computer- and paper-based testing)
 2. Into a speech-to-text converter (e.g., voice recognition software), augmentative communication device, or assistive technology device to be transcribed by the scribe at a later time into the online testing platform or onto a paper-based book/answer document). A student must be given the opportunity to review and edit their responses before they are finalized into the online testing platform or paper-based test book/answer document.
- When using a speech-to-text converter, augmentative communication device, or other assistive technology device, hard copies of the student's response must be printed out for transcription purposes unless the device being used does not have the capability to print. In cases where printing a response is not possible, scribing must take place as the student dictates or otherwise produces the response. All electronic files must be deleted immediately after the testing session.
- The scribe must allow the student to review the scribed response in order to make edits. If requested by the student, the scribe may read the scribed response back to the student. The student may dictate changes or edits to the scribe, and the scribe must make those changes exactly as dictated by student, even if a change is incorrect. All changes must be made during testing.

Additional Guidelines for the DC ELA Assessment—Prose Constructed Responses

Capitalization and Punctuation

For the DC ELA Assessment—Prose Constructed Responses only, the student is responsible for all capitalization and punctuation. This can be accomplished either after testing or during testing using

one or more of the following Rules for Punctuation:

1. After dictation: The student can dictate the entire response at one time. The scribe will write/type the response without capitalization and punctuation. When the student is finished dictating, the scribe will show the response to the student. The student will tell the scribe which letters are to be capitalized and where punctuation should be added.
2. During dictation: The student may add capitalization and punctuate as they dictate.
 - a. For example, when stating the sentence “The fox ran.” The student will say, “Capital T, the fox ran, period”
 - b. If a sentence includes other punctuation, for example a comma, the student must indicate the comma. For example, when stating, “The boy bought apples, oranges, and bananas.” The student will say, “Capital T, the boy bought apples, comma, oranges, comma, and bananas, period”

Students must be given the opportunity to proofread their responses, even if they provide capitalization and punctuation during dictation.

Rules for Capitalization

The scribe can automatically capitalize in these cases:

1. The scribe should capitalize the first letter of a sentence if the student has indicated the punctuation in the previous sentence. For example, if the student said, “Capital T, the fox ran, period. The fox jumped, period.” The scribe would write “The fox ran. The fox jumped.”
2. The first word in a new paragraph when students have indicated for the scribe to begin a new paragraph.

The student must specify capitalization in the following cases:

1. The first letter of a sentence, if the student has not indicated punctuation in the previous sentence. For example, if the student said, “Capital T, the fox ran, the fox jumped, period.” The scribe would write “The fox ran the fox jumped.”
2. Other capitalization (e.g., capitalization of proper nouns, acronyms, etc.)

Scribe Parameters during the Assessment

The following scribing practices are acceptable:

- The scribe may ask “Are you finished?” Or “Is there anything you want to add or delete?”
- The scribe may respond to procedural questions asked by the student such as, “Do I have to use the entire space to answer the question?” The scribe may indicate “no.”
- If the student requests that the scribe read a response that was already dictated, the scribe must read what the student dictated previously in an even voice, being careful not to cue the student to errors.

The following scribing practices are unacceptable:

- The scribe cannot influence the student’s response in any way.
- The scribe cannot give the student specific directions, clues, or prompts; e.g., “First, set the equations equal to one another;” or “Make sure that the equation is set equal to zero.”
- The scribe cannot tell the student if their answer is correct or incorrect.
- The scribe cannot answer a student’s questions related to the content; e.g., “Is this the right

- way to set up the problem?” Or “Can you tell me what this word means?”
- The scribe cannot alert the student to mistakes they made during testing.

Special Considerations When Scribing for a Student Who Uses Sign Language or Cued Speech

- The scribe for a student who signs their responses must be fluent in ASL, signed English, or other sign systems the student uses.
- When responses are dictated by a student using American Sign Language (or other signed system), the scribe may ask clarifying questions regarding the use of classifiers. Classifiers give descriptive information about a noun or verb such as location and kind.
- The scribe will write the student’s responses in English. The transcription of ASL will not be done in a word-to-word format, but instead will be written in English without changing or enhancing the meaning of the content, adding information, or explaining concepts unknown to the student (e.g., student signs “HOUSE WHITE LIVE THERE ME.” Scribe writes “I live in the white house.”)
- Scribe must follow all other acceptable scribing practices.

Use of Speech-to-Text/Voice-Recognition Software/Devices

Speech-to-text conversion, or voice recognition, software allows students to dictate responses into their computer microphone and have the responses converted to printed text. For this accommodation, students will use their own assistive technology devices at a separate computer station equipped with speech-to-text/voice recognition software in order to respond to multiple-choice, open-ended items, and extended responses on assessments. Students who use voice recognition software routinely, and for whom this accommodation is listed in their IEP, may use speech-to-text/voice recognition software as an accommodation on assessments. Students must become familiar with the software and must have opportunities to practice using it prior to testing. It is also important that students who use speech-to-text devices be given the opportunity to develop planning notes using speech-to-text, and to view what they produce via speech-to-text.

Upon completion of a test, the student’s responses should be printed out and the guidelines for transcribing student responses followed.

Guidelines for Transcribing Student Responses (Paper-based testing only)

Certain situations involving scribing of responses during administration of assessments may require a Test Administrator to transcribe a student’s response in a standard, scorable test booklet or answer document. These situations may include:

- Answers were recorded in the wrong section of a Test Booklet or Answer Document, or in an incorrect Test Booklet or Answer Document.
- A student takes the test using a special test format that requires answers to be transcribed (e.g., large print).
- A student uses a speech-to-text converter, augmentative communication device, or assistive technology device to be transcribed by the scribe at a later time.
- As an accommodation, a student records answers in a test booklet, answer document, or on blank paper, instead of in the required Test Booklet or Answer Document.
- A Test Booklet or Answer Document becomes unusable (e.g., torn, wrinkled).

If a student’s responses must be transcribed after test administration is completed, the following steps must be followed:

- At least two persons must be present during any transcription of student responses. One

of these persons will be the transcriber, and the other will be an observer confirming the accuracy of the transcription. It is highly recommended that one of the individuals be an authorized LEA Test Coordinator or School Test Coordinator.

The student’s response must be transcribed verbatim into the Answer Document or Test Booklet. The student’s original response in an Answer Document/Test Booklet should be returned with secure test materials. The LEA Test Coordinator or School Test Coordinator should write “DO NOT SCORE” or draw an “X” in large font on the front of the original Answer Document/Test Booklet. Do not cover the barcode. Return them with nonscorable test materials.

- Braille transcription: Only an eligible Test Administrator who is a certified Teacher of Students with Visual Impairment, including Blindness, or someone working under the direct supervision of an eligible Test Administrator who is a certified Teacher of Students with Visual Impairment, including Blindness may transcribe the student’s responses onto the paper form of the DC CAPE assessments.
- Any original student responses that were printed from an assistive technology device or recorded separately on blank paper (or on other external devices) must be securely shredded.

Procedures for Transcribing Student Responses for Computer-Based Testing

Selected Response and Technology Enhanced Items

For selected response and technology enhanced items, student responses must be entered into TestNav during testing by the Test Administrator. Once the student reaches the end of the test with all Selected Response and Technology Enhanced Items completed, the Test Administrator should have the student EXIT the test but not submit the test.

Constructed Response Items

During administration of computer-based assessments, students who require use of a speech-to-text converter, augmentative communication device, or assistive technology device will need constructed responses transcribed into TestNav by a Test Administrator before the online testing window closes. In these situations, the following steps must be followed.

- As the student encounters constructed responses, they should use their device to respond to the questions. The student will then continue testing in TestNav, leaving these items unanswered in TestNav.
- Once the student reaches the end of the test, the Test Administrator should have the student EXIT the test but NOT submit the test.
- The Test Administrator must set the test to Resumed status within Assessment Delivery and Management Platform (ADAM).
 - If a student submits the test in error, the test submission must be undone to complete the transcription. Contact OSSE to have test submission undone.
- Once the test has been resumed, the Test Administrator must log in to TestNav as the student and navigate to the items for transcription.
- At least two persons must be present during any transcription of student responses. One of the individuals must be an authorized Test Administrator.
- The student’s responses must be transcribed verbatim into TestNav. (See note above about scribing signed responses in English).
- Once all items have been transcribed, the Test Administrator will submit the test.
- After transcription is complete, all original student responses that were printed from an assistive technology device must be securely shredded.