A08.2 Scribes and Proofreaders for Written Work

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1   Introduction

1.1   Purpose

This policy outlines the acceptable use of scribes and proofreaders for written work across all programmes delivered by SAE Institute at any campus involved in the delivery of validated programmes.

1.2   Related Policies and Documents

This policy complements other relevant policies, procedures and key documents, including:

- A05 Academic Quality Assurance Policy
- A08.3 Academic Misconduct
- A18 Student Code of Conduct
- Assessment, Project, or Portfolio Guidelines

2   Scope

The policy applies to all students submitting written work including, but not limited to essays, reports and written examinations. It covers all programmes at SAE campuses involved with the delivery of validated provision.

3   Scribes and Amanuenses

Where a specific need has been identified through an official needs assessment, the use of scribes may be permitted for written work, including coursework and examinations. SAE does not have provision to provide this service, but students may be signposted to dedicated providers to enable them to access such services at their own discretion.

Where possible, it is advised that the student and scribe meet regularly to practice the process. Where a scribe is used within a timed examination, separate accommodation will be made available. The student will be allocated an additional 25% time to account for the reduced speed associated with dictation.

During an assessment activity, scribes:

- Should write down *exactly* what the student says, which requires the student to include punctuation and spell out technical words or names.
- Must not rephrase or paraphrase what is dictated to them.
- Must not correct sentence construction, grammar or the use of language.
- May read back to the student what has been written.
- May read examination questions, but cannot explain the meaning of words or provide any additional support or prompts in answering a question.

4 Proofreaders

Proofreading should be the final stage of producing a piece of academic writing. SAE believes that students should be encouraged to proofread their own work, since this is an essential skill in the academic writing process.

In some instances, it may be appropriate for some students to seek the help of a third party for proofreading. Such third parties can be professional proofreaders, fellow students, friends or family members.

These guidelines set out guidance for students, staff and any external proofreaders for all written work. Failure to adhere to these guidelines may incur penalties as outlined in A08.3 Academic Misconduct.

If students use a third party, they must be identified and sign a statement that their contribution was limited to checking for, identifying, and suggesting corrections for errors in text. Students are advised to identify and consult with a proofreader early to ensure clear expectations are agreed around what does or does not fall under the remit of a proofreader (as outlined below), when they will take receipt of the work, how long it will take to complete the work, the agreed cost of the service if applicable.

Proofreading is not editing—not checking or amending ideas, arguments or structure—which would amount to plagiarism (presenting the work of others as your own).

It is the student's responsibility to provide the proofreader with a copy of these guidelines. The proofreader must sign a formal statement (as provided in appendix A) and this statement must be handed in alongside the submission.

A proofreader may:

- identify typographical, spelling and punctuation errors
- identify formatting and layout errors and inconsistencies (e.g., page numbers, font size, line spacing, headers and footers)
- identify grammatical and syntactical errors and anomalies
- highlight overly long or complex sentences or paragraphs, especially where meaning is ambiguous
- identify minor formatting errors in referencing (for consistency and order)
- identify errors in the labelling of diagrams, charts, or figures
- identify lexical repetitions or omissions.

A proofreader may not:

- add to content in any way
- check or correct facts, data calculations, formulae, or equations
- rewrite content where meaning is ambiguous
- alter argument or logic where faulty
- rearrange or reorder paragraphs to enhance structure or argument
- implement or significantly alter a referencing system
- re-label diagrams, charts, or figures
- reduce content so as to comply with a specified word limit
- make grammatical, syntactical, or stylistic corrections
- translate any part of the work into English.

Students have overall authorial responsibility for their work and should choose whether they wish to accept the proofreader's advice. Students should note that the use of a proofreader will not be accepted in mitigation of any deficiencies in their work.

5   References

These guidance notes have been written in consultation with other Higher Education providers' policies in mind, and the further research into the use of scribes and proofreaders. Notable sources that have informed the policy are:

- Hanafin, J., Shevlin, M., Kenny, M. and McNeela, E., 2007. *Including Young People with Disabilities: Assessment Challenges in Higher Education*. Higher Education, 54(3), pp.435-448.
- Royal Holloway University of London. 2015. *Policy on Proofreading Students' Written Work*.
- University of Cambridge. 2016. *Guidelines for Students, Supervisors, Examiners and Proofreaders*. Accessed online 29/09/2020 at https://www.plagiarism.admin.cam.ac.uk/files/proofreading_2016.pdf
- University of Essex. 2011. *University Policy and Guidance on Proofreading of Student Texts.* Accessed online 29/09/2020 at http://www.essex.ac.uk/proofreading/policy.aspx

6   Policy History

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