

Circular S/IF/36/19

May 2019

To:	The Principals of Post-primary Schools and Directors of Further and Higher Education Colleges
For circulation to:	Relevant Heads of Department, Examinations Officer and Special Educational Needs Coordinator

Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar and the use of scribes

This circular provides guidance on how candidates can access marks for spelling, punctuation and grammar (assessed as part of the QWC requirements) when a scribe has been used in CCEA's GCSE or GCE qualifications.

Spelling, punctuation and grammar are assessed as part of the Quality of Written Communication (QWC) requirements for a qualification (where applicable). QWC is taken into account when assessing candidates' extended written responses. Extended responses are marked on the basis of levels of response. The description for each level of response includes reference to QWC. Separate marks for Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar (SPaG) are not available for CCEA's revised GCSEs in English Literature, Geography, History and Religious Studies.

Please see overleaf for specific guidance on the use of a scribe for GCSE English Language Units 1&4.

Accessing marks for spelling, punctuation and grammar as part of the QWC requirements when a scribe is used:

Spelling

- For those responses in which spelling, punctuation and grammar are assessed as part of the QWC, it will be determined if the candidate has met the requirements for **spelling** as follows:
 - At the end of the examination the scribe will choose the first 150 words from the answers dictated;
 - From these 150 words, the candidate will be asked, in order of the presentation of text, to spell any words of two syllables or more;
 - The candidate will be required to spell a maximum of 20 words (where the combined dictated answers amount to fewer than 150 words, all the words dictated should be used for this exercise).
- The procedure to be followed is detailed below:
 - After the examination has been completed the candidate will be given a five minute supervised break before the assessment of the spelling procedure is conducted;
 - The scribe must clearly indicate on the script the point at which the examination has concluded and the assessment of spelling commences;
 - The scribe will read out the first sentence from the answers dictated by the candidate for the questions which assess spelling, punctuation and grammar as part of the QWC requirements. The scribe will then ask the candidate to spell each word of two or more syllables from that sentence. This process will be followed, sentence by sentence, until the candidate has spelt 20 words, or, if fewer than 20 multisyllabic words are available in the designated answers, then all the words of two or more syllables;
 - The scribe will record the spelling of the dictated words on the answer paper. The spelling will subsequently be assessed by a CCEA examiner during the formal marking process;
 - An additional 15 minutes will be allocated for this exercise.

Punctuation

- For those questions which assess spelling, punctuation and grammar as part of the QWC, the candidate should dictate the use of punctuation throughout their answers. The dictated answers will be authenticated by the scribe on the cover sheet. The dictated answers and cover sheet are submitted for marking in the usual way.

Grammar

- For those questions which assess spelling, punctuation and grammar as part of the QWC, the candidate should dictate his/her answers to the scribe. The dictated answers will be authenticated by the scribe on the cover sheet. The dictated answers and cover sheet are submitted for marking in the usual way.

GCSE English Language

Spelling, punctuation and grammar are discretely assessed in Section A of GCSE English Language (Units 1 & 4) through Assessment Objective 4(iii). In cases where candidates have not dictated spellings (letter by letter) and punctuation throughout the response, candidates will only be able to access a portion of the 30 marks available for this part of the assessment. Please see the subject microsite for further details.

Additional considerations

Scribe Cover Sheet

A scribe cover sheet must always be completed by the centre when a scribe has been used, and this must be attached to the front cover of the script. The cover sheet must clearly indicate the extent to which the scribe has been used for spelling, punctuation and grammar. If this is not indicated it will be assumed that the punctuation and spelling have been added by the scribe and the candidate will only be able to access a portion of the marks available under the QWC requirements.

Notes on the completion of the scribe cover sheet and details on the use of a scribe under Access Arrangements can be found on the JCQ website (<https://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/access-arrangements-and-special-consideration>).

Self-editing/correction

The candidate will be permitted to ask for a correction to be made to their spelling during the specified time; they can self-correct the spelling of words.

If you have any queries regarding the content of this circular please contact the Education Manager with responsibility for the qualification. Contact details may be found on the CCEA website.