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Guidelines and Objectives for Exam Readers

This document was developed to answer some of the most frequently asked questions regarding reading and scribing exams for students with disabilities. If questions persist after reviewing the contents of this document, please contact RCPD.

Objectives for Oral Exam Readers

1. To make available the content of any printed materials associated with the administration of the printed exam.

Methods of Achieving Objective

- A. The reader should read each exam item as presented in the printed exam.
 - B. Following the presentation of an exam item, the reader should allow time for the examinee to respond with an answer to the item.
 - C. Because of the complexity of many exam items, it may be necessary for the reader to read a given item several times, (this is done at the request of the examinee).
2. To assist the examinee in recording answers to questions as presented in the printed exam.

Methods of Achieving Objective

- A. When recording answers to an exam item, the reader should respond in writing with exactly what was dictated by the examinee.

Things to Avoid While Reading an Exam

1. Do not give your opinion on an exam item, (e.g. “I think that question was unfair”, or “Are you sure that’s the correct answer?”)

2. Never tell the examinee what you think the correct answer is even after the question has been answered, (e.g. “I’m pretty sure B was the right answer.”)
3. When reading multiple-choice items, avoid stressing or emphasizing one option over another, (e.g. Reading option B louder than option A.)
4. The reader must never offer interpretations regarding the meaning of exam items, (e.g. “What they’re really trying to say is....”)
5. Avoid making grammatical or structural modifications to essay or sentence answers a student dictates to you.

Things To Do When Reading an Exam

1. Before accepting an assignment to read or scribe an exam, be certain you understand the essential requirements of the assignment (i.e., does the student need assistance with reading, scribing, or a combination of both). Please note that RCPD does not disclose the nature or specific details of the disability as this is a matter of confidentiality.
2. Before beginning the exam, make sure you have clear instructions from an exam proctor or the instructor regarding what is and is not allowed during the exam. Also, be sure you understand what is to be done with the exam upon completion.
3. If the exam involves the use of a computer, discuss with the exam proctor or instructor exactly what limitations exist regarding your involvement in mouse control and typing.
4. If the reader senses the examinee is having difficulty with an item, it is appropriate for the reader to ask the examinee if he/she needs the question or part of the question re-read.
5. It is appropriate to spell any words the reader cannot pronounce, or as requested by the examinee.
6. It is appropriate to help the examinee gain a greater understanding of graphical or placement critical aspects of an exam by answering questions about the locations of such items, or by tracing items with the student’s hands or fingers.