



Introduction to Digital Question Papers: Guidance for Centres

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Introduction

This document contains information for teachers and lecturers on using SQA's Digital Question Papers (DQPs). It details what you need to do for your candidates to use the DQPs successfully, and how and when you need to request DQPs from SQA. Appendix 1 provides detailed information for SQA Co-ordinators.

This information must be read in conjunction with *Assessment Arrangements Explained: Information for Centres* (Publication code: FA4378), which you can find on the Assessment Arrangements webpages at www.sqa.org.uk/assessmentarrangements.

You can find detailed technical guidance for setting up and using the DQPs on the SQA Digital Question Paper webpage at www.sqa.org.uk/digitalquestionpapers.

Further helpful information can also be found on CALL Scotland's website¹ at <http://www.callscotland.org.uk>

¹ CALL Scotland is 'Communication, Access, Literacy and Learning (CALL) Scotland' and is part of Moray House School of Education, University of Edinburgh. Please note that SQA is not responsible for the content of these websites.

What are Digital Question Papers? (DQPs)

SQA can provide DQPs as an assessment arrangement for disabled candidates and/or those identified as having additional support needs. DQPs are PDF versions of the conventional examination question paper.

DQPs in 'question and answer' (structured) format

Some conventional question papers come in the format of a 'question and answer' booklet where candidates would normally insert their answers. DQPs in this 'question and answer' format have the answer boxes enabled. Candidates can type (or dictate, where speech recognition software is installed) their answers into these.

DQPs in 'question only' (unstructured) format

More commonly, the conventional question papers come in the format of a question-only paper where candidates have to write their answers in a separate answer booklet. DQPs in this 'question only' format have paper-specific digital answer books into which candidates can type their answers or (dictate them, with speech recognition software). The list of current question papers that are 'question-only' and that require a separate answer book can be found on our website at http://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/files_ccc/2016_DABs.pdf.

Candidates can use the DQPs to:

- ◆ type or dictate, with speech recognition, their answers on screen directly onto the DQP or onto the digital answer book
- ◆ change how the question paper is displayed on screen eg change the on-screen colour of the paper and/or the text
- ◆ use text-to-speech software to read the question paper or to read back their responses.

Digital answer books for use with DQPs

You only require a digital answer book for use with the 'question-only' DQPs. These will be supplied by SQA on the disc with the DQP in both MS Word and PDF formats. You should read Appendix 1 for information on the advantages and disadvantages of using PDF and MS Word versions of the digital answer books.

The PDF answer books are also supplied in both '*SpellCheck-on*' and '*SpellCheck-off*' versions. However, the MS Word answer books are only supplied in the '*SpellCheck off*' version as it is the candidate's device that controls the MS Word setting. This means that you must ensure that the PC's MS Word settings are correct for each candidate. The spellcheck must only be used where it has been authorised by SQA.

For practice purposes, you can download the digital answer books from our website:

<http://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/68471.html>.

Preparing to use DQPs and answer books in an external examination

Before using the DQPs or the answer books in the actual examinations, you must make sure your candidates can use them effectively under examination conditions. They must be able to enter their personal details, to access and read the DQPs, to insert their answers, and to

save their files. This means that your candidates **must** have had suitable practice with using the DQPs and, where appropriate, the answer books.

Candidates can practise using past DQPs and digital answer books, which can be downloaded from SQA's website at: www.sqa.org.uk/digitalquestionpapers. Please note that not all past papers are available in the DQP format, but the techniques in using DQPs can be practised using other level/subject DQP past papers if necessary.

It is also important to note that some examination question papers might be less suitable in digital format than others. You should consider carefully which DQPs you request, given the candidate's particular difficulties and technical skills. For example, question papers where straightforward text answers are required are the most suited. However, maths and science question papers — which may contain formulae and which may require answers in the form of figures, formulae or drawings — can be more challenging for candidates to use. Some candidates may need to use a paper copy of the answer book, in conjunction with the DQPs or digital answer books, to draw diagrams or graphs or to enter symbols and formulae etc.

Also, please note that the answer grids for objective (multiple-choice) tests in some examination question papers cannot be completed digitally. They must be answered on the paper copy of the answer grid and must be passed to the invigilator with the printed digital script. The examination question papers with these objective tests are:

- ◆ National 5 Biology, Chemistry and Physics
- ◆ Higher Biology, Chemistry, Human Biology and Physics
- ◆ Advanced Higher Biology and Chemistry

Finally, your centre must have the necessary experience in setting up and using DQPs under examination conditions. Before the examination, you must make sure that you have read all the relevant guidance. The detailed technical guidance can be found on the DQPs webpage <http://www.sqa.org.uk/digitalquestionpapers>.

You must also ensure that the PCs/tablets and printers that are to be used have been tested using DQP past papers, the digital answer books in the correct format and, where appropriate, Data Booklets (all are available from SQA's website at <http://www.sqa.org.uk/digitalquestionpapers>). You must also ensure that you test that the PC or tablet can connect with the printer and print correctly.

Requesting DQPs from SQA

The specific arrangements for using the DQPs should meet the candidate's identified need and reflect the candidate's usual way of working in the classroom or support base.

You must request a DQP through SQA's online Assessment Arrangements Request (AAR) system. You must select the **DQP option** on the AAR system. If you do not select the DQP option you will not receive the DQP. Please ensure that any staff responsible for entering details onto the AAR system are aware of this and do not select the ICT option when a DQP is required.

The AAR system opens in October and you are asked to submit your requests for DQPs by the end of January to ensure we can produce and distribute the DQPs in time.

If your candidate is sitting at an alternative approved SQA centre: the candidate's home centre must complete an SA00 'sitting at' form and return it to SQA (see webpage <http://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/582.html>), otherwise a CD may not be available at the alternative centre.

Before the examination day

You must check with the Chief Invigilator that an envelope with a DQP has been supplied for each exam for which you have requested a DQP. Do not open the envelope at this stage. If you do not have an envelope for a requested exam, contact SQA immediately on 0345 213 6800.

The SQA Co-ordinator should supply the Chief Invigilator with:

- ◆ the SQA report detailing those candidates for whom DQPs have been requested
- ◆ written confirmation that access to all network facilities or other digital storage has been disabled on the PCs or tablets to be used
- ◆ confirmation of how and where the candidate's responses are to be printed

You must test all PCs and/or tablets to ensure that they are operational and that the relevant software has been installed.

You may need to provide separate suitable accommodation when a candidate is using the digital question papers if their use is likely to distract other candidates. In this case, you should take account of the need for additional invigilation.

If your centre has a number of candidates sitting the same DQP, you can copy the DQP or use an 'Exam Network' for uploading DQPs to save time.

Where a candidate is taking two papers on the same day, arrangements may have to be made to delay the starting time of the second exam to ensure all checks are made. Arrangements for the supervision of candidates may also need to be made.

Remember: if it is not possible to use the DQP, the printed version of the question paper should be used, and it is expected that a reader and/or scribe will be available if the candidate requires this type of support. You do not need to have recorded this on the AAR system.

On the day of the examination

If a candidate chooses not to use the DQPs on the day of the exam, you must inform SQA by e-mail at aarequests@sqa.org.uk, or by phone on 0345 213 6890. You must inform SQA of the alternative arrangement to be used.

Before the start of the exam, you should

- ◆ Ensure that any required digital answer books and data booklets are uploaded to the devices being used.
- ◆ Ensure that the spell-check settings are appropriate for each candidate when using MS Word answer books,
- ◆ Set any preferred defaults for individual candidates.
- ◆ Open the DQP packages in the presence of the invigilator (only one CD is supplied for each QP). DQPs can be opened up to one hour prior to the examination start time, but only in the presence of an invigilator.

- ◆ Copy the question paper file(s) from the CD and load to the correct folder (if using an exam network when there are multiple candidates) or device for the candidate(s).
- ◆ Spot check the DQP content to ensure the file opens, that the content can be read and that text-to-speech technology (if required) is working.
- ◆ Ensure that, where possible, an auto-save facility is available. Candidates should also be advised to save work as they go through the exam. Before printing, candidates should be advised to do a final file save.

If you are unable to use the CDs, contact SQA on 0345 213 6800. Should a new e-copy of the question paper be required, a PC with internet access to the SQA Secure website will be needed for downloading a copy of the question paper. SQA will provide full details when contacted.

Candidates may access both the DQP and the conventional paper question paper at any time during the examination — for example, where there are questions requiring drawing in mathematics or science based papers.

Printing your candidate's work

At the end of the examination, (and following the arrangements agreed between the centre and the Chief Invigilator), the candidate's saved work must be printed out. No changes can be made to the candidate's work after the examination has ended. The invigilator does not need to be present during printing.

Double-sided printing is acceptable, but care should be taken that the paper used does not 'show through' (ie printing on one side is not visible through the paper on the other side). When you are satisfied with the hard copy of the candidates' work, ie that all typed answers have been fully printed, you should give the print-out to the Invigilator. You must then **delete** any material saved on the hard drive. All examination materials must be submitted to SQA in the normal way. This includes the print-out of the candidate's work, any other word-processed work (if applicable), or any additional written or graphical work produced by the candidate during the examination.

At the end of the examination, the CD is to be removed from the PC. The original CD containing the digital question paper(s) may be retained by the centre in the same way as the printed question papers.

Contingency arrangements

The contingency arrangements that apply in all examinations apply also to candidates using DQPs, in addition

- ◆ If there is any difficulty in opening the file on the day of the examination, the Invigilator should inform the centre's SQA Co-ordinator, who should immediately contact SQA on 0345 213 6800. Access to an e-copy of the DQP on a secure site may be possible, but will require internet access from a non-exam PC and a memory stick to transfer the DQP.
- ◆ If it is not possible to use the DQP, the printed version of the question paper should be used. If the candidate requires any type of support to access the printed version of the question paper or to write responses, eg a reader/scribe, these alternative assessment arrangements must be available.
- ◆ In the event of any technical difficulties occurring during the examination, the designated teacher/technician may be allowed into the examination room to repair or provide

another machine or other software to enable the candidate to complete the examination. An additional allowance of time equal to the time lost will be made available to the candidate, and the candidate should be advised of this at once to allay anxiety.

- ◆ If the repair or change to another machine, and the allowance of additional time, resolves the problem, the matter should simply be reported to SQA by the invigilator.
- ◆ In any case where a fault results in the spoiling or changing of the candidate's work, a brief report should be prepared by the invigilator and countersigned by the SQA Co-ordinator. This should be sent to the Assessment Arrangements Team. The report should indicate the name of the centre and the candidate's name.

Appendix 1: Using PDF or MS Word versions of Digital Answer Books

PDF digital answer books: advantages and disadvantages

Advantages

- ◆ Familiarity: candidates can use Adobe Reader for both the DQPs and the digital answer books.
- ◆ The candidate's SCN from the cover sheet will automatically copy to the header of each page.

Disadvantages

- ◆ The number of lines and characters that can fit on one page of a PDF digital answer book is restricted and text does not 'flow' from one page to another. Consequently, the 'over-filling' of answer boxes/pages results in text size being continually reduced.
- ◆ Editing tools are limited.
- ◆ Dragon speech recognition can be used, but with limited functionality. Windows speech recognition cannot be used.

MS Word digital answer books: advantages and disadvantages

Advantages

- ◆ The candidate can use all of the Word formatting, fonts, sizes, styles etc.
- ◆ Text flows from page to page.
- ◆ All speech recognition programs, including the free Windows 7 tools, work.
- ◆ Most writing support tools work better in Word, for example, Co: Writer, Penfriend, ClaroRead, Read and Write Gold, Ginger, Ghotit, etc.
- ◆ Word has better drawing and graphic tools than Adobe Reader. Word 2007 and 2010 have an improved equation editor; see also Microsoft Mathematics.
- ◆ Candidates can type equations with the Word equation editor, and can use add-ons such as Efofex (<http://www.efofex.com/>) to create equations, chemical formulae etc.
- ◆ **If the candidate wishes**, the SCN can be copied from the cover sheet to the footer of every page. Please note that this is not automatic and requires a number of steps to be followed. Please read the technical guidance to find out how to do this

Disadvantages

- ◆ The candidate needs two different applications to read the DQP and type their answers.
- ◆ Candidates who use text-to-speech may have to use two programs: one for the PDF (eg PDFaloud) and another for the Word (eg WordTalk), although some text-to-speech programs can read from both (eg ClaroRead, Read and Write Gold, Ivona MiniReader).