



## Use of a bilingual dictionary for learners who have English as an additional language

Assessment and certification of SQA's qualifications are conducted in English and Gaelic. SQA must ensure that the assessment of our qualifications is valued and credible with our learners, centres, partner organisations and the wider community. English and Gaelic are the national languages of Scotland and are the principal languages of learning and teaching in Scotland.

This means that the translation of SQA assessment materials into a learner's first language, or the translation of a learner's assessment responses from their first language into English, is not allowed.

Learners who have English as an additional language (EAL), **and whose knowledge of English makes it difficult to communicate their attainment**, may be allowed the use of a bilingual dictionary in their SQA assessments. EAL learners are allowed access to a bilingual dictionary in the external assessment to look up any words that they may not be familiar with.

You must request permission for a learner to use a bilingual dictionary in an external assessment by using the EAL spreadsheet. You can download this from our secure website by clicking on **NQ** then **Assessment Arrangements** and complete it using MS Excel.

A bilingual dictionary is not permitted in English or English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) exams.

Permission to use a bilingual dictionary should not be used to compensate for a learner's level of English comprehension. No learner, regardless of their difficulty, is allowed an English-only dictionary in external assessments.

The dictionaries that are permitted are English-first language (word-for-word) dictionaries that do not contain explanations or definitions of words or phrases. It is your responsibility, before the exam, to check that the dictionaries to be used by learners are clean copies of English-first language (word-for-word) dictionaries. You must check to ensure that no unauthorised information, such as notes or revision data, have been enclosed within or written on the pages of the dictionary.

It is your responsibility to determine whether a learner needs to use a bilingual dictionary. Not all EAL learners will need to use a bilingual dictionary, and not all learners who need to use a bilingual dictionary will need the additional time. The use of the dictionary, and any additional time requested for using the dictionary, should reflect the learner's way of working in teaching and learning.

## **For external exams**

Learners are allowed an additional 10 minutes per hour to use the dictionary in the external exam. No additional time will be given for learners using the bilingual dictionary in a Modern Language exam that is their first language.

In the **Modern Languages** and **Music** exams, candidates may consult their bilingual dictionary in all papers (including the Listening assessment). In Modern Languages exams, the English/first language dictionary is allowed in addition to the modern language dictionaries in assessments where these are permitted. Learners are also allowed to use the extra time **before** the official start time to look at the question papers and consult their bilingual dictionary.

Where a learner is sitting an exam in their first language, a bilingual dictionary will only be allowed where this is permitted for all learners, but no additional time will be permitted for this.

Learners can also consult their bilingual dictionary during the Listening assessment while the CD is playing, but it should be made clear that the CD cannot be paused while they are doing this.

## **For internal assessments**

You do not need to submit a request for a learner to use a bilingual dictionary in internal assessments to us. You should refer to the assessment specification for the qualification to determine whether it is acceptable for learners to use a bilingual dictionary. Learners may require an additional 10 minutes per hour to allow them to use the dictionary in assessments that are done under supervised/controlled conditions.

There are restrictions on the use of a bilingual dictionary in National 2 and National 3 ESOL unit assessments. Further information can be found on the 'Subject specific resources' section of [our website](#).

## **Additional information**

### **Word lists**

As an exceptional arrangement, a learner may be allowed to use a word list for subject-specific words (and only these words) that are not found in some bilingual dictionaries. Such requests are considered on an individual basis, and a request should not be made for all learners with the same first language to use the same word list. We must ensure that any proposed word list does not provide an unfair advantage. Therefore, as soon as a need for a subject-specific word list is identified, and in advance of the scheduled assessment, you must submit the proposed word list with the learner's details to the Assessment Arrangements team (eal.requests@sqa.org.uk) for consideration.

### **Electronic dictionaries and dictionary apps**

A learner can use an electronic dictionary provided it functions only as an English-first language dictionary — it must be word-for-word and must not contain explanations or definitions of words and phrases. Any functions that are not allowed in an external exam (including personal word lists, and thesaurus and connectivity) must be disabled.

### **Downloadable dictionaries**

A learner can use a copy of the dictionary downloaded from the Internet if a hard copy cannot be sourced, provided it functions only as an English-first language dictionary.

Learners **must not** be allowed to access the online dictionary with internet access enabled during an external assessment. It can be downloaded and printed out as a paper version, or used as a stand-alone file on a PC, laptop or other ICT device. If an electronic copy is used on an ICT device, you must also provide written confirmation that the ICT security steps (as detailed on the ICT Security Checklist) have been implemented. Full details of this can be found in our *National Qualifications: Guide for SQA Co-ordinators* which is available on SQA Connect.

For external exams, you must submit a request for the use of a downloadable dictionary to us. Before the exam diet starts, you must give the chief invigilator the list of learners approved by SQA to use a downloaded dictionary.