

Use of a Bilingual Dictionary for Learners Who Have English as an Additional Language

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We are committed to using plain language. If you have any suggestions on how we can improve, let us know at editor@qualifications.gov.scot.

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Introduction: bilingual dictionaries in assessments

English and Gaelic are the national languages of Scotland. They are also the principal languages of learning and teaching in Scotland. The languages of assessment and certification of our qualifications are English and Gaelic. This ensures that the assessment of our qualifications is valued and credible with our learners, centres, partner organisations and the wider community.

This means that we do not allow the translation of our assessment materials into a learner's first language, or the translation of a learner's assessment responses from their first language into English. English-only dictionaries are also not allowed in any external assessments, including exams for National Courses.

Learners with English as an additional language (EAL), **who find it difficult to show their knowledge and skills in English**, may be allowed to use a bilingual translation dictionary in their Qualifications Scotland assessments. They can use the dictionary in external assessments to look up any words that they may not be familiar with. However they cannot use a bilingual dictionary in English or English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) exams.

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 selecting NQ then Assessment Arrangements, and complete it using Microsoft Excel.

No learner, regardless of their difficulty, is allowed an English-only dictionary in external assessments.

Permission to use a bilingual dictionary should not be used to compensate for a learner's level of English comprehension. The dictionaries permitted are English/first language (word-for-word) dictionaries that do not contain explanations or definitions of words or phrases.

You should 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 extra time. The use of the dictionary, and any extra time requested for using the dictionary, should reflect the learner's way of working.

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 revision notes, has been enclosed within or written on the pages of the dictionary.

For external exams

Learners are allowed an extra 10 minutes per hour to use the dictionary in the external exam. No extra 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, learners may use 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 can also use the extra 10 minutes in the hour **before** the official start time to look at the question papers and consult their bilingual dictionary.

A learner sitting an exam in their first language can only use a bilingual dictionary in the same exams as all other learners, but no additional time will be allowed.

Learners can also use 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 extra 10 minutes per hour to use the dictionary in assessments that are done under supervised or controlled conditions.

There are restrictions on the use of a bilingual dictionary in National 2 and National 3 ESOL unit assessments. Further information is available 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 must:

- **Be individual to a learner's needs:** Each word list submitted for consideration must be specific to the individual learner's needs. Requests must **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.

- **Be subject-specific:** Only subject-specific terminology for the subject and level that cannot be found in a bilingual dictionary should be included. The word list must not contain command words or terminology that are specified in course specifications that learners should know and are assessed on.
- **Contain word-for-word translation only:** The list must only include word-for-word translations of the subject-specific terminology from English into the learner's first language. The word list must **not** include definitions or explanations of the terminology, or any additional information.
- **Be quality assured:** The word list, produced with the learner, must be quality assured by the subject teacher and a member of centre staff who has a sufficient level of knowledge of the language before it is submitted for consideration. Both of them must confirm the above criteria have been met.

You may find the checklist at the end of this document helpful when preparing EAL word lists.

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@qualifications.gov.scot) for consideration. All requests for EAL word lists must be submitted by the end of January deadline, as detailed in the 'Key Dates' section of Delivering National Qualifications: Guide for Co-ordinators, which you can find on [Qualifications Scotland Connect](#). There is more information on our [secure website](#) under NQ, then Assessment Arrangements.

Electronic dictionaries and dictionary apps

Learners 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.

Downloaded dictionaries

Learners 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 (word-for-word) 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. The ICT Security Checklist is available on our [secure website](#) under NQ, then Assessment Arrangements.

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

Creating EAL word lists

Purpose of an EAL word list

An EAL word list is an exceptional arrangement designed to support a learner in **accessing** the questions in an assessment — not in **answering** it. Its purpose is to remove a language barrier that prevents the learner from understanding the wording of the question or the materials used to present it.

The list should only contain individual, subject-specific words that are essential for the learner to read and interpret the question and the words cannot be found in a bilingual dictionary.

Each list must be tailored to the individual learner, rather than produced for groups of learners, and all entries must be direct word-for-word translations with no explanations or definitions.

EAL word list checklist

We've produced this checklist to help you prepare word lists confidently and consistently in line with our requirements.

Use these questions to determine whether a word should be included.

1. Is the word list specific to the individual learner?

Each learner must have their own word list based on their individual needs. Centres must not submit the same list for multiple learners.

No: Not allowed

Yes: Continue

2. Is the word available in a bilingual dictionary?

Yes: Not allowed

No: Continue

3. Is the word needed to help the learner access and understand the question?

Does the word appear in, for example, the question, diagrams, labels, tables or maps?

No: Not allowed

Yes: Continue

4. Is the word appropriate for the qualification level?

Yes: Not allowed

No: Continue

5. Is the word an assessed concept, process, skill, model or term?

Does knowing or recalling this word contribute to gaining marks? Including these terms would support the learner's **answer**, not their **access**.

Yes: Not allowed

No: Continue

6. Is the word a command term that could be used in the question stem?

Does the word tell the learner what to do with a question — for example 'analyse', 'discuss'? Command terms are part of exam literacy, and all learners are expected to understand them.

Yes: Not allowed

No: Continue

7. Is the translation strictly word-for-word with no explanation?

No: Not allowed

Yes: Continue

8. Is the word list formatted correctly?

Words must be in alphabetical order and must **not** be grouped under headings or themes.

No: Not allowed

Yes: Continue

9. Has the word list been checked by the required staff?

It must be checked by **both** the subject teacher and a staff member with knowledge of the learner's first language to ensure the list is accurate and meets all the above criteria.

No: Not allowed

Yes: Submit for approval

Submission process

Requests must be submitted by the **end of January** deadline, as detailed in the 'Key Dates' section of Delivering National Qualifications: Guide for Co-ordinators, which you can find on [Qualifications Scotland Connect](#).

When submitting a request, send the proposed word list to eal.requests@qualifications.gov.scot along with:

- the learner's full name
- the learner's Scottish Candidate Number
- the subject and level
- the learner's first language

If you have any questions about the process or about preparing word lists, please contact us at eal.requests@qualifications.gov.scot.