

## SHORTHAND PROCEDURES FOR CANDIDATES

**A copy of these instructions MUST be handed to each candidate before the examination begins.**

1. Photo ID must be placed on your desk ready for checking by the invigilator.
2. Mobile phones and any devices capable of voice recording must be switched **off** and placed at the front/back of the exam room – if a mobile rings the candidate will be disqualified. Smartwatches must be removed and placed with personal belongings.
3. Please ensure everything you need for the exam is on your desk and place all bags and other personal belongings at the front/back of the exam room prior to the start of the exam.
4. There must be absolute silence during the examination. You are not allowed to question any word or words after the exam dictation.
5. At no time during the examination are you allowed to converse with one another or communicate by signs or in writing.
6. The title of the exam dictation will be written in longhand on the board by the invigilator. The title does not need to be typed on the Cirrus transcription page.
7. The use of shorthand books is not allowed. English dictionaries may be used
8. During the 30 second or 15 second interval (90-120wpm exams) you may look through your notes. You must not start your transcription until the invigilator tells you to do so.
9. The shorthand note must not be altered and the only marking allowed on the note, after note taking, is the ringing of outlines; revised outlines may be written in the margin. Shorthand is not marked, but is checked. Longhand, other than your name, should not appear anywhere on the shorthand note page(s). Any longhand appearing within the shorthand notes, or in the margins, may lead to the deduction of one mark per word. In line with industry practice, any of the following, which could lead to the shorthand note losing credibility, may lead to the deduction of marks:
  - Shorthand outlines not matching the transcript
  - The alteration, deletion and/or insertion of outlines in the shorthand note after the exam dictation has taken place
- Gaps in the shorthand may invalidate the transcript.
10. Transcriptions must be completed in the Cirrus online assessment platform.
11. Please ensure that you include accurate punctuation (full stops) in your transcription. Failure to use punctuation may change the sense of the piece, which could lead to marks being deducted.
12. For 90-120wpm exams please ensure you submit the quote to be marked in the quote box as indicated on the transcription screen. Only the quote you have identified should be transcribed in the box. Check your word count for the quote. The quote should not be less than 25 words or more than 35 words. Any other words transcribed in the quote box will result in a fail.
13. At the end of the transcription period, you must ensure that your name and URN are written in **BLOCK CAPITALS** on every page of shorthand submitted. You must staple your shorthand notes and submit these to the invigilator. **All shorthand notes must be submitted to the invigilator at the end of the exam. Failure to do so will result in your submission being declared void.**

14. You must not take a copy of your shorthand notes from the examination room.

15. Transcription times allowed:

- 60 wpm - 25 minutes
- 70 wpm - 30 minutes
- 80 wpm - 35 minutes
- 90 wpm - 40 minutes
- 100 wpm - 45 minutes
- 110 wpm - 55 minutes
- 120 wpm - 65 minutes

16. If an emergency arises and the examination room has to be cleared, the invigilator will pause the exam. You must leave all notebooks on the desks facing down and follow the instructions given by the invigilator. If an equipment malfunction occurs during the exam dictation, your invigilator will contact the NCTJ to provide a backup exam dictation.

17. If you experience any issues during the exam you must inform the invigilator immediately so that appropriate action may be taken, and so that the NCTJ has an official record of the event recorded on the exam invigilation form.

18. Candidates are expected to behave in a professional manner when attending NCTJ examinations. The NCTJ does not tolerate unreasonable behaviour or actions towards other candidates, NCTJ staff or its representatives.

19. Any form of suspected malpractice during the exam will be reported to the NCTJ and may result in disqualification from the exam and/or further sanctions as appropriate.