

Skills Exam Information

Computers:

You may bring a personal computer, printer, extension cord, power strip and any necessary cables only if you mailed the Confidentiality Agreement and Use of Computer Statement by the registration deadline.

Computer users must sit in the area of the exam room that is so designated.

Examinees must disable their computer's microphone by either changing the settings on their computer or by using an external adapter plug.

If your steno machine has a test mode, it must be placed in test mode for the exam.

It is your sole responsibility to understand exactly how your equipment works. Proctors will not be able to assist you.

Typewriters:

If you will be using a typewriter instead of a computer, it is your responsibility to bring your own typewriter. You may also bring your own extension cord and power strip. Please bring an ample supply of typewriter ribbon to fit your particular typewriter.

No typewriter will be admitted into the exam that retrieves, edits or stores characters. Typewriters with simple, full-line correction or spelling capability will be allowed.

Check the list of acceptable typewriters on our website. If your typewriter is not on that list, call the vendor to see if it can hold more than one line of correction in its memory. If it can hold more than one line of correction in its memory, it will not be allowed.

Supplies:

Examinees are responsible for bringing all supplies necessary to take the exam (i.e., transcript paper, diskettes, SD cards, CDs, power cords, extension cord, power strip, dictionary, etc.)

Use of a Dictionary:

You may use a dictionary (which you must furnish) during the oral/skills examination. You may not use any other reference materials.

Cheating:

Anyone discovered cheating will be disqualified and will NOT be eligible for retesting for a period of two (2) years. <http://www.crcb.state.tx.us/statute.asp#52.023>

Cheating includes, but is not limited to:

Leaving the exam site with a copy of the exam on disk, tape, paper, or in electronic, audio or any other form.

*If you are not able to completely delete the exam from your equipment (including your steno machine), you will be subject to the rule on cheating for leaving with a copy of the exam.

*Directly tape recording the dictation.

Prohibited:

Examinees are prohibited from using electronic devices of any kind at the exam site.

Electronic devices include, but are not limited to, AudioSync, Bluetooth, wireless connections and digital recorders.

Cell phones are to be turned off and placed with the rest of your belongings at the front of the exam room.

Dictation & Transcription:

Testing Schedule

- 1.) Literary warm-up material
- 2.) Literary exam
- 3.) Jury Charge warm-up material
- 4.) Jury Charge exam
- 5.) Questions & Answers warm-up material
- 6.) Questions & Answers exam

The dictation will be composed of five (5) minutes of selected literary material given at 180 wpm, five (5) minutes of jury charge at 200 wpm, and five (5) minutes of two-voice questions and answers at 225 wpm.

Each examinee must personally take down the exam by either stenotype or voice, and reduce it to writing via computer or typewriter.

TCRA will provide a list of proper names used in the exam at registration.

You will be allowed three (3) hours to complete the transcription. Your transcript must be printed or typewritten and double or triple spaced on white paper. You must leave at least a one-inch margin on the left side of the page so that no part of the transcript will be hidden once the pages are stapled to the cover sheet.

If time permits, you may review your transcript and make corrections to it, but you may use only your original takedown notes from which your transcript was prepared for this review.

If you finish transcribing the exam early or request a "No Grade," you may leave the transcription room but will not be permitted to remove your equipment or leave the premises until all examinees have completed this portion and ALL exams have been turned in.

A "No Grade" request is equivalent to receiving a failing grade.

Examinees must stop typing/proofreading when time is called at the end of the exam. Do not continue to type/proof after the proctor announces the close of the session or your transcript will not be accepted. At that time, examinees will turn in their exam papers.

After you have transcribed and proofread your exam, you will be permitted to print out your exam in the presence of a proctor. This will be the only exam paper that you will be allowed to print and will be considered your original exam for grading purposes. You will be allowed to make corrections in ink on your exam as long as there is enough transcription time. The proctors will then ensure that you delete the exam file from both your writer and your computer.

Test your printer for functionality, ink, printed pages per minute, etc. before you arrive on site.

You may make corrections on your exam papers by placing X's over the error and writing the correction directly above the mistake. You must use a blue ink pen to make any corrections and they must be legible. You may not use black or red ink.

Please arrange your transcripts in the same order in which the exam was dictated.

General Information

The Texas Court Reporters Association is not responsible for lost, stolen or misplaced equipment. Each examinee is encouraged to label his or her equipment in case it is misplaced. Only exam candidates will be allowed in the hallways and lobby during the registration and testing periods.

Please have your friends, family and/or school representatives drop you off and return at a designated time. We fully understand that exam candidates may require assistance with equipment before and after the exam; however, please ask your friends and family not to wander around the conference center while you are being tested.

While it is good practice to arrive early the day of the exam, please do not arrive hours earlier than your scheduled registration/set-up time.

Examinees may not leave the building or use the telephone for any reason during the exam, including transcription time.

Frequently Asked Questions

If I finish the oral/skills portion of the exam early, may I leave? No. Everyone must stay at the exam site until all exams have been accounted for. Additionally, you will not be able to turn off your equipment and pack up until all the exams are turned in and accounted for.

What if I decide to request that my exam not be graded or I just do not want to complete the exam? You must sign your exam cover sheet, in the appropriate area, to indicate you request a "No Grade". Be advised that a "No Grade" is the equivalent of a failing grade.

Can I choose my exam session? No. Due to space limitations, once the exam rosters have been posted, there will be no changes made.

Can I use equipment with AudioSync when I take the exam? No. AudioSync equipment is not permitted.

Are we permitted to use the Internet at the exam site? Use of the Internet is not permitted at the exam site, even if you've completed your exam. Using the Internet falls under the category of cheating and will exclude you from testing until the mandatory two (2) years have elapsed.