

Controlled Assessments - Examination Security and Invigilation Policy and Procedure

Overview

Welcome Skills is committed to ensuring the security of all controlled assessment material and integrity of the invigilation and/or assessment process.

Welcome Skills works with a number of Awarding Organisations and End-Point Assessment Organisations. In addition to this policy and procedure, Welcome Skills will always abide by any additional requirements, required by them and their requirements take precedence over this policy and procedure.

What is Controlled Assessment

The primary controlled assessment is an examination, whether multiple choice or short answer. However, this policy and procedure does relate to other controlled assessments such as: practical assessment and some assignments. The definition of a controlled assessment is when the assessment of the assessment criteria requires the supervision / invigilation of a Learner during the assessment.

Where the Learner is being assessed as part of their end-point assessment, the End-Point Assessment Organisations procedures will be applied, rather than Welcome Skills procedures.

Controlled Assessment Requirements and Procedure

Controlled assessment usually requires the following to be in place:

- The physical (or simultaneous electronic) presence of a Learner and an invigilator, supervisor, or tutor/assessor
- Specific requirements for these assessments such as time constraints will normally be specified in the qualification specification or the Learner standard end-point assessment plan.
- Both external and internal assessments are subject to controlled condition requirements. All formal assessment of Learner performance contributing to the achievement of an Qualification must comply with those controlled conditions.
- Tutor/Assessors will ensure that the Learner is aware that they are being formally assessed. They should have been deemed ready for assessment and this should have been discussed and agreed with the Learner.
- Learners must be made aware of the nature and format of assessment and what to expect in advance of the assessment taking place. This will include confirmation of the standards at the level, which they will be expected to demonstrate in realistic tasks, the assessment procedures, assessment duration and assessment conditions.
- Learners should have been given an opportunity to familiarise themselves with any sample assessment materials and, for online/offline tests, the on-screen system in advance of the formal assessment session.

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- If applicable, Learners must be made aware that although they may be assessed in a group context for certain tasks, they are being individually assessed against the assessment requirements, so must ensure that they are actively participating in the discussions, in order to demonstrate the relevant skills at the level.

Assessment conditions:

- Learners must be provided with a quiet environment which will be undisturbed for the duration of the assessment or as set out within the assessment guidance or End-Point Assessment Plan. They must have direct access to the fully operable on-screen system, offline system, or the paper-based material, which must be secured and returned (if applicable) immediately following the assessment session.
- Learners must be directly supervised throughout an assessment session to reduce the risk of plagiarism and malpractice. Learners must be seated separately and aware that it is not permitted to interact with anyone other than the invigilator, if necessary. Seating plans must be recorded and maintained. Learners are not permitted to use mobile devices (including smart watches), or to access any resources not directly provided for the purposes of the assessment.
- The invigilator is responsible for ensuring that all of these conditions are met and must confirm Learner identity prior to commencement of the test and complete the attendance register. The register will confirm compliance with all the assessment conditions.

Assessment Venue Requirements

Tutor/Assessors are required to maintain records of how assessment venues meet these criteria. False or misleading statements by the Tutor/Assessor in respect of assessment venues may result in immediate suspension or withdrawal of Centre Approval from the awarding organisation or end-point assessment organisation and assessments may be invalidated

As part of the ongoing internal quality assurance processes and procedures, the Lead IQAs will check that these requirements are being adhered to on both planned and unannounced audit visits.

- Tutor/Assessors must ensure that assessments take place in a suitable assessment environment. Any room in which an assessment is held must provide Learners with appropriate conditions conducive for taking the assessment. Particular attention should be given to conditions such as heating, lighting, ventilation, and the level of outside noise. There must be a sign, clearly visible to others in the building, that an assessment is taking place.
- Seating arrangements must prevent Learners from overlooking the work of others in all directions. In particular, the minimum distance in all directions from centre to centre of the ,s' chairs must be 1.25 metres. There should also be space for the Invigilator and any technical support required.
- For written assessments, each Learner should have a separate desk or table large enough to hold question papers. Learners who are not seated at individual desks must be far enough

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apart (minimum 1.25m) so that their work cannot be seen by, and contact cannot be made with, other Learners.

For computer-based online or offline assessments:

the room layout must be planned to prevent screens being read by other Learners

- there must be at least 1.5 metres from the centre of each screen to the centre of the next screen
- the clock is displayed on every computer screen in use
- a trained administrator must be available during the assessment to deal with any technical queries that may arise.
- Display material, such as posters, wall charts, information leaflets, which might be helpful to Learners must not be visible in the assessment room.
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The following items must be on display in the assessment room:

- A poster advising Learners that mobile phones should be switched off
- Assessment and warning notice for Learners
- Centre appeals procedure
- Emergency/evacuation procedures
- Information must be visible to all Learners showing the centre number and the start and finish times of the assessment.
- There should be a space at the front of the assessment venue where the invigilator(s) can sit. Where possible for online/offline assessments, at least one replacement/spare PC should be available in the event of equipment failure.

During the assessment

- The Invigilator to Learner ratio for all examinations should be a maximum of 1:20
- When only one invigilator is present, he or she must be able to get help easily without leaving the room and without disturbing Learners.
- Welcome Skills have systems and checks in place to ensure that an assessment is not undertaken or invigilated by anyone who has a personal interest in the result of the assessment.
- An invigilator cannot be a current Learner at the centre or any relative, friend or peer of a Learner in the examination room.
- Any potential or actual conflicts identified by a centre must be reported to Welcome Skills before the assessment in order that alternate arrangements can be made.
- All personal belongings (e.g. bags, coats etc.) must be left, at the Learner's, own risk, outside of or at the front of the exam room.

Before the assessment starts, the assessment Invigilator must:

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- Check that the relevant notices are displayed and that there is a clock which is visible to all Learners
- Confirm Learner identification by checking that all Learners have the required identity documents and that the relevant section of the Attendance register has been signed to show attendance and to confirm the identification seen. Accepted forms of identification include:
 - signed valid passport of any nationality,
 - signed UK photo driving licence,
 - UK biometric residence permit,
 - valid warrant card issue by HM Forces or the Police,
 - other photographic ID card, e.g. employee ID card (must be current employer), student ID card, travel card
 - Advise Learners who are unable to provide the required identity documents and photograph that they cannot sit the assessment, and that they must leave the assessment room
 - Make sure that the seating arrangements meet the awarding organisation or end-point assessment organisation's assessment venue requirements
 - Inform Learners that they must follow the regulations of the assessment (for paper based or for onscreen assessments)
 - Advise Learners of emergency/evacuation procedures

The Invigilator must advise Learners that:

- They must write in blue or black ink
- All mobile phones, or other electronic devices, must be switched off
- Any course material should be removed from their desk, and placed at either the front or back of the room
- They must not ask for, and will not be given, any explanation of the questions and answers
- If they leave the assessment room, unaccompanied by a member of centre staff, they will not be able to return during the assessment.

The Invigilator must:

- Announce clearly to Learners when they may begin
- Specify the start and finish time of the assessment, and the earliest time that Learners can leave the assessment room
- Remind Learners that they cannot communicate in any way with, ask for help from or give help to another Learner while they are in the assessment room

The Invigilator must not:

- Make any comment where a Learner believes that there is an error or omission on the question paper.

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- Give any information to Learners about possible mistakes in the question paper, unless there is an erratum notice.
- Comment on the content of the question paper
- Offer any advice or comment on the work of a Learner

During the assessment

Invigilators must supervise Learners throughout the whole time that an assessment is in progress. This means that:

- Invigilators must give their complete attention to the invigilation process at all times
- Invigilators must not carry out any other task (e.g. doing other work, using a mobile phone) in the assessment room
- Invigilators are required to move around the assessment room, quietly and at frequent intervals
- Invigilators must give frequent time checks
- Invigilators must monitor the use of ICT when assessments are on screen to ensure that Learners are not accessing material or applications, or software, which is not allowed.

Summoning help during an assessment

When one Invigilator is present in an assessment, they must be able to summon help, in case of an emergency, without leaving the room or disturbing Learners. A mobile phone may be used, and must be switched to silent alert, so as not to disturb Learners.

Leaving the assessment room

Where Learners have completed their assessment and are permitted to leave before the finish time, they must be instructed to do so quietly, without causing undue distraction to others. This must not be until 50% of the available examination time has passed.

Ending the assessment

When ending the assessment, Invigilators should give sufficient notice to Learners. This is normally achieved by giving fifteen minute and five minute warnings prior to the published finish time. All externally set and marked paper-based assessment papers must be collected and placed in secure storage prior to submitting to the awarding organisation or end-point assessment organisation for marking.

At no point must any indication be given to Learners as to whether it is believed that they have passed or failed the assessment. The marking of assessment papers by tutor/assessors, to pre-empt awards will be treated as malpractice and could result in the withdrawal of Welcome Skills's Centre Approval or a sanction.

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Paper based assessment papers must be sent to the awarding organisation or end-point assessment organisation within the specified timeframe and by a secure method along with a copy of the completed attendance register and seating plan.

The original attendance register and seating plan will be retained for three years from the date the test is taken for all online, offline and paper based and external controlled assessments.

The Invigilator must ensure that any resources and downloads saved onto each computer system are fully removed.

Storage and Destruction of Confidential Materials

Welcome Skills will ensure that we are to demonstrate that appropriate security systems are in place to prevent unauthorised access to the assessment / examination materials.

The contents of all materials must be treated as strictly confidential and should not be shared with anyone other than those taking or administering the assessment. Copies may

- not be issued to anyone, including teaching staff..
- Question papers and any other confidential material, e.g. answer booklets, practical test scenarios etc, must be stored securely at the Welcome Skills's head office in a safe or secure lockable cupboard with restricted access (limited key holders) in a secure locked room.
- All question papers issued for an assessment must be returned as instructed, including any unused papers or materials.

Internal Quality Assurance Monitoring Visits

The Lead IQA operates a system of announced and unannounced visits to ensure that the invigilators undertaking controlled assessments are doing so in line with Welcome Skills requirements.

These visits provide ongoing confidence in our invigilation process as well as maintaining and improving quality. Such checks create the opportunity to comment on good practice as well as identifying areas for improvement.

Invigilators are "spot checked" as part of a risk-based approach to the monitoring of controlled assessment. We calculate risk using a number of factors including, the volume of Learner registrations and other statistical data'

Invigilators will receive feedback from the unannounced visit within a maximum of 48 hours. Any actions to make improvements and/or any good practice observed will be highlighted within the report.

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