



Examination and Invigilation Policy

Most recent update: 03 March 2026

Scope

This policy outlines the Skills and Employment department's policy and procedure for the administration and invigilation of examinations and controlled assessments. The policy is based on NOCN Examination and Invigilation Policy v3.1, February 2021.

The policy applies to all externally set examinations. There is a separate invigilator Handbook available which contains posters, templates, forms and guidance for invigilators.

Purpose

The purpose of this document is to:

- establish a clear set of rules that address security and control risks regarding the setting, deliver, printing, handling, distribution, transportation and storage of examination papers
- outline individual responsibilities in ensuring that examinations are administered in a way that is compliant with this policy
- establish resources and space requirements regarding the conduct of examinations
- establish quality and delivery arrangements of examinations to maintain the confidentiality and integrity of assessment materials
- outline the requirements for the invigilation of examinations
- detail the distinctive forms of invigilation that are available for examinations
- confirm the actions that will be taken against individuals who are found to be in violation of this policy

Confidentiality Of Assessment Materials

All assessment material and any associated passwords to access the material must remain confidential at all times and stored inline with the Document Retention and Safe Storage Policy and accessed only by authorised individuals.

All examinations must be invigilated by an individual who has not prepared the learners for the examination, including the learners' tutor. These individuals must not be given access to examination papers for qualifications they deliver unless otherwise agreed with the awarding body. Examination papers must not be altered or amended in any way unless authorised to do so by the awarding body as part of a reasonable adjustment or special consideration (see the Reasonable Adjustments Policy). Examination papers must not be copied or used for training purposes under any circumstances.

Transportation of examination papers is permitted but they must always remain secure in a sealed package.



Downloading And Printing Of Examination Papers

After printing by the designated staff member, examination papers must not be handed to learners or unauthorised staff members. After each printing session, checks must be carried out to ensure that no master copies are left on the machine and that all papers are removed from the room by the designated staff member, who must also ensure that any spoilt copies are destroyed appropriately. All electronic images or memory must be deleted from the machine.

Once printed, examination papers must be placed in a sealed envelope. The person printing the papers must sign and date over the seal to confirm who printed the papers, and when.

Examination Venues and Arrangement of Desks/Workstations

All examinations must be conducted in an appropriate setting. The room must be of a sufficient size and temperature. Noise levels must be minimal, and learners must not be disturbed during their examination. The Room Assessment checklist should be checked for each venue. The invigilator must have access to and be able to produce the checklist during examinations.

Each learner must have a separate desk and they must be of sufficient size to hold the examination papers and seat the learner comfortably. If separate desks are not possible, learners must be far enough apart so that their work cannot be seen by others. The minimum distance between learners (from centre to centre of each chair) is 1.25 metres. Learners must all be facing in the same direction and must not be able to make contact with each other.

The invigilator must ensure that there is no unauthorised activity by learners, e.g. communication with others or use of unauthorised reference materials.

Display Materials

The invigilator must ensure the following are displayed for all learners sitting examinations:

- examination warning notices for learners informing them that they are now under examination conditions, e.g. requesting them to turn off mobile phones
- the appeals procedure
- the emergency evacuation procedures
- 'Examination in Progress' posters to be displayed outside the room
- a board or flip chart highlighting the Centre number, title of examination and the start and finish times (along with the earliest time a learner can leave the examination room)
- a reliable clock, large enough for the learners to clearly read

The Invigilator Role And Responsibilities

All invigilators must be appropriately trained. The role of the invigilator is to ensure that all examinations are conducted in accordance with awarding body requirements, in order to:

- ensure that all learners have an equal opportunity to demonstrate their abilities



- maintain the security and confidentiality of the examination papers and completed response sheets, before, during and after the examination
- prevent possible learner malpractice
- prevent possible administrative failures
- ensure that learner identification requirements are followed

Invigilator Requirements

Invigilation cannot be carried out by any person related to a learner sitting an examination, or an individual who has a personal interest in the learner's result.

Invigilation cannot be carried out by a person who has prepared the learners for examination (including the learner's tutor). The tutor must not be present in the room at the time of the examination.

The invigilator must be able to summon help in case of an emergency without leaving the room or disturbing the learners. A mobile phone is permitted for this purpose but must remain switched off throughout the examination process unless required.

An invigilator may have an approved assistant to help with enforcing examination conditions if required, but they must not have been involved in the direct delivery of teaching or assessment of the qualification.

Individuals may provide learning or access support for learners if this is approved by the awarding body.

Invigilation Of Exams

Learners must be aware that they are under examination conditions from when they enter the room until they are permitted to leave.

Prior to learners entering the room, the invigilator must establish the identity of all learners sitting the examination. A photographic ID such as a passport or driving licence should be used. If these are not available, then a formal ID card such as armed forces, police, student union, company ID card may be permitted. If a photographic ID cannot be produced, a birth certificate and a letter from the Council (e.g. Council Tax) or utility bill will suffice containing the learner's name and address will suffice.

The Invigilator must ensure that only authorised individuals are present in the examination room prior to the opening of the sealed package containing examination materials. This includes learners who will not be sitting the examination and any tutors who have prepared the learner for the examination. Teaching assistants/learning support assistants to support an invigilator in enforcing examination conditions or in calming any learners with special educational needs are permitted.

Before commencing the start of the examination, and throughout the examination, the invigilator must ensure that learners do not have any electronic equipment, including computers/laptops, mobile phones and smart watches, on their possession, or near them.



The invigilator must ensure that they are able to observe each learner in the examination room at all times. They must ensure that they consider the shape of the room in which they are conducting examinations and if an invigilator is not able to observe each learner at once, then additional invigilators will be required.

The invigilator must give all of their attention to invigilating the examination. They are prohibited from carrying out any other task (such as reading a book, using a computer or mobile phone) whilst invigilating an examination. Invigilators must ensure that they are vigilant and remain aware of emerging situations, looking out for suspected malpractice. It is the invigilator's responsibility to ensure confidentiality of assessment materials is maintained throughout the examination session. Any irregularities must be recorded, and stored, and provided to the awarding body upon the return of the completed examination papers.

A learner arriving late for their examination must not be allowed into the examination room. They must not be permitted to sit the same examination paper alongside the other learners and will receive a 'Not Present' result for the examination session. An examination paper may be re-ordered through the awarding body for an alternative date. Where only one learner is booked to sit an examination, the invigilator is able to allow the examination to go ahead if the learner arrives within the 30-minute period before or after the scheduled examination start time.

Emergencies And Evacuation

Where an emergency arises and an evacuation is necessary, the invigilator must follow the venue's own procedure for safely evacuating all individuals from the examination room. Learners must be supervised and under examination conditions at all times during an evacuation to ensure that learners can continue their examination once they are permitted to return to the examination room. If, at any point, the invigilator believes that the confidentiality or integrity of the examination has been compromised, they should notify the awarding body as soon as it is appropriate and safe to do so for further guidance.

In each case of an emergency or an evacuation a written record must be kept of the events, including a statement from the invigilator of how the confidentiality of assessment materials was kept during the emergency or evacuation. The record of each incident must be shared with the awarding body within 1 working day of the incident via email. All records of emergency or evacuation incidents during examination sessions must also be stored by the Quality Team for external quality assurance purposes.

Leaving The Examination Room

Learners are not permitted to leave the examination room until at least twenty minutes of examination time has elapsed (other than in an emergency/medical situation or where they have been provided authorisation) and may not leave in the last ten minutes of the examination. For examinations which are 30 minutes in length or less, learners are not permitted to leave the examination room until the full examination time has elapsed.

Learners who have been provided with authorisation to leave the examination room temporarily must be accompanied by a member of staff. Where learners have completed their examination, and are permitted to leave before the finish time, they must be instructed to do so quietly, without



causing undue distraction to others. If learners leave the examination room, unaccompanied by a member of centre staff, they must not return to the examination room until the examination session has concluded.

Ending The Examination

When ending the examination, invigilators must provide learners with a fifteen minute and five-minute warning prior to the finish time of the examination.

The invigilator must ensure that all examination material is collected and collated prior to allowing learners to leave the examination room.

At no point can the invigilator inform a learner of whether they have passed or failed the examination. Unauthorised marking of examination papers by is malpractice and could result in the withdrawal of Centre Approval.

Return Of Examination Papers

Examination papers and associated material are packaged appropriately and securely immediately after the examination session has concluded. This must be completed by an individual who has been authorised to handle examination material.

The authorised individual who packages the material must ensure that any unused examination papers are separated from completed papers/response sheets and that the unused papers and material are securely shredded within the delivery venue. Completed examination papers and material must be placed into a sealed package for return to the awarding body. The package must be stored securely at all times.

Paper-based examinations must be received by the awarding body within 2 working days of the examination and should be sent using recorded delivery. If it is not possible to return the papers within two working days of the examination, this must be confirmed by email to the awarding body as soon as possible, explaining the reason for the delay and the expected date of receipt.

Cancellation Or Amendment Of Examinations

If an examination is cancelled, or the venue and times are amended, this must be confirmed by email to the awarding body as soon as possible explaining the reason for the change or cancellation. This includes situations where an examination session does not go ahead due to the absence of learners.

Examination Malpractice

If, at any point, an individual believes that the security of examination materials has been breached or is aware of any other issue that may threaten the integrity of the examination process, they must immediately notify their manager. If malpractice or maladministration may have occurred, the awarding body must be immediately notified (see the Maladministration Policy).



Further information can be found on our website in the following related documents:

- Malpractice and Maladministration Policy