

Appendix 1 Instructions for conducting on-screen tests 1 September 2023 to 31 August 2024

1 Introduction

Centres must be authorised by the relevant awarding body to offer on-screen tests. They must ensure that they meet the arrangements detailed in this booklet and have the expertise to access, administer and support the test/examination.

2 Security

In addition to the requirements set out in section 4 of the *Instructions*, the following instructions apply to all confidential materials relating to the administration and delivery of on-screen tests.

- 2.1 Centres must have the relevant software installed to administer the tests and demonstrate that the appropriate security systems are in place to prevent unauthorised access to the test/examination materials.
- 2.2 Electronic test/examination materials must always be stored securely.
- 2.3 The test/examination materials must only be accessed in accordance with the awarding body's subject-specific instructions.
- 2.4 Candidate test password information must be stored securely and only given to candidates at the time of the examination. Different passwords must be set up for each session, if more than one session is required. It is not sufficient to rely on candidates keeping their passwords secret.
- 2.5 **The invigilator must check the identity of each candidate and ensure that the correct ID and password are issued.** The candidate is responsible for inputting their ID and password, and for ensuring that the name of the test and their details are correct. If the information presented to the candidate is incorrect, they must notify the invigilator and cancel out of the examination before starting. The invigilator must give the candidate the correct ID and password to access their examination. If a candidate sits an examination in another candidate's name (whether or not it is intentional), this may constitute malpractice.
- 2.6 Confidential material (including discarded printouts) must be kept secure throughout the examination window (i.e. the range of dates within which the unit/component must be conducted).
- 2.7 Centres must maintain the confidentiality of candidate responses and candidate details.
- 2.8 Centres must have appropriate security systems and procedures in place to prevent candidates using computers/laptops in examinations having unauthorised external communication with other users of computers/laptops.

3 Timetabling of tests

- 3.1 For examinations which are timetabled, test sessions must take place according to the awarding body's timetable and will be restricted to the scheduled period.
- 3.2 Centres will need to plan and set up the sessions before the examination date, taking into account that access to the tests will be restricted to the test window by the software.
- 3.3 Centres must inform candidates which session and room they should attend.

- 3.4 Requirements for the supervision of candidates will differ between tests. Centres must always refer to the appropriate awarding body's subject-specific instructions.
- 3.5 Where a test is on-demand, once the candidate has completed his or her test, there is no reason for the candidate to remain within the examination room.

4 Use of calculators

The requirements set out in section 10 of the *Instructions*, apply to all on-screen tests unless stated otherwise in the appropriate awarding body's subject-specific instructions.

5 Resources

- 5.1 Centres must ensure that sufficient work stations are available, including at least one replacement computer and printers where required. The equipment must be fit for purpose, meet the awarding body's minimum technical specifications and must be checked by a competent person before use.
- 5.2 Centres should consider using one work station as a 'control centre'. This must be monitored by an invigilator or a member of the centre's IT support team.
- 5.3 If more than one test is being conducted at the same time, centres should consider using an additional 'control centre'. (Please note that this is a requirement for AQA on-screen tests.)
- 5.4 There must be appropriate policies and procedures in place to:
- a) protect the network and the security of the hardware and software which is used to deliver on-screen tests;
 - b) hold candidate responses.
- 5.5 The centre's management of the secure test environment in which on-screen tests operate must be robust.

Ensure stocks of toner, ink and paper are sufficient to meet the demands of the on-screen test where required.

- 5.6 You must display the following JCQ notices outside the examination room:
- a) Unauthorised items poster (A3 version);
 - b) Warning to candidates (A3 version).
- 5.7 Individual computers should show the time left for the test to run. If not, a clock must be visible to all candidates. The centre number, start and finish times must be displayed prominently.

Care should be taken to ensure that the clock displays on individual computers are accurate and synchronised for examination purposes.

6 Accommodation

- 6.1 Centres must ensure an appropriate assessment environment.
- 6.2 Where computers are used for assessment purposes, the head of centre is responsible for ensuring that health and safety laws are followed. Particular attention must be given to:
- a) electrical safety;
 - b) environment, heat, light and ventilation;

- c) user comfort and safety, such as the position of screens, wrist rests, foot rests, chairs, adjustable tables, copyholders and computer screens on adjustable arms.

- 6.3 The arrangement of workstations and the position of the invigilator's desk must facilitate detection of any unauthorised activity by candidates, for example communication with others or use of unauthorised reference material.
- 6.4 The layout of the room for on-screen tests cannot be specifically defined since there will be several solutions to organising work stations within the space available. When planning the layout of the room, centres must consider the following limitations:
- a) the distance between the screens as defined in section 6.5 below;
 - b) the division of the work space to allow any permitted additional materials to be used;
 - c) the use of booths, screens or partitions, whether temporary or permanent;
 - d) impact on invigilation requirements;
 - e) ratio of invigilators.
- 6.5 **Each work station must be isolated by a minimum space of 1.25 metres measured from the nearest outer edge of one screen to the next, unless the monitors are positioned back to back or separated by dividers or protected by privacy screens.**
- 6.6 Under certain circumstances 1.25 metres may prove to be an insufficient distance to prevent candidates seeing, intentionally or otherwise, the work of others. **The principal objective is to ensure that no candidate's work can be overseen by others. Appropriate steps must be taken to ensure that this can be achieved.**
- 6.7 Candidates should normally be seated in candidate number order. However, candidates permitted extra time should be seated where they will not be disturbed by candidates who have completed the test.
- 6.8 Candidates must not be permitted to change seats unless asked to do so by the invigilator.

Centres will need to decide how to accommodate large numbers of candidates. The following alternatives should be considered:

- seating candidates sitting the same test at alternate computers;
- seating a candidate next to someone entered for a different tier;
- seating a candidate next to someone entered for a different subject or unit/component;
- seating the candidates before handing out their confidential log-in details.

If confidential log-in details are placed at workstations before the candidates are seated, centres must check to ensure that candidates are seated correctly.

7 Invigilation arrangements

For on-screen tests, particularly those involving a large number of candidates and where more than one test is being conducted, it is recommended that a specialist invigilator is appointed. The specialist invigilator should have proven IT skills and experience in conducting on-screen tests, and be assisted by at least one other invigilator.

- 7.1 There must be at least one invigilator for each group of 20 or fewer candidates taking on-screen tests, unless an awarding body has given permission to do otherwise. This will, however, be dependent on the nature of the test and the layout of the room. Further invigilators should be employed at the exams officer's discretion to ensure that all candidates are always in view.

- 7.2 Technical help should be available throughout the test(s) in case of hardware/software problems and to assist with invigilation of the test.
- 7.3 **Candidates must not be in possession of the following items – AirPods, earphones/earbuds, iPods, mobile phones, MP3/4 players or similar devices, and watches.**
- 7.4 **Unless permitted by the awarding body's subject-specific instructions, there must be no access to:**
- a) data stored on the hard drive;
 - b) email;
 - c) portable storage media, e.g. floppy disks, CDs, memory sticks;
 - d) pre-prepared templates;
 - e) the internet.
- 7.5 Centres must keep a signed record of the seating plan.
- 7.6 During a test, work stations may be networked and it may not be possible to avoid a group of candidates having to share access to a printer. Candidates must be closely supervised to ensure they only have access to their own work.

8 Emergencies

In dealing with emergencies staff must be aware of the centre's policy and, where appropriate, any instructions from relevant local or national agencies.

Where the integrity of the examination or the candidates' performance may have been affected, a report must be sent to the appropriate awarding body.

See also section 25 of the *Instructions*.

- 8.1 **Centres must ensure that candidates are closely supervised if an evacuation is necessary.**
- 8.2 You should refer to any software specific instructions to safeguard:¹
- BS17.1a** the security of assessment content and responses (for example by pausing the test for all candidates and locking the assessment room which has been evacuated without closing down the software);
 - BS17.2.1** procedures for dealing with hardware, software and communication failures (which may affect individual workstations or the whole network) should normally allow the candidate(s) to continue the assessment session at a different workstation or at a later time, if necessary, without loss of working time. In extreme cases it may be preferable to provide a paper assessment;
 - BS17.3** procedures for re-starting an assessment after an unplanned break (i.e. an emergency or a technical failure) should ensure that the invigilator:
 - a) controls the re-start;
 - b) re-sets the timing, where necessary;
 - c) ensures that candidates can re-access their previous responses where this is technically feasible and permitted by the assessment regulations.

¹ This document takes account of BS ISO/IEC 23988:2007 which is the British Standard Code of Practice for the use of information technology in the delivery of assessments.

9 Finishing the examination

- 9.1 Centres must ensure that all candidates' work is saved and secure from unauthorised access.
- 9.2 All other examination material, including copies of candidates' work, additional printouts and question papers must be collected by the invigilator and stored in a secure place.
- 9.3 Any common user areas accessible to candidates must be cleared of all work saved during the examination immediately after each session.
- 9.4 Candidates' user areas must be removed at the end of the examination window or after each session if feasible. Whichever strategy is adopted, centres must ensure that the user areas of those candidates who have already sat the examination cannot be accessed by candidates who are scheduled to sit the examination in a later session within the window. Where networked stations are used, particular care should be taken to prevent work being accessible via shared folders.
- 9.5 Invigilators should be aware that work may need to be printed off outside the time allowed for the test. Candidates must not be prevented from doing so but must always be supervised.
- 9.6 Scrap paper used by candidates must be collected and destroyed.
- 9.7 Where required by an awarding body, the invigilator should check that all on-screen assessments have been uploaded to the awarding body.