



Instructions for Conducting Controlled Assessments

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Department: AO



FutureQuals



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Instructions for conducting controlled assessments.

Version Control: POL022-V23-3

The following table presents the version control of this policy:

Version	Date	Reason for Change	Changes approved by:
POL022-V23-2	31/07/2023	New document template and refresh of content. Additional wording regarding copying of assessments. Updated acceptable Identification documents. Removal of reference to FQ marking papers. Changes to attendance register to reflect events	SS
Pol022-V23-3	1/11/2023	Removal of reference to on-paper Functional Skills exams.	SS

Please note: This version replaces all previous versions.

1. Introduction

This policy provides all FutureQuals Approved Centres with information and guidance on the process for Conducting Controlled Assessments, which enables FutureQuals to award qualifications that comply with its regulatory requirements.

This policy applies in England and, where relevant, in the devolved nations.

2. Purpose

This outlines the process for Conducting Controlled Assessments.

These instructions contain all the necessary information to enable FutureQuals centres to conduct assessments safely, securely, and efficiently.

They apply to all externally set controlled assessments and internally set and marked controlled assessments including paper-based, online, and offline tests.

3. Supporting Documents

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies and procedures:

- Bribery and Corruption policy
- Conflict of Interest policy
- Enquiries about results and appeals policy
- Malpractice and maladministration policy
- Reasonable adjustments and special considerations policy
- Sanctions Policy

4. Links to Regulatory Criteria

Regulator	Regulatory rule or guidance document	Regulatory condition / principle
CCEA	General Conditions of Recognition	C2, G4,
Ofqual	General Conditions of Recognition	C2, G4,
Qualifications Wales	Standard Conditions of Recognition	C2, G4,
SQA Accreditation	Regulatory Principles (2021)	RP12

5. Definitions

Controlled assessments are a type of formative assessment of the learning outcomes where supervision of learner assessment is required.

The term supervision means, the simultaneous physical (or simultaneous electronic) presence of a Learner and a lecturer, supervisor, assessor, tutor or other appropriate provider of education or training provided to a Learner.

Controlled assessments cover a range of assessment methods such as practical tasks, written questions, multiple choice/short answer, and knowledge assessment tasks.

Specific requirements for these assessments such as time constraints will normally be specified in the qualification specification or the learner guidance.

6. Responsibilities

Centres

Centres must:

- have in place their own policy or instructions for conducting controlled assessments and exams, as well as the appropriate level of resources to implement and maintain it.
- make sure the Centre staff are trained in implementing controlled assessments, including correct invigilation procedures.
- ensure Learners are aware of the rules and any prohibited activity in relation to controlled assessments and ensure that learners' follow the instruction given accordingly.
- Report any concerns or breaches to these instructions to FutureQuals at the earliest opportunity.
- Ensure that any reasonable adjustments have been applied for in advance of the assessment, approval gained, and invigilator(s) (and learners) briefed to ensure any arrangements are implemented correctly.

It is the responsibility of the Head of Centre to ensure that all assessors and invigilators are familiar with the requirements set out in this document, that they adhere to them and that the document is accessible on the day of the assessment.

Learners

Learner must:

- follow the instructions given by centre staff when taking part in controlled assessments, also referred to as exams, in accordance with this policy.

FutureQuals EQAs

External Quality Assurer's will sample the evidence during routine external quality assurance activities.

7. Policy

Assessment Venue Requirements

Centres are required to maintain records of how assessment venues meet these criteria, which must be made available to FutureQuals on request. False or misleading statements by the Centre in respect of assessment venues may result in immediate suspension or withdrawal of Centre Approval, and assessments may be declared void.

As part of the ongoing External Quality Assurance processes and procedures, FutureQuals will check that these requirements are being adhered to on both planned and unannounced audit visits.

Centres 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 learners' 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 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 and
- 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.

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

Example posters, assessment notice and the emergency/evacuation procedures are available upon request.

Information must be visible to all learners showing the centre number and the start and finish times of the assessment.

There should be a reliable clock (or other suitable timekeeping device, e.g., time displayed via a computer screen) which must be visible to each learner in the assessment room. The clock/display must be large enough for all learners to read clearly.

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.

Controlled Assessment Requirements

Both external and internal assessments are subject to controlled condition requirements. All formal assessment of learner performance contributing to the achievement of the qualification must comply with those controlled conditions.

Centres 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 (SAMs) and, for online/offline tests, the on-screen system in advance of the formal assessment session.

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, 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. 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, or to access any resources not directly provided for the purposes of the assessment.

The invigilator is responsible for ensuring that all these conditions are met and must confirm the learner's identity prior to commencement of the test and complete an attendance register.

An example attendance register is available upon request.

During the assessment

The Invigilator to learner ratio for paper-based tests should be 1:30 maximum and for on screen tests, a maximum of 1:20.

When only one invigilator is present, they must be able to get help easily without leaving the room and without disturbing learners.

A centre must 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 and any relative, friend or peer of a learner in the exam room must not be the sole invigilator.

Any potential or actual conflicts identified by a centre must be reported to FutureQuals before the test 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**:

- 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 valid passport(any nationality), a national identity card issued by an EU country, a Gibraltar identity card, signed UK photo driving license, 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
- Confirm that there are no conflicts of interest between the learners and the Invigilator
- 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 FutureQuals 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 not be the class Tutor/instructor** unless another independent Invigilator is present.

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.
- Copying, taking screen shots or any other form of copying of paper or online assessment materials is strictly forbidden.

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. However, in this situation, the Invigilator must refer the matter to the Head of the Centre, who should contact FutureQuals
- Give any information to learners about mistakes in the question paper, unless there is an erratum notice, or permission has been given by FutureQuals
- Comment on the content of the question paper
- Offer any advice or comment on the work of a learner
- Allow learners to copy, take screen shots or any other form of copying of paper or online assessment materials. This is strictly forbidden.
- Mark papers, if they have been involved in the delivery of the qualification. This is a conflict of interest.

8. Process

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 this duty at all times
- Invigilators must not conduct 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 that 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. Re-entry will not be permitted.

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 and registers must be collected and placed in secure storage prior to being marked by the centre.

At no point must any indication be given to learners as to whether it is believed that they have passed or failed the assessment. Any attempt to pre-empt awards will be treated as malpractice and could result in the withdrawal of Centre Approval.

The marking of assessment papers should be undertaken by a member of centre staff who has not been involved in the delivery of the qualification to learners.

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

The Invigilator must ensure that any assessments are completed and assessment sessions are logged out of, as well as resources and downloads saved onto each computer system are fully removed.

Storage and Destruction of Confidential Materials

Centres must be able to demonstrate that appropriate security systems are in place to

prevent unauthorised access to the test/examination materials. This will be checked as part of the quality assurance processes in place for Centre or Qualification Approval, scheduled quality assurance visits and unannounced centre visits to monitor live tests.

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. FutureQuals must be notified immediately if any known or suspected infringement of these conditions takes place.

Question papers and any other confidential material, e.g., answer booklets, must be stored securely at the centre's registered address in a safe or secure lockable cupboard with restricted access (limited key holders) in a secure locked room.

Should any breaches of these requirements be identified, a sanction may be put in place to protect the interests of the learners and could potentially lead to the invalidation of assessment results.

Should the centre be found responsible for compromising the security of the assessment then they may be charged for redevelopment costs.

Details of the sanctions that could be applied can be found in the FutureQuals Sanctions Policy.

All question papers issued by FutureQuals for an assessment must be returned or destroyed as instructed, including any unused papers or materials. Evidence to support the destruction of papers must be retained by centres.

Unannounced Visits

FutureQuals may operate a system of unannounced visits to ensure that centres are undertaking tests in line with our requirements and to prevent malpractice.

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

Centres are "spot checked" as part of our risk-based approach to the monitoring of approved centres. We calculate risk using several factors including the volume of learner registrations and other statistical data and the number of incidents reported to us by centres and our External Quality Assurers.

Centres must provide the person conducting the visit, upon request, access to premises, people and records relating to learner assessments, achievement and internal quality assurance.

If a Centre fails to provide access, FutureQuals will suspend the Centre's approval status subject to further checks.

Feeding back to Centres

Centres will receive feedback from the unannounced visit within a maximum of 20 working days. Any actions to make improvements and/or any good practice observed will be captured on the appropriate form.

Imposing Sanctions

On completion of an unannounced visit, FutureQuals reserves the right to impose sanctions or special conditions on Centres, Centre staff and/or learners to safeguard the award of achievement and protect their interests. Any sanction proposed will be reviewed by the Head of Quality before being applied in line with our published Sanctions Policy.

Administration and Invigilation of Functional Skills exams

The head of centre must ensure that:

Administration of exams

(‘Administration’ includes initial receipt of confidential materials, secure storage, movement and preparation of materials for scheduled assessments, and registration, secure storage and return of materials to the awarding organisation after scheduled exams are completed)

- a) No tutor of a Functional Skills qualification can be involved in the administration of the assessment materials for Level 1 and 2 exams in that subject, regardless of the level they teach.

Invigilation of exams

- b) A Functional Skills subject tutor must not be involved in the invigilation of that subject, even if they have not taught those candidates (i.e., a Functional Skills English tutor must not invigilate any Functional Skills English exam and a Functional Skills Maths tutor must not invigilate any Functional Skills Maths exam, regardless of the level they teach).

Exceptions

A centre must ensure that it has a suitable invigilator available for all Level 1 and 2 Functional Skills assessments.

There are no automatic exceptions. In exceptional circumstances, the Head of Centre must contact FutureQuals immediately. Any exception **must** be agreed by the FutureQuals in advance of any assessment taking place. An exception may also require the centre to agree to additional measures to ensure the security of materials and additional monitoring by FutureQuals.

9. Monitoring and evaluation of the policy (standard text no need to amend)

The tools we use for implementing and monitoring policies, procedures and processes include regular meetings at operational and senior level. Each policy, procedure or process is assigned to a Head of Department who is responsible for its successful operation, addressing any issues arising from it and evaluating its effectiveness in meeting its purpose. This forms part of the controls that guide our business to ensure compliance with legislative and regulatory requirements.

Data required in support of a policy, procedure or process is held in line with the FutureQuals Data Protection Policy (Privacy Standard) based on GDPR best practice.

Policies are stored on Share Point. Additionally, in line with our Business Continuity Plan, a hard copy of every policy is held in the Executive Office, should IT systems fail. It is the responsibility of the Executive Office Manager to ensure that the latest version of a policy (or procedure/process) is available in hard copy.

10. Review

This policy shall be reviewed periodically by the Senior Learnership or updated should there be any changes to legislation, regulation or custom and practice and presented to the Executive Team (or Governing Body) for approval.

11. Feedback and complaints

We welcome your feedback, which will help us to improve the products and services we provide. We know that sometimes things go wrong, but if they do, we want to try to stop them from happening again. If you would like to give us your feedback or you're unhappy with the service, you can contact us on AO@FutureQuals.com



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