

NOCN Invigilation Policy

1. Scope

Integral to NOCN's commitment to the integrity of certificated claims for its qualifications by recognised Centres, this document details the requirements to maintain the security and quality assurance of all NOCN examinations, whilst also safeguarding the interest of Learners by ensuring examinations are fair and equitable.

This policy covers all externally set examinations for NOCN and NOCN_Cskills Awards qualifications. This includes both paper based and online examinations.

The intended audience for this policy is:

- NOCN Core and Associate staff
- All staff of NOCN Delivery Partners associated with NOCN provision
- All staff in NOCN recognised and partner Centres
- Learners
- Qualification Regulators
- Industry Regulators

Please note that the person who has signed the NOCN Centre Agreement and Terms and Conditions will be held responsible for the Centre's compliance with the NOCN Invigilation Policy. Failure to comply will result in sanctions for the Centre.

2. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Establish a clear set of rules that addresses security and control risks regarding the setting, delivery, printing, handling, distribution, transportation and storage of examination papers.
- Establish resources and space requirements regarding the delivery and invigilation of examinations.
- Establish the quality arrangements and delivery of examinations through NOCN
- Detail intellectual property rights.
- Provide rules that govern the non-compliance and/or malpractice by Learners or invigilators during the examination.

3. Security Arrangements

All examinations are set by NOCN and must not be amended. If any papers or questions are amended, the examination will be void.

Examination papers will only be made available to Centres via Quartzweb, a secure test platform, or via recorded delivery. Examination papers must only be accessed by the nominated person/s and authorised staff. Examination papers must be stored securely and access should be limited. The person who is responsible for delivery of training must NOT be given access to, or sight of, examination papers for courses which they are delivering.

Examination papers must not be copied and must not be used for training purposes (i.e. mock exams). This will be considered malpractice and sanctions will be imposed.

3.1 Online Tests/Examinations

For all online tests/examinations:

- Access to the test platforms must be controlled by the Centre Contact/Quality Assurance Contact and electronic passwords and user access only provided to authorised staff.
- 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, separated by dividers or protected by privacy screens. 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.
- Only one candidate per workstation is permitted.
- Venues used for examinations must be appropriate. There must be a room available where candidates will not be disturbed.
- Where required, candidate test password information is stored securely and only given to candidates at the time of the examination.
- Candidates are prevented from using computers/laptops in examinations which have unauthorised external communication with other users of computers/laptops.
- The arrangement of workstations and the position of the invigilator's desk must facilitate the detection of any unauthorised activity by candidates, for example communication with others or use of unauthorised reference material.
- Sufficient work stations must be available, including at least one replacement computer.
- Candidates should not have use of any other electronic equipment besides the ones that are required for the examination.
- Unless otherwise stated by the awarding organisation's subject specific instructions, the invigilator must remind candidates that they must not have access to the Internet, e-mail, data stored on the hard drive or portable storage media (e.g. CDs, memory sticks or pre-prepared templates).
- It is the Centre's responsibility to ensure candidates are familiar with the instructions, procedures and regulations for the on-screen test, particularly on how to navigate and respond on-screen.
- Check that all candidates have logged on successfully, or have been logged on by the centre.
- Ensure that candidates know how to request technical assistance if required during the examination.
- Ensure that technical support is available throughout the on-screen test in relation to malfunctioning of equipment, software or the on-screen test itself.
- At the end of the examination, the candidate must be logged out of the system.

NOCN use the following test platforms for online examinations/tests:

- Classmarker
- EExams
- Skillstest

3.1.1 Classmarker

- The link to your online examination will be made available to Centre staff via Quartzweb. The link will only become visible on the date of the examination. The username and password to unlock the examination will also be provided through Quartzweb, to authorised personnel only.
- Before the examination, it is the Centre's responsibility to ensure candidates are familiar with the instructions, procedures and regulations for the on-screen test, particularly on how to navigate and respond on-screen.
- The invigilator must ensure that all candidates have logged on successfully, or have been logged on by the Centre.
- At the end of the examination, once 'End of Test' has been clicked, or permitted time has expired, the candidate will not be able to re-access the examination.

3.1.2 EdExams

NOCN utilise an online platform for Level 1 and Level 2 Functional Skills assessments that has been created in conjunction with EExams. EExams is an assessment platform in the format of an application that is downloaded to your computer. The application has a built in lock down software that prevents learners from using their computer outside of the application, including accessing their internet browser, throughout the examination.

Before the examination takes place, it is the invigilator's responsibility to download the examination onto the application. At this point, the application can be taken offline and learners can complete their examination without a live internet connection.

Following the completion of the examination, the invigilator should submit the completed examination to NOCN to allow for the paper to be marked and awarded.

3.1.3 Skillstest

- Multiple choice unit question tests can be delivered electronically through Skills Test, or printed as a hard copy, via this platform.
- The invigilator must investigate un-authorised key strokes when notified through the system before permitting the test to continue.
- Completed tests must be kept for a minimum 3-year period and subject to sample by the External Quality Assurer. Results must be kept for a minimum 7-year period.
- Where the test has been delivered as a hard copy, the completed paperwork must be kept securely at the Centre for a period of 3 years. The results must be kept for 7 years.

- Where the test has been delivered as a paper-test it must be marked within 14 days using the Skills Test platform. Paper-based test results must be stored for sampling and kept for a period of 3 years. These will be subject to external quality assurance.

3.2 Paper Based Examinations

Centres must ensure that:

- Appropriate security systems are in place to prevent unauthorised access to examination materials.
- Appropriate arrangements are in place to ensure that examination materials are delivered/accessed only to/by those authorised by the Head of the Organisation.
- Examination materials (including response sheets) must be stored securely at all times to ensure confidentiality. They must be locked away. This includes at **all** delivery venues and not just the Centre's main address.

3.2.1 Quartzweb Download/Printing of papers

All examination papers will be password protected and user access permitted only by authorised staff. Please note: the papers will be available from 2 working days before the examination and will expire on the date of the examination.

Centres must only print the exact number of papers that are required for the specific exam sitting as stated on the Examination Order form. The printing area must be supervised when printing hard copies of the test papers.

The staff printing must be instructed not to accept or hand over examination papers to candidates or persons not identified as authorised employees. Checks must be carried out after each printing session to ensure that:

- No master copies are left on the machine and that all examination question papers including spoilt copies are removed from the printing room by the employee designated by the person responsible for quality and confidentially destroyed.
- No electronic images or memory are remaining on the printing machine after examination papers have been printed in cases where final test papers are electronically downloaded to a printing machine.

Once printed, these papers should be placed into a sealed envelope and stored securely in a safe location. They should not be opened until the Examinations are about to take place. The envelope(s) containing the examination question papers **must not** be opened until five minutes before the examination start time.

The person who is responsible for delivery of training must NOT be given access to, or sight of, examination papers for courses which they are delivering.

3.2.2 Examination Papers via Secure Courier

Paper examinations will be sent out via a secure courier and will arrive at the Centre at least 2 working days before the date of the first exam. All paper based examination material is sent via a courier service to the Centre address, unless otherwise specified on the examination order, and will need to be signed for upon receipt. On receipt, the package containing the examination papers should be checked. Centres should notify NOCN if there are any problems, for example:

- If it appears that the parcel or one of the packets has been opened during transit and therefore there may have been a breach of security.
- The material has been significantly damaged in transit.
- The material appears not to meet your requirements.
- There is any reason to suspect that the security of the examination papers has been breached.

All of the supporting documentation, such as candidate information sheets and observation sheets will be included within the consignment (if applicable to the qualification examination).

Paper based tests must only be handled solely by the authorised departmental administrative employee(s), not by messengers, candidates, assistants or any other persons.

Examination Papers must be stored unopened in a secure location until the Examinations take place. The envelope(s) containing the examination question papers **must not** be opened until five minutes before the examination start time.

3.3 Transportation of Examination Papers

The transportation of examination papers is permitted. However, the security of the papers must be maintained. The papers must be transported in a plain envelope and not left unattended at any time during the transportation. The papers must be kept in a secure location at all other times.

3.4 Storage of Examination Papers

All examination papers must be stored in a secure location.

3.5 Return of Examination Papers

NOCN must receive **within two working days of the final examination** the completed examination papers using a traceable method such as recorded delivery or courier. All documents completed by the learner should be submitted.

If you are unable to return the papers within two working days of the final examination you must confirm in writing that there will be a delay in submitting examination papers, the reason behind the delay and the expected date of receipt.

All used and un-used papers must be returned to NOCN and if the exam is cancelled notice must be given to NOCN at nocn@nocn.org.uk

Failure to return papers within this timeframe and without an explanation may result in the papers being declared void and Sanctions may be applied to your Centre by the NOCN Assurance team. Your Centre's Approval may also be reviewed.

4. Administering the Examination – Invigilation Requirements

All examinations must be administered securely by Centres, using appropriately trained Invigilators. The Centre are responsible for training Invigilators and ensuring they are fully aware of their roles and responsibilities in assuring the validity of the qualification. The Centre must also manage any potential conflict of interest. The trainer/tutor cannot be the invigilator for any examinations, unless stated in the relevant qualification specification.

NOCN provide **Guidance for Invigilators** – Centres should familiarise themselves with the content of this and may use the suggested scripts provided.

4.1 Role of the Invigilator

The examination invigilator is the person in the examination room with responsibility for conducting a particular examination session in the presence of candidates. Invigilators have a key role in upholding the integrity of the examination process.

The role of the invigilator is to ensure that examinations are conducted in accordance with regulatory requirements, in order to:

- Ensure that all candidates have an equal opportunity to demonstrate their abilities.
- Ensure the security of the examination papers and completed response sheets, before, during and after the examination – this includes the security of any online test platform being used.
- Prevent possible candidate malpractice.
- Prevent possible administrative failures.
- Ensure that NOCN identify requirements are adhered to.

The invigilator must:

- Be appropriately trained in their duties and a responsible adult.
- Give all their attention to conducting the examination properly.
- Be able to observe each candidate in the examination room at all times.
- Be fully conversant with NOCN and regulatory requirements for confirming candidate identity.
- Inform the head of the centre if they are suspicious about the security of examination papers, completed response sheets or any other issue that threatens the integrity of the examination process. (In such cases, the head of the centre must inform NOCN immediately, and send a full written report within five working days of the suspicion arising).

The invigilator must not:

- Carry out any other task (for example, reading a book, use a computer, mobile phone etc) in the examination room.

4.2 Who can invigilate examinations?

NOCN Centres must ensure sure that invigilation is carried out by a person who has not prepared the candidates for the examination. Unless otherwise stated in the relevant qualification specification, this means that the trainer cannot act as the exam invigilator, and should not be present in the examination room. Invigilators must be responsible adults, appropriately trained in their duties.

It is also inappropriate for invigilation to be carried out by a person related to a candidate sitting the examination.

At least one invigilator must be present for groups of up to 30 candidates in examinations. When only one invigilator is present, they must be able to summon help easily, without leaving the examination room, and without disturbing candidates.

4.3 Examination Room layout

The seating arrangements must prevent all candidates from overlooking (intentionally or otherwise) the work of others. The minimum distance in all directions from centre to centre of candidates' chairs must be 1.25 metres.

All candidates must face in the same direction.

Each candidate must have a separate desk or table big enough to hold question papers and answer booklets. Candidates who are not working at individual desks must be far enough apart so that their work cannot be seen by, and contact cannot be made with, other candidates.

Where candidates are sitting at workstations to take online examinations, there must be sufficient dividers between each booth to prevent candidates seeing the work of others. 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, separated by dividers or protected by privacy screens. 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.

Floor plans of examination sessions must be retained and provided to NOCN on request.

Where specific arrangements are being made for candidates with approved reasonable adjustments, these must be adhered to and the approval documentation be available at the time of the examination.

4.3.1 Information to be displayed

The invigilator must ensure the following are prominently displayed:

- Examination warning notice for candidates.
- Centre Appeals Procedure.
- Emergency/evacuation procedures.
- Examination in Progress' notices outside of the examination room.
- A board/flipchart/whiteboard should be visible to all candidates showing the centre number, subject / Unit title and paper number; and the actual starting and finishing times of each examination.
- Ensure a reliable clock is visible to each candidate in the examination room. The clock must be big enough for all candidates to read clearly.

The invigilator must ensure that any display material (such as maps, diagrams, wall charts and projected images etc.) which might be helpful to candidates is not visible in the examination room.

4.4 Instruction to Candidates – start of the examination

The invigilator **must**:

- Advise candidates of the emergency/evacuation procedures.
- Inform candidates that they must follow the regulations of the examination.
- Advise the candidate should write in blue or black ink (written examinations).
- Advise the candidate they should not use correction fluid (written examinations).
- Inform the candidate they should not make any other marks on the examination paper (written examinations).
- Instruct the candidate they must not have access to items other than those stated in the instructions on the question paper, the stationery list or the specification for that subject in the examination room.
- Inform that mobile phones, electronic communication or storage devices are **not** permitted.
- Check that candidates have the correct examination paper.

This means that:

- Any course material should be removed from desks and placed at the front of the room.
- The invigilator should open the packets of examination papers, in the examination room in front of the candidates, and distribute to candidates.
- Candidates should not ask for, and must not be given, any explanation or interpretation of the questions and answers.
- If candidates leave the examination room, unaccompanied by a member of centre staff, they will not be able to return during the examination.

The invigilator **must**:

- Specify the length, start and finish time of the examination, and the earliest time that candidates can leave the examination room.

- Read the Instructions on the front of response sheet to candidates and demonstrate how to complete the response sheet and advise candidates how to make changes to answers.
- Remind candidates that they cannot communicate in any way with, ask for help from or give help to another candidate while they are in the examination room.
- Announce clearly to candidates when they may begin.
- Be present in the examination room at all times.
- Not leave examination papers unattended at any time.

4.5 During the examination

The invigilator **must not**:

- Make any comment where a candidate 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 send a report to NOCN.
- Give any information to candidates about possible mistakes in the question paper, unless there is an erratum notice, or permission has been given by NOCN.
- Comment on the content of the question paper.
- Read a word or words printed on the question paper to a candidate, other than the instructions on the front cover.
- Offer any advice or comment on the work of a candidate.

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

- Invigilators must give complete attention to this duty at all times.
- Invigilators must be vigilant and remain aware of emerging situations, looking out for cheating and malpractice or candidates who may be feeling unwell. Any irregularities must be recorded.
- Invigilators must not carry out any other tasks in the examination room.
- Invigilators are required to move around the examination room quietly and at frequent intervals.
- Invigilators should give regular time checks.

Summoning help during an examination:

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

4.6 Late Candidates

A candidate who arrives more than ten (10) minutes after the examination has started must not be allowed to enter the examination room. Arrangements will need to be made by the Centre to order examination papers for an alternative date. They will not be permitted to sit the same examination paper as other candidates.

4.7 Leaving the Examination

Candidates are not permitted to leave the examination room until at least twenty minutes examination time has elapsed (other than in an emergency/medical situation) and may not leave in the last 10 minutes of the examination.

Candidates who are allowed to leave the examination room temporarily must be accompanied by a member of centre staff. Where candidates have completed their examination, and are permitted to leave before the finish time, they should be instructed to do so quietly, without causing undue distraction to others.

Where relevant, the invigilator must ensure that all relevant sections of the examination response sheet (including the box indicating the number of changes made) are fully completed and signed by both the invigilator and candidate **before** candidates leave the room. Those candidates **must not** be allowed back into the room.

4.8 Ending the Examination

When ending the examination, invigilators should give sufficient notice to candidates. This is usually achieved by giving a fifteen minute and five-minute warning prior to the published finish time of the examination.

At the end of the examination the invigilator should:

- Tell the candidates to stop working and remind them that they are still under examination conditions.
- For paper based examinations, collect all examination papers and examination response sheets to place in secure storage prior to submitting to NOCN for marking. Candidates are NOT allowed to keep examination papers or response sheets.
- For paper based examinations, collect all the scripts/objective test sheets before candidates are allowed to leave the examination room.
- Candidates and invigilator must confirm the number of changes made on response sheets (where applicable). These should be entered in words and not numbers, and confirmed by both the invigilator and candidate signing the appropriate declaration on the response sheet.
- For online examinations, provide instruction on the closing of the examination.

At no point should any indication be given to the candidates as to whether it is believed that they have passed or failed the examination. This information can ONLY be confirmed by NOCN.

The marking of examination papers by the approved trainer/examination invigilator to pre-empt awards is seen as malpractice and could result in the withdrawal of Centre Approval / Recognition.

5. Quality Assurance

NOCN reserve the right to conduct unannounced visits to examination sessions.

This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis. Next review date: April 2019

Version	Approved by	Date	Next Review Date
2.1	GHE	March 2018	April 2019