

Guidance for Invigilators

1.1 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.

1.2 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.

1.3 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.

1.3.1 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.

1.4 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.