



Instructions for the Conduct of Controlled Assessment

Functional Skills Entry Level

2023-2024

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Introduction

For the purpose of this document, the Head of Centre, Principal of the College or the Chief Officer is the named person who takes ultimate responsibility for quality assurance within the centre and will be referred to as 'Head of Centre' throughout the document. All centres must have relevant approval from Pearson before offering the Entry Level Functional Skills (ELFS) qualification.

The Head of Centre is responsible for ensuring the proper conduct of the ELFS Assessments, although they may delegate certain tasks as necessary. Please [contact us](#) if a situation arises that is not covered by this document. For all instances referring to a contact in this document, please submit the query to us using the [Pearson Support Portal](#).

This document covers the conduct of the controlled assessments for Functional Skills Mathematics, English and ICT at Entry 1, 2 and 3. Your Examinations Officer should also access the [UK Information Manual](#) and the [ELFS Centre Guide to Quality Assurance](#). These documents are available on our website and contain information about entries and certification. The Pearson Functional Skills homepage can be found here: <https://qualifications.pearson.com/en/qualifications/edexcel-functional-skills.html>

The assessments are graded as either 'pass' or 'fail', however, centres must refer to the Guidance for Assessors and accompanying mark schemes when marking controlled assessments and for the set pass mark. The ELFS controlled assessment documents can be accessed via the [secure website](#)

Assessors must have access to the relevant Guidance for Assessors in advance of each assessment to allow particular arrangements to be accommodated in time.

There is no set date or assessment window for Entry Level Assessments. Centres do not need to inform Pearson before assessing learners. However, we advise centres to complete registrations no later than three weeks before the scheduled assessment. Registrations can be made through Edexcel Online.

Standards Verifiers are allocated from January 2024. Any correspondence relating to the assessments should be addressed directly to your allocated Standards Verifier unless otherwise instructed by Pearson.

Safe custody of assessment papers and other materials

Only authorised personnel such as the Examinations Officer(s) and Examinations Assistant(s) (as allocated per role on Edexcel Online) have appropriate access to download live materials from the secure site.

Live assessment materials include: controlled assessment tests, corresponding mark schemes, Guidance for Assessors and Entry Level FS ICT data files. These materials must be checked carefully once printed, and Pearson notified immediately if there are any problems or if the assessments cannot be accessed.

Please note: Controlled assessment queries, i.e. the content of the assessment materials, **MUST NOT** be emailed as the content is **secure** and emailing any part of it is considered a **breach of security** – if you have a query about the content of a controlled assessment test, please contact us stating your name and contact details, and request for one of the team to contact you directly via phone to discuss your queries.

It is the responsibility of the Head of Centre to ensure that the assessment papers are locked away in a place of high security after they have been printed. Centres are not allowed to download and store any live assessments on their computers. All assessment materials are considered 'live' until Pearson has released them as a set of practice papers.

Centres should print assessments on demand and only as required to ensure only valid controlled assessments are sat by learners. ELFS assessments can be printed no earlier than 2 weeks before the live assessment is due to take place to allow time for contextualisation. Assessors need to access to the Guidance for Assessors and the controlled assessment tests to decide whether contextualisation is needed.

We understand that it is not always possible to print the exact number of assessments from the website. Photocopies of a master copy (that is printed with every cohort) can therefore be made. However, centres are required to check that questions are still clear and that, where measurements are required, scales are still correct to ensure learners are not disadvantaged. Pearson is not responsible for centres who fail to follow these guidelines.

The Examinations Officer is the designated person within a centre who is responsible for the safe storage, access and delivery of secure assessments.

The Examinations Officer should:

- download live assessment materials
- keep live assessments safe and secure prior to administration
- make live assessments available to assessors and learners at the appropriate time
- manage the security and secure disposal of assessment papers following completion of the assessment
- ensure completed assessments are stored securely.

Pearson must be informed immediately if the security of the assessment papers has been put at risk by fire, theft, loss, damage, unauthorised disclosure or any other circumstances. Refer to the Appendix section at the end of this document for a full list of Pearson contact details.

Once the assessment has been sat, all assessment papers and scripts must be collected before the learners leave the room to ensure that no controlled assessments are accidentally removed.

If the assessments are taking place on more than one site, the Head of Centre is responsible for ensuring that:

- the correct number of controlled assessment tests and supporting materials are delivered to each site and that security is maintained throughout
- the terms and conditions on the secure area of the website are followed
- the transport of assessment materials, if applicable, is secure.

Conditions for storing assessment materials

It is the responsibility of the Head of Centre to ensure that the assessments are locked away in a place of high security and to set out the appropriate terms of authorisation for members of staff.

Assessment materials must be stored in a safe or a cabinet in a securely locked room conforming to the secure storage requirements below.

Requirement	Recommendation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Strong safe or security cabinet or metal cabinet with locking bar ● 2 to 4 key holders only 	Bolted to wall or floor
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Secure room in a fixed building, i.e. not a Portakabin or similar ● Walls, ceiling and floor of strong, solid construction 	Preferably on an upper floor with no windows.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Solid door ● Strong, secure hinges ● Security lock, e.g. 5 lever mortise lock ● 2 to 4 key holders only ● There must be at least 2 keys rather than 1 key with 2 or more members of staff with access to it. Centres must not keep a spare set of keys in a cabinet or safe which can be accessed by members of staff who are not involved in exams administration. Keys must either be kept on the key holder's person or kept in a coded key safe which is only accessible to the designated key holders 	A hollow door would require reinforcement.

For exceptional circumstances regarding storing assessment materials please contact us for further guidance prior to the Standards Verification virtual visit taking place.

In order to conduct live assessments for each assessment session, centres are required to:

- accept the terms and conditions on the secure assessment website
- ensure that for each assessment session for Entry Level FS:
 - the assessments are printed from the secure site no earlier than 2 weeks before the controlled assessment taking place
 - the assessments are contextualised as required
 - the assessments are sealed inside envelopes
 - the sealed envelopes are stored securely
 - the assessments are not opened until the time of the assessment
 - provide a copy of the Guidance for Assessors to authorised Assessors prior to the day of each assessment sitting.

Centres must have a tracking system for recording when assessment materials are taken from secure storage and when they are returned to ensure that the assessment materials remain confidential.

Please note: Centres are reminded that completed learner assessments should be kept securely both before and after they have been verified by the Standards Verifier. Learner assessments must **NOT** be handed back to learners at any stage as the assessments stay live until Pearson release the set as practice papers.

Conditions for transporting assessment materials

Assessment materials should not be moved until immediately before the scheduled assessment time. Unless the assessment is scheduled for Monday 8am and as long as the sub-site is within reach, there is no problem with moving the assessment materials on Monday morning. If the sub-site is a considerable distance away, the assessment materials can be transported, provided that:

- the alternative site has secure storage to keep the papers until the scheduled assessment
- assessment materials are sealed in a secure envelope
- assessment materials are transported by a responsible member of staff who has sight/hold of the sealed envelope at all times during the transport. In exceptional circumstances, and when this is not possible, centres will need to contact us in order to get approval to use a recorded delivery postal method such as Royal Mail recorded delivery services
- a transport log is kept (there is no template that we give centres, a spreadsheet or a Word-table would be enough, as long as the following information is captured: names of all people handling the papers, times when the papers were removed from secure storage, means of transport and security measures taken, tracking number log when approval to use a postal delivery method has been granted, time of arrival in sub-site and secure storage arrangements at the alternative site).

Scheduling assessments

Assessments may take place at any time and on any date. The Head of Centre must take all reasonable steps to ensure there is no possibility of collusion between learners taking assessments at different times, or between learners and anybody else with access to the assessment papers.

Entry Level FS Assessment Record and Authentication Sheet

One form for each learner needs to be completed and signed by the learner and Assessor/Invigilator for each controlled assessment sat. The Assessment Record and Authentication Sheet should be retained and submitted together with the particular sample requested for standards verification.

Re-sit rules

Entry Level FS Maths, Entry Level FS ICT, Entry Level FS English Reading and Writing

Candidates who do not pass the assessment the first time and wish to sit it again, must re-sit the whole assessment (using a different paper) no earlier than 14 days from taking the original assessment.

If the candidate should fail the assessment again, they will have to wait at least 14 days before sitting the assessment again (using a different paper). The tests should be rotated until the controlled assessment is passed. Centres are required to keep a log of controlled assessment tests for each specific learner taking this course.

Entry Level FS English Speaking, Listening & Communicating

Candidates who do not pass the assessment the first time and wish to sit it again, can re-sit no earlier than 14 days from taking the original assessment – this means that each of the activities in Task 1 and the discussion in Task 2 must be different from the original assessment. Where a candidate has not passed one of the tasks for Speaking, Listening & Communicating they are permitted to retake that task only, providing they passed the other task.

No controlled assessment tests are produced for this component. Please refer to the [Sample Assessment Materials](#) for ideas on discussion topics.

Resources for assessments

The Head of Centre is responsible for ensuring learners have or are provided with any equipment required to take the assessment, as well as for taking all reasonable steps to prevent learners from having access to any unauthorised equipment or resources.

The Head of Centre is responsible for ensuring that the centre has appropriate and secure reprographic facilities so that learners are able to use assessment papers that have been printed or photocopied to a high standard.

Learners should only have access to items specified in the Guidance for Assessors and must not have access to anything that could compromise the integrity of the assessment.

Learners must be informed that possessing any unauthorised equipment or resources during the assessment, whether intended for use or not, may result in disqualification.

In particular, learners must be instructed to switch off any mobile phones and other devices with access to the internet, and hand them to invigilators before the assessment begins, unless the use of this equipment is a requirement of the assessment.

Learners should be made aware that the controlled assessment tests may be used for any rough notes. No additional loose paper may be provided to learners and learners must not, under any circumstances, take any work or notes away with them after the assessment.

For the Speaking, Listening & Communicating unit, notes can be made as per the test instructions, but these must be collected by the invigilator at the end of the assessment activity.

Location of assessments

The Head of Centre is responsible for ensuring all assessments take place in a suitable venue whether on or off the centre's own premises.

The venue must be free from extraneous noise and enable candidates to work without disturbance or interruption for the duration of the assessment.

Any room in which an assessment is held must provide candidates with appropriate conditions for taking the assessment. You should pay attention to conditions such as lighting, heating and ventilation and the level of outside noise.

The centre must display the [JCQ Warning to candidates and JCQ Unauthorised items poster](#) and any specific instructions related to the subjects being examined.

No display materials which might be helpful to candidates should be visible in the assessment room. However, posters that may already be on the walls do not need to be removed unless they would be helpful to candidates.

The seating arrangements in the assessment room must be such as to prevent candidates from overlooking, intentionally or otherwise, the work of others, and with sufficient space to accommodate assessment papers, answer sheet/workbook(s) and any other required materials.

Various assessments may be held simultaneously in the same room, provided no disturbance is caused.

Invigilation arrangements

The assessments must take place under supervised conditions, where:

- learners must be continually supervised by a reliable person
- all necessary facilities must be available to learners
- any time restrictions must be complied with
- learners' work must be **independent and unaided**.

The Head of Centre must ensure that suitably informed and briefed adults carry out assessment invigilation. The Head of Centre should be fully aware of any potential conflict of interest between a learner and Invigilator and take all reasonable steps to prevent any such conflict. We require the Head of Centre to maintain a **record of approved invigilators** for instances whereby the tutor is undertaking sole invigilation duties. This must include invigilator names and the rationale for their selection.

Please note: the tutor is able to undertake sole invigilation duties, even if they have had overall responsibility for preparation of the candidates being examined. Tutors cannot direct candidates to particular questions or particular sections of the question paper and must not advise the learner to correct a wrong answer.

A centre must ensure that it has a suitable invigilator available for all Entry Level Functional Skills exams.

Invigilators must give their full attention to the proper conduct of the assessment for the whole time it is in progress and there must be a sufficient number of Invigilators in the room to monitor all of the candidates present. It is suggested as good practice that one Invigilator would be responsible for no more than 30 candidates.

Where the assessment is being invigilated by one person, they must be able to summon assistance easily without leaving the assessment room or disturbing the learners. The Head of Centre may choose to adopt more rigid 'examination' procedures for the assessments than those set out in this document. This is acceptable, although no learner should be unfairly disadvantaged as a result.

Guidelines for Assessors prior to assessments

It is essential that Assessors are clear about the contents of the assessments and the Guidance for Assessors before administering any of the assessments. Copies of the Guidance for Assessors (for Entry Level FS) can be found on the [secure area](#) of the Pearson website. The Exams Officer should allow Assessors to access those documents before assessments take place. Centres should ensure that the Guidance for Assessors document for the specific assessment is reviewed as further guidance is provided which relates to the specific controlled assessment test, e.g. particular resources, pass mark, allowance for reading time and guidance on contextualisation.

Please note: Only Examinations Officer(s) and Examinations Assistant(s) will have access to download the secure materials and only members of staff that the Head of Centre feels appropriate can have access to the assessments and any accompanying documents after they have been downloaded. It is the responsibility of the centre to keep a log of who accesses the secure content and when it is accessed.

Additional guidance – Entry Level FS Maths controlled Assessments

Centres are not permitted to create their own assessments but are allowed to contextualise Pearson assessments.

Additional guidance – Entry Level FS ICT controlled Assessments

The Entry Level FS ICT controlled assessments require learners to complete a number of activities using a computer.

The Entry Level FS ICT assessments are task-based and internally assessed. Each learner must have access to an individual workstation (stand-alone or networked) connected to a printer within the same room or at least in a location where the learner can access their work without leaving a supervised environment.

The Head of Centre is responsible for ensuring that any equipment and software used is fit for purpose and in working order, in particular:

- all hardware and software must be checked by a competent person before use
- learners must not be able to access another learner's work, for example anybody who has taken the same controlled assessment during an earlier sitting; particular care should be taken where networked workstations are used to prevent work being accessible via shared folders
- learners should only save a document if specifically directed by the activity instructions
- learners should not be able to access email or the internet whilst a controlled assessment is in progress – unless specified in the assessment
- it is advisable that Invigilators have a reasonable level of IT competence, since they need to ensure learners submit only their own work and need to be assured that learners are not colluding in any way
- all printouts must be collected once the learner has finished the controlled assessment
- some of the Entry Level FS ICT assessed activities may require the use of other technological items.

Please note: The ICT data files, which can be found in the same folder as the Guidance for Assessors on the secure website, do not need to be downloaded onto a memory stick by the learner. Centres are permitted to download the files onto a secure drive, but this has to be done before each batch of learners take the controlled assessment to ensure the latest versions are used. If learners are required to show knowledge of how to use input and output devices (for example by using a memory stick), this evidence can be submitted in the form of a witness statement.

Additional Guidance Entry Level FS English Speaking, Listening & Communicating

Your centre will be required to ensure that a Speaking, Listening & Communicating assessment is scheduled to take place on the day of the external verification or, if this is not possible (for example, learners are off sick, learners have particular needs which preclude an external Standards Verifier being present or the assessment is taking place in a face-to-face setting) to ensure that two E1, one E2, and one E3 video recordings of live assessments can be viewed during the external verification.

The Head of Centre must ensure that the following requirements are adhered to so that the Entry Level Speaking, Listening and Communicating assessments are conducted and assessed fairly and consistently across all centres.

- All performances must be internally assessed once they have been recorded. As the person administering the Speaking, Listening and Communicating assessment has to play the role of the interlocutor, it would be impractical to conduct assessment of the candidates' performances as they occur (during the recording of the assessments). Alternative arrangements must be made for separate Assessors to mark the candidates' performance as they occur. Any such Assessors must be members of the teaching team and be fully conversant with the national standards and the Pearson criteria.
- We recommend that all assessed candidates' assessments be video recorded. If there are any specific reasons why a candidate should not be identified within a video recording, please complete the [Recording Exemption Request Form](#).
- All video recording equipment must be tested before formal assessment begins and periodically checked between recordings.
- The candidate must clearly state their full name at the beginning of each recording before commencing the assessment
- Care must be taken not to erase any recording accidentally and to ensure that each assessment recording is saved and stored securely
- If you experience technical issues and lose a group of recordings, please notify your Standards Verifier
- Centres must provide good quality video / audio media with clear audio - the Standards Verifier will request these during the external verification.
- All recordings should be clearly labelled with the centre name and number, the name of the interlocutor(s) and Assessor(s) as well as the candidates' names, number and task completed.

- Recording must take place in a specially allocated quiet room and any extraneous noise kept to a minimum.
- Ensure that the recording is made of the entire assessment, including ALL of the interlocutor(s) speech.
- Candidate's access to dictionaries is forbidden during the assessment.
- Note-taking is only allowed during the assessment when the Assessor instructs the candidate that they can make notes. It is not allowed at any other time during the assessment.
- All recordings must be securely held in centres for a minimum of 3 years following certification of the candidate as they may be required for quality assurance purposes.
- The task should not be pre-recorded and played to candidates. Assessors need to read the task to candidates.

How to take and store video evidence

Top Tip: The Assessment Record Sheets (ARS) of all the assessed learners in the video recorded assessments must be sent to the Standards Verifier. Your Standards Verifier might ask to see an additional sample of Assessment Record Sheets, so these must be available if requested.

- Everybody being recorded should be clearly visible in the recording
- When recording video evidence please ensure that the candidate:
 - Is in sharp focus, with a clear difference between the candidate's face and the background
 - Has eyes open that are clearly visible (no sunglasses or tinted glasses and no hair across the eyes)
 - Has nothing covering their face - you should make sure nothing covers the outline of the eyes, nose or mouth (some exceptions may apply).
- The camera should be firmly mounted on a tripod or other secure base.
- The camera should be capable of recording on digital tape such as a CD/DVD or a memory card.
- The candidate's voice must be clearly audible – this may be through the on-board microphone. If the candidate's voice is not clearly audible, then a separate microphone should be used. If a separate microphone is used this should be linked to the camera through the appropriate audio input e.g. XLR, audio jack or phone socket.
- The finished recording should be downloaded to an appropriate device such as a desktop computer, laptop or portable device such as a tablet. Care must be taken to ensure that the individual recordings are stored in an appropriate file format.

- The recording must **not** be edited.
- The finished recording must be stored securely. The individual candidate recording should be stored as a file with the candidate's name and Pearson Registration number in the file name.
- The candidate's recording must be finalised in a universally acceptable format for playback such as MP4, MPEG, AVI, MOV or WMV.
- A back-up copy of the file must be kept in an appropriate medium such as a CD, DVD or memory stick. This copy must be retained for a minimum of three years by the centre in a secure place. **Please note:** It may be appropriate, in some cases, to use a handheld device to record the candidate. If this is used there must be facilities to record sound at an appropriate level. There must also be a facility to store the recordings as files and download these files to an appropriate storage device. The same checks on recording levels, clarity of sound and security of the file formats must be carried out.

People present during assessment

Whilst the assessment is taking place, only the learner(s) and Invigilator(s) and other authorised persons should be in the room.

Representatives from the awarding body and regulatory authorities reserve the right to observe the assessment provided learners are not disturbed. Otherwise, only persons authorised by the Head of Centre are to be allowed in the assessment room.

Starting the assessment

Before learners are permitted to start work, the Invigilator must:

- ensure that learners are seated in accordance with the seating arrangements
- inform the learners they are now under exam conditions
- advise learners that any unauthorised material must be handed in (including MP3 players, pagers, tablets, mobile phones, smart phones and other products with text facilities)
 - **Please note:** Entry Level FS ICT may require the use of mobile phones and other technological based items
- check that learners have all the necessary materials to enable them to complete the assessment as set out in the Guidance for Assessors document for each assessment
- arrange for controlled assessment tests to be handed out immediately before the start of the assessment
- if necessary, report to the Head of Centre any grounds for suspicion about the security of the controlled assessment tests and, where appropriate, the Head of Centre must immediately notify Pearson
- ensure the learners are sitting the correct paper by checking the front cover, subject, level and date
- centres should read instructions to the learners and display them in the room where the assessment is taking place
- ensure that details of any erratum notices are brought to the attention of learners
- instruct learners to record their personal details according to the requirements
- remind learners that they must follow the instructions on how to record and submit their work
- remind learners that they must not communicate in any way with, seek assistance from or give assistance to another learner during the assessment; they should not communicate in any way with any other learner(s) except where this is a requirement of a particular assessment
- announce clearly to the learners when they may begin the assessment.

The Invigilator must not give any information to learners about suspected errors in the controlled assessment tests unless an erratum notice has been issued to the centre by Pearson.

During the assessment

The assessment must take place under supervised conditions. This means that:

- learners must be continually supervised by a reliable person the whole time the assessment is in progress; this person must give complete attention to this duty at all times
- all necessary facilities must be available to learners.

The Invigilator must complete an attendance list (or similar).

If a learner arrives after the assessment has started, the learner may be allowed to take the assessment provided that undue disruption is not caused to the other learners and the security of the controlled assessment test is maintained.

Learners who leave the assessment room temporarily must be accompanied to ensure the integrity of the assessment is not compromised. In these circumstances, learners may be allowed extra time to compensate for their temporary absence.

Learners should be regularly made aware of the time remaining whilst taking an assessment, either through a visible clock or by the Invigilator providing periodic time-checks.

If any learner has been given additional help or support during the sitting of an assessment, details must be given on the Assessment Record and Authentication Sheet of the particular controlled assessment test(s). The Standards Verifier should then have sufficient information from which to make a professional judgement as to whether the learner was given fair advantage under the circumstances.

Centres are entitled to appeal should any decision made by the Standards Verifier be construed as an unfair disadvantage to a learner. All appeals should be communicated to us via the Pearson Support Portal within 14 working days of receiving the Standards Verifiers decision.

Irregular conduct

It is the duty of the Invigilator to ensure any cases of irregularity or misconduct in connection with the assessment are reported to the Head of Centre as soon as possible. The Examinations Officer is empowered to withdraw a learner from the assessment as a last resort (e.g. when the continued presence of a learner would cause disruption to other learners). The Head of Centre must report all cases of suspected or actual malpractice in connection with the examination to our Business Assurance Group at Pearson through the contact us page.

Wherever possible, the Invigilator must remove and keep any unauthorised material that a learner may have in the assessment room. Any infringement of the regulations may lead to disqualification of the learner. The decision on disqualification rests with Pearson.

Although Standards Verifiers will support centres, any suspicion of irregular conduct by Assessors/Invigilators will be investigated by Pearson and appropriate sanctions will be put in place.

Emergencies

In the event of an unforeseen emergency (e.g. fire alarm, bomb alert, etc) that requires learners to leave the assessment room, the Invigilator must first ensure the learners' safety.

Where an evacuation is necessary, all learner work must be left in the assessment room. If possible, the assessment room should be made secure. Learners should remain under supervised conditions at all times whilst outside the assessment room. Depending on the circumstances, the Invigilator and Examinations Officer may consider the following:

- if the assessment has only just started (e.g. during the first ten minutes) the learners can return to the assessment room and continue, ensuring that the learners are given their overall time allowance
- if the assessment has been under way long enough that some learners may have seen the majority of the assessment paper and there is a significant risk that the integrity of the assessment would be compromised if the assessment were allowed to continue, the learners' work should be shared securely with the Standards Verifier.

Consideration may be given to the possibility of taking the learners, with assessment papers and scripts, to another place in order to complete the assessment. If an emergency results in an evacuation, the Head of Centre is responsible for informing the Functional Skills Assessment team at Pearson.

After the learners have returned to the assessment room and before the assessment is resumed, indicate on the learners' work, where it is feasible to do so, the point at which the interruption occurred. These assessments should be submitted for standards verification to the Standards Verifier. Centres should make a full report of the incident and of the action taken for submission to the Functional Skills Assessment team at Pearson.

Ending the assessment

Learners may be permitted to leave the room before the end of the assessment provided that no disruption is caused to the remaining learners and the integrity of the assessments is not compromised. Learners who leave a supervised environment are not to be re-admitted to the assessment room.

The Head of Centre must consider any potential for the assessment to become compromised and ensure the Invigilator is advised of the centre's policy.

Learners must be given their full time allowance even if they have arrived later than their scheduled start time.

The Invigilator should check that learners have identified their work as instructed. All assessment materials must be collected before the learners leave the room to ensure that none are accidentally removed.

After collation, the learners' work and assessment materials should be handed to the Examinations Officer or other authorised person(s).

Teachers/Assessors who mark assessment papers should ensure that the papers are kept in a secure place until marking is complete and then kept securely until they are requested for verification by the Standards Verifier.

If selected for virtual sampling, learners' work should be despatched or shared securely to the Standards Verifier who will verify the assessments. Learners' work should also be stored securely after it is returned to your centre and must not be handed back to learners. Assessments will stay live until they are released as practice papers by Pearson.

Marking and Internal Verification

Teachers/Assessors must not mark in a public place. All learners' work must be available for internal verification. Centres should refer to the guidelines provided by Pearson on internal verification in the ELFS Centre Guide to Quality Assurance.

Standards verification and disposing of materials

A completed Sampling Report Form should be password protected and emailed to the Standards Verifier to enable the selection of a sample of learners' work to be verified. The requested learners' work must be sent to the Standards Verifier using a secure method. Any unused blank assessments (e.g. when a candidate is absent) should be securely destroyed.

Original assessments should be sent to the Standards Verifier. Centres must keep copies of the original assessments. These copies must be stored securely.

All assessment materials will continue to be 'live' until released as a set of practice papers. Until such time, centres must continue to store all learner work securely.

In order for centres to monitor assessment decisions over time, centres should retain all completed and marked assessments securely for a minimum of **three years** following certification of the candidate as they may be required for quality assurance purposes.

The following documents need to be retained for a minimum of **three years**, for all learners whose assessments have been verified by your Standards Verifier:

- any documents detailing internal verification feedback to Assessors related to the particular sample
- records of internal verification meetings
- internal verification feedback forms
- Standards Verification Reports
- assessments submitted to the Standards Verifier.

Completed controlled assessment tests must **not** be given back to learners after the assessment is sat. If a learner has failed the assessment, formative feedback should be given. Assessors should ensure that they are aware of which questions the learner did not pass and the criteria covered by those questions. The learner can then be given information on which skills need more work before another controlled assessment test is taken.

Access arrangements

Centres should refer to the [Special requirements and Access Arrangements webpage](#). Access arrangements will not be permitted if they compromise the assessment criteria. Before registering a learner for an assessment requiring the demonstration of skills which the centre feels are beyond the scope of the learner, the centre is advised to consult the Special Requirements team to ensure that the access arrangements are appropriate. Standards Verifiers may refer any such query to Pearson for a final decision.

Centres should only make a request for access arrangements which reflect the learners' normal ways of working. Centres are not required to have every learner individually assessed by a specialist. Centres are required to have determined the needs of the learner within the classroom situation and in the light of those arrangements made part of the normal working practices.

Any access arrangements given must be documented on the front cover of the learner's assessment paper and on the Assessment Record and Authentication Sheet.

Centres are permitted to enlarge assessments from A4 to A3 themselves.

The following can be requested by contacting the Modified Papers team.

Enlarge from 12 point to:

18 point BOLD Arial (on A4 pages)

24 point BOLD Arial (on A3 pages)

Please note: modified controlled assessment tests must be requested **eight to ten weeks** before the assessment is to take place. Modified assessments should not be used for future sittings as the assessment could change.

When a learner is assisted by a reader, a scribe, a sign language interpreter or a practical assistant, help must not be given with the subject matter being assessed. This support must not give the learner an unfair advantage or disadvantage. It must not invalidate the assessment. Additional time may also be available, and a separate room may be necessary if the learner is to dictate responses, in which case a separate invigilator will be required.

The Head of Centre/Examinations Officer should ensure that readers, scribes, sign language interpreters and practical assistants are acceptable and responsible adults, familiar with the subject matter being tested and have worked with the learner(s) before the assessment. A relative of the learner must **not** act as a reader, scribe, sign language interpreter or practical assistant.

Readers

- A reader is required to read, on request, all or part of the assessment or any part of the learner's responses.
- A reader must read accurately and at a reasonable rate. A reader may repeat as necessary any instructions given on the assessment paper, as well as the question and answers already recorded.
- A reader may assist a visually impaired learner using tactile diagrams, graphs and tables to obtain the information which the printed paper would give to a sighted learner.
- A reader must, if required, spell out any word which occurs in the assessment.
- A reader must be prepared for periods of inactivity.
- In English, Irish or Welsh specifications, a reader cannot be used for the reading component of assessments, unless specifically permitted at certain levels by the specification.

Scribes

- A scribe is required to write or type answers as they are dictated by the learner.
- A scribe must write legibly, write or type at a reasonable speed and should have a working knowledge of the subject.
- A scribe must write down or type the answers exactly as they are dictated.
- A scribe must draw or add to diagrams strictly in accordance with the learners' instructions.
- The learner will not be expected to dictate spellings. If spelling is being assessed, then they must dictate spellings.
- A scribe should work at the learner's pace.

- In English, Irish or Welsh specifications, a scribe should not be used for writing component of assessments, unless specifically permitted at certain levels by the specification.

Sign language interpreters

- A sign language interpreter is required to communicate questions to the learner upon request.
- A sign language interpreter is not an oral language modifier or a reader.
- A sign language interpreter should give the essence of the learner's signed response on the assessment paper without inferring any meaning that was not clear in the signed response.
- Learners who are signing their responses must not be in a position to see other learners' signed responses.
- A sign language interpreter should work at the learner's pace.

Sign Language (i.e. BSL, SSE) is permissible in the Speaking, Listening and Communicating component, provided this is made accessible to all participants in the discussion. It is recognised that BSL is a language in its own right and not a form of English. BSL is, however, permitted as an alternative to English for the assessment of Speaking, Listening and Communicating where BSL is the learner's normal way of communicating in the contexts described by the standards.

Practical assistants

- A practical assistant is required to help a learner in practical assessments, to carry out tasks at the learner's instruction and ensure the safety of the learner. This support must not give the learner an unfair advantage.
- A practical assistant must work strictly in accordance with the learner's instructions and should not perform any task independently of the learner.
- A practical assistant is not permitted to carry out tasks which are the focus of the assessment, such as artwork, designing or making artefacts.

Bilingual translation dictionaries

In Writing tests, bilingual translation dictionaries may be used only by learners whose first language is not English, Irish or Welsh. The use of a bilingual translation dictionary should reflect the learner's normal way of working within the centre. Bilingual translation dictionaries may be used by all learners in Reading, Maths and ICT tests.

Dictionaries to be used in the assessment must be held in the centre under secure conditions and thoroughly checked to ensure that notes have not been enclosed within or written on the pages of the dictionary. This should include checking that no unauthorised material is contained within the dictionary.

Learners using dictionaries which contain notes will lose their right to these access arrangements. Online translation dictionaries are not permitted.

Word processors (computers, laptops and tablets)

Centres are allowed to provide a word processor (e.g. computer, laptop or tablet) **with the spelling and grammar check/predictive text disabled** to a candidate **where it is their normal way of working within the centre**, unless the qualification specification says otherwise. This also includes an electronic braille or a tablet.

Communicating with us

Pearson communicates with centres by newsletter, telephone and email. To make sure we reach you, please ensure that you maintain accurate contact details on [Edexcel Online](#).

You can submit any queries to us using the [Pearson Support Portal](#). By using the Support Portal, you can get in touch with Pearson directly. We aim to respond to you within 5 working days. When submitting your query, please quote the team name you are needing to contact.

Functional Skills Content and Assessment team

For issues with the content of test paper questions or mark schemes, emergencies or incidents during assessments and general assessment queries. Also, for appeals against qualification and certification blocks.

Please note: The content of the controlled assessment tests is secure and emailing any part if it is considered a **breach of security** – if you have a query about the content of a test or the allocation of marks for a particular question/task, contact us stating your name and contact details, and request for one of the team to contact you directly via phone.

Approvals team

For gaining approval and approval queries.

Business Improvement and Regulation team

For reporting cases of suspected malpractice or a breach of test paper security.

Exams Officers Support team

For registrations and certifications issues, reporting of grades, amendments to names, grades entered incorrectly, reprinting of certificates or if your centre is experiencing problems downloading live assessments from the secure Pearson website.

Vocational Deployment team

To find out your Standards Verifier details, to have a Standards Verifier allocated to your centre and to report difficulty contacting Standards Verifiers.

Special Requirements team

For issues relating to access arrangements and all special consideration requests.

Contacting your Standards Verifier

Contact details can be found on Edexcel Online. The Standards Verifier can assist with assessment issues; provide information, advice and support, sampling size, mark schemes, specification queries, and guidance for Instructions for the Conduct of Examinations.

If you have a question, please contact
FS Assessment or your Vocational Quality Assurance Manager via
[The Pearson Contact Portal](#).

In addition, you will find further information on our
[Quality Assurance webpages](#).