

Skillsfirst Assess

Instructions for Conducting Tests

September 2019 v1.1



Contents

This document is divided into three sections which provide additional guidance regarding the invigilation of tests and checking that tests have been uploaded to XAMS.

This MUST be read and understood by ALL invigilators prior to invigilating any Skillsfirst Assess tests.

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Introduction

The rules set out in this document must be adhered to during **all** Skillsfirst Assess tests.

All invigilators must be trained to carry out this role by the Provider. The Provider must conduct regular training / standardisation to ensure all invigilators are aware of any changes.

Employers / Providers (test centre) must ensure the software (XAMS), required for on-screen tests has been installed on all machines that will be used for End-Point Assessment Multiple-Choice Question (MCQ) tests prior to the test date. Should you encounter any problems with any aspect of your installation please contact us via enquiries@skillsfirstassess.co.uk or 0121 270 5100 (option 3).

It is important that the test centre has a plan in place to cover any disruption to tests and how the arrangements will be communicated to invigilators and apprentices i.e. fire evacuation or bomb alert. In the event a test centre is unable to open to facilitate the scheduled tests, Skillsfirst Assess should be notified immediately.

In the event the security of a test is put at risk Skillsfirst Assess should be notified immediately.

Skillsfirst Assess reserves the right to conduct unannounced invigilation audits; this will include a review of the test centres secure test storage.

Any breach of the invigilation process will be dealt with in line with Skillsfirst Assess' processes.

Section A

General guidance for conducting tests

1.1 Invigilators

The role of the invigilator is to:

- ensure the security and integrity of all tests before, during and after the assessment
- prevent apprentice plagiarism / collusion
- minimise the impact to the apprentice of potential hardware failures
- ensure previously agreed reasonable adjustments are put in place

The invigilator must be able to access help easily, without disturbing the apprentices, or leaving the apprentices unattended. If necessary, the invigilator is allowed to keep a mobile phone in the test room for emergency purposes only, however it **must** be kept on silent mode.

The Provider's management team **must** make sure that **all** invigilators are suitably qualified and experienced adults; they **must not** be current apprentices at the centre. Although the Provider's management team may decide who is suitably qualified and experienced, any relative, friend or peer of an apprentice in the exam room is not permitted.

The Provider's management team or designated personnel must make these instructions available to all Functional Skills invigilators. This may be a printed version or an electronic copy and must be visible at all times via a computer.

1.2 Preparing the test room

Test centres must ensure suitable accommodation is used for **all** tests as follows:

- the test room must be of a suitable size
- apprentices must be seated a minimum of **1.25 metres apart and** facing in the same direction; each apprentice should have a separate desk and must be far enough apart from other apprentices to prevent them from seeing each other's work
- heating, lighting, ventilation and the level of outside noise must be appropriately controlled to allow the apprentices to take their test comfortably
- display material which might be helpful to apprentices **must not** be visible
- ensure there is a working clock visible to each apprentice
- make sure all relevant test signage is clearly displayed
- the invigilator must be able to freely move around the room and be able to observe each apprentice at all times

1.3 Before the test

Before apprentices are allowed to start the test, the invigilator must always:

- make sure photographic identification of each apprentice has been authenticated as per the checklist
- inform apprentices that they must follow the regulations of the test on the day of the test
- create a seating plan that shows the exact position of each apprentice in the test room
- confirm emergency procedures to all apprentices
- remind apprentices that they are not allowed to communicate in any way with, ask for help from, or give help to, another apprentice while they are in the test room
- inform apprentices that they cannot bring mobile phones / smart watches / tablets into the test room; if this is not practical, an area within the test room, out of the reach of apprentices must be identified and monitored by the invigilator at all times

- instruct the apprentices to sign and write their name exactly as it appears on the attendance register (paper-based tests only)
- identify any apprentices with special requirements and ensure provision to support these apprentices is in place
- ensure that you have the invigilation pack, if not, contact Skillsfirst Assess immediately
- ensure all apprentices are seated before commencing the test and they have been issued with the correct login details for the test they are about to sit
- ask apprentices to confirm they are sitting the test for the correct standard and level
- clearly announce to apprentices when they may begin and inform them of the duration of their test
- if a reader or scribe is required for the test, the invigilator must also be present and ensure that no other apprentices are disadvantaged by this arrangement; readers and or scribes are not allowed access to the test paper prior to the start of the test
- apprentices who are late for the test may be permitted to enter the test room and sit the test (at the invigilators discretion)

1.4 During the test

The invigilator must:

- supervise the apprentices throughout the test and give complete attention to this duty at all times
- be vigilant, looking out for potential plagiarism / collusion. Any irregularities **must** be recorded on the invigilation / supervision report and Skillsfirst Assess **must** be notified immediately
- move around the test room quietly and at frequent intervals
- be able to observe apprentices
- any changes made to seating arrangements during the test **must** be recorded on the seating plan, this must be made available to Skillsfirst Assess upon request
- accurately complete the attendance register and invigilation / supervision report during the test, specifying any apprentices who were absent
- adhere to the correct timings of the test
- ensure any disturbances / emergencies (if applicable) are dealt with appropriately, recorded on the supervision report and notified to Skillsfirst Assess immediately
- make sure advice is provided to apprentices if they suspect there is an error on the paper, contact Skillsfirst Assess immediately
- inform Skillsfirst Assess if any apprentices were allowed to leave the room unaccompanied

The invigilator must not:

- direct apprentices to particular questions or particular sections of the question paper
- read a word or words printed on the question paper to an apprentice, other than instructions before the test
- carry out any other task, such as; read or scribe during the test unless permission has been granted by Skillsfirst Assess
- allow the use of correction fluid or erasable pens by apprentices
- leave the room
- reword a question / word in the test
- offer any advice or comment on the work of an apprentice

1.5 At the end of the test

- clearly tell the apprentices to stop working, reminding them test conditions still apply
- for on-screen tests, remind apprentices they must select the 'finish' button on-screen
- for paper-based tests, ensure all apprentices have entered their details correctly on their scripts and included their name on all documents being submitting for marking
- for paper-based tests, ensure all test papers (used and unused), apprentice scripts and documents are collated prior to the apprentices leaving the room
- ensure apprentices who were granted extra time continue their test

1.6 After the test

- for on-screen tests, ensure the test has been submitted / uploaded to XAMS
- for paper-based tests, ensure all test papers (used and unused), invigilation records, apprentice scripts and documents are despatched to Skillsfirst Assess immediately via a secure postal method; if you are unable to return them to Skillsfirst Assess immediately, ensure they are stored in the centre secure location until no later than the following day

1.7 Retaining invigilation records

The invigilator must retain signed records of the seating plan, attendance register, and invigilation / supervision reports for each test sitting and return the data to Skillsfirst Assess within 48 hours. Where it will be retained for a minimum of 3 years from the date of the test sitting. As part of our quality assurance process, Skillsfirst Assess Lead Independent End-point Assessors will sample these records.

Section B

On-screen tests

The following additional guidance must be adhered to when conducting **on-screen tests**

1.1 Preparing for the test

As well as ensuring the test room is appropriate (refer to Section A), the test centre must ensure that computers are checked to ensure they are **fit for the purpose** of running the test. This includes ensuring:

- the software required for on-screen tests (XAMS) has been installed on all machines (see table below)
- each computer has a secure and stable internet connection (via Wi-Fi or a wired connection) **unless** the tests are downloaded and run in offline mode. Dongles and personal hotspots are **not** permitted to be used.
- the PC / laptop is fully charged and will remain so for the duration of the test
- all passwords and login details for onscreen tests are kept secure prior to the test commencing
- all apprentices receive guidance on how to use the onscreen testing software.
- apprentices have been provided with their login details prior to commencing the test and that they thoroughly check their personal details are correct; notify Skillsfirst Assess **immediately** if they are incorrect
- all computers must meet or exceed appropriate specifications to run XAMS (see below). Failure to ensure this, could result in apprentices being disrupted during the test

Minimum Requirements for Safe Exam Browser

Operating System	Supported Operating System	Safe Exam Browser Version
Windows	Windows 7 Windows 8/8.1 Windows 10	Windows: SEB 2.2.3 or higher
Mac	MacOS 10.13 High Sierra MacOS 10.12 Sierra OS X 10.11 El Capitan OS X 10.10 Yosemite OS X 10.9 Mavericks	MACOS: SEB 2.1.3 or higher iOSL: SEB 2.1.3 or higher

Minimum Requirements for XAMS

Supported Browsers	Internet Explorer: 9 or above Chrome: 34.0.1847 or above Microsoft Edge: All Versions Firefox: 31.0 or above Safari: 6.2 or above Safe Exam Browser 2.0.2 or above
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Browser settings	<p>Popups must be allowed. Guidance on how to do this below:</p> <p>IE11: http://windows.microsoft.com/en-gb/internet-explorer/ie-security-privacy-settings#ie=ie-11</p> <p>IE10: http://windows.microsoft.com/en-gb/internet-explorer/ie-security-privacy-settings#ie=ie-10</p> <p>IE9: http://windows.microsoft.com/en-gb/internet-explorer/ie-security-privacy-settings#ie=ie-9</p> <p>IE8: http://windows.microsoft.com/en-gb/internet-explorer/ie-security-privacy-settings#ie=ie-8</p> <p>Chrome: https://support.google.com/chrome/answer/95472?hl=en-GB</p> <p>Firefox: https://support.mozilla.org/en-US/kb/pop-blocker-settings-exceptions-troubleshooting#w_pop-up-blocker-settings</p>
Screen Resolution	For sitting tests and performing administrative tasks: 1024 x 768

Minimum Requirements for Offline XAMS

Information	Requirement
Operating System	Windows 7 to 10
Processor	1 GHz
RAM	1 GB RAM
Free disk space	5GB

1.2 During the test

Invigilators must ensure that:

- in the event of a problem with the test or the XAMS software, the following guidelines are adhered to:
 - immediately contact the Skillsfirst Assess Support Team on 0121 270 5100 (option 3) to seek advice and support
 - check that the test resumes correctly and that the apprentice has not lost their work
 - ensure that test conditions remain
- in the event of a hardware failure, the centre's IT department are contacted and that the apprentice is allowed to resume the test on a different workstation where necessary
- if necessary, they detail any problems and the action taken to rectify the problem on the invigilation report

Where the above is not possible, the apprentice must be given the opportunity to re-sit the test at a later date.

1.3 After the test

Invigilators must ensure that:

- if rough paper for notes have been used by any apprentice, this must be collected before the apprentice(s) leave the room
- ensure all common user areas accessible to apprentices are clear of all work immediately after the test

Section C

Invigilating apprentices with access arrangements

Skillsfirst Assess has a Reasonable Adjustments & Special Consideration policy to prevent discrimination in the assessment of skills and knowledge, therefore allowing reasonable adjustments to assist apprentices in demonstrating competence. Visit our website to view the Reasonable Adjustments & Special Consideration policy and permissions table www.skillsfirst.co.uk. It is important approval is granted from Skillsfirst Assess where applicable.

It is important the following invigilation rules are adhered to in relation to reasonable adjustments.

In cases where additional support is required to facilitate access arrangements, the head of centre has the responsibility to ensure that invigilators and those facilitating access arrangement i.e. readers, scribes and sign language interpreters understand their role and responsibilities. All involved must be trained appropriately in their role.

1.1 Reader (approval required)

The invigilator is responsible for ensuring that the reader and apprentice do not distract, or can be overheard by other apprentices. If the apprentice and reader are accommodated in a separate room to other apprentices, an additional invigilator will be required.

1.2 Scribe (approval required)

The invigilator is responsible for ensuring that the scribe and apprentice do not distract, or be overheard by other apprentices.

It is normal practice for the apprentice and scribe to be in a separate room to other apprentices, an additional invigilator will be required.

1.3 Sign language interpreter (approval required)

The invigilator is responsible for ensuring that the interpreter and apprentice do not distract other apprentices. Apprentices requiring a sign language interpreter may need to be in a separate room to other apprentices, an additional invigilator will be required.

1.4 Prompter (approval required)

A prompter may be requested if an apprentice loses concentration easily, has little or no sense of time, or is affected by an obsessive-compulsive disorder, leading them to repeatedly go over a question, rather than moving onto another question.

A prompter:

- must not be the apprentices tutor, assessor, relative, friend or peer
- must be a responsible adult
- should keep the apprentice focused on the question in hand and then move him / her onto the next question
- has a different role to a reader, scribe and practical assistant, however the same person can conduct more than one role to support the apprentice if permission has been granted by Skillsfirst Assess
- the invigilator may act as the prompter if no other apprentices are present

