



Training
QualificationsUK

TQUK Functional Skills Paper-Based

Guidance – TQUK Print

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Introduction

This guidance sets out mandatory requirements for schools, colleges, training providers and employers (“centres”) delivering TQUK Functional Skills Level 1 and Level 2 paper-based assessments in English and Mathematics. It defines rules and expectations to protect the security, integrity and fairness of assessment delivery and supports consistent compliance with JCQ Functional Skills guidance and relevant JCQ examination standards.

This guidance applies to:

- All TQUK-approved centres delivering paper-based, on-demand Functional Skills Level 1 and Level 2 assessments (English and Mathematics).
- All staff involved in assessment delivery, including heads of centre, examinations officers, quality nominees, invigilators, tutors and administrative staff.

This guidance does not replace JCQ requirements. It should be read alongside:

- JCQ Instructions for conducting Functional Skills assessments (English and Mathematics)
- JCQ Instructions for Conducting Examinations (ICE) (where applicable)

Where this guidance adds TQUK-specific steps, those steps are mandatory in addition to JCQ requirements.

Responsibilities of centre staff

Head of Centre / Test Manager

The Head of Centre is accountable to TQUK for overseeing the centre's arrangements for the secure and compliant delivery of exams, in line with JCQ requirements and this guidance. This includes always maintaining the security and integrity of exams.

Key responsibilities include:

- Ensuring there are sufficient, suitably trained staff involved in exam delivery and invigilation
- Making sure secure storage arrangements meet required standards
- Ensuring any suspected or actual malpractice is reported promptly to TQUK

Examinations Officer

The Examinations Officer plays a key role in coordinating the practical arrangements for exams, including:

- The safe and secure storage of all exams
- Allocating invigilators for exam sessions
- Managing security arrangements from receipt of exams through to completion

Quality nominee

The quality nominee should ensure that:

- Exams are invigilated by suitably qualified and experienced adults
- Appropriate arrangements are in place to carry out learner identity checks

Exam receipt, security & storage

Receipt checks

On receipt of question paper packets, centres should carry out basic checks against the dispatch and cover information provided. Centres should contact TQUK immediately if:

- A packet appears to have been damaged in transit
- A seal is broken or shows signs of tampering
- Incorrect question papers have been delivered

Each package includes a dispatch sheet listing:

- Learner names
- Subject and level
- Applied standards
- Any reasonable adjustments included within the secure envelope
- Packages are clearly marked *Private and Confidential* to support secure handling on delivery.

Prohibited actions

To protect the security and integrity of exams, centres should ensure that the following actions do not take place:

- Photocopying question papers unless specifically authorised by TQUK
- Publishing or sharing information about exam content without authorisation from TQUK
- Opening question paper packets before the scheduled exam time

Secure storage requirements

Centres should have arrangements in place for secure storage that align with JCQ requirements. This includes:

- Keeping exam materials locked away in a secure location
- Limiting access to a small number of authorised key holders (typically between two and six)
- Maintaining records of deliveries and access to exam materials
- Ensuring live exam papers are not stored on computers or electronic devices
- Using a safe or cabinet located within a securely locked room that meets secure storage standards

Security incidents

TQUK should be informed immediately if the security of exams may have been compromised. This includes situations such as fire, theft, loss, damage, unauthorised disclosure, or any other circumstance that could place exam security at risk.

Transporting papers and multi-site delivery

Question papers are dispatched to the approved centre through the address details provided on booking. Any transport of the paper packets must be done only by authorised staff using secure methods.

Centres operating across multiple sites or venues may split packets only where this is permitted under JCQ Functional Skills guidance. In these situations, centres should maintain a clear and documented chain of custody, recording:

- Who transported the papers
- When and where transportation took place
- Where the papers were securely stored
- *Note:* Where centres require off-site delivery, packet splitting, or the use of multiple rooms, centres should follow the relevant JCQ conditions and any TQUK instructions issued as part of the booking.

Responsibilities of the invigilator

Invigilators responsible for conducting exams in the presence of learners must be suitably qualified and experienced adults. Invigilators should be independent of the learners being examined and must not have a conflict of interest.

An invigilator **must not be**:

- Involved in the teaching, preparation, assessment, or internal quality assurance of the learner in any way
- The direct line manager of the learner
- The sole invigilator where they are a friend, relative, or peer of a learner

Additional invigilator support must be in place where required to protect the integrity of the exam.

As part of their responsibilities, it is expected that the invigilator will:

- give their full attention to invigilation and not carry out other tasks within the exam room
- ensure sufficient invigilator coverage, including: A minimum ratio of 1 invigilator to 30 learners
- the ability to summon assistance without leaving learners unsupervised when invigilating alone
- the ability to clearly always observe all learners
- ensure learners are seated in accordance with the seating plan and informed that they are under exam conditions
- draw learners' attention to the instructions on the front of the exam paper and ask them to check they have been issued with the correct exam, subject, and level
- be aware of any learners who have approved reasonable adjustments in place and ensure these are applied correctly
- check the identity of each learner before the exam begins and record evidence of the ID check. Where learners are not personally known to the centre, photographic identification must be verified.

Exam conditions

Preparing the room

Centres should ensure the exam environment is suitable and that exam conditions can be maintained throughout. This includes ensuring that:

- Seating is arranged to prevent learners from overlooking others' work
- Required notices and posters (including *Warning to Learners* and *Unauthorised Items*) are displayed outside the exam room
- Any display materials that could assist learners are removed or covered, unless explicitly permitted by the question paper instructions
- Only authorised persons are present in the room and exam conditions are maintained for the full duration of the exam
- Learners only have access to equipment and materials permitted by the question paper instructions and any approved access arrangements
- Mobile phones, watches (including smartwatches), and any other unauthorised items are not in learners' possession. Where such items are brought into the room, they should be placed out of reach and kept under invigilator control
- Food and drink are allowed only at the discretion of the Head of Centre. Where permitted, drinks should be in a transparent container with labels removed (centres may apply stricter local rules, such as *water only*)
- For Functional Skills Mathematics Level 1 and Level 2, calculators are only used where permitted by the exam instructions. Where separate non-calculator and calculator sections apply, the non-calculator section should be completed and collected before calculators are issued and the calculator section begins
- Additional paper for rough work is provided and controlled as exam stationery where permitted. All rough work should be handed in with the completed exam
- Dictionaries are only permitted where allowed by the exam instructions. Where permitted, dictionaries must be physical, free from annotations, and checked by the invigilator before the exam begins

Before the exam

Centres and invigilators should ensure that:

- Learners are seated according to the seating plan and informed they are subject to exam regulations
- All unauthorised items are removed or handed in, including mobile phones and prohibited materials
- Learners use, or are provided with, a pen with black ink
- Question papers for absent learners are not issued to any other learner and are returned to TQUK
- Unused or damaged exam materials are not destroyed. These must be returned to TQUK using the agreed returns process

During the exam

Exam materials are pre-assigned to individual learners. Each exam paper includes the learners name printed on the front, ready for distribution. The papers contain a QR codes that identify the learner and the email address used at the time of booking

These QR codes are essential to TQUK's tracking, return, and scanning processes and must not be defaced, damaged, or obscured under any circumstances.

Invigilators should:

- Open question paper packets in the exam room at the scheduled start time
- Distribute question papers and any associated reading materials using the learner's name information shown on the front page
- Ensure that question papers are handed to learners face down and that learners are only instructed to begin once the exam has formally started

Functional Skills mathematics

- Ensure Section A and Section B are separated before distribution
- Issue Section A only at the start of the exam
- Collect Section A before issuing calculators and Section B
- Issue Section B immediately after Section A has been collected and calculators are permitted in line with the exam instructions

Functional Skills English

- Separate the reference material from the question paper before distribution
- Ensure both the reference material and question paper are handed to learners face down until the exam begins

Unforeseen circumstances

In the event of an emergency or unexpected disruption (for example, a fire alarm, medical incident or third-party interruption), the invigilator should:

- Stop learners from writing and follow centre evacuation procedures
- Ensure learners leave exams papers in the room and close booklets where possible
- Supervise learners to prevent discussion of the exam content
- Record the interruption, including start time and duration, on the invigilator report
- Allow remaining working time if the exam resumes, or seek guidance if resumption is not possible
- Emergencies or disruptions will not automatically result in a voided exam; however, the invigilator's report will play a key role in any decision made by TQUK.

After the exam

Invigilators should:

- Collect all exams, question papers, and any associated reading materials or inserts before learners leave the exam room
- Ensure learner details on all exams are correct

Secure packaging for return to TQUK

TQUK provides a secure returns envelope for paper-based exams. Use of the TQUK envelope is optional; centres may use their own packaging provided it is secure and adequately protects exam materials during transit.

Dispatch requirements (tracked delivery)

Learners' exam papers and reading materials must be returned to TQUK using a **tracked** postal or courier service.

- A pre-paid label is not supplied. Centres are responsible for arranging and paying for the tracked service and retaining proof of dispatch
- Exams should be dispatched on the same day as the exam, or no later than the next working day

What must be returned to TQUK

The following items must be returned together:

- Completed exam papers and any reading materials
- Any unused or blank copies of exam papers issued for the booked sitting

Return address:

Print & Certification Team
Training Qualifications UK
Crossgate House
Cross Street
Sale
Manchester
M33 7FT

Completing the Invigilation Form

Once the learner(s) has finished their exam, you must complete the online Invigilation Form within one hour. In exceptional circumstances, where a genuine operational issue prevents this, a maximum timeframe of up to 24 hours is permitted.

If an invigilator or centre contact is unable to access the form or experiences any technical difficulties, they must contact TQUK Support immediately for assistance.

Plagiarism & cheating

Plagiarism occurs when a learner copies someone else's work as their own, and as such, TQUK will classify this as cheating. This includes the misuse of content generated by Artificial Intelligence, where it is submitted without appropriate acknowledgement or represents work not genuinely produced by the learner.

Examples of plagiarism include:

- Cutting or copying material directly from a website, textbook, or other source without proper reference or acknowledgement.
- Paraphrasing – altering a few words from books, websites, AI-generated content, or another individual's work to present it as your own.
- Use of AI tools to generate responses, assignments, or content that is submitted as original work without disclosure or permission.

Further guidance

JCQ [Instructions for conducting examinations](#) (ICE) guidance

JCQ [Instructions for conducting Functional Skills assessments \(English and Maths\)](#)

JCQ [Information for candidates documents](#)

SARAs - [Test and Assessment](#) (Online Invigilation Form)

TQUK - [Policies and Procedures webpage](#)

Troubleshooting

If you have any questions or experience any issues, please contact our Customer Service Team by calling 0333 3583 344 or emailing support@tquk.org.

Regarding the notification of completion of online invigilation forms past the designated deadline please contact our Print & Certification Team by responding to chase email or by emailing Operations@tquk.org.

Our office hours are 08:30-17:00 Monday-Friday.