Functional Skills



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SLC: Remote Delivery

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Introduction

This document aims to provide clear and consistent guidance to all Internal Assessors who undertake remote assessment practice in support of the Speaking, Listening and Communicating (SLC) assessment components within one or across both of the following:

- VQA Functional Skills qualification in English at Level 1
- VQA Functional Skills qualification in English at Level 2

Internal Assessors are asked to ensure that the detail outlined with this document is adhered to in order to support valid and reliable assessment practice, as well as a consistent assessment experience for all learners, regardless of location.

For the purpose of this document, the term 'remote assessment' is applied to an assessment component which is undertaken without a Learner or Internal Assessor on site and via the use of an online meeting, desktop sharing and video conferencing software package.

The use of remote assessment practice provides greater flexibility to support learners and assessors in undertaking assessments that suit business and other needs.

Remote assessment has, in recent years, typically been associated with assessments such as a Professional Discussion, Interview or Presentation. However, more and more, remote assessment can support a greater range of assessments, including SLC.

How is a remote assessment conducted?

Remote SLC assessments must be conducted through the use of appropriate online communication software (Microsoft Teams, for example): an online communication tool that allows for webcam, audio and screen sharing. This allows the nominated Internal Assessor to communicate with the learner, complete the necessary validation checks prior to the assessment taking place, view the learner's screen and record the assessment to aid both internal and external quality assurances processes.

Where online video software cannot be accessed (no internet, company firewalls etc.) then the use of telephone, where audio recording is possible and viable, is permitted. There must be a valid reason as to why the learner cannot access an online platform, which must be made known to the IQA for the centre. The assessor/IQA should then make a record of this to support both internal and external quality assurances processes.

Facilitating the Assessment

Prior to the assessment

Once the learner(s) joins, they should be asked to confirm they are settled and ready to begin, advised that the recording is going to be activated and informed that validity checks will take place as part of the recording and prior to the main assessment commencing. These checks should be completed in line with the **VQA Functional Skills SLC Controlled Environment** document.

Internal Assessors are required to conduct validity checks of:

- learner identification/authentication
- the assessment environment.

Both must be conducted regardless of whether the assessment is being conducted with a webcam-enabled device or purely audio. Both checks should be recorded to support internal quality assurance processes.

Webcam enabled device

- Where a webcam is accessible, Internal Assessors are asked to compare the learner's ID to
  the learner on the webcam to ensure there is a true likeness.
  - Acceptable photo ID includes government issued: passport, driving license, national identify card. Student ID cards are acceptable in for education institutions that issue photo cards. Other forms of photo ID may also be accepted but should be agreed in advance.
- The Internal Assessor must also ask the learner to use the webcam to undertake a sweep of the room to enable them to review the surroundings to ensure it is a controlled environment and appropriate for an assessment.

Audio Only

Where the assessment is being conducted purely through audio, the Internal Assessor is required to ask three questions relating to the learner's ID to validate that they are the registered learner.
Internal Assessors should select three questions from this list:

- Name as appears on the ID
- Date of birth
- Name of tutor
- Name of training Provider
- Name of employer (if necessary)

Internal Assessors must then use validation statements to confirm that the environment is appropriate and meets the requirements outlined above.

Where the above checks are conducted and satisfied, the Internal Assessor should confirm that the assessment is able to commence. Where the above checks are conducted and Internal Assessor is not satisfied that they can validate the assessment, they must not progress with the assessment and should rearrange.

If able to proceed, the Internal Assessor must:

- reiterate that the assessment will be recorded
- confirm the assessment details such as duration
- remind the learner(s) of the format and any evidence they are able to access/utilise during the assessment
- recap that they should ask for questions to be reworded or for clarification if required.

Starting the Assessment

Internal Assessors could use the below script at the start of each assessment:

"This is [ASSESSOR NAME], recording the [SLC COMPONENT] for [LEARNER(S) NAME] for [QUALIFICATION NAME], on [ASSESSMENT DATE]. I can confirm that I have conducted a validity check of the assessment environment and can also confirm that the identification of the learner(s) has been confirmed. The assessment is now able to proceed."

If the assessment includes the presence of another person, e.g. an Internal Quality Assurer, or other support, they should also be introduced, and their role explained.

During the Assessment

The Internal Assessor should remain vigilant throughout the assessment to ensure that the environment remains controlled at all times and incidents are managed appropriately.

An incident is anything that interrupts the natural flow of the assessment and that causes the assessment to be paused. In some cases, it may be acceptable to continue the assessment following the interruption. However, in other cases, the assessment may have to be stopped, voided and rescheduled.

If during the assessment an unforeseen event occurs, the Internal Assessor should consider these factors to determine if the assessment is able to continue or if it should be ended: if there is an opportunity during the disruption for the learner or learners to gain an advantage, for example.
Similarly, if one or a number of learners become distressed or overly nervous as a result of the unforeseen circumstances, then the assessment should be ended. All instances must be fully documented and shared with appropriate members of the

recognised centre following the conclusion of the assessment.

If during the assessment an unforeseen event occurs that adversely affects the ability/opportunity of the learner(s) to fully and fairly demonstrate their skills and knowledge, the assessment should be ended.

Examples of incidents where assessments may be able to continue include:

- fire alarm tests where the learner does not have to leave the room
- extreme weather (such as heavy rain/hale) should this not impact on audio quality
- minor and temporary technical difficulties
- a coughing/sneezing fit.

Examples of incidents where assessments must be voided include:

- malpractice
- emergencies
- incidents which put the learner, learners or Internal Assessor at risk, such as faulty electrical equipment
- general concerns about the quality of the controlled environment.

Concluding the Assessment

At the end of the assessment, the Internal Assessor may allow each learner the opportunity to add any further information that may support their evidence. Once each learner confirms they have nothing further to add, the Internal Assessor should read the following statement or suitable equivalent:

“Thank you for taking part in today’s assessment. If you have any questions, please contact your recognised centre. Thank you once more and have a great day.”

You may also wish to confirm any internal marking and IQA arrangements and turnaround information.