

External assessment policy

Policy statement

This policy outlines the approach YMCA Awards expects its approved training providers (centres) to apply to external assessment and invigilation; this includes remote invigilation (eProctoring).

Scope

This policy applies to all YMCA Awards approved centres delivering qualifications that include externally assessed components.

Scheduling external assessments

For learners to be scheduled for an external assessment, they must have been registered with YMCA Awards for a qualification that contains externally assessed units or components. Learners will usually be available to schedule one working day after the learner registration form has been locked/submitted within Y-Connect.

If a learner has been assessed as requiring additional time, you will need to let us know by completing a 'Reasonable Adjustment/Special Consideration application' form within Y-Connect **at least 5 working days before the assessment**.

Paper-based assessments

Learners should be scheduled for external assessments as soon as reasonably possible.

It is best practice to schedule and download the related assessment materials **at least one working day before the assessment is due to take place**. This ensures that we are available to provide support if anything goes wrong. Assessment materials can be downloaded up to 10 days before the exam is due to take place. Downloaded assessment materials must be printed and deleted straight away.

Onscreen assessments

Learners should be scheduled for external assessments as soon as reasonably possible.

It is best practice to schedule and download the related assessment materials **at least one working day before the assessment is due to take place**. This ensures that we are available to provide support if anything goes wrong.

Learners' login slips can be printed as soon as the schedule has been created. Learners can test the XAMS login information in advance of the scheduled assessment. The live assessment will not be available until the scheduled start date and time but a practice assessment will be available in advance.

eProctored onscreen assessments

Learners should be scheduled for external assessments as soon as reasonably possible and **at least 3 working days before the assessment is due to take place**.

This ensures that learners have sufficient time to complete the pre-assessment system checks and we are available to provide support if anything goes wrong.

Learners' login slips can be printed as soon as the schedule has been created. Learners can test the XAMS login information in advance of the scheduled assessment. The live assessment will not be available until the scheduled start date and time but a practice assessment will be

available in advance. Learners must complete the eProctoring preassessment system checks at least 48 hours before the scheduled assessment.

[How to schedule external assessments](#)

Arranging invigilation

Face-to-face invigilation	Remote invigilation (with eProctoring)
<p>Invigilators are responsible for upholding the integrity of the external assessment by ensuring the procedures outlined in this document are followed.</p> <p>There must be at least one invigilator for every:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 30 learners (paper-based assessments)• 15 learners (onscreen assessments)• 8 learners (onscreen assessments where learner is supplying the device). <p>If only one invigilator is used, they must be able to call for assistance without disturbing learners or leaving them unattended.</p> <p>Learners granted a reasonable adjustment to use a reader or writer must be allocated a separate room to other learners completing the assessment at the same time.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Invigilators must not include:• anyone related to a learner completing the assessment• anyone responsible for supporting a learner with reasonable adjustments during the assessment. <p>It is best practice to ensure that tutors involved in preparing the learners for assessment are not used as invigilators. Where this is not possible, the main centre contact must let us know and outline their procedure for managing the conflict of interest.</p>	<p>By following robust procedures, the standard of invigilation that we would expect in face-to-face settings can be achieved using eProctoring for on-screen assessment. The standard we set for eProctoring sets out to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• maintain the confidentiality of assessment materials• allow verification of learners' identities• verify the appropriateness of the assessment environment for the duration of the assessment• simultaneously monitor the learner and their computer screen. <p>YMCA Awards provide an eProctoring solution which is available to our approved centres to invigilate our on-screen external assessments, for an additional fee. If you would like to use an alternative eProctoring solution to invigilate assessments, please contact us for further information on how to proceed. We will need to work with you to ensure the proposed solution meets our requirements. It can take several months to get an alternative eProctoring system set up and approved.</p> <p>We do not accept the use of video conferencing systems (e.g. Zoom or Microsoft Teams) or video calling (e.g. WhatsApp or FaceTime) for invigilation of external assessment.</p>

Centres must ensure that they have sufficient, suitably qualified resource to oversee scheduled external assessments.

Allocating rooms and equipment for external assessment

Centres must ensure they have written approval for all assessment venues in advance of assessment taking place. Where an assessment venue is separate to your usual delivery locations, **external assessments must still be invigilated as outlined in this policy.**

Any learners requiring a reader or writer must be allocated a separate room where they can be supported without disrupting the assessment of others.

Learners are permitted to use their own device to sit onscreen assessments. However, they must ensure the screen has a resolution of at least 1024 x 768 pixels and they log into XAMS using Google Chrome. Invigilators must be made aware that learners are using their own devices.

Our external assessments last from 15 to 60 minutes. Learners should have an appropriate level of comfort during the assessment and therefore the room should:

Face-to-face invigilation	Remote invigilation (with eProctoring)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• be accessible to all learners• have appropriate lighting, heating and ventilation• have appropriate seating for the duration of the assessment• be located away from distracting noise• be free from any learning materials or displays that could assist learners during the assessment• distance learners appropriately; (learners must be seated at least 1.2 metres apart unless there are partitions between desks).• contain at least one spare workstation/computer for every 10 learners scheduled (onscreen assessments only)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• be a private room not occupied by any other person• have sufficient lighting for the camera (and invigilator) to be able to see the learner throughout the assessment• have appropriate furniture for the learner to be able to sit a formal written assessment – this is likely to be a desk/table and upright chair• be located away from distracting noise• be free from any learning materials or displays that could assist learners during the assessment

Notifying learners

As soon as possible after the external assessment has been scheduled, centres should provide their learners with confirmation of the assessment date and direct them to the relevant guidance at ymcaawards.co.uk/learners/external-assessment.

Learners should be aware that failure to follow our external assessment rules or instructions provided on the assessment cover sheet/intro page may result in us invalidating their result.

Storage of paper-based assessment materials

The exams officer must ensure that the confidentiality of assessment materials is maintained by ensuring:

- they are stored securely until destroyed
- they are not used for practice or mock assessments
- their content is not used or reviewed by centre staff for any purpose.

The penalty for breaching the confidentiality of assessment materials, resulting in their withdrawal and/or replacement is £15 per replacement question plus £500 for administration.

Before the assessment	Following the assessment
<p>The exams officer must not download assessment materials unless they are prepared to print them. Once assessment materials have been printed, electronic copies must be permanently deleted (i.e. removed from the recycle bin or equivalent).</p> <p>The confidentiality of the assessment materials must be maintained during transportation. If posting to another location, the exams officer must ensure assessment materials are sent in tamper-proof packaging and that the delivery can be fully tracked.</p> <p>External assessment materials must not be posted outside the UK without our prior written consent.</p>	<p>The exams officer is responsible for ensuring that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • all question papers have been accounted for and securely destroyed • all learners answer sheets are scanned and sent to awards.support@ymca.co.uk for marking as soon as possible following the assessment, along with the attendance list and any additional documentation (e.g. malpractice reports or details of disruption to the assessment) • learner answer sheets are securely stored until the results have been received • the seating plan is retained for 12 months following certification.

The role of the invigilator for face-to face assessments

The exams officer should ensure that the invigilator is provided access to the assessment materials on the day of the assessment.

The invigilator must not review the content of the assessment materials or learners' responses.

Before the assessment begins

Invigilators must ensure:

- the room has been set up correctly with a sign outside indicating an assessment is in progress and a clock clearly visible showing the correct time
- that any learning materials or displays that could assist learners in the assessment have been covered or removed
- the seating plan is appropriate
- they're aware of any reasonable assessment adjustments (e.g. extra time)
- they're aware of any learners using their own device for onscreen assessments
- they check learners' photographic ID (usually a passport or driving license) before allowing them access to the assessment room
- any personal items not required for the assessment (including switched off mobile phones and other smart devices) are out of reach of learners

Once learners have been seated

Invigilators must:

- inform learners they are now subject to the rules of the assessment
- remind learners they must not attempt to communicate with any other learners until they leave the assessment room
- check that learners have all the necessary materials

- ensure learners are clear on how to complete their answer sheets and what to do if they make an error
- remind learners to sign their theory paper answer sheets (we will not be able to mark the assessment if this isn't completed)
- provide learners with their personalised assessment paper and answer sheet (paper-based assessments) or personal login details (on-screen assessments)
- remind learners completing onscreen assessments that they must not navigate away from the assessment window or open other tabs or applications during the assessment
- check that learners have the correct assessment materials
- announce clearly when learners can begin and specify the time allowed
- write start and finish times so that they are clearly visible to all learners
- check and complete the learner register

Failure to comply with these assessment rules may invalidate learners' results.

During the assessment

Invigilators must:

- supervise learners throughout the whole assessment
- remain alert, observing learners throughout the assessment
- not undertake any other activities whilst invigilating
- alert learners when they have between 5 and 10 minutes remaining. For on-screen external assessments, the invigilator must also:
 - ensure learners only have one web browser tab/window open
 - ensure learners do not navigate away from the assessment
 - intermittently check what is on each learner's screen

Learners arriving late to the assessment

Learners arriving late may be allowed to sit the assessment, at the invigilator/centre's discretion, providing:

- they arrive within 15 minutes of the scheduled start time
- it doesn't compromise the invigilation of other learners

If a late arriving learner sits the assessment, the invigilators will need to ensure the details and circumstances are recorded for External Quality Assurance.

Learners finishing the assessment early

Learners can be allowed to leave the assessment room from 30 minutes after the scheduled start time, provided:

- this doesn't interfere with other learners' assessments
- all assessment materials and notes are passed to an invigilator
- the invigilator confirms that the answer sheet has been signed by the learner before the learner leaves.

Once a learner has left the assessment room, they cannot re-enter.

Misconduct

Invigilators must take steps to stop any inappropriate behaviour. If the incident is serious, an invigilator must collect the learner's assessment materials and instruct them to leave.

Invigilators must immediately report any misconduct to the main centre contact detailing:

- the time and nature of the incident
- the persons involved and witness statements
- considerations allowed for other learners affected.

The invigilator will need to provide a written report to the main centre contact as soon as reasonably possible after the incident.

YMCA Awards must be alerted of all incidents of misconduct as soon as possible after the assessment.

Disruptions to external assessment

If an external assessment is interrupted by circumstances beyond learners' control (e.g. fire alarm), the invigilators must ensure:

- the assessment room is evacuated safely
- all assessment materials are left on learners' desks
- assessment conditions are maintained wherever possible

Providing learners are closely supervised and assessment conditions are maintained, learners can be allowed to resume the assessment and given the full time once the disruption is resolved.

We must be informed of all disruptions to assessments as soon as possible following the incident.

Ending the assessment

At the end of the assessment time, invigilators must:

- tell learners to stop
- collect all assessment materials and notes
- confirm that learners have signed their answer sheets before they leave the assessment room
- place the answer sheets in the order on the schedule register
- sign each answer sheet to confirm authenticity
- ensure all assessment materials and paperwork is securely passed to the exams officer

We cannot release results for any answer sheet that is missing a learner or invigilator signature.