



SQA Level 4 and 6 Diplomas in Conveyancing/Probate Law and Practice

Guidance for Centres: Supervision of Assessments in Examination Conditions

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1 Introduction

The SQA Level 4 and Level 6 Diplomas in Conveyancing/Probate Law and Practice are Ofqual regulated qualifications on the Regulated Qualifications Framework (RQF) and are subject to Ofqual's General Conditions of Recognition published most recently in June 2016. The Diploma qualifications have been developed in close collaboration with the Council for Licensed Conveyancers (CLC).

This document provides guidance for SQA approved centres and prospective centres on the conditions of assessment for the component Units in the Diploma qualifications. In particular, it explains who may act as a Supervisor of the end of Unit assessments which are carried out in controlled, examination conditions and what that role entails.

In accordance with Ofqual's regulatory conditions, the Diploma qualifications have each been allocated a figure for Total Qualification Time (TQT) which gives an indication of the minimum length of time it would take the average candidate to complete the qualification. Guided Learning Hours (GLH) for each component Unit are also stated on each Unit specification. This guidance gives some examples of activities which do/do not fall under Guided Learning in order to assist approved centres with their planning for delivery of the qualifications.

2 The conditions of assessment for component Units

In contrast to the former CLC examination system, all component units in the SQA Diplomas are internally assessed within the SQA approved centre, subject to SQA's quality assurance procedures.

The SQA Diplomas are unitised and comprise a number of competence based Units with clearly specified statements of standards in the mandatory section of the Unit specification. The mandatory Evidence Requirements section in each Unit provides a statement covering the type, amount and minimum standard of evidence on which the assessment decision for that Unit will be made. The Evidence Requirements section also states the mandatory assessment conditions under which the evidence for the Unit is to be generated and all centres approved by SQA to deliver the qualifications must adhere to the specified conditions under which the end of Unit, summative assessment is to take place.

The assessment conditions for all the Level 4 Units, apart from the two Understanding Accounting Procedures units, are assignments undertaken by candidates in their own time, for submission within a specified timescale. The assessment conditions for the Accounting Procedures and all Level 6 units are controlled, examination conditions and this requires that candidates are supervised during the time the assessment is taking place

The Unit Specification for each Unit details the amount of time allowed for each assessment in examination conditions, and may be worded as "supervised, exam conditions" or "controlled conditions." In addition, the Unit specification also stipulates whether any reference materials, handwritten notes or electronic devices are

permitted during the supervised assessment for use by the candidates. A closed-book assessment indicates that candidates are not allowed to bring any materials or devices into the assessment; open-book assessments allow only materials stipulated in the Unit Evidence Requirements to be used during the assessment.

3 Supervision of assessments in controlled, examination conditions

Supervision ensures that candidates' work is authentically their own. The key role of a Supervisor is to uphold the integrity of the assessment process. SQA expects that the highest standards should be adhered to when supervising candidates and in keeping with the Supervisor's own professional ethics.

Centres may wish to devise a process which provides an audit trail to confirm that the assessment has been undertaken in accordance with the assessment conditions detailed in the Unit specification.

3.1 The role of a Supervisor

The Supervisor is responsible for ensuring that these activities do not permit collusion or cheating or any other form of misconduct or disruption by candidates.

More than one Supervisor may be required depending on the number of candidates sitting the assessment. If it is a large number of candidates, SQA would recommend 1 Supervisor per 35 candidates and a further Supervisor for each multiple of 35 or part thereof.

3.2 Suitability for the role of Supervisor

Supervisors should not be related by blood, marriage or in a relationship with the candidate/s they are supervising.

The following functions may carry out the role of a Supervisor, although ideally not an individual who has been directly involved in the delivery of the Unit(s) being assessed. However, for some smaller centres, SQA acknowledges this may not be possible.

In the workplace:

- ◆ Any person holding a position of trust and responsibility such as a manager or team leader
- ◆ Assessor
- ◆ Internal Verifier
- ◆ Trainer
- ◆ An adult with invigilation experience

In a college:

- ◆ Lecturer or assessor/internal verifier
- ◆ Any person holding a position of trust and responsibility
- ◆ Designated quality assurance staff, eg exam officers, invigilators, registrars

3.3 Conduct of Supervisors

The Supervisor is the person in the assessment area responsible for conducting the assessment in the presence of the candidates.

The role of the Supervisor is to ensure that the assessment is conducted according to these instructions in order to:

- ◆ ensure the security of the assessment before, during and after the assessment.
- ◆ prevent possible candidate malpractice.

Supervisors should be alert and unobtrusive during the whole of the assessment and should avoid remaining in one place, especially directly behind a candidate, for any length of time. Private reading, use of mobiles or other similar device, eating or drinking, talking loudly to colleagues or candidates or any other activity which may disturb the candidates, or prevent full attention being given to the candidates is not allowed. While an assessment is in progress only essential conversation may be conducted.

No Supervisor should leave the assessment area during the course of an assessment unless replaced by another Supervisor.

Supervisors should ensure that their personal mobile phones are switched off. Supervisors must:

- ◆ be able to observe each candidate in the assessment area at all times.
- ◆ be familiar with the Information for SQA Diploma Learners (Appendix 1), and the 'no mobile phones' poster (Appendix 2).
- ◆ inform the Head of Centre if they are suspicious about the security of the assessment.
- ◆ ensure candidates do not remove **ANY** assessment materials and candidate scripts from the assessment area.

3.4 Identifying candidates

It is important that Supervisors are able to establish the identity of all candidates sitting assessments in controlled, examination conditions. Arrangements should be made to ensure that all Supervisors can carry out adequate checks on the identity of all candidates. The identity of each candidate must be confirmed. If the Supervisor becomes aware that a candidate is sitting an assessment in another candidate's name, then the assessment must be stopped. If a candidate sits an assessment in another candidate's name (whether or not it is intentional), this may constitute malpractice.

Centre staff who have been authorised by their Head of Centre may be present at the start of the assessment for the purposes of assisting with the identification of candidates.

3.5 The assessment area

In the assessment area, candidates must not have access to items other than those permitted in the Unit specification, if appropriate, ie if the examination is an open-book assessment. This means that:

- ◆ ideally, all unauthorised items are left outside of the assessment area
- ◆ any unauthorised items that have been taken into the assessment area must be placed out of reach of the candidates before the assessment starts — this would normally be at the front of the assessment area (or similar) so that the Supervisor can control access to the items

3.6 Supervising the candidates

Supervisors must supervise the candidates throughout the whole time the assessment is in progress and give complete attention to this duty at all times. Supervisors must be vigilant and remain aware of emerging situations, looking out for malpractice or candidates who may be feeling unwell. Any irregularities must be recorded.

Supervisors are required to move around the assessment area quietly and at frequent intervals.

Toilet breaks are permitted and arrangements should be made to accompany candidates to and from the toilet.

3.7 Malpractice

If a candidate contravenes the information in Appendix 1, the Supervisor should remove the candidate from the assessment area. This should be done in an appropriate manner to ensure minimal disruption to other candidates. If the malpractice is confirmed, the candidate should be warned that SQA will be informed and that potentially they could be disqualified. If it is confirmed there is no malpractice, the candidate will be able to return to the assessment area and should be given the opportunity to make up any lost time at the end of the assessment.

The Supervisor must record what has happened and, wherever possible, the Supervisor should remove and keep any unauthorised material that a candidate may have in the assessment. If necessary, the Supervisor should summon assistance. The Head of Centre must report all cases of assessment malpractice to SQA as soon as possible.

If candidates commit malpractice, SQA may penalise or disqualify them.

3.8 Emergency evacuation of the assessment area

Should there be a fire alarm whilst the assessment is taking place, or any other event requiring evacuation of the assessment area, the Supervisor should collect all assessment materials and candidates' scripts before they leave the area.

Arrangements should be in place to ensure that in this situation candidates are unable to discuss the assessment with others and/or refer to any materials prior to re-commencing the assessment.

When the candidates are permitted to return to the assessment area, the Supervisor should return the assessment materials and candidate scripts to the candidates and ensure that they receive the full allocation of assessment time.

3.9 Candidates suffering illness or distress

If a candidate is suffering from illness or distress during an assessment, the Supervisor can give permission for the candidate to leave the room under supervision. It is advised, for each assessment event, that Heads of Centre arrange to have a male and a female member of staff available to supervise the candidates in such emergencies. The Supervisor should:

- ◆ retain the candidate's assessment material and candidate script and make a note of the time.
- ◆ allow the candidate to leave the assessment area with the person made available by the Head of Centre — the candidate must remain under this person's supervision while outside the assessment area.

If the candidate returns to the assessment area, the Supervisor should return the assessment material and candidate script and ensure that the candidate receives the full allocation of assessment time.

4 Total Qualification Time (TQT) and Guided Learning Hours (GLH)

In September 2015, Ofqual introduced the new Regulated Qualification Framework (RQF) and published new *General Conditions of Recognition* which require awarding organisations to take a consistent approach to determining the Level and size of regulated qualifications.

Condition E7.1 requires an awarding organisation to assign a number of hours for Total Qualification Time and for Guided Learning to a regulated qualification.

Total Qualification Time (TQT) consists of:

- ◆ the number of Guided Learning Hours (GLH) which an awarding organisation has assigned to a qualification for Guided Learning, ie activities that are completed by the learner under the direct instruction or supervision of a lecturer, Supervisor or tutor.

and

- ◆ an estimate of the number of hours a learner will reasonably be likely to spend in preparation, study, assessment activities or any other form of participation in the qualification delivery which takes place under the direction of a lecturer, tutor or Supervisor, but *not* under their direct supervision.

Examples of activities falling under the Guided Learning Hours estimate are:

- ◆ Supervised end of unit assessments in open/closed-book controlled, examination conditions
- ◆ Face to face meetings with the lecturer, Supervisor or tutor
- ◆ Teaching sessions — either face to face or learner/tutor conversations in real time, eg through telephone/webcam contact, internet messaging
- ◆ E-assessment where the learner is supervised by the lecturer, Supervisor or tutor in real time

Examples of activities which are *not* part of Guided Learning Hours but are included in the TQT calculation:

- ◆ End of Unit assignments undertaken in the learner's own time and submitted within a specified timeframe for marking by the approved centre, eg a case study scenario where the learner has access to unlimited materials and answers a set of questions
- ◆ Watching a pre-recorded podcast or webinar in the learner's own time
- ◆ E-assessment where learners' knowledge and understanding is assessed unsupervised and where they can access online e-assessment at any time

Appendix 1: Information for SQA Diploma Candidates

Information for Candidates

- 1 You **must** be on time for all your assessments.
- 2 You **must not** become involved in any unfair or dishonest practice in any part of the assessment.
- 3 You **must not**:
 - ◆ sit an assessment in the name of another learner
 - ◆ have in your possession any unauthorised material or equipment which might give you an unfair advantage.
- 4 Possession of a mobile phone iPod, MP3/4 player, a wrist watch which has a data storage device, or any other product with text/digital facilities or other unauthorised material is breaking the rules, even if you do not intend to use it, and you will be subject to penalty and possible disqualification.
- 5 You **must not** talk to, attempt to communicate with, or disturb other candidates once you have entered the assessment area.
- 6 You **must** follow the instructions of the Supervisor.
- 7 You **must** not remove any paper from the assessment area.
- 8 If you are in any doubt, speak to the Supervisor.

The Warning to Candidates must be displayed in a prominent place outside each assessment area. This may be a hard copy A3 paper version or an image of the poster projected onto a wall or screen for all candidates to see.

Appendix 2: No Mobile Phones poster



NO MOBILE PHONES, IPODS, MP3/4 PLAYERS.

**NO PRODUCTS WITH AN ELECTRONIC
COMMUNICATION/STORAGE DEVICE OR DIGITAL
FACILITY.**

Possession of unauthorised items is an infringement of the regulations and could result in

DISQUALIFICATION

from the current assessment and the overall qualification.

Candidates are advised that mobile phones in particular **must not** be in their possession whether switched on or not.

This poster must be displayed in a prominent place outside each assessment area.