**Surpass Viewer - published on 7 December 2020 and also provided to Centres through the Centre News.**

**Frequently asked questions**

**1. Why are Adobe withdrawing flash support?**

There are some underlying security vulnerabilities with Flash when content is accessed via browsers.

This makes the technology more susceptible to malicious attacks. Flash is now no longer considered

an industry standard. Adobe have announced that they will be withdrawing support for Flash at the

end of 2020 and, as such, web browsers will be removing the ability to run Adobe Flash.

SQA use Flash-based content to administer and mark tests and offer practice tests via OpenAssess.

To allow continued and uninterrupted access to our Flash-based content beyond Dec 2020, we

require the use of Surpass Viewer (a customised software app with Flash embedded) which you will

need to download and install.

Once installed, you’ll be able to continue to access relevant areas of SOLAR beyond the withdrawal

of Adobe Flash from browsers.

From January 2021, you will only be able to access this content via the Surpass Viewer. This is not a

permanent solution and SQA are working towards HTML delivery in 2021.

**2. What services are impacted and what customer groups are they used by?**

The following services are impacted:

• Surpass – used by centre staff

• ‘Enter Keycode’ Web delivery – used by students to sit tests

• OpenAssess – used by students for familiarisation and preparation of a live test experience.

To access SOLAR tests or to administer the tests, you must download and install the Surpass Viewer

on your machine to allow continued access.

**3. Why have SQA decided to launch the Surpass Viewer over converting Flash content?**

Whilst it would have been a preferred option to migrate over to more current technology, such as

HTML5, the reality is that this was not a feasible option to offer all re-authored content in our

question banks within the new HTML system by Jan 2021, this means that we will need to continue

the delivery of the current qualifications on the Flash based systems in place until their withdrawal.

Surpass Viewer has a stable version of Flash embedded. To mitigate against security concerns, it will

only work with allowed and trusted content, so will not be susceptible to the wider browser-based

security risks associated with Flash.

In preparation for Adobe withdrawing Flash support from 1 January 2021, we strongly advise you to

download and install the Surpass Viewer now to access any of the above applicable services.

**4. What direct impact will this have on me?**

All SOLAR users will need to download, install and use the Surpass Viewer for continued access of

full content and functionality. From Jan 2021, all access to SOLAR surpass content must be via the

Surpass Viewer. The website itself will continue as normal through browser. SecureClient and the

Surpass App will receive a separate update to install the new Flash version. They are not delivered

through the Surpass Viewer

**Students**

All students completing any of the following actions:

• Accessing Formative tests via OpenAssess

• Using the ‘Enter Keycode’ delivery screen to access a test.

**Centre staff**

• Anyone doing Scheduling, Invigilation and checking Results – specifically Centre

Administrator access to SOLAR.

**5. What is the difference between the Surpass Viewer app and my standard browser (such as**

**Chrome, Internet Explorer etc)?**

Areas which will need to be accessed via the Surpass Viewer:

• (SOLAR)

• Online Formative tests (OpenAssess)

Only pre-listed areas can be accessed through the Surpass Viewer unlike a standard browser

You should continue to use your standard browser for everything else on the SOLAR website. e.g.

new subject requests, viewing guidance training materials etc

**Technical Support**

**1. Who can I contact if I have any issues downloading Surpass Viewer?**

For any support queries relating to Surpass Viewer please email us using the Helpdesk form on the

SOLAR website

**2. How do I install Surpass Viewer on different computers and is it available for mobiles?**

An installation guide has been created to guide you through the steps for downloading and installing

on Windows and macOS machines. The Surpass Viewer is not supported on mobiles. This is not

currently supported for Chromebooks or Linux devices at present, however we are working on

making this available for Chromebook users.

**3. Are there security issues with Flash?**

To mitigate against any security issues, the Surpass Viewer has been designed so that it can only be

used to access the administrative and delivery parts of the SOLAR website. It cannot be used to

access any other sites so will not be susceptible to wider browser-based security risks related to

Flash.

Please note that Surpass Viewer will only work with the following content:

• (SOLAR)

• Online Formative tests (OpenAssess)

**4. Which computers at centres will need Surpass Viewer installed?**

Any machines where SOLAR, and online Formative tests are accessed will need to have the Surpass

Viewer installed. It will need to be installed on each machine individually.

**5. Will the Viewer open automatically when I open any SOLAR content?**

Yes, provided you have already installed Surpass Viewer. If you attempt to open any Surpass

(SOLAR) content but have not installed the Surpass Viewer, you will be prompted to do so and be

taken through the installation process onscreen (See our installation guide). Updates may be

required as you start the viewer, these should be accepted and then the content accessed again

through the SOLAR website.

**6. What are the troubleshooting guidelines?**

Installation and user troubleshooting steps have been added to the installation guide. We encourage

you to read through this guide before beginning your installation.

**7. Who do we speak to if we have any issuing during installation?**

For any support queries relating to Surpass Viewer please email us using the Helpdesk form on the

SOLAR website

**8. Can you give any guidance on configuring permissions and firewalls?**

As these can vary between different makes, models, operating systems and networks, regrettably

we are unable to offer specific advice on how to do this.

**9. If I don’t want to make any changes to my firewall, what are my options?**

If your firewall settings prevent you from downloading and installing the Surpass Viewer, your

security settings will need to be relaxed / exceptions added for the Surpass Viewer. If you do not do

this, you will not be able to install the Surpass Viewer. If you are unable to install the Surpass Viewer,

once Adobe ends Flash support, you will not be able to access SOLAR or use OpenAssess.

**10. What are the system requirements?**

Please refer to the Installation guide for full details.

**11. Will there be updates to the viewer or any downtime?**

The Surpass Viewer updates automatically. When there is an update, you can choose to restart the

application to begin using the updated version or wait until you next open it. You do not need to

reinstall the Surpass Viewer. You may need to use the SOLAR website again to access the content

once an update has been installed.

**12. Is it a one-time install?**

Yes, you will only be required to download this once per machine. But updates will take place. Also

your network restrictions may impact this – please refer to the installation guide.

**13. Are there any alternatives that you can offer?**

Regrettably, there are no other alternatives at present but SQA is working towards HTML delivery.

\*\*Ends\*\*

SQA Microsoft Surpass Viewer Guidelines for Installing can be accessed at the following link

[SQA Microsoft Surpass Viewer installation guide.pdf](https://www.sqa.org.uk/mini/files/SQA%20Microsoft%20Surpass%20Viewer%20installation%20guide.pdf)

SQA Apple Surpass Viewer Guidelines for Installing can be accessed at the following link

[SQA Apple Surpass Viewer installation guide.pdf](https://www.sqa.org.uk/mini/files/SQA%20Apple%20Surpass%20Viewer%20installation%20guide.pdf)

\*\*ends\*\*