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External Assessment Venue Requirements

Centres must ensure that external assessments take place in a suitable assessment environment. This means that:

- Any room in which an assessment is held must provide learners with appropriate conditions for taking the assessment. Particular attention should be given to conditions such as heating, lighting, ventilation and the level of outside noise
- Display material, such as posters, wall charts, information leaflets, which might be helpful to learners must not be visible in the assessment room
- A reliable clock (or other suitable time keeping device, e.g. time displayed via a computer screen) must be visible to each learner in the assessment room. The clock/display must be large enough for all learners to read clearly
- The following items must be on display in the assessment room:
 - Poster advising learners that mobile devices (phones, iWatches etc.) are not allowed in the exam room
 - Assessment notice for learners
 - Centre appeals procedure
 - Emergency/evacuation procedures
- There must be a sign, clearly visible to others in the building, that an assessment is taking place
- Information must be visible to all learners showing the centre number and the start and finish times of the assessment
- Seating arrangements must prevent learners from overlooking the work of others. In particular, the minimum distance in all directions from centre to centre of learners' chairs must be 1.25 metres.
- For written assessments, each learner should have a separate desk or table large enough to hold question papers. Learners who are not seated at individual desks must be far enough apart (minimum 1.25m) so that their work cannot be seen by, and contact cannot be made with, other learners
- For computer-based assessments: the room layout must be planned to prevent screens being read by other learners; there must be at least 1.5 metres from the centre of each screen to the centre of the next screen; the clock is displayed on every computer screen in use; a trained administrator must be available during the assessment to deal with any technical queries that may arise
- The Invigilator to Learner ratio is a minimum of 1:30 for paper based assessments and 1:20 on-screen assessments
- There must be space for the Invigilator to sit
- Where possible, there is at least one replacement PC available

Centres are required to maintain records of how assessment venues meet these criteria, which must be made available to Open Awards on request. False or misleading statements by centres in respect of assessment venues may result in immediate suspension or withdrawal of centre approval, and assessment papers may be declared void.