Dublin International Study Centre

Invigilation Policy

Contents

Invigilation Policy

Section One: Purpose

1. This policy establishes clear guidelines and procedures for the invigilation of assessments and examinations conducted at DISC. It ensures that invigilation is carried out in a manner that reflects the core principles of consistency, fairness, academic integrity, and compliance with regulatory standards, with particular reference to o QQI Core Statutory Quality Assurance (QA) Guidelines (April 2016) and QQI Assessment and Standards (Revised 2022). This policy forms part of DISC's overall approach to assessment; further information on our assessment strategy and procedures is set out in DISC's Assessment Code.

Section Two: Scope

2. This policy applies to all summative assessments, examinations, and formal testing across all academic programmes delivered at DISC, including both internally assessed components and externally moderated assessments.

3. It covers the following contexts:

    - In-person examinations conducted on-site at DISC.

    - Computer-based and digital assessments requiring invigilation.

    - Make-up, deferred, or resit exams, regardless of timing or location.

    - Assessments conducted under formal exam conditions, including those requiring reasonable accommodations for learners with additional needs.

4. Other forms of graded assessments are used at DISC (for example, formative tasks and project-based assessments), which do not require the same form of invigilation. However, these forms of assessment are conducted in line with the same principles of security, transparency, fairness and confidentiality, as set out in DISC's Assessment Code and related procedures.

5. This policy applies to:

    - All learners enrolled in DISC programmes.

    - Academic and administrative staff involved in the preparation, delivery, and supervision of assessments.

    - External invigilators or moderators engaged by DISC.

Section Three: The Management and Conduct of Invigilated Exams

6.   Effective invigilation relies on clearly defined roles and responsibilities to ensure the integrity, security, safety and effective operation of all formal assessments. The following table outlines the key personnel involved in the invigilation process and their respective duties:

Role	Responsibility
Lead Invigilator	In each examination room, the Lead Invigilator, accompanied by an Assistant Invigilator, oversees and actively monitors the examination in real time, supervises the invigilation team in the room, acts as the point of contact with the Exam Officer on procedural matters, applies regulations consistently, and completes the session log and any incident reports.
Invigilators	Monitors learners during examinations, enforces exam regulations, and maintains exam conditions. Reports any incidents, breaches or irregularities to the Lead Invigilator during the examination session where needed to protect integrity or safety, or in a formal written Incident Report with supporting evidence post examination.
Exam Officer	Coordinates the overall examination process, schedules and allocates invigilators, oversees compliance with institutional and regulatory requirements, provides briefings and support to invigilators, and provides all academic staff with the Invigilator Guidelines in advance of each examination period.
Academic Staff	Submit examination papers, marking schemes and any special instructions in advance; notify the Exam Officer of learners who require reasonable accommodations; and discuss exam regulations with learners prior to the examination, with information provided via the Student Handbook.

Section Four: Training

7.   All invigilators must successfully complete training before undertaking invigilation duties. The training covers QQI regulations, DISC policies, and procedures for maintaining assessment integrity. Attendance is recorded by the Exams Officer, and refresher sessions are provided annually or whenever procedures change.

8.   Training includes:

- Applying emergency protocols.

- Handling suspected academic misconduct.

- Maintaining confidentiality and data protection.

- Inclusive invigilation.

- Exam safety and security.

- Use of digital assessment platforms and incident logging (where relevant).

9. Inclusive invigilation refers to the application of approved reasonable accommodations consistently and discreetly; giving accessible, plain-English instructions; being alert to barriers (e.g., sensory, mobility, language); respecting cultural or religious considerations where appropriate; and treating learners with dignity, fairness, and neutrality throughout the exam process.

Section Five: Invigilation Procedures

10. All invigilators must follow standardised procedures to ensure consistency, protect learners' rights, and meet regulatory obligations. The following procedures apply to all invigilated assessments.

Pre-Examination Procedures

Task/Area	Description	Responsible Person(s)
Staffing & Ratio Compliance	Ensure a minimum of 2 invigilators per room and at least a 1:25 invigilator-to-learner ratio.	Examinations Officer
Assessment Material Collection	Assessment boxes must be collected in full and should include exam papers, answer booklets, learner list with seating plan, incident report form, PITA forms, spare pens, and any necessary equipment such as calculators.	Examinations Officer/ Lead Invigilator
Arrival Time	Arrive at least 30 minutes before the exam starts.	Lead Invigilator/Invigilators

Pre-Exam Briefing	Conduct briefing on exam regulations, emergency protocols, attendance, and seating plans.	Lead Invigilator
Exam Room Setup	Ensure signage is displayed ("Examination in Progress") and seating is as per official plan.	Invigilators
Materials Check	Confirm only authorised items (pens, approved calculators, water) are on desks. Snacks are only permitted in exceptional circumstances, such as when a learner has specific medical conditions.	Invigilators
Bluetooth Device Check	Conduct a check for unauthorised electronic/Bluetooth devices before the exam starts.	Invigilators
Learner ID Check	Verify valid photo ID against the official candidate list.	Invigilators
Seating Plan Enforcement	Ensure learners sit in their designated seats as posted outside the room.	Invigilators

During Exam Procedures

Task/Area	Description	Responsible Person(s)
Opening Announcements	Deliver official exam instructions, including rules of conduct, permitted materials, and timing.	Lead Invigilator
Reading Time Protocol	Distribute exam paper first; allow a 10-minute reading period with no writing allowed; distribute answer booklets at the end of reading time.	Lead Invigilator / Invigilators
Identification on Scripts	Instruct learners to write only their student ID and desk	Invigilators

	number on exam materials.	
Enforcement of Conduct Rules	During reading time, no writing is permitted. Learners may not leave the examination room or submit their work within the first 30 minutes or during the last 15 minutes of the exam. Learners arriving more than 15 minutes after the scheduled start time will not be allowed to enter the examination room. All materials must be completed in pen, unless otherwise specified.	Invigilators
Active Monitoring	Maintain a discreet, professional presence; circulate regularly and observe learners to detect misconduct.	Invigilators
Misconduct Response	Intervene discreetly in suspected cheating or misconduct; confiscate unauthorised materials; document incident.	Lead Invigilator / Invigilators
Incident Escalation	Log details in Exam Incident Report Form; escalate serious cases to Exams Officer.	Lead Invigilator
Time Announcements	Announce exam start, halfway point, 10-minute warning, and end of exam.	Lead Invigilator or Assigned Invigilator
Time Synchronisation	Ensure timing is synchronised and visible to all learners.	Lead Invigilator
Break Requests	Breaks are coordinated via the approved staff channel and permitted only for genuine needs (toilet, sudden	Invigilators

Task/Area	Description	Responsible Person(s)
	illness/wellbeing), with reasonable accommodations honoured. As a guide: none under 60 minutes (except emergencies), one for 60–120 minutes, and up to two over 120 minutes; no breaks in the first 30 minutes or last 15; one candidate leave at a time with an escort; devices and materials stay at the desk (CBT stations locked). Record seat/ID and times in the room log; use the channel for flow only (no names or sensitive details). Breaks are coordinated via the approved staff channels.	
Learner Escort for Breaks	Accompany the learner outside the exam room as needed.	Support Staff
Seating Plan Enforcement	Monitor and maintain correct seating throughout the exam.	Invigilator

Post-Exam Procedures

Task/Area	Description	Responsible Person(s)
Collection of Exam Materials	Immediately collect all question papers, answer booklets, supplementary sheets, and scrap paper after the exam ends.	Invigilators
Attendance Confirmation	Ensure learners sign the attendance sheet upon submission of their scripts.	Invigilators
Final Count	Verify that the total number of scripts and materials matches the attendance register.	Invigilators
Script Labelling	Check each script is labelled with learner's ID, exam code, date, and module title. Document any missing or	Invigilators

	mislabelled scripts.	
Material Transfer	Securely transfer all collected materials to the Exams Officer in tamper-proof envelopes/folders to maintain confidentiality and chain of custody.	Invigilators
Completion of the Invigilation Report	Complete the standardised Invigilation Report including: • Number of students present/absent • Confirmation of materials handover • Incident details • Signature and time	Invigilators
Incident Reporting	Report any incidents (e.g. malpractice, disruptions, queries) to the Exams Officer and QA Team using appropriate forms as per the Academic Integrity Policy.	Invigilators
Confidentiality Assurance	Maintain strict confidentiality regarding all exam content, student actions, and incidents. No discussion outside official channels.	Invigilators
Return of All Materials	Ensure no exam materials (scripts, questions, notes, rough work) are retained. All must be returned to the Exams Officer.	Invigilators
Secure Receipt & Storage	Receive and securely store exam materials for processing, ensuring the chain of custody is intact.	Examinations Officer
Review of Incident Reports	Review any incident reports and escalate as needed to the Deputy Director of Curriculum and Progression.	Examinations Officer/Head of Quality

Section Six: Academic Misconduct

Learners Academic Misconduct

11. Scope (examples): unauthorised materials/devices; plagiarism and collusion; impersonation; obtaining or giving unfair assistance; fabricating or altering work; disruptive behaviour; breaching formal examination rules.

12. Suspected academic misconduct is investigated by a neutral panel comprising the

Exams Officer, an academic staff member, and the Head of Quality. Learners are formally notified and given an opportunity to respond in line with the Academic Integrity Policy. The panel reviews the case to determine whether misconduct occurred, its severity, and any appropriate sanctions.

13. Sanctions are proportionate, consistent, and based on the nature and seriousness of the offence. Outcomes may include:

- A formal warning (typically for minor or first-time offences)

- Disqualification from the affected assessment or exam

- Referral to disciplinary procedures

- Suspension or expulsion in cases of serious or repeated misconduct

14. Learners may appeal any decision in writing within five working days. Appeals are reviewed by an independent Appeals Panel in accordance with the Student Appeals Policy. The panel's decision is final and communicated in writing.

15. All confirmed cases are logged in a secure Misconduct Register maintained by the Exams Officer and reported to the Academic Board, the Head of Quality, and QQI where appropriate.

16. For full definitions and procedures, please refer to the Academic Integrity Policy (and the Student Appeals Policy).

Staff/Invigilator Malpractice

17. Scope (examples): failing to apply exam procedures; giving undue assistance; mishandling or compromising exam papers/scripts; altering records; breaching confidentiality; conflicts of interest not declared; failing to report suspected misconduct; repeated non-compliance with invigilation protocols. The regulatory measures for staff/invigilator malpractice are listed below.

18. Immediate handling (during an exam):

- The Lead Invigilator takes steps to protect the integrity and safety of the session (e.g., reallocates duties, secures materials, documents events) and informs the Exams Officer.

19. Investigation:

- Allegations are referred promptly to the Head of Quality and Exams Officer and, where appropriate, to HR for investigation under staff conduct/disciplinary procedures.

- The staff member is informed of the allegation and given the opportunity to respond. Evidence (logs, statements, materials) is collated and retained securely.

20. Outcomes (proportionate and consistent):

- Feedback, coaching or mandatory retraining.

- Formal warning and/or removal from invigilation duties.

- Disciplinary action under HR procedures (up to dismissal in the most serious cases).

21. Appeals:

- Staff may appeal outcomes in line with HR policies and procedures.

22. Reporting and records:

- Incidents are recorded in the Invigilation Incident Log and, where upheld, in a Staff Malpractice Register held by the Exams Officer. Material breaches are reported to the Academic Board and, where required, to external bodies/partners.

Misconduct Handling Process

Suspected Misconduct During Exam

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Invigilator Intervenes & Documents Incident

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Report Submitted to Exams Officer

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Formal Investigation Initiated

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Learner Notified & May Respond

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Investigation Panel Reviews Case

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Decision & Sanction Issued

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Learner May Appeal

▼

Appeals Panel Reviews

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Final Outcome Communicated

Case Logged & Reported

Diagram 1. Misconduct Procedure

Section Eight: Review

23. To ensure that the Invigilation Policy remains compliant, effective, and reflective of best practice, DISC is committed to a structured and timely review process.

Review Cycle

24. This policy will be reviewed annually by the Curriculum and Progression Committee (CPC) as part of DISC's quality assurance cycle.

25. The review will ensure continued alignment with:

- QQI statutory requirements and Assessment and Standards, Revised (2022).

- Updates to DISC's Academic Integrity Policy and operational procedures.

- External examiner feedback, audit findings, and learner evaluations.

Triggers for Early Review

26. An interim review may be initiated ahead of schedule in response to:

- Significant regulatory changes (e.g. QQI, ELE Code, GDPR).

- Identified gaps or risks during internal or external quality audits.

- Changes to programme delivery modes (e.g. introduction of online exams).

- Serious incidents or recurring challenges in exam administration.

Responsibility and Oversight

27. The Deputy Director of Curriculum and Head of Quality will co-lead the review process, consulting with:

- Programme Managers.

- Lead Invigilators.

- Student Support staff.

28. Recommendations will be presented to the Academic Board for approval.

Document Control

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