

## Technical information/support (inc. Technical Support Checklist – also available as a separate download))

**Note:** In addition to IT-specific recommendations, centres need to conform to the general requirements of awarding bodies and with health and safety requirements, and safeguard the confidentiality of candidates' personal data, including information relating to health and disability.

### Emergencies

- The centre should have procedures in place for dealing with emergencies (such as fire alarms and bomb scares). These should include provision to:
  - safeguard the security of assessment content and responses (for example, by locking an assessment room which has been evacuated without closing down software)
  - minimise opportunities for collusion between candidates or communication with others during interruptions to an assessment
  - ensure that candidates have the full working time for the assessment
  - safeguard access to the server room if applicable.
- Procedures for dealing with hardware, software and communication failures (which may affect individual workstations or the whole network) should normally allow the candidate(s) to continue the assessment session at a different workstation or at a later time, if necessary, without loss of working time.
  - In extreme cases it may be preferable to provide a paper-based assessment, and the conditions/procedure for this should be agreed in advance with the awarding body.
  - Where appropriate, the invigilator may be able to opt to extend the time limit (if any) to compensate for delays. This must be agreed with the appropriate awarding body, as it is not a valid option for some assessments.
  - All emergencies, technical failures and irregularities, including system delays, should be recorded, together with the action taken.
  - All technical failures and delays and any candidate complaints of this nature that could form the basis of an appeal should be logged and reported.
  - The centre should attempt to resolve any difficulties that occur. However, if an issue cannot be resolved locally, or is the subject of an appeal, it should be referred to the awarding body.

## First line troubleshooting

- Centre staff should be able to perform initial troubleshooting should problems occur. However, if it is not possible to resolve the problem internally, or a quick solution is needed (particularly if the e-test session is under way), the centre should contact the appropriate specialist help (see ‘Specialist technical support’, below).
- To minimise disruptions due to technical failures, the centre should give due consideration to:
  - maintenance of hardware
  - provision of spare workstations and/or easily replaced items
  - a back-up server, if applicable.

## Specialist technical support

- Technical help should be available for centres, both for initial setting up of assessment software (if needed) and during e-test sessions. Information should include helpline numbers and troubleshooting hints.
- The centre should check with the awarding body who to contact for technical assistance, and ensure that staff have access to helpline numbers.
- The centre manager should ensure that relevant staff understand any troubleshooting hints that have been provided.

## Technical specification: delivery platforms

Exact technical specifications may vary from one awarding body to another, and e-assessment centres should check their suitability to offer e-tests. These technical specifications will include requirements such as:

- minimum hardware, including network and peripherals
- keyboard (for example UK, US)
- screen resolution and colour depth
- operating system(s), including the range of acceptable version numbers
- language of the operating system (for example English, French). This could affect, for example, the display of dates and of numbers using decimal points and number of bits for character codes

- any software required in addition to the e-assessment software (for example browser software, plug-ins and specific fonts), including software versions where applicable
- communication links
- assistive technology to which the e-assessment software may link (including any particular settings or hardware inclusions).

## Technical support checklist

Summary of technical requirements	Yes/No	Comment/Issues
The centre has procedures in place for dealing with emergencies, technical irregularities and delays.		
Technical support meets the following requirements: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Technical support staff have been trained as required by the awarding body's requirements.</li> <li>• Trained support staff are available for setting up assessment software and downloading/checking e-assessment materials.</li> <li>• Trained support staff are available for e-assessment sessions.</li> <li>• Trained support staff are available to perform initial troubleshooting.</li> <li>• The centre has contact details for specialist technical.</li> </ul>		
Centre equipment meets the relevant awarding body's systems specification for delivering e-assessments.		
Signature of supervisor/manager:		