

P9 S9 C8 Examinations Policy

1. PURPOSE AND POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

The purpose of the Forus Training examinations policy is to ensure the preparation, coordination and management of the examination process. Consideration is specifically given to the following principles;

- **Conduct** - of the exam process; scheduling, communication to trainers and learners, modes of facilitation (classroom, Virtual Learning Environment),
- **Efficiency** - invigilation/proctoring, appropriate examination papers, coordination of documentation, timekeeping,
- In the best interests of the learners - communication to learners including understanding of examination details, attendance and what to do in unexpected/exceptional circumstances,
- Oversight of academic integrity of assessment in the examination papers and accompanying examination solutions;
 - **Reliability** - ensure the examination method is the correct and validated method for assessing the learning outcomes as outlined in the approved indicative content,
 - **Validity** - ensure the marking schemes applied are accurately and fairly weighted and against the assessment learning outcome being assessed,
 - **Fairness and Transparency** - ensure the information regarding completion of examination scripts, assessing examination scripts and allocation of marking to examination responses are coherently communicated to learners.

2. DEFINITIONS

Forus Training defines 'examinations' as a formal assessment of learners' knowledge and/or proficiency in a specific subject area. Examinations may be in written (theoretical) or practical (skills demonstration) format.

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3. SCOPE

This policy supports a wide range of standard operating procedures including (but not limited to);

1. Examination responsibilities,
2. Trainer/learner codes of conduct during examination facilitation,
3. The use of recording equipment (practical (skills demonstration) examination assessments only),
4. The 'tests' and qualifications offered,
5. Examination timetables,
6. Entry details including late entries to examinations,
7. Examination fees (where applicable),
8. The Equality Act 2000-2004; special educational needs, access arrangements and reasonable accommodation,
9. Managing invigilators/proctors and examination schedules,
10. Learners and special consideration,
11. Appeals,
12. Results, enquiries about results and access to examination scripts,
13. Certification.

4. POLICY STATEMENT

The majority of the examinations offered by Forus Training are governed by regulations stipulated by the accrediting bodies Forus Training are currently affiliated with. Such regulations have been established to ensure academic integrity and security of all components of the assessment process. Strict adherence to this policy and associated specific operational procedures and standards is required to retain Forus Training approved status.

Please note that a specific policy relates to the proctoring of an exam in the case of blended learning and the virtual learning environment (VLE).

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5. PROCEDURES AND PRACTICES

Examination instructions to coordinators of the examination processes:

1. Current versions of all assessment materials (Learner instructions, assessment question papers, and marking schemes) must be received in good time for assessments and are distributed at the appropriate time,
2. The examinations are posted in Ampac C3 Envelope Tamper Evident Pk20 envelopes and should be opened 30 minutes.
3. Where recording and additional assessment resources, props and equipment is required, it must be appropriately sanitised and in safe working order,
4. All assessment materials must be maintained securely until the commencement of the assessment,
5. The assessment area must be prepared in accordance with the appropriate requirements prior to the Learners' arrival,
6. Only authorised individuals will have access to the assessment area while it is being prepared and during the assessment facilitation/invigilation,
7. Assessments must be supervised in accordance with Forus Training Assessment Procedures,
8. Completed assessments will be held under secure, confidential conditions for the period specified and suitably disposed of thereafter; [P9 S9 C11 Security of assessment](#),
9. Assessment records will be stored securely with appropriate backup procedures; [P9 S9 C11 Security of assessment](#),
10. Assessment answer books and other assessment materials will be made available for review during internal and external verification if required.

NB: Forus Training may support a trainer's decision not to permit a learner to participate in an examination where the learner has not met minimum attendance requirements as a point of entry and/or, the trainer does not believe the learner to have acquired the necessary skills (in

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the case of a practical examination) to complete said examination successfully.

Examination Rules for Learners – Provided in advance of each examination

1. Learners will not be allowed to leave the examination environment and return during examination periods unless the invigilator is satisfied that the candidates need to leave is genuine and the integrity of the exam is not compromised,
2. Learners should raise a hand to attract the attention of the invigilator during the examination,
3. Learners are not permitted to talk during the examination or distract/disrupt other learners during a practical examination assessment,
4. Learners are not permitted to view another learner's work during the examination,
5. Forus Training operates a '100% clean desk' system in regards to written examinations. Learners are not permitted to have any materials with the exception of those necessary for the examination on their desk, e.g. writing material, calculator, reference material, except in the case of an open book exam,
6. In regards to written examinations, learners will be required to sit a distance of no less than 1.5 meters away from each other,
7. Learners are required to submit their exam paper in the time allocated and no later unless grounds for reasonable accommodation have been granted to that learner,
8. Learners are asked to leave the room quietly if they have completed their exam paper early,
9. Learners must complete and sign the learner declaration within their assessment brief and submit to the invigilator along with their exam paper,
10. Learners may be expelled from the examination centre if their behaviour, in the opinion of the invigilator is such as to jeopardize the successful conduct or integrity of the assessment.

Instructions to Assessors:

1. All examination papers and practical examination briefs should be prepared according

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to the approved and validated assessment design procedures for examinations,

2. All examination papers should be completed using Template for Examination Paper where possible.
3. Assessors must make themselves contactable on the day of an examination, should the invigilator/proctor have a query.

Use of Dictionaries in Examinations:

If a learner's level of English is such that he/she needs to use a bilingual dictionary during examinations, he/she must bring a signed [P9 S9 C6 Use of Dictionary Form](#) agreeing to the use of the dictionary during Examinations.

The learner must present the 'Use of Dictionary Form' to the examination invigilator at the examination.

1. The learner is responsible for bringing his/her own dictionary to the examination,
2. The use of an electronic dictionary, single language dictionary or thesaurus is not permitted,
3. Dictionaries should be word-to-word dictionaries so that a learner is not given an unfair advantage by using a dictionary with explanations,
4. Examination invigilators will check the dictionary beforehand to ensure that it is free of any notes or other unauthorised material.

Instructions for Examination Invigilators - Written Examinations:

1. Where possible trainers should not invigilate their own group for an examination,
2. Invigilators should be in the examination centre 30 minutes before the examination is due to commence,
3. Invigilators should receive the examination papers in a sealed envelope from the person designated to coordinate the examination and ensure that there are sufficient

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examination papers and blank answer books available,

4. The invigilator should check that the details on the envelope match the examination papers enclosed. If a discrepancy occurs, the papers should not be distributed and the person coordinating the examination should be contacted immediately,
5. If everything is in order, examination papers should be distributed and left faced down until the invigilator instructs learners to turn them over when the examination commences,
6. If a problem arises with an examination paper, it should be referred to the person responsible for coordinating the exam,
7. Invigilators must remain 'vigilant' for the duration of the examination and should not read or use headphones while invigilating,
8. Invigilators must ensure that each learner signs [P9 S7 Attendance Record](#). Following this, the invigilator must check the name against the learner photo identification and sign and date alongside the learner's examination declaration, to endorse learner identity,
9. The invigilator must make a note on the Examination Attendance Sheet where a Learner's identity cannot be verified and the person coordinating the examinations should be notified immediately,
10. Invigilators should check the completed answer books against the [P9 S7 Attendance Record](#),
11. The invigilator collects the papers at the end of the exam. The invigilator must return the papers with the Examination Attendance Sheet in the envelope provided, securely sealed with sellotape, to the person responsible for coordinating the exam. Any unused examination papers and answer books should be included also. These are posted to the Mullinagar office using a registered post.
12. Where a suspected incident of assessment malpractice occurs, the invigilator will complete [P9 S8 Alleged Assessment System Malpractice Report](#) and submit it to the person responsible for coordinating the examination,
13. The learner should be informed that a suspected incident of malpractice is being

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reported and they should be allowed to complete the examination.

Instructions for Examination Invigilators - Practical Examinations:

1. Where possible trainers should not invigilate their own group for an examination,
2. Only invigilators with subject matter expertise must invigilate practical assessments,
3. Invigilators should be in the examination centre 30 minutes before the examination is due to commence,
4. Invigilators should receive a full copy of the practical examination brief along with supplementary guidelines and specific marking criteria and marking breakdowns/rubrics upon appointment of the invigilation role,
5. The invigilator must liaise with the coordinator of the examination process to ensure that all props, resources and recording equipment required are available, sanitised and in safe working order. The coordinator is responsible for ensuring all is securely left in the practical examination environment,
6. The invigilator should check that all props, resources and any additional supports have been made available and are working. If a discrepancy occurs, the assessment should not be facilitated and the person coordinating the examination should be contacted immediately,
7. If everything is in order, the supporting examination papers should be distributed along with the instructions to learners to complete the examination declaration. This will include permission to record for assessment purposes,
8. If a problem arises with an examination paper, it should be referred to the person responsible for coordinating the exam,
9. Invigilators must remain 'vigilant' for the duration of the examination and should not read or use headphones while invigilating,
10. Invigilators must ensure that each learner signs P9 S7 Attendance Record. Following this, the invigilator must check the name against the learner photo identification and sign and date alongside the learner's examination declaration, to endorse learner identity,

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11. The invigilator must make a note on the Examination Attendance Sheet where a Learner's identity cannot be verified and the person coordinating the examinations should be notified immediately,
12. Invigilators should check the completed assessment documentation against the P9 S7 Attendance Record,
13. The invigilator will collect the examination papers at the end of the exam if the exam is held in another part of the country / not in a Forus Training Centre. The Invigilator should use registered/express post in a securely sealed with sellotape, to the person responsible for coordinating the exam. The invigilator must return the examination related papers with the Examination Attendance Sheet in the envelope provided, Any unused examination papers and answer books should be included also.
14. Where a suspected incident of assessment malpractice occurs, the invigilator will complete P9 S8 Alleged Assessment System Malpractice Report and submit it to the person responsible for coordinating the examination,
15. The learner should be informed that a suspected incident of malpractice is being reported and they should be allowed to complete the examination.

Instructions for Learners:

1. Learners are responsible for noting the date, time and location for each of their examinations,
2. Learners are responsible for bringing photo identification to the examination. Learners may not be permitted to participate in the examination if identity cannot be verified,
3. Learners are required to be in the examination centre 15 minutes prior to the commencement of the examination,
4. Learners will not be admitted to the examination centre later than 15 minutes after the commencement of the exam,
5. Learners will not be allowed to leave the examination centre until after 30 minutes from the commencement of the exam,

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6. Each learner must sign the appropriate sign in sheet for his/her group for each examination,
7. No books, notes, or written materials are allowed to be taken into the examination environment,
8. Coats and bags must be left in a designated area of the examination centre and all mobile phones should be switched off, not on silent,
9. Silence must be observed at all times and learners shall not communicate with, or aid another learner,
10. Learners should raise their hand to attract the attention of the supervisor,
11. A learner will not be allowed leave and return to the examination centre unless there is a genuine need and they are duly and appropriately supervised,
12. A learner must raise their hand when they want to leave the examination centre and their answer books/practical assessment documentation must be collected from their desk. If a learner leaves an examination early, the time must be noted by the invigilator on the sign in sheet. The learner is not allowed to return,
13. Learners must ensure that their name is on every piece of evidence handed up. Where more than one answer book is used the learner must indicate this on both books,
14. At the end of time-limited examinations and when informed to do so, learners must stop writing/performing immediately,
15. Learners cannot remove examination papers, answer books or any other form of assessment resource from the examination environment,
16. Learners must remain seated until all the examination papers and documentation have been collected,
17. Where there is a suspicion of assessment malpractice the invigilator will inform the learner that the incident will be reported and the learner will be allowed to continue with the examination. All instances of suspected reported assessment malpractice will be investigated in accordance with [P9 S8 Malpractice & Plagiarism](#).

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In the case of repeat and deferred examinations, a different examination paper and brief must be used.

6. RELATED DOCUMENTS AND COMMUNICATION

1. [Learner Handbook](#)
2. [Learner Code of Conduct](#)
3. [Trainer Handbook](#)
4. [Trainer Code of Conduct](#)
5. [P9 S9 C8 Online Exam Proctoring Policy](#)

7. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

It is the responsibility of everyone involved in Forus Training examination processes to read, understand and implement this policy.

In the event of natural disasters/forces of nature (such as extreme weather conditions or pandemics), Forus Training will not facilitate or require learners to attend a scheduled examination in a previously arranged learning environment. To safeguard assessment integrity, the Forus Training contingency policy on alternative assessment will activate. This will allow Forus Training to cancel the existing arrangements and, with options, provide appropriate opportunities for learners to complete the assessment process. This information will be communicated to learners as soon as it is possible to do so.

9. ACTIONS TO BE FOLLOWED IF THE POLICY IS NOT IMPLEMENTED

Where a complaint of misconduct or alleged breach of conduct by a learner, invigilator or person coordinating the examination process presents, the concerned person will be brought before the Head of Certification. The Head of Certification will take steps as soon as is practicable to arrange a meeting (i.e., a preliminary hearing) with the person concerned and will provide in advance details of the alleged offence in the form of a [P2 S2 Potential Improvement Notice \(PIN\)](#).

10. CONTACT INFORMATION

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