



**Making IT
good for society**

BCS Learning & Development

IT User Operational Requirements Manual

February 2022

Version 3.5

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1. Introduction

The purpose of this manual is to explain the operational requirements our Approved Centres must follow to deliver BCS and ICDL Foundation qualifications.

The Centre Manager is responsible for ensuring the Centre is compliant with the requirements of this manual.

It is essential that Centres meet the requirements set out in this document as failure to do so may impact on Learner results, or lead to sanctions being applied to the Centre. Please refer to section [29 Non-Compliance and Sanctions](#).

All registered staff involved in managing, administering and assessing our qualifications must read this manual before commencing activities. Specific information relating to our qualifications are detailed in the relevant Qualification Specification document on our website, www.bcs.org and on our Approved Centre Forum (ACF) which is only accessible to Approved Centre staff.

For details about the ACF please refer to section [3 Approved Centre Forum](#).

Any updates to this manual will be notified to Approved Centres by email to the Centre Manager and will also be uploaded to the ACF.

If there are any concerns or queries do get in touch with us, so we can provide support in delivering BCS qualifications. See section [2.2 Contacting BCS](#) for our contact details.

1.1 How to Use This Manual

This manual explains BCS requirements, so that we, and our Centres, remain compliant with our regulators.

The manual initially describes the Approved Centre's journey as a BCS Centre, explaining points such as legal requirements and what the Centre must have in place. It moves on to describe a Learner's journey through their registration, assessment, quality assurance and certification.

All requirements in the manual are further explained and demonstrated in the BCS training available on our website www.bcs.org/centraining, see section [8 Approved Centre Training](#) for further information about the available training.

There is sign-posting throughout the manual to highlight wherever a document is available for Approved Centres to use, to indicate where additional information is in another section in the manual, or to explain where user guides are available on the ACF. There is additional *help, in some sections, to provide examples of what we consider to be good practice.

The green sign below refers to a mandatory document or BCS policies available on the ACF.

ACF: News, Information & Support > Document Library

Document Name

The blue sign below refers to good practice documents, or to user guides or other websites. All documents are available on the ACF.

ACF: News, Information & Support > Document Library

Document Name

2. BCS Contact Details

This section explains the different ways in which Centre staff can contact our teams.

2.1 Contacting BCS

We are committed to providing Centres with an efficient, prompt and friendly service that will assist in the delivery and implementation of our qualifications. To find out more about the BCS approach, the Customer Service Statement can be downloaded from the ACF.

If you encounter a level of service that is below your expectations, we would like to know about it. **We are also interested in hearing your feedback if we exceed your expectations.** Please contact us by emailing centresupport@bcs.uk.

ACF: News, Information & Support > Document Library > Policy Documents

Customer Service Statement

2.2 Contacting BCS

We have specialised teams to support our Centres throughout their accreditation and delivery of BCS qualifications.

The table below shows what each of our teams can assist with, and how to contact them:

The Sales Team	The Operations Support Team	The Service Delivery Team	The Customer Service Team	The Channel Partner Quality Team
Qualification syllabus and options Pricing Quotations Placing Manual Orders	Automated Orders	Reasonable Adjustments	Learner Registrations Tests (sample/mock and live) Certifications Courseware	Centre Approval Re-Accreditation Staff Training Audits Audit Actions Breaches of Requirements
bcssales@bcs.uk	supportteam@bcs.uk	eprofessional@bcs.uk	centresupport@bcs.uk	cpqt@bcs.uk
			Live chat - Customer Service Live Chat (bcs.org)	Live chat - Customer Service Live Chat (bcs.org) – Select Training provider audit & Accreditation

01793 417445 Open from 8:45 am – 4:30 pm Monday to Friday		01793 417425 Open from 9:15 am – 5:15 pm Monday to Friday	01793 417530 Open from 8:30 am – 5:15 pm Monday to Friday	01793 417560 Open from 9:00 am – 5:00 pm Monday to Friday
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To ensure we can efficiently deal with all queries, it is important Centre staff quote the Centre identification number in all communications with us. This number will have been issued as part of the Centre Approval process. This number is not the National Centre Number (NCN) that may be used with other awarding organisations.

We aim to respond to all emails within five working days.

2.3 Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

The FAQ area of the BCS website is a fully searchable facility, based on inputting key words, and will provide answers to the most commonly asked questions.

The FAQ area can be accessed at www.bcs.org/faq.

If you do not find the answer to your question, please contact the Customer Service team using any of the methods from the above table.

3. Approved Centre Forum

The Approved Centre Forum (ACF) is a secure area of our website enabling registered Centre staff to carry out administration activities such as ordering tests and registering Learners. The ACF also contains information about our qualifications along with any updates we need to give Centres.

An important feature of the ACF is the 'Home' page. Any changes or news we wish to share with Centres will be displayed here. 'Compliance Corner' is a regular feature informing Centres of compliance breaches we are experiencing so that Centre staff can take the necessary steps to resolve if applicable. All updates are dated, which allows for easy navigation.

The table below provides an overview of what is available on the ACF:

Ordering & Administration	Learning & Assessment	News, Information & Support	Qualifications
Order items such as tests, courseware and registration credits Register Learners Generate reports Register Satellite Sites Apply for reasonable adjustments User guides and videos on administration processes	Links to approved courseware providers Details of each assessment method User guides for online learning platforms and automated assessment systems	Document library containing available documents and policies View case studies and marketing materials	Details of all our qualifications, including qualification specifications, syllabuses, tests and sample tests

3.1 Who Needs ACF Access?

- The Centre Manager is required to have access to the ACF, and is responsible for ensuring all information on the ACF is cascaded to staff who do not have access
- Administrators, or anyone who places orders or registers Learners
- Teachers need access to the ACF if they want to find information about qualification specifications or sample tests, alternatively the Centre Manager may cascade these items to Teachers.

3.2 How to Access the ACF

Use the following link www.bcs.org/acf and complete the registration process to request access to the ACF. Access will only be permitted for registered Centre staff. For security reasons staff details will be checked before access is confirmed. This process is usually completed within two working days.

3.2.1 Selecting a username and password

When registering to access the ACF, staff are required to provide a username and password. Usernames must not include the following: Admin, the Centre name, ICDL, Staff or Staff member's forenames. Shared or generic logins are not permitted, all ACF accounts must be individual for the registered staff member.

If usernames or passwords are forgotten, there is a link on the ACF login page which will generate an email response. A new account must not be created.

If any details need changing on the ACF, e.g. new email address or password, click the 'My details' link at the top right of the ACF home page.

4. Legal Obligations

BCS are required to comply with our regulators, and in doing so we are required to ensure our Approved Centres are compliant with the Law. The following section explains these requirements.

4.1 Regulators

As an Ofqual approved awarding organisation, how BCS quality assures the delivery of our qualifications is governed by the General Conditions of Recognition. This document is available from [Ofqual Handbook: General Conditions of Recognition - Guidance - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk)

Where our qualifications are also delivered in Wales, Northern Ireland and Scotland we are also governed by equivalent regulatory instruments from Qualifications Wales, the Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment (CCEA) and the Scottish Qualifications Authority (via SQA Accreditation). The relevant regulatory documents can be found on their websites.

If the Centre is delivering ICDL qualifications, our quality assurance is further guided by the ICDL Foundation's quality assurance standards.

4.2 Trademark and Logos

BCS Approved Centres are permitted to use Approved Centre logos, which must be the current versions.

ACF: News, Information & Support > Marketing Materials > Qualification Logos

A range of Logos, and guidelines for use are available

4.3 Approved Materials

Centre staff should ensure that all materials protected by copyright (e.g. ICDL Foundation approved courseware materials) are protected from resale. If staff become aware of materials being sold in an unauthorised manner, such as through the Internet, commercial or trading portals, please notify us by emailing centresupport@bcs.uk.

All materials provided by Centres are intended for use by registered Learners. If Centre staff wish to offer any Centre products commercially, the Centre Manager must request permission to do so by emailing centresupport@bcs.uk. We use a variety of techniques to monitor the Internet for unauthorised materials. Action will be taken against individuals or organisations that are found to have broken copyright rules.

4.4 Data Protection

The Centre Manager must ensure the Centre has the relevant data protection notices in place for Learners, so they know what will happen with their data.

4.5 Learning Records Service

The Learning Records Service provides Learners aged 14 and over with a unique learner number (ULN). When a ULN is supplied together with a BCS qualification registration, BCS use this information to validate the ULN with the Learning Records Service.

BCS supplies unit and qualification achievement data to the Learning Records Service.

4.6 Equalities

The Centre must meet current requirements for equalities legislation for staff and Learners. Centres are required to have an appropriate Equalities Policy in place which is issued to Learners.

ACF: News, Information & Support > Document Library > Policy Documents

Equal Opportunities and Diversity Policy

4.7 Safeguarding

Centres are required to have a Safeguarding Policy, which is issued to Learners, a Safeguarding Officer in place and all relevant staff to have received the required training.

4.8 Complaints

Centres are required to have a Complaints Procedure which is issued to Learners.

ACF: News, Information & Support > Document Library > Policy Documents

Complaints Policy

4.9 Financial Obligations

BCS require invoices issued to our Approved Centres to be paid within our standard term of 30 days. Sanctions may be applied if invoices are not paid on time.

Please refer to our Price List and Invoicing Policy and Sanctions Policy for further details.

ACF: News, Information & Support > Document Library > Price List

Price List and Invoicing Policy

ACF: News, Information & Support > Document Library > Policy Documents

Sanctions Policy

4.10 Insurance

Employee and public liability insurance documents are required to be displayed either in hard copy at the Centre or available in electronic format.

4.11 Policies

To help Centres ensure the correct policy standards are in place, we have provided a full set of policies which may be reviewed, adapted and incorporated into the Centre's own policies. Required Centre policies may need to be submitted prior to audit.

Centre policies must be available in English

The policies below are required by BCS:

Policy or procedure	What it contains	Links to section
Equalities policy	Details the Centre's commitment to provide equal opportunities and how this is demonstrated through working practices	4.6 Equalities
Reasonable adjustment policy	Details how Learner requirements are met within the centre May also include Special Considerations policy	15 Reasonable Adjustments and Special Considerations
Quality assurance policy	Details the Centre's commitment to quality assurance and references processes that support this, including internal verification	23 Quality Assurance
Safeguarding policy	Details the ATP's commitment to safeguarding candidates to include:	4.7 Safeguarding

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Training Provider is committed to protecting children, young people and vulnerable adults whilst they are a learner of the Training Provider The Training Provider actively seeks to demonstrate this commitment by adopting policies, codes of practice and action plans to remove any potential risks The Training Provider has a Safeguarding Officer in place <p>The Training Provider has the required training in place for all relevant staff</p>	
Complaints procedure	Details how Learner complaints are managed within the Centre prior to submitting any complaint to BCS	<u>4.8 Complaints</u>
Learner appeals procedure	Details how Learner appeals are managed within the Centre prior to submitting any appeal to BCS	<u>23.4.2 Learner appeals</u>
Malpractice and maladministration procedure	Details how malpractice and maladministration is managed within the Centre	<u>13 Malpractice and Maladministration</u>

4.12 Health and Safety

The assessment environment must meet current requirements for Health and Safety Legislation. Registered staff must ensure the environment meets these requirements before commencing any assessment. For details of current requirements staff should contact the organisation's Health and Safety representative or the Health and Safety Executive.

4.13 Disabled Access

The Centre Manager must ensure there is an environment which will allow access by a disabled Learner at every site where assessment is to be offered. If this is not possible, the Centre Manager must make alternative arrangements such as a different venue suitable for the Learner.

5. Staff Roles and Responsibilities

All staff members who are involved in the management, invigilation, marking or verification of tests or assessments must be registered with us. Staff may be registered in one or more roles.

Our requirements are:

- The Centre Manager is the single main point of contact
- Two Invigilators must always be registered
- Staff must complete BCS training relevant to their role(s).

5.1 How to Register Staff with BCS

The Centre Manager is required to email BCS cpqt@bcs.uk to:

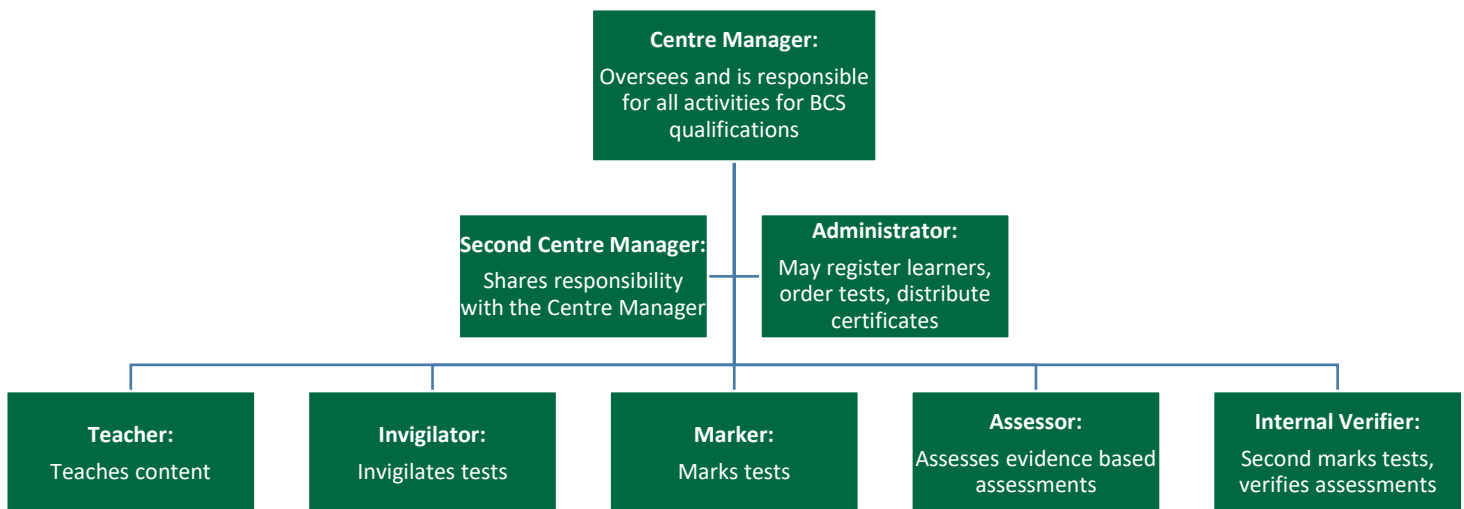
- Register a member of staff
- Remove a member of staff

- Amend the details for any member of staff.

Please be aware if a member of staff leaves the Centre, they may still have access to the ACF if BCS are not informed they have left.

5.2 Who's Who in The Assessment Process

The chart below provides an overview of the BCS roles that Centre staff may be registered for.



5.3 Centre Manager

A BCS Centre Manager is not required to be a manager in terms of the organisation, however, the BCS Centre Manager is responsible for the oversight of BCS qualifications throughout the approval period, ensuring all aspects of delivery meet our requirements.

5.3.1 Centre Manager responsibilities

The Centre Manager is the single main point of contact for us and is required to have an excellent working knowledge of the BCS qualifications offered by the Centre.

Responsibilities regarding Centre staff:

- Ensure all staff involved with BCS qualifications are registered with us
- Ensure staff details are updated with any changes, including when staff leave or are no longer involved with BCS qualifications
- Retain a workforce of an appropriate size and with the appropriate levels of competence for the qualifications delivered
- Ensure all staff have access to the current Operational Requirements Manual
- Ensure all staff have completed relevant BCS training appropriate to their roles
- Responsible for evidencing sufficient management controls of all operational activities relating to our qualifications, including overseeing the management of BCS registered staff.

Responsibilities regarding delivery of our qualifications:

- Responsible for the quality of teaching, training, testing and assessment
- Ensure the security of all assessment materials, including test banks, and procedures for issuing passwords to Learners and staff
- Ensure conflicts of interest relating to BCS qualifications are managed and recorded, see section [6 Conflict of Interest and Personal Interest Policy](#)
- Ensure all required internal verification, including observations of invigilation, is conducted, see section [23 Quality Assurance](#)
- Take all reasonable steps to protect the interests of Learners in the case of the withdrawal of the Centre delivering BCS qualifications
- Knowledge of all policies and procedures the Centre must adhere to
- Responsible for evidencing sufficient management controls of all operational activities relating to our qualifications, including regular reviews of qualification and assessment data.

Responsible for communicating with BCS and assisting us with any enquiries:

- Immediately notify us of any suspected malpractice or maladministration by email to cpqt@bcs.uk
- Assist us in carrying out any reasonable monitoring activities and assist in any investigations
- Provide reports to us detailing any testing anomalies outside of the Centre's operational profile, when requested
- Ensure we are notified prior to a change of Centre Manager
- Ensure a full handover is completed to the new Centre Manager.

5.4 Invigilator

Centres must have a minimum of two registered invigilators to operate. An invigilator is responsible for monitoring test sessions to ensure our test requirements are met.

The Centre Manager must ensure Invigilators:

- Are registered with BCS
- Complete the BCS Invigilator training before being permitted to invigilate
- Are observed at their first live test session, by a BCS registered member of staff, and the invigilator observation report is signed by both the invigilator and the observer
- Are observed annually, by a BCS registered member of staff, to ensure test regulations are being followed, and the invigilator observation report is signed by both the invigilator and the observer, see section [22.1 Observations of Invigilation](#)
- Do not receive any financial incentive, such as bonuses or performance related incentives for their invigilation, regardless of the test outcome, although they may receive standard fees for their invigilation
- If supplied by an organisation, that organisation must not receive any financial incentive for the invigilation, regardless of the test outcome.

Invigilators are responsible for ensuring all our requirements are met when preparing for, delivering, and following a test session. Please refer to section [19 Knowledge Modules](#)

Invigilator checklists have been provided in appendix C, D and E to help Invigilators meet our requirements.

To comply with our conflict of interest policy (see section [6 Conflict of Interest and Personal Interest Policy](#)), Invigilators are not permitted to be involved in any invigilation activity if they have had any prior involvement with the teaching of the Learners undertaking the test or if the Learner is known to them outside of the Centre.

5.5 Marker

Centres using manual tests must have at least two registered Markers. For further information about marking, please see section [21 Marking](#).

The Centre Manager must ensure Markers:

- Are registered with BCS
- Are trained in marking procedures before being permitted to mark any live tests
- Are occupationally competent.

A Marker is:

- Responsible for the accuracy of their own marking by following and applying the mark schemes
- Required to have all their marking second marked until the Centre Manager is satisfied with the Marker's accuracy
- Required to have samples of their marking second marked as requested by the Internal Verifier
- Required to be further trained to the required standard, if their marking is found to be unsatisfactory either by internal or external verification.

To comply with our conflict of interest policy (see section [6 Conflict of Interest and Personal Interest Policy](#)):

A Marker is **NOT** permitted to mark a test for any Learner who they have taught the unit being marked or if the Learner is known to them outside of the Centre.

5.6 Assessor

Centres using evidence based assessments must have at least one registered Assessor. For further information about assessment of evidence, please see section [21.1 Assessments](#).

The Centre Manager must ensure Assessors:

- Are registered with BCS
- Are occupationally competent.

An Assessor is:

- Required to review and assess all Learner evidence materials to ensure the learning outcomes and assessment criteria have been met
- Responsible for ensuring Learner evidence is authentic
- Required to complete and retain Learner records and documentation, such as Learner review documents, observation reports and details of professional discussions.

To comply with our conflict of interest policy (section [6 Conflict of Interest and Personal Interest Policy](#)):

An Assessor is **NOT** permitted to assess any unit for a Learner who they have taught the unit being assessed, or if the Learner is known to them outside of the Centre.

5.7 Internal Verifier

The purpose of Internal Verification is the maintenance of standards within the qualification. Centres using manual tests or evidence based assessments are required to demonstrate internal quality assurance of these processes.

The Centre Manager must ensure Internal Verifiers:

- Are registered with BCS
- Are occupationally competent.

An Internal Verifier of manual tests is:

- Required to second mark 100% of all tests marked by new markers within 20 working days of the date of the test
- Required to second mark all borderline tests within 20 working days of the date of the test
- Required to second mark an additional 10% of all tests annually
- Required to select their own sample for second marking
- Responsible for discussing and agreeing on final marks with the original marker.

See section [22.2 Internal Verification: Manual Tests](#) for more information on the second marking process.

An Internal Verifier of evidence-based assessments is:

- Required to ensure consistent standards for the qualification
- Responsible for verifying the quality of assessment practice of each Assessor
- Expected to highlight any trends and areas for improvement
- Required to develop and support Assessors.

See section [22.3 Internal Verification: Evidence Based Assessments](#) for more information on internal verification of assessments.

To comply with our conflict of interest policy (section [6 Conflict of Interest and Personal Interest Policy](#)):

An Internal Verifier is **NOT** permitted to carry out any verification on any unit for a Learner who is known to them outside of the centre.

5.8 Administrator

Staff who are involved with ordering courseware, qualifications or tests, or registering Learners may wish to register with BCS as an Administrator. Whilst registration is not mandatory, once registered it will allow access to the ACF, which is where ordering and registration is carried out.

Staff who are registered with us for other roles, such as Centre Manager or Invigilator, do not need to register as Administrator, as they can gain access to the ACF through those roles.

5.9 Teacher

BCS considers a Teacher to be anyone who has had any involvement with the teaching or support of BCS Learners. This may be, for example, Teacher, Trainer, Facilitator, Teaching Assistant or Cover Supervisor.

Teachers are not required to register with us but doing so will allow access to the automated test systems enabling Teachers to run reports or administer diagnostic assessments.

To comply with our conflict of interest policy (see section [6 Conflict of Interest and Personal Interest Policy](#)), Teachers are not permitted to be involved in any invigilation activity if they have had any prior involvement with the teaching of the learners undertaking the test or if the Learner is known to them outside of the Centre.

6. Conflict of Interest and Personal Interest Policy

BCS apply strict requirements to avoid and remove any potential conflict of interest. Not only does this help us to meet our regulatory requirements, it also helps to protect Centre staff.

BCS classifies any of the following as examples of potential conflicts of interest:

- A Teacher having any involvement with invigilation, marking or assessment for a Learner who they have taught for that unit
- An Invigilator invigilating a Learner known to them outside of the Centre
- A Marker marking a test for a Learner known to them outside of the Centre
- An Observer carrying out an observation of invigilation on an Invigilator known to them outside of the Centre.

The following requirements **MUST** be adhered to:

Teachers CAN	Teachers MUST NOT
Invigilate live assessments Second mark their own Learners' tests Internally verify their own Learners' assessments	Invigilate their own Learners Mark their own Learners' tests Assess their own Learners' assessments Have any involvement in the assessment, invigilation or marking of a Learner known to them outside of the Centre

The Centre Manager must ensure any conflict of interest in the Approved Centre is identified and recorded on the Conflict of Interest Record.

ACF: News, Information & Support > Document Library

Conflict of Interest Record

The Centre Conflict of Interest Policy for Regulated Qualifications can be found on the ACF

ACF: News, Information & Support > Document Library > Policy Documents

Centre Conflict of Interest Policy for Regulated Qualifications

7. Staff Testing

Staff testing is defined as any member of staff who works for the BCS Approved Centre taking a BCS test or assessment at the Centre where they work. For BCS and our Centres to remain compliant with our regulators we require additional measures to be put in place whenever any Centre staff are being tested:

- The Centre Manager must request permission to test staff prior to any live test taking place
- Only staff who have **NEVER** had any access or involvement with the teaching, invigilation, marking or administration of the BCS qualification, that they wish to be registered for, can complete the manual test. Staff members that have had access to the BCS ACF, may complete the online tests only. In all circumstances, prior approval must be gained and approved by BCS.
- Staff are required to take their tests with other Learners registered at the Centre, i.e. non-staff (if this is not possible, e.g. the Centre only tests internal staff, please contact the Channel Partner Quality Team for advice)
- Any test session which includes staff testing must have two Invigilators, and the two Invigilator names must be recorded in the central recording system, along with a record of their signatures
- Any records containing details of staff testing must be retained for a minimum of three years as they may be required for quality assurance purposes, see also section [9.3 Retention of Work](#).

To help Centre staff ensure these requirements are met, we recommend using the Test Register located in appendix F to record the required information.

If there are any staff at the Centre who may wish to take BCS qualifications in the future, they should not be allowed to be involved in any aspect of BCS teaching, administration or invigilation until they have completed their BCS qualification.

8. Approved Centre Training

The purpose of Centre training is to ensure Centre staff fully understand the operational requirements that must be followed to operate as an Approved Centre.

8.1 Training Format

The training comprises of a series of videos and supporting documentation outlining requirements contained within this manual. The videos are available on our [website](#) which makes them easily accessible to all Centre staff.

8.2 Who Must Complete Centre Training?

It is a mandatory requirement for staff registered in the following roles review all of the videos and supporting documentation in the sections indicated below. It is the Centre Managers responsibility to ensure all staff have completed the relevant training prior to carrying out their roles. Staff who have previously completed the online training are not required to review the videos, however as there are requirement changes within this manual, BCS recommends completion.

Role	Section/s to be completed
Centre Manager Second Centre Manager	Centre manager and administrator Invigilator Marker and internal verifier (if manual testing is offered within the centre)
Administrator	Centre manager and administrator
Invigilator	Invigilator
Marker Internal Verifier	Marker and internal verifier

Further support is available for staff in the appendices section at the back of this manual. BCS recommends providing appendices C, D, E and F to Invigilators.

8.3 On-Site Training

On-site training is available for Centres who wish to arrange a bespoke training day for their staff. This may take the format of the general training detailed above or may be tailored to meet the needs of the Centre. Further information can be obtained by contacting us at cpqt@bcs.uk.

9. Record Keeping

BCS Approved Centres are required to maintain a range of records relating to the BCS qualifications the Centre offers. Whilst much of this is electronic, such as a spreadsheet to record all test data, some will be paper-based, such as signed confirmation of certificate distribution. It is important the relevant Centre staff record all the information required as it will help us, and the Centre Manager, with queries, either during an audit, or when we complete certificate validation checks.

9.1 Central Recording System

Centres must have a central recording system in place to record all details of Learners, assessments and certification. If there are Satellite Sites, the Approved Centre must be able to access and collate all records in relation to BCS qualifications.

If the Centre delivers automated testing, it is not permitted to rely solely on any third-party system to record data. It is important that all data is recorded to ensure any data provided to BCS or to an automated test provider's system is accurate.

ACF: News, Information & Support > Document Library

Central Record

An exemplar recording document is available for download from the Document Library of the ACF which may be adapted and adopted by the Centre. Alternatively, Centres may use their own systems providing all data requested in the table below is recorded and available for checking at audit:

Learner details	Assessment details	Certification details
Title	Date	Qualification completion date
Forename	Start time	Certificate received date
Surname	Finish time	Certificate dispatch / collection date
House number or name	Duration (this may be a calculated field)	
Postcode	Test version number	
Proof of identification, see section 14.2.2 Learner identification	Outcome (pass/fail, percentage or grade)	
Date of birth	Invigilator names	
Gender	Proof of identification at test / assessment	
Ethnicity	Marker / Assessor name	
Qualification registered for	Second Marker / Internal Verifier name	
Registration date	Result of second mark (mark or percentage)	
Registration number		
Guided learning hours		
Reasonable adjustments made		

9.2 Data Backups

The Centre Manager must ensure all data is backed up and is available to BCS on request. The data should be remotely accessible if required. The central recording system must be retained for the duration of the Centre's approval period. Data may be archived on secure servers but must be accessible if required.

The Centre Manager should ensure prior to secure disposal of the data records that no external organisations, such as regulators or funding agencies, require access.

9.3 Retention of Work

Centres must keep fully auditable records of all assessments, both passes and fails, for three years after completion. This is for audit purposes and to assist with the fulfilment of our malpractice policy. For each Learner, the following must be stored:

- A copy of each question paper issued to Learners
- The completed mark sheets or evidence record sheets for all tests and assessments
- All outputs for each assessment (in electronic format)

- All documented evidence of internal verification
- Any requests for reasonable adjustments or special consideration
- Any details of test incidents
- A record of certificate receipt by the Learner, to include date received / or sent and the Learner's signature if collected.

For external verification and audit purposes, BCS will request a sample of test or assessment materials to be submitted electronically, therefore BCS require all assessment materials to be stored electronically after completion.

For more information about external verification, please refer to section [27 External Verification](#).

For more information about audit, please refer to section [28 Audit](#).

9.4 Out of Hours Testing and Assessment

If tests or assessments are conducted outside of what is deemed normal working hours for the Centre, out of hours sign in sheets must be completed and retained for ALL sessions. The sign in sheets will be requested at audit. A template sign in sheet is available from the Document Library of the ACF, which may be used, or the Centre's own record providing it contains the following:

- Centre name
- Centre number
- Invigilator name(s)
- Invigilator signature(s)
- Learner names
- Learner signatures
- Date
- Time of arrival and time of departure.

ACF: News, Information & Support > Document Library

Out of Hours Record Sheet

9.4.1 What does out of hours mean?

It is the Centre Manager's responsibility to know what is classed as normal working hrs for the Centre.

For guidance, BCS offer the following examples of what may be meant by out of hours for Centre types:

- If the Centre is a school, and Learners attend school from 8:00 am to 3:30 pm on a Monday to Friday, out of hours for this Centre would be before 8:00 am, after 3:30 pm, Saturdays, Sundays and school holidays when the school would not normally be open to Learners
- If the Centre is a private training provider, and opening hours for Learners is 9:00 am to 5:00 pm on a Monday to Friday and Saturday 9:00 am to 12:30 pm, out of hours for this Centre would be before 9:00 am, and after 5:00 pm during the week, and before 9:00 am and after 12:30 pm on a Saturday, and Sundays

- If the Centre a college, and opening hours are 8:30 am to 9:00 pm Monday to Friday, out of hours for this Centre would be before 8:30 am, after 9:00 pm during the week, and Saturdays, Sundays, and college holidays when the college would not normally be open to Learners.

If the Centre Manager is unsure whether the out of hours' sheets should be completed, please contact cpqt@bcs.uk for guidance.

9.5 Guided Learning Hours

The guided learning hours for each of our qualifications is noted in the Qualification Specifications and our website www.bcs.org.

Learners are required to meet the minimum guided learning hours to protect the integrity of our qualifications. The completed guided learning hours for each Learner must be recorded in the central recording system, as this is needed for audit.

Centres may also wish to demonstrate coverage of the content and hours using any of the following:

- Timetables, confirming the course hours
- Registers, confirming Learner attendance on the course
- A record of learning for individual Learners
- A scheme of work for the course
- Records of any prior learning that contribute to the learning hours, for example a scheme of work which demonstrates coverage of the learning outcomes and the hours delivered
- Teaching methods used, with sample lessons or learning materials.

10. Assessments in Alternative Sites

Approved Centres are permitted to carry out assessments in alternative locations which we define as either Satellite or Off-site depending on the status of the venue, and for how long assessment is taking place in the venue.

10.1 Satellites

A Satellite Site could be, for example, an adult learning centre if the Centre is a college, another academy if the Centre is a multi-academies trust, a hospital site if the Centre is an NHS Centre, or a training site if the Centre is a private training organisation.

The following applies to Satellite Sites:

- The site must be part of the Approved Centre's organisation, or linked in some way
- The site must be registered with us as a Satellite Site, by completing the online form on the ACF
- There must be a main point of contact registered at the Satellite Site
- There must be a minimum of two registered Invigilators at the Satellite Site
- All assessments and records must be held at the Approved Centre
- The Centre Manager must evidence how they will oversee the running of the Satellite Site.

Please note, if a new Satellite Site is registered which exceeds the threshold of five Satellites in total, the Centre Manager must contact the Channel Partner Quality team at cpqt@bcs.uk

ACF: News, Information & Support > Document Library > Policy Documents

Price List and Invoicing Policy

as this will affect the re-accreditation fees. See our Price List and Invoicing Policy for further information. Centres will receive additional audits if more than five Satellite Sites are registered.

To register a Satellite Site, complete the online form on the ACF.

10.2 Off-site

An Off-site venue could be, for example, a Learner's house, a hospital, a client site or

ACF: Ordering & Administration > Satellite Sites > Register New Satellite Sites

organisation or any other location that is not the Approved Centre address or a registered Satellite Site of the Approved Centre.

The following applies to Off-site venues:

- The Centre Manager must request advance permission to offer assessments in any venue that is not the Approved Centre or a registered Satellite Site of the Centre
- The Off-Site Assessment Form must be completed every time an assessment takes place at an Off-site location, and this must be retained for audit
- An Off-site venue should only be used once, under special circumstances. Should an off-site venue be required for more than one occasion it must be registered as a Satellite Site (if it is not appropriate to register the venue as a Satellite Site the Centre Manager should contact us).

To request permission to test Off-site, email cpqt@bcs.uk.

11. What You Must Request Advance Authorisation For

Before any of the activities in the table below are carried out, the Centre Manager must contact us for authorisation. Refer to the applicable section, referenced in the second column for details on how to do this.

Activity	Refer to section
To apply for reasonable adjustment to the assessment process for a Learner, such as extra time or a reader	<i>15.1 Reasonable Adjustment Request</i>
To carry out tests or assessments at an Off-site location	<i>10.2 Off-site</i>
To continue testing a learner who has failed four tests in a unit	<i>19.7 Resits of Live Tests</i>
To use barriers or dividers in the test room if minimum spacing requirements cannot be met	<i>19.2.4 Spacing of computers</i>
To test staff who work at the Centre	<i>7 Staff Testing</i>

12. Reporting To BCS

As soon as the Centre Manager becomes aware of any of the below, please notify us by following the instructions in the relevant section.

Activity	Refer to section
If there are suspicions that malpractice or maladministration has occurred in the Centre	13 Malpractice and Maladministration
If the security of test materials has been compromised	12.1 Breaches in Test Security
If there has been a serious incident during an exam	19.5 Serious Incidents
If a Learner has exhausted the Centre appeals process and wishes to appeal to us	23.4.2 Learner appeals
If there is a requirement to apply for special consideration for a Learner	15.2 Special Consideration Request
If the Centre changes its address	12.3 Change of Centre Address
If the Centre Manager changes	12.2 Change of Centre Manager
If there are any changes to the Centre's invoicing details	12.4 Change to Invoicing Details
If the Centre is closing or BCS accreditation is no longer required	12.5 Centre Withdrawal or Closure

12.1 Breaches in Test Security

The Centre Manager is required to notify BCS should there be any breaches in test security. Please contact the Channel Partner Quality Team on cpqt@bcs.uk. See also section [19.5 Serious Incidents](#).

12.2 Change of Centre Manager

As the Centre Manager is the single main point of contact between BCS and the Approved Centre, BCS must be notified of any change to Centre Manager immediately. If we are not notified the Centre may miss important communications or updates.

To notify us of a change in Centre Manager please contact the Channel Partner Quality Team on cpqt@bcs.uk.

It is beneficial to the Centre if there is a Centre Manager handover to ensure continuity of operational requirements.

A document is available to help new Centre Managers in appendix B.

12.3 Change of Centre Address

If the Centre is changing its address, the Centre Manager must notify us by emailing the Channel Partner Quality Team on cpqt@bcs.uk.

12.4 Change to Invoicing Details

If there are any changes to invoicing details the Centre Manager must notify us by emailing the Channel Partner Quality Team on cpqt@bcs.uk.

12.5 Centre Withdrawal or Closure

If there is a requirement to withdraw from BCS Approved status or the Centre has ceased trading, the Centre Manager must complete the Centre Closure Form available via the Approved Centre Forum (Home > News, Information & Support > Document Library > Centre Closure Form). Then send by email to cpqt@bcs.uk.

BCS reserves the right to close a Centre if it fails to pay any sum owing to BCS within the standard payment period (30 days of invoice).

ACF: Information, News & Support > Document Library > Policy Documents

Qualification Withdrawal Notice Centre Form

13. Malpractice and Maladministration

The Centre must have arrangements in place to prevent instances of malpractice and maladministration. BCS must report any adverse effects arising from malpractice or maladministration to our regulators.

For us to remain compliant with our regulators, Centre Managers must:

- Have a malpractice and maladministration policy or procedure
- **Immediately** report suspected malpractice or maladministration to BCS
- Assist BCS with any investigations.

A failure to report suspected or actual malpractice or maladministration to BCS constitutes malpractice.

To report any instance of malpractice or maladministration, please email cpqt@bcs.uk.

ACF: News, Information & Support > Document Library > Policy Documents

Malpractice and Maladministration Policy

14. Orders and Registrations

The following section explains ordering, how to register Learners, and what information is required to register them.

14.1 Orders

If the Centre is a new BCS Approved Centre, the first order will need to be placed through the Centre's Sales contact. This is to ensure the order processing works correctly for the Centre.

Except for a Centre's first order, all BCS qualification registrations must be ordered on the ACF.

For full details on how to order there is a user guide on the ACF.

ACF: Ordering & Administration

Ordering BCS Registrations – User Guide and

Ordering BCS Registrations – Watch the video

14.1.1 Does BCS offer refunds?

BCS does not offer refunds on registrations, courseware licenses or test credits.

Once a registration or courseware licence has been assigned to a Learner it cannot be deleted, removed or assigned to another Learner. The only exception is if a registration has been duplicated by mistake.

If a Learner leaves the Centre, the Centre Manager should ensure the Learner is provided with their BCS identification number, so they may continue their qualification at another BCS Approved Centre.

14.2 Registrations

A Learner must be registered for the qualification they wish to take before any assessment can commence. At first registration with BCS a Learner will be given a BCS identification number, which is a unique number for all BCS qualifications a Learner takes. A Learner can be registered for multiple BCS qualifications, using the same BCS identification number.

14.2.1 What information is needed to register Learners?

Before a Learner is registered, Centre staff must ensure:

- The Learner is registered before the date of their first live test or assessment
- The Learner's identification document(s) is checked and recorded, see section [14.2.2 Learner identification](#)
- The Learner's official name as shown on their identification is used to register them
- The centre address details are used if registering a learner under the age of 18.

The following information is requested when registering Learners:

- ULN (Unique Learner Number from Personal Learner Record)
- Learner Title
- Learner Forename*

- Learner Surname*
- Date of Birth*
- Gender*
- House Number or Name*
- Postcode*
- Telephone Number
- Email
- Ethnicity*

*Indicates mandatory field

14.2.2 Learner identification

All Learners, except school children, known staff or residents of HMP, must provide identification prior to registration for any BCS qualification. Learners are required to provide either one item from List 1, or two items from List 2.

Identification seen for each Learner must be recorded on the central recording system, see section [9.1 Central Recording System](#), as this information is required for compliance and audit purposes.

List 1: One item required
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Passport ▪ EC identity card ▪ Full driver's licence with photograph
List 2: Two current items required
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Standard acknowledgement letter (held by people seeking asylum) ▪ Rent book or tenancy agreement ▪ Bank card: credit, charge, cheque guarantee, debit (in date) ▪ Bank or building society book ▪ Cheque book ▪ Letter showing home address ▪ Full driver's licence without photograph ▪ Benefit letter or agreement ▪ Services identity card ▪ Utility bill ▪ Original birth certificate ▪ Marriage certificate ▪ Travel pass with photograph ▪ Any other form of identification

14.2.3 How to register Learners

Learners are registered using the 'Ordering & Administration' section of the ACF. Centre staff can check how many available registration credits there are by selecting 'Unused Registrations'. Providing there are sufficient available registration credits, Learners can be registered using the 'Registration' link.

Learners may be registered individually, using a CSV file in a pre-defined format, or by carrying out a bulk import.

User guides containing full instructions on how to register Learners can be found on the ACF.

ACF: Ordering & Administration

Registering Learners – User Guide

Registering Learners – Watch the video

14.2.4 Amendments to a Learner registration

Amendments to registration details can only be made in the following circumstances:

- If there is an error, and we are informed of this prior to certification
- If the Learner changes their name, we are informed prior to certification, and we are informed of what official document has been seen confirming the name change.

In both cases, email us at centresupport@bcs.uk indicating the changes required.

BCS reserve the right to apply an administration fee for amending registrations. Full details of fees can be found on the price list on the ACF.

ACF: News, Information & Support > Document Library > Price List

Price List and Invoicing Policy

14.3 RQF Credit Transfer Process

If a Learner is registered for a BCS qualification and they already have a prior achievement of one or more of the units for that qualification, the unit(s) can be marked as complete using the RCF Credit Transfer process. A guide containing instructions on how to do this can be found on the ACF.

ACF: Ordering & Administration

RQF Credit Transfer – User Guide and

RQF Credit Transfer – Watch the video

Please note that qualifications being credited will usually have a three-year time limit that begins from the date of the first unit pass therefore if a unit is credited with a prior achieved result from two years ago, the Learner will now only have one year remaining to complete the qualification.

15. Reasonable Adjustments and Special Considerations

BCS seeks to ensure there are no unnecessary barriers for Learners by providing reasonable adjustments or special considerations where relevant. We also ensure any request for Learners preserves the validity, reliability and integrity of the qualification.

Centres have a responsibility to ensure effective internal procedures are in place for identifying any such Learner need. These procedures must also comply with the requirements of the Equality Act 2010.

Information about a person's physical or mental health is regarded as 'sensitive personal data'. Staff are required by the Data Protection Act to take additional precautions when dealing with such data, which must be securely stored at the Centre. When requesting a reasonable adjustment or special consideration we may require information or supporting evidence to be sent to us, but we will inform the Centre if this is the case.

ACF: News, Information & Support > Document Library > Policy Documents

Documentation relating to equal access can be found in our: *Reasonable Adjustment Policy*

15.1 Reasonable Adjustment Request

Requests for reasonable adjustments must be made by a registered member of staff, at least 10 working days prior to the BCS live test taking place, using the online request form on the ACF.

ACF: Ordering & Administration > Reasonable Adjustments

Online Request Form

Consent Form

Before a request is submitted, we would expect the Learner to have completed the following criteria:

- The Learner is registered with us
- The Learner has completed a sample or mock test
- The Learner has provided their consent by signing the BCS Consent Form, available on the ACF.

The BCS Consent Form for each Learner must be retained in your centre as they will be checked as part of your audit.

Please note, the amount of extra time needed should be specified by Centre staff, up to a limit of 100%, using objective evidence based on the Learner's experience in a sample or mock test. Other reasonable adjustments may be requested, such as applying for a reader for the Learner. Please refer to guidance documents on the ACF.

ACF: News, Information & Support, Document Library > Accessibility Resources

A range of guidance documents

15.2 Special Consideration Request

Requests for special considerations must be made by a registered member of staff by email to centresupport@bcs.uk.

You must submit a request for special consideration no later than five working days after the assessment.

Requests for special consideration may only be accepted after the results of the assessment have been released to the Learner in the following circumstances:

- The application has been overlooked at the Centre, and the oversight has been confirmed by the Centre Manager
- Medical evidence comes to light about a Learner's condition, which demonstrates the Learner must have been affected by the condition at the time of the assessment, even though the problem revealed itself only after the assessment
- For automated tests, where results are immediately available to Learners.

15.3 Supporting Evidence

If we require supporting evidence before a final decision can be made about a reasonable adjustment or special consideration, we will inform the Centre Manager by email.

Supporting evidence should be sent by email to centresupport@bcs.uk using a password protected zip file.

Where Centre staff can verify evidence of the disability or difficulty, and where the implications are clear, such as for Learners who are registered blind, or partially sighted, or with physical difficulties or a profound hearing impairment, there is no requirement to provide further evidence.

Where the implications of the disability or need are not apparent, we will expect the Centre to have supporting evidence of the Learner's performance in an assessment. This would cover requests regarding issues such as:

- A specific learning difficulty, e.g. dyslexia
- English as a foreign language
- A temporary illness or injury.

The Centre Manager must securely retain a copy of the supporting evidence documentation. An Auditor may request to see this evidence as part of an audit.

15.4 Confidentiality

BCS will keep in confidence all correspondence and documentation it receives, as stated within the Approved Centre Contract.

16. Test Security

It is the responsibility of the Centre Manager to ensure all staff are compliant with test security.

BCS live tests **must** be kept secure.

Throughout this manual there are specific instructions that must be followed to protect the test content. The general principles that must be adhered to are:

- Locations used for storing test papers must be secure
- Content must remain secure whenever the test papers are in transit
- Only staff who need access to the test papers to fulfil their role should have it
- Staff who have knowledge of the test questions must never share this information
- Procedures for issuing passwords for an automated test system to staff and Learners must be secure, see section [17.1 Passwords](#).
- Staff are not permitted to view live tests for teaching purposes. The information required can be found on the syllabus

Any breaches in the security of the tests **MUST** be reported to BCS as soon as identified, see section [12.1 Breaches in Test Security](#).

17. Automated Testing

Automated test systems are available for many BCS qualifications and units. These systems provide an administration system for allocating tests to Learners and reporting on Learner progress. Details of the automated test systems, and support with using them, is available on the ACF.

ACF: Learning & Assessment > User Guides

When a Learner completes a test using an automated system, all results are submitted directly to BCS. Centre staff can review the results on the ACF, as well as on the automated system.

ACF: Ordering & Administration > Reports

17.1 Passwords

Procedures for issuing passwords to staff and Learners, that provide access to systems that hold the test questions, must be secure. All users, Invigilators and Learners, of the automated test system must have individual logons with passwords known only to themselves.

BCS require the following processes to be implemented:

- The first time a Learner or Invigilator logs into the automated test software they **MUST** be instructed to change their given password
- Centre staff **MUST** instruct Learners on what constitutes a strong password, see below for details
- Passwords **MUST NOT** be written down or stored by Centre staff.

What constitutes a strong password?

BCS suggests the following:

- A mixture of lower case, capitals, numbers, symbols
- At least eight characters long
- A password that is not used for anything else.

If a Learner forgets their password it must be reset, either by themselves using their email, or by Centre staff. If the password is reset by Centre staff, the Learner **MUST** be instructed to change it again, so only the Learner knows it.

Any breaches in the security of the tests **MUST** be reported to BCS as soon as identified, see section [12.1 Breaches in Test Security](#) for details.

18. Manual Testing

Manual testing is an off-line method where Learners undertake the tasks for each question using a live application.

To deliver manual testing the Centre is required to have a minimum of two Invigilators, two Markers and one Internal Verifier. See section [5 Staff Roles and Responsibilities](#).

18.1 Manual Test Bank

Manual test banks are available for download from the ACF. The Centre Manager must request the password from BCS at centresupport@bcs.uk, keep this secure, and only provide it to registered staff who need access to the test bank, e.g. Invigilators, Markers and Internal Verifiers.

Test banks are provided in a range of Microsoft Office formats. If the Centre needs to use a different format than those listed on the ACF, please contact the Customer Service Team to request an alternative.

The test banks are provided as follows:

- Test papers, provided electronically in portable document format (PDF)
- Mark schemes, provided electronically in Microsoft Excel format
- Work files, provided electronically for Learners' use during tests.

Please note the following:

- Test materials remain the property of BCS
- Test materials must not be downloaded and stored. They must be downloaded from the ACF each time they are required, to ensure Learners have the most up to date tests available
- All test materials, including work files, printouts, mark sheets and question papers, must be kept secure
- Live tests are not permitted to be used as sample papers
- Staff are not permitted to view test papers for teaching purposes. The information required can be found on the syllabus

Manual tests completed by Learners must be marked by registered Markers, and are subject to internal verification by registered Internal Verifiers. Please see sections [21 Marking](#) and [22.2 Internal Verification: Manual Tests](#) for further information.

To help BCS Learners prepare for their live tests, BCS provide a range of sample test materials on the ACF which are freely available.

ACF: Qualifications > *Select the relevant qualification* > Sample Tests

19. Test Regulations

This section explains BCS requirements for managing test sessions from the preparation of the test environment, checking Learner requirements are met, preparing and briefing Learners, handling incidents and post-test requirements.

Documents are available for the Invigilator in appendix C, D, E and F. It is recommended these are provided to Invigilators to help them prepare and deliver test sessions to meet BCS requirements.

19.1 Test Environment

Testing can only take place within an environment that meets our requirements. The Centre Manager is responsible for ensuring the following are considered prior to allowing testing:

Requirement	See Section
Safety of the test environment	4.12 Health and Safety
Disabled access	4.13 Disabled Access
Spacing of computers	19.2.4 Spacing of computers
Invigilator to Learner ratios	20.1 Test Environment
Noise and other possible distractions	20.1 Test Environment
If using a Satellite, it is registered with us prior to testing	10.1 Satellites
If Off-site testing, authorisation has been given by BCS prior to testing	10.2 Off-site

Learners must be given every opportunity to work without disturbance or distractions. Test sessions must be conducted in a quiet environment, ideally a closed room. BCS recommend:

- There are no other activities taking place in the test room
- There are no Learners present who are not taking live tests
- There are no Learners present taking mock tests.

When preparing the test environment, the Invigilator must:

- Ensure a wall clock is visible to all Learners and the Invigilator
- Check the date and time is accurate on all computers being used
- Ensure any system checks have been completed
- Ensure there is a minimum of 1.25 metre spacing between the computers, or ensure Learners are sitting at alternate machines

- Ensure the maximum ratio of 1 Invigilator to 20 Learners is not exceeded
- Ensure the room is in a quiet location and free from external noise
- Ensure the walls of the room do not display information that may help Learners with test questions.

Please see section [19.2.5 What does a good test room look like?](#) for an example of preparing a good test environment.

19.2 Test Preparation

Learners have a designated time to complete each test (for full details see the relevant Qualification Specification) this time includes reading time.

The Invigilator must check all Learner requirements below are satisfied.

19.2.1 Learner requirements

Prior to permitting Learners to test, the Invigilator must:

- Ensure all Learners are registered with BCS for the correct qualification or unit
- Check the earliest test passed is no more than three years before the current test day
- Ensure no Learner is taking a resit too early, Learners are not permitted to resit a test until at least one full calendar day has passed, see section [19.7 Resits of Live Tests](#)
- Ensure if any Learner is taking their fifth or more attempts at a unit, that authorisation has been given by BCS, see section [19.7 Resits of Live Tests](#)
- Ensure no Learner is attempting to take a unit stream more than once, unless authorisation has been given by BCS, see section [19.7 Resits of Live Tests](#)
- Ensure if a Learner is taking an *Improving Productivity using IT* test, it is a different application for each attempt
- Check if any Learners have additional time or other reasonable adjustments authorised by BCS
- Check and record the identity of all Learners.

A Test Register document is available in appendix F which BCS recommend is used to record details of the test session. This is not mandatory, but may assist with updating the central recording system, and may help with any queries during an audit.

19.2.2 Manual tests: additional requirements

- Ensure Learners only use approved test materials and storage media
- Ensure Learners have access to all the required work files (either on a removable storage device or a secure network area, not the Learners' normal network areas)
- Label any storage devices with the Learner's name and BCS identification number
- Ensure test materials are securely stored until the time of the test
- Invigilators must randomly select the test stream from the bank of test papers on the day of the test, and ensure that all test papers versions are used.
- When selecting the *Improving Productivity* unit, the application type, i.e WP, SS, PR & DB is to be randomly selected, and not chosen to the learner's strength.

19.2.3 Automated tests: additional requirements

- If using an Invigilator key, the Invigilator responsible for the test session must create it

- If not using an Invigilator key, the Invigilator must login to the automated test system with their own secure login details to start Learner tests.
- When selecting the Improving Productivity unit, the application type, i.e WP, SS, PR & DB is to be randomly selected, and not chosen to the learner's strength

19.2.4 Spacing of computers

Learners **must** be spaced a minimum of 1.25 metres apart, and not be overlooked by other Learners. This distance is measured from the outer edge of one monitor to the next nearest monitor. This does not apply to monitors positioned back to back.

When mandatory spacing cannot be met, alternate machines **must** be used.

There must be sufficient computers to test the cohort with the required spacing.

If the Centre needs to use barriers or dividers to separate Learners, the Centre Manager must contact BCS for authorisation. Staff must ensure invigilation can still be conducted effectively with barriers or dividers, and this may result in the need for extra Invigilators.

Please email cpqt@bcs.org for authorisation on using barriers or dividers.

19.2.5 What does a good test room look like?

An ideal test room is a closed room, in an area of the Centre which is free from external noise or distractions. Computers are spaced at least 1.25 metres apart, or alternate computers are used. There is a maximum of 20 Learners in the room taking live tests with at least 1 Invigilator. There are no other activities taking place in the room at the same time. The walls in the room are clear, or have no material displayed on them which could help the Learners in the test. There are no distractions with Learners or staff entering or leaving the room during the test session. There is a clear fire exit route, and no trip hazards.

19.3 Learner Briefing

At the start of each test session the Invigilator is responsible for ensuring all Learners are made aware of the test requirements.

Please refer to appendix E for a recommended text the Invigilator could read out to all Learners at the start of each test session. This mirrors the requirements in section [19.4.1 Test requirements](#).

19.4 During Test Sessions

Invigilators must monitor all test sessions to ensure they meet our test requirements below. The Invigilator must be present in the test room, from test preparation through to test completion. Any issues experienced during a test session must be recorded on the Test Incident Log and remedial action must be undertaken.

Serious incidents must be reported to the Centre Manager immediately.

See sections [19.4.2 Test incidents](#) and [19.5 Serious Incidents](#).

19.4.1 Test requirements

- Tests must be conducted under test conditions

- Learners are not permitted to speak to each other or ask the Invigilator about test questions
- Learners may only address the Invigilator in case of hardware or software failure
- Learners are not permitted to observe any other Learner's work
- Learners are not permitted to use a calculator or any other electrical device such as a personal laptop or music player
- Mobile phones and smartwatches are strictly prohibited, these must be handed in before the live test commences
- Learners are not permitted to use books or any other help during the test
- Learners are not permitted to leave the test room, unaccompanied during the test
- Toilet breaks are not permitted, if a Learner leaves for a toilet break, they must not be permitted to return, unless authorised by BCS as a reasonable adjustment
- Learners must be made aware of the naming conventions as file names, file extensions, folders, directories, URLs, hyperlinks, image links, web pages, email messages, field names and text insertions are presented in **Bold** or **Bold italic**
- Learners must be made aware that file names are as requested in the test paper, they must not rename or amend file names, unless instructed to do so, as this will lose marks
- Learners must be given a five-minute reminder before the end of the test
- Learners should be advised to make a note of the start and finish times
- Learners must be told if there is any breach to any of these regulations the test will be terminated and invalidated
- Advise Learners if they are leaving the room after they have finished, they must keep noise levels to a minimum to avoid distracting other Learners who are still working.

If Learners are taking a manual test, there are additional requirements:

- Learners must only use the test papers and folders, or drives specified
- Learners are permitted to use the in-built help facility, but they must not use an Internet browser to search for further help
- Learners must not remove any test materials from the test room
- Learners must hand in all test materials before leaving the test room.

19.4.2 Test incidents

Any interruption or incident during a test session must be documented by the Invigilator and reported to the Centre Manager. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Technical problems
- Building evacuations
- Medical emergencies
- Anything that requires Invigilator intervention.

ACF: News, Information & Support > Document Library

Test Incident Log

Interruptions and incidents may be recorded on the Test Incident Log, available from the ACF, or the Centre's own central record provided it contains the same information. The following must be recorded for any incident:

- Learner ID / ULN
- Learner Name
- Unit
- Test Date
- Test Start Time
- Time of Incident
- Duration of Incident
- Invigilator Name
- Details of Incident.

These records may be requested by BCS for audit purposes, or during a Learner appeal or malpractice investigation.

If there is a need to evacuate the test room whilst Learners are taking tests, Learners may resume the tests after the evacuation providing:

- All test materials were secured
- Learners were separated from other Learners and were not permitted to speak to anyone during the evacuation period
- Learners were not able to access teaching, learning or revision material.

The Invigilator should use their professional judgement to determine whether any Learner has been disadvantaged by the evacuation. The Invigilator should determine whether the Learner can continue with the test, or if they should be provided with a new one.

If the test cannot be resumed on the same day, the test must be ended. A live test cannot be carried over and resumed on another day.

In all cases the interruption or incident **must** be recorded.

Should the incident be serious, please refer to section [19.5 Serious Incidents](#).

19.5 Serious Incidents

The Centre Manager **must** notify BCS immediately of any incident that has not met BCS requirements or compromises the integrity of our qualifications.

Please report any notifications to cpqt@bcs.uk including the Centre identification number, with sufficient information to describe the incident, which qualifications were affected, and the number of Learners involved.

The types of incident we need to be made aware of include, but are not limited to:

- Security breaches of test questions
- Suspected malpractice or maladministration by staff or Learners
- Anything that would invalidate the successful award of a unit or qualification.

19.6 Post Test Requirements

The Invigilator must ensure any documents completed during the test session are submitted to the Centre Manager. Any incidents must be discussed to allow the Centre Manager to inform BCS should this be necessary.

19.6.1 Manual tests: additional requirements

- Ensure no test materials are taken from the test room by Learners
- Ensure all materials are securely handled
- Submit all materials, including test papers, printouts, and Learner work files to the Centre Manager, at the Approved Centre, within five working days to allow for marking, internal verification and central recording to be undertaken
- Ensure all Learner work files are securely stored on a removable storage device or secure network area, prior to removing files from computers in the test room where necessary.

All Learner test files must be retained and securely stored as they will be required for audit purposes. See section [28 Audit](#), and section [9.3 Retention of Work](#).

19.7 Resits of Live Tests

Learners are permitted to resit units they have passed or failed.

In all cases, Learners **MUST NOT** resit a test either:

- On the same day, or
- On the following calendar day.

To clarify, there must be at least one clear calendar day between the original test and the next attempt. For example, if a Learner has taken a live test on a Monday, they are not permitted to resit that unit again until Wednesday.

In the case of manual tests, the Invigilator must ensure the next attempt is a different stream from the previous attempt(s) of that unit, by random selection.

In the case of the *Improving Productivity Using IT* unit (non-school), the Invigilator must ensure that a different application is randomly selected for each attempt.

In the case of ICDL Advanced tests, if a Learner fails all of the four available assessments it is possible to re-sit the first of these assessments again provided that the first attempt was at least six months prior to the new assessment date. You must contact us at centresupport@bcs.uk so that the assessment history can be verified. This relates specifically to Learners that may have taken an assessment at other Centres as their assessment history may not be known.

If a Learner has had four attempts at one unit, it is possible for the Learner to resit, but the Centre Manager must contact us for approval. The Centre Manager must be able to demonstrate how the Learner has been supported to ensure they are fully prepared for live tests. This may include additional revision of the learning materials on areas of weakness, further exercises for the Learner to practice, or further taught classes. We will inform the Centre Manager if an additional test can be released.

Email to: centresupport@bcs.uk

Further information regarding resits can be found in the relevant Qualification Specification available on the ACF.

20. Marking

Mark schemes and marking instructions are provided with each manual test. The Marker is expected to follow the schemes applying the marks as instructed.

If the Centre uses manual tests:

- They must be marked by a registered Marker
- Marking must be completed within 10 working days of the date of the test
- Details of the test must be added to the central recording system before the result is uploaded to the ACF (see section [9.1 Central Recording System](#) and section [23.2 Uploading Results](#))
- If the Marker is new, or the test result is borderline, (+ / - 1 of the pass mark), the Internal Verifier must second mark the test within 20 working days of the date of the test, see section [22.2 Internal Verification: Manual Tests](#)
- The Internal Verifier will select a sample of marking.

To comply with our conflict of interest policy (see section [6 Conflict of Interest and Personal Interest Policy](#)):

- A Marker is **NOT** permitted to mark a test for any Learner who they have taught that unit.

21. Evidence Based Assessment

To offer evidence based assessments the Centre must register at least one Assessor and one Internal Verifier.

21.1 Assessments

Evidence based assessment can be used for a Learner to demonstrate their skills and knowledge of a unit by generating a portfolio of evidence. Learners will be required to provide evidence to show they have met all the learning outcomes and assessment criteria for the unit being assessed.

Learner evidence may include:

- Evidence from the workplace
- Professional discussion
- Observations
- Witness testimonies
- Tasks set by the assessor.

A suitably competent Assessor is responsible for assessing all the evidence against the unit criteria.

Evidence Record Sheets (ERS) are available to download from the BCS website and the ACF, for each unit in the ITQ framework. A guide for Centres is also available for download. The ERS is used to record where the Learner has met the criteria, along with signatures for the Learner, Assessor and Internal Verifier if sampled. There is also space for the Assessor and Internal Verifier to provide feedback.

The completed ERS, along with the Learner work, must be securely stored for internal verification and audit purposes.

ACF: Qualifications > ITQ > ITQ Documentation

Evidence Record Sheet Guide

<http://www.bcs.org/content/ConWebDoc/40777> Select the relevant unit to locate the ERS

21.2 Quality Assurance

All evidence based assessments are subject to internal verification. See section [22.3 Internal Verification: Evidence Based Assessments](#) for full details.

21.3 External Verification

All evidence based assessments are subject to external verification. See section [27 External Verification](#) for full details.

22. Quality Assurance

22.1 Observations of Invigilation

BCS requires observations of Invigilation to be carried out for all Invigilators. This is to ensure that assessment regulations are being met, and corrective action can be taken where there are non-compliances.

As a minimum, the Centre Manager must ensure:

- All new Invigilators complete BCS training
- All new Invigilators are observed at their first live test session
- All Invigilators are observed at least once per calendar year.

To document the quality assurance of invigilation, Centre Managers must:

- Ensure the observations are completed by a Centre representative who is registered with BCS
- Ensure the observer observes the whole test session
- Ensure the Invigilator Observation Reports are completed and signed at the time of the observation
- Retain the reports as these will be required for audit, or on request by BCS.

If issues are identified with any of the observations, there is a requirement that feedback is provided to the Invigilator, and corrective action taken. This may include further training on areas of weakness. It may also be appropriate to conduct a further observation to check that improvements have been made.

22.1.1 What feedback may be appropriate for the Invigilator?

When conducting the observation, and while completing the Invigilator Observation Report, the observer could highlight aspects of good practice seen during the session along with any areas that require improvement. Examples of feedback to the Invigilator could include:

- Learners were well briefed about the test session and all seemed to understand the requirements
- An incident regarding a technical issue was handled well, and this was documented on the Test Incident Log
- Some of the Learners were sitting too close, next time please ensure the minimum spacing requirements are met
- It became noisy when some of the Learners who had finished left the room, this disturbed the remaining Learners, next time please ask Learners to leave the room in silence.

ACF: News, Information & Support > Document Library

Invigilator Observation

22.2 Internal Verification: Manual Tests

Centres using manual tests are required to demonstrate internal verification of the marking process. Internal verification involves second marking and standardisation of the marking to maintain standards within the qualification.

An Internal Verifier must:

- Second mark 100% of all tests marked by a new Marker
- Second mark 100% of all borderline tests
- Routinely select and sample an additional 10% of all tests.

22.2.1 Second marking

All papers from new Markers must be second marked until the marking is consistently accurate.

All papers with borderline results (+/- 1 of the pass mark) must be second marked.

Recording of the second marking process must be evident on both the Learner mark sheet and on the central recording system.

The Learner's final mark must be agreed between the Marker and the Internal Verifier. In cases where the Marker and Internal Verifier do not agree, the Centre Manager is responsible for authorising the final mark. The Centre Manager must not have been involved in the marking process if this scenario occurs.

Second marking for new Markers and borderline results must be carried out within 20 working days of the date of the test.

22.2.2 Routine 10% sampling

In addition to second marking all tests for a new Marker and all borderline tests, a further 10% of tests must be second marked for routine sampling.

The Internal Verifier must select their own random sample, which must include a strategy to sample:

- All Markers
- All Satellite Sites

- All units, particularly for any new or updated units
- Passes and fails.

Routine sampling is not required to be completed within 20 working days of the date of the test. It is the Centre Manager's responsibility to demonstrate that 10% routine sampling has been carried out overall.

22.3 Internal Verification: Evidence Based Assessments

Centres using evidence based assessments are required to demonstrate internal verification of the assessment process. Internal verification involves reviewing the work of Assessors, and standardisation of their assessments to maintain standards within the qualification.

An Internal Verifier must put in place a sampling strategy to ensure they sample:

- All Assessors, increasing the sample for new Assessors to 100% until consistent
- All Satellite Sites
- All units, increasing the sample for any new or updated units
- All assessments, including: achievements, not achieved, and incomplete units.

Recording of the internal verification process must be evident on both the Learner Evidence Record Sheet and on the central recording system.

22.4 Centre Management Controls

The BCS Centre Manager is responsible for ensuring there are appropriate internal quality assurance arrangements in place to safeguard the effective delivery of BCS qualifications. There are mandatory quality assurance processes, described above, but there are additional measures a Centre Manager might take to further assure themselves of quality, such as:

- Meetings with staff
- Site visits
- Reviews of centre outputs, such as test data, which may be measured against expected results, or the programme of delivery
- Acting on Learner feedback.

The Centre Manager must decide what is appropriate for the size and formation of the Centre.

22.5 Audit

The final stage of quality assurance is for internal processes to be reviewed by an Auditor or the Channel Partner Quality Team. Please refer to section [28 Audit](#) for details of the BCS audit process.

23. Results, Enquiries and Appeals

23.1 Results and Feedback to Learners

Once marking, assessment and any required internal verification has taken place, results must be provided to Learners. Learners should be given general feedback, referring to syllabus areas or assessment criteria where mistakes have occurred to assist with their revision before the next test or assessment.

It is **NOT** permitted to supply any of the following to a Learner:

- A question by question breakdown
- A manually marked test paper
- A mark sheet
- A full printout of an automated test.

For some qualifications, tests are marked by BCS. Centres will be issued with Learner results after BCS has completed the marking, sampling and verification processes. For details of qualifications marked by BCS, and the marking process, please refer to the relevant Qualification Specifications.

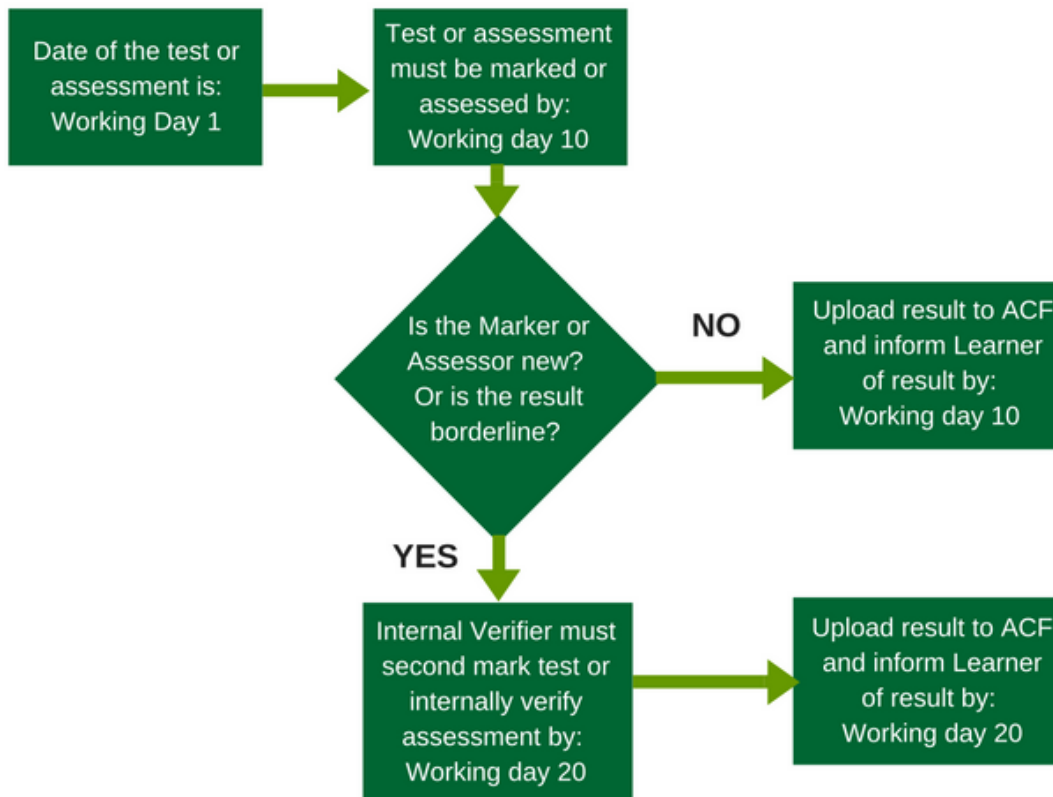
23.2 Uploading Results

If the Centre offers manual tests or evidence-based assessments, the results must be uploaded to the ACF.

Staff must ensure:

- Any **required** internal verification (borderlines, new markers, new assessors) has been completed prior to uploading any results
- The results of all passes and all fails are uploaded
- The result is uploaded within 10 working days of the test or assessment date, unless the test or assessment requires second marking or internal verification for a new Marker or Assessor, or is a borderline result
- The result is uploaded within 20 working days of the test or assessment date, if the test or assessment requires second marking or internal verification for a new Marker or Assessor, or is a borderline result
- All details of the manual test results are to be uploaded to the ACF accurately. If any errors are made during this process, the Client Support team are to be contacted urgently, to inform them of the details to be amended. (centresupport@bcs.uk)

Please see below a timeline flowchart for marking, second marking, internal verification and uploading of results.



A guide explaining how to upload results can be found on the ACF.

Please note the results of any automated test must not be uploaded as these results are sent through to BCS directly by the automated test provider.

ACF: Ordering & Administration

Manual Test Results Entry

23.3 Enquiries About Results

Reports can be downloaded from the ACF to enable Learner information held by BCS to be reviewed. Reports are available on individual Learners or all Learners at the Centre. Please note that results from automated test providers may take up to 10 working days to be received by us.

23.4 Appeals

23.4.1 Centre appeals

BCS Approved Centres can appeal any decision made by us. The Centre Manager must notify us within 20 working days from the date we advised the Centre of the decision. Centre appeals must be submitted to cpqt@bcs.uk.

Our Training Provider Appeals Policy can be found on the ACF.

ACF: News, Information & Support > Document Library > Policy Documents

Training Provider Appeals Policy

23.4.2 Learner appeals

Centres are required to have an appropriate Learner Appeals Procedure which is issued to Learners. If the Learner is not able to resolve an appeal after following the Centre procedure, the Learner has the right to submit an appeal directly to BCS. This must be submitted within 20 working days of the date of the assessment or test, and will incur a fee of £10. The fee will be refunded if the Learner's result improves following appeal.

Learner appeals must be submitted to centresupport@bcs.uk.

Once an appeal has been reviewed by us, we will write to the appellant with details of our decision to either:

- Amend the decision considering the rationale or any new evidence put forward
- Confirm we stand by the original decision.

The Learner will then have the right to seek an independent review. This will be carried out by someone who is not employed by, or otherwise connected to, BCS.

Our Learner Appeals Policy can be found on the ACF.

ACF: News, Information & Support > Document Library > Policy Documents

Learner Appeals Policy

24. Certification

On completion of the final unit for a registered qualification, results are validated, and providing validation is successful, a certificate is produced.

It is possible to request a unit certificate for any Learner who has successfully completed any units which are part of a registered qualification. To request a unit certificate email centresupport@bcs.uk including a purchase order number as unit certificates are chargeable.

24.1 Certificate Distribution

There must be an audit trail for the distribution of Learner certificates for all BCS qualifications and units. We despatch certificates to Centres by recorded delivery or courier, and there is an expectation of a similar secure process for onward distribution to Learners. To ensure the certificate distribution process can be verified, our requirements are:

- Record the date each certificate is received in Centre
 - Issue the certificate directly to the Learner, and obtain Learner signature, or
 - Post certificates via recorded delivery, retaining the proof, or
 - Post certificates and retain proof of postage
- Record the date of collection or postal date.

We may request to see evidence of the certification process at audit, such as viewing a record of dates certificates are received and issued, or viewing Learner signatures.

24.2 Return of Certificates to BCS

If a Learner does not collect their certificate when requested, the certificate must be securely stored for 12 months. After this time, if the certificate remains uncollected, it must be returned to us by recorded delivery with a covering letter, for archiving.

24.3 Replacement of Lost or Damaged Certificates

Replacement certificates may be requested for any lost or damaged certificate. To request a replacement, complete the Replacement Certificate Request form on the ACF, including a purchase order number as replacements are chargeable.

For details of unit certificate and replacement certificate charges please refer to the current Price List on the ACF.

ACF: Ordering & Administration > Certification

Replacement Certificate Requests

ACF: News, Information & Support > Document Library > Price List

Price List and Invoicing Policy

25. Invalidation of Results

If BCS identify an occasion where our assessment requirements have been breached, BCS may invalidate the results.

Should BCS request the return of any Learner certificate, the Centre Manager will be informed of this by email and asked to send it back to us by recorded delivery.

26. External Verification

For us to assess the effectiveness of Centre marking and assessment, Centres are required to provide us with samples of completed work. All Learner work and associated mark sheets or evidence record sheets must be electronically and securely stored to help with this process. The work may be requested by an External Verifier or the Channel Partner Quality Team. It may be requested at any point during the year, or may be in conjunction with an audit.

The Centre Manager will be provided with a list of BCS Learner identification numbers with their units to be sampled, and will be asked to submit the work within 5 working days of the request date.

The Centre Manager will be required to submit:

Manual tests	Evidence based assessment
Learner evidence: work files Completed mark sheets	Learner evidence Evidence Record Sheet Any other relevant Assessor and Internal Verifier documents

These tests MUST be password protected or uploaded to a secure storage area accessible to the Auditor	
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The samples of work will be checked by our External Verifier and we will provide feedback on our findings. The Centre is expected to act upon the findings where an instruction for corrective action is given. Where issues are identified following the sampling process we may increase the amount of sampling, request further samples, or in extreme cases, suspend manual testing or assessments until the issues are addressed.

27. Audit

BCS Approved Centres are continually audited to ensure our requirements are being successfully met and that we remain compliant with our regulators. Our approach to auditing is risk based, and takes account of the Approved Centre structure, exams output and history.

Audits are undertaken with the Centre Manager, by any of the following methods:

- Physical visit with an Auditor
- Remote (video conferencing or telephone) audit with an Auditor or Channel Partner Quality Officer
- Unannounced physical visit with an Auditor
- Physical visit to a Satellite Site with an Auditor.

Audits may additionally include:

- Observation of a test or assessment taking place at any of the Centre's venues
- Interviews with BCS registered staff
- Discussions with Learners for their feedback, however we will not contact Learners under the age of 18 without prior consent.

Auditors may also be accompanied by another Auditor, or a member of BCS staff, as part of our monitoring process.

27.1 Organising an Audit

A BCS Auditor or Channel Partner Quality Officer will contact the Centre Manager through the new BCS Centre Management system, to advise that an audit is due, and will offer a range of dates and times for the audit to take place. The Centre Manager is required to confirm an appropriate date and time, or inform us if alternatives are needed.

Should the Centre Manager not respond to an audit request, BCS may inform the Centre Manager of a date the audit will take place.

27.2 Preparing for Audit

Before the audit takes place, the Centre Manager is required to submit a range of documents to the new BCS Centre Management system, Salesforce, such as Centre policies, Invigilator Observation Reports and Test Incident Logs. It is important to submit the documentation in a timely manner as non-submission means the Auditor or Channel Partner Quality Officer does not have access to all the information and this may result in a higher risk rating for the Centre.

For a physical audit visit, it is helpful if the Auditor is informed of any special arrangements for parking or access.

27.3 Who Should be Present at an Audit?

It is a requirement that the audit is conducted with the Centre Manager.

It may also be appropriate to include other members of staff who know about centre processes for BCS qualifications. For example, a Teacher may be able to explain about teaching materials and delivery methods, an Invigilator may explain their test processes, and an exams officer or Administrator may be able to discuss Learner registration and certification.

We may request interviews with registered members of staff and / or Learners.

27.4 What Might be Asked at an Audit?

The Auditor or Channel Partner Quality Officer will ask a range of questions to determine the compliance and level of risk to BCS. The Auditor may ask to see evidence of compliance, such as a demonstration of the central recording system, or a visit to the test rooms being used.

The audit is also an ideal opportunity for Centre staff to raise any questions or issues for discussion with the Auditor. It may be helpful to have these written down in advance of the audit.

Typical audit questions may include:

What is your process for training your staff?

Who receives learner certificates, and how are these distributed?

How do you record the Guided Learning Hours for each learner?

Describe a typical exam session.

How do you ensure security of the tests?

How do you ensure the authenticity of learner work?

Explain how you accommodate Learners who require reasonable adjustments.

27.5 What Happens Next?

The Auditor or Channel Partner Quality Officer will be able to offer support where the Centre is not fully compliant. They can sign-post to further information, and offer advice where improvements are needed.

Following completion of the audit, the Centre Manager will be provided with an action plan, and appropriate timescales for completion of each action point. The level of non-compliance at the Centre will determine the risk rating to BCS.

A document to help prepare for audit is available in appendix G.

BCS reserves the right to suspend an Approved Centre from registering Learners, conducting tests, or to withdraw approval if a Centre is not meeting our requirements or is in breach of contract. Further information can be found in our Sanctions Policy.

28. Non-compliance and Sanctions

This Operational Requirements Manual is provided to explain our requirements regarding compliance, and offers examples throughout of what constitutes good practice to help Centres with this. By meeting all our requirements, the Centre will be compliant.

There may be occasions when Centres do not meet our requirements, and the level of non-compliance in the Centre may lead to sanctions being applied. If we need to apply a sanction, a member of the Channel Partner Quality Team will email the Centre Manager to inform them of the sanction, and explain what will happen next.

For full details of sanctions, please refer to our Sanctions policy.

ACF: News, Information & Support > Document Library > Policy Documents

Sanctions Policy

Glossary

ACF	The Approved Centre Forum, a secure area of the BCS website for registered Centre staff to carry out administration tasks and access information.
Approved Centre	An organisation approved by BCS to offer our qualifications.
Assessment	A method of confirming Learner achievement using work produced by them to meet the criteria of the unit.
Assessor	Responsible for assessing work produced by Learners who are using evidence based assessment.
Audit	A formal examination of an Approved Centre's documents, records and operational practices to verify compliance.
Automated Test	A method of assessment that must be completed within a specific duration, using an online assessment provider's software.
Borderline	A result of + / - 1 of the pass mark of a manual test.
Centre Manager	Responsible for ensuring all BCS requirements are met when delivering our qualifications. The single main point of contact.
Internal Verifier	Responsible for ensuring the internal quality of marking and assessment.
Invigilator	Responsible for ensuring test sessions are correctly prepared and delivered.
Learner	Registered with BCS, working towards a qualification or unit with the aim of taking tests or assessments to achieve certification.
Manual Test	A method of assessment that must be completed within a specific duration, using printed test papers and the software applications directly.
Marker	Responsible for marking manual tests.
Off-site	A location that is not the Approved Centre, or a registered Satellite, where tests or assessments take place.
Reasonable adjustment	An approved modification to test conditions for a Learner.
Salesforce	The new BCS Centre Management system
Sampling	A technique for selecting a representative proportion of tests or assessments.

Satellite Site	A location, linked to the Approved Centre, registered with BCS, where tests or assessments may take place.
Secure	Keeping test questions, Learner work, all data safe. Accessible only to those who need them. Locked away, password protected.
Serious Incident	An event that compromises the integrity of BCS qualifications. Must be reported to us.
Teacher	Teaches qualification, or unit content to Learners. Supports Learners while they are working towards their assessments.

Appendices

Appendix A: Document Summary

List of documents available on the Document Library of the ACF and whether they are mandatory or advised

Document name	Use	Mandatory?
Central Record	May be used to record all Learner and assessment data	No
Conflict of Interest Record	Record information about any conflict of interest identified in Centre	Yes, if applicable
Invigilator Observation Report	Report to complete for all observations of invigilation	Yes
Operational Requirements Manual	Details all BCS requirements	Yes
Off Site Assessment	Record information about any test which takes place in a location that is not the Approved Centre or a Registered satellite	Yes, if applicable
Out of Hours Record Sheet	Complete for any testing outside of normal Centre hours	Yes, if applicable
Personal Learner Record	Factsheet explaining Personal Learner Record and Unique Learner Number	Information only
Policy Documents	BCS Policies Exemplar policies for Centres to adapt and adopt if required	Yes
Price List	Price list and invoicing policy	Yes
Qualification Specifications	Details of the specifications for each of our qualifications	Information only
Suspected Learner Incident Form	Report full details of suspected Learner malpractice	Yes, if applicable
Test Incident Log	Record any incident or interruption during live test	Yes, if applicable
Test Register	Record information about a test session (located in appendix F)	Recommended

Appendix B: New Centre Manager / New Centre: Checklist for getting started

Ensure BCS have been informed if you are the new Centre Manager	
Download Operational Requirements Manual – distribute to relevant staff – read it	
Join BCS Approved Centre Forum (ACF)	
Complete BCS Centre Manager training	
Check all staff are registered with BCS	
Ensure all registered staff have completed the relevant BCS training	
Access the ‘Document Library’ in the ACF for a range of materials, some mandatory and some recommended for best practice	
Purchase qualification registrations from BCS (first order cannot be completed online)	
Purchase tests / learning materials (if using) from BCS	
Create own learning materials based on syllabus or qualification specification (if using)	
Download manual sample tests for practice (if required)	
(If applicable) Ensure Action Plan from Approval Report is implemented and BCS informed when actions complete	
(If applicable) Ensure Action Plan from last Audit Report is implemented and BCS informed when actions complete	
Ensure all Learners are registered with BCS before taking any tests or assessments	
Set up administration and exam processes, such as: Central Recording System Learner passwords on automated test software / changed by Learners Creating Invigilator keys (if using) Schedule for observations of invigilation – complete observations Test Register (if using) Test Incident Log	
Remove conflict of interests: Teachers not permitted to invigilate OR mark their own Learners’ tests or assessments	
Contact BCS Customer Services with any queries: 01793 417530 centresupport@bcs.uk	

Appendix C: Invigilator Checklist: Preparing for a Test Session

Test Preparation	Yes?
Check and prepare the test environment	
Does the environment comply with health and safety requirements?	
Is there disabled access, if needed?	
Is there a wall clock visible to Learners and the Invigilator?	
Is the date and time accurate on all computers being used?	
Have you carried out any system checks on the computers?	
Have the minimum spacing requirements of 1.25 metres been met, or will Learners be sitting at alternate computers?	
Will there be sufficient Invigilators to meet the maximum requirement of 1 Invigilator to 20 Learners?	
Is the room in a quiet location and free from external noise?	
Are the walls in the room clear of any information that may help Learners with test questions?	
Check Learner requirements	
Are all Learners registered with BCS for the correct qualification or unit?	
Have you checked that the earliest test passed for all Learners is no more than three years before the current test day?	
If any Learner is resitting a unit they have previously taken, has at least one full calendar day passed since the previous attempt?	
If any Learner is taking their fifth or more attempt at a unit, has authorisation been given by BCS?	
If any Learner is resitting a unit they have previously taken, have you ensured they are not given a unit stream more than once, unless authorised by BCS?	
If any Learner (non-school) is taking an <i>Improving Productivity using IT</i> test, have you checked a different application has been given for each attempt?	
Have you checked if any Learner has been awarded extra time or other reasonable adjustment authorised by BCS?	
Have you checked and recorded the identity of all Learners?	

Manual tests: additional requirements	
Have you ensured that Learners are only using approved test materials and storage media?	
Have you ensured all Learners have access to all the required work files (either on a removable storage device or secure network area, not the Learners' normal work areas)?	
Have you labelled any storage devices with the Learner's name and BCS identification number?	
Have you securely stored all test materials until the time of the test?	
Have you randomly selected the test stream from the bank of test papers on the day of the test?	
Automated tests: additional requirements	
Are you using an Invigilator key to start the test? Have you created the Invigilator key yourself?	
If you are not using an Invigilator key are you using your own login to start the Learner tests?	

Appendix D: Invigilator Information: Test requirements

Invigilators must monitor all test sessions to ensure they meet our test requirements below. The Invigilator must be present in the test room, from test preparation through to test completion. Any issues experienced during a test session must be recorded on the Test Incident Log and remedial action must be undertaken.

Serious incidents must be reported to the Centre Manager immediately.

Test requirements

- Tests must be conducted under test conditions
- Learners are not permitted to speak to each other or ask the Invigilator about test questions
- Learners may only address the Invigilator in case of hardware or software failure
- Learners are not permitted to observe any other Learner's work
- Learners are not permitted to use a calculator or any other electrical device such as a personal laptop or music player
- Mobile phones and smartwatches are strictly prohibited, these must be handed in before live test commences
- Learners are not permitted to use books during the test
- Learners are permitted to use the in-built help facility, but they must not use an Internet browser to search for further help
- Invigilators are permitted to provide Learners with plain paper and a pen/pencil for notes and workings out during the test, but these must be collected at the end of the exam.
- Learners are not permitted to leave the test room, unaccompanied during the test
- Toilet breaks are not permitted, if a Learner leaves for a toilet break, they must not be permitted to return, unless authorised by BCS as a reasonable adjustment
- Learners must be made aware of the naming conventions as file names, file extensions, folders, directories, URLs, hyperlinks, image links, web pages, email messages, field names and text insertions are presented in **Bold** or ***Bold italic***
- Learners must be made aware that file names are as requested in the test paper, they must not rename or amend file names, unless instructed to do so, as this will lose marks
- Learners must be given a five-minute reminder before the end of the test
- Learners should be advised to make a note of the start and finish times
- Learners must be told if there is any breach to any of these regulations the test will be terminated and invalidated
- Advise Learners if they are leaving the room after they have finished, they must keep noise levels to a minimum to avoid distracting other Learners who are still working
- Learners must hand in all test materials before leaving the test room

If Learners are taking a manual test, there are additional requirements:

- Learners must only use the test papers and folders, or drives specified
- Learners must not remove any test materials from the test room

Post-test requirements for manual tests

- Ensure no test materials are taken from the test room by Learners
- Ensure all materials are securely handled
- Submit all materials, including test papers, printouts, and Learner work files to the Centre Manager, at the Approved Centre, within five working days to allow for marking, internal verification and central recording to be undertaken
- Ensure all Learner work files are securely stored on a removable storage device or secure network area, prior to removing files from computers in the test room where necessary

Appendix E: Learner Briefing

The Invigilator is required to ensure Learners are made aware of test regulations.

It is advisable the Invigilator reads out the following instructions to Learners at the start of each test session:

Instructions to Learners

- You are now under test conditions
- You must not speak to each other or ask the Invigilator about test questions
- You may only address the Invigilator in case of hardware or software failure
- You are not permitted to observe any other Learner's work
- You are not permitted to use a calculator or any other electrical device such as a personal laptop or music player
- Mobile phones and smartwatches are strictly prohibited, you must hand these in
- You are not permitted to use books during the test
- You are permitted to use the in-built help facility, but you must not use an Internet browser to search for further help
- You are permitted to ask for plain paper and a pen/pencil to make notes during your test, but this must be collected by the Invigilator at the end of the test
- You are not permitted to leave the test room, unaccompanied during the test
- Toilet breaks are not permitted, if you leave for a toilet break you will not be allowed to return, unless this has been authorised as a reasonable adjustment
- The naming conventions for file names, file extensions, folders, directories, URLs, hyperlinks, image links, web pages, email messages, field names and text insertions are presented in **Bold** or **Bold italic**
- Ensure file names are as requested in the test paper, you must not rename or amend file names, unless instructed to do so, as this will lose marks
- You will be given a five-minute reminder before the end of the test
- You should make a note of the start and finish times
- If there is any breach to any of these regulations the test will be terminated and invalidated
- If you are leaving the room after you have finished, you must keep noise levels to a minimum to avoid distracting other Learners who are still working
- You must hand in all test materials before leaving the test room

Additional briefing information for Learners taking manual tests:

- You must only use the test papers and folders, or drives specified
- You must not remove any test materials from the test room

Appendix G: Audit Checklist

Following a request for audit by an Auditor or a Channel Partner Quality Officer, the checklist below should help the Centre Manager prepare:

Tasks	Yes	N/A
Arrange a date and time for the audit to take place		
Submit all documentation or information requested in advance		
Ensure you have access to all information in your Centre concerning BCS qualifications		
Ensure other members of staff such as Teacher, Invigilator or Exams Officer are briefed about the audit and could be available if required		
If the Auditor has requested to observe a test session, ensure you arrange the audit for when testing is planned to take place		
If the Auditor has requested to speak to any of your Learners, and / or staff, ensure they are available for when the audit is scheduled to take place		
If the Auditor has requested a visit to one of your registered Satellite Sites, ensure you have access for when the audit is scheduled to take place		
Review your last Action Plan, which may be from your last audit or approval, check you have completed all action points If you are a new Centre Manager and do not have access to this, please check with the previous Centre Manager		
Do you have documentation or records you can show the Auditor to demonstrate you have completed your action points?		
If you offer automated tests: Ensure you have access to the automated test software as you may be required to run reports		
If you offer manual tests: Ensure the requested sample is submitted in advance, or if no sample is requested in advance, ensure you have access to all the test files since your last audit or approval, including mark sheets and internal verification documentation Ensure a quiet area is provided for the Auditor to sample the work		
If you offer evidence based assessments: Ensure the requested sample is submitted in advance, or if no advance sample is requested ensure you have access to all the assessment files since your last audit or approval, including evidence record sheets and internal verification documentation Ensure a quiet area is provided for the Auditor to sample the work		
Ensure you check the home page of the ACF for the latest updates		
Please inform the Auditor of any special requirements for parking or access		
If you or any staff have questions for the Auditor, have these ready for discussion during the audit		

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3 Newbridge Square, Swindon, SN1 1BY

T +44 (0) 1793 417 560

Email cpqt@bcs.uk

Website www.bcs.org

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