Social Distancing – Test Centre Guidelines and Procedures

In response to COVID-19 and the ongoing affect this will have across all test centres we have adopted measures that will be required to ensure the protection of exam candidates and centre staff.

The following sections outline these procedures and assume observance of social distancing via the recommended government guidelines:

Information for Candidates

- Candidates must bring a face mask to their exam centre and abide by the rules for the wearing of face masks at that centre, both before and during their exam.

- To protect other candidates and staff, the candidate will not be permitted to enter the test centre if they:
  - Have been diagnosed with COVID-19 or been in close personal contact with someone with a confirmed diagnosis
  - Have had any flu-like symptoms in the last fourteen days, including fever, chills, cough, sore throat, or shortness of breath
  - Have returned from travel to a highly infected area in the last 14 days

- Candidates to be provided with clear instructions (by the Awarding Body) of the expected conduct for each test centre prior to attending their exam

- Candidate face masks and gloves, when worn, will be required to be removed during the check-in process for the purposes of verifying the identity of the candidate

- Candidates will be required to stay 2 metres apart from others in the waiting area (if available to candidates) and during the admissions process

- Candidates will not have access to the exam venue before the specified exam admissions process
Candidates will be advised to ensure they cover their nose and mouth in case of sneezing or coughing

Candidates are advised to only bring the relevant / permitted items for their exam, this will help to limit the amount of additional personal belongings for storage

Information for Test Centres

Candidate arrival/admissions process

• Where possible please provide a clear one-way system into the building ensuring separate entrances / exits

• Requirement to limit the number of candidates using lifts at any one time (may lead to delays)

• Provide clear, easy to read instructions throughout the test centre

• Provide hand sanitiser stations in all public areas

• Remove public seating furniture to minimise congregation

• Turn off vending machines / close off public water fountains

• Aim to limit points of physical contact between staff and test takers

• Provide test centre staff with protective masks / gloves to help reduce the risk of infection

• Enforce social distancing practices throughout the admission process:
  o Provide additional staff to help with directions / enforce guidelines on exam day
  o Ensure ‘Supermarket-style’ social distance spacing of 2m apart both outside and inside the test centre
  o If possible, provide Perspex screens (sneeze stoppers) at reception / registration desks
  o Increase number of reception / registration desks for venues with multiple rooms or larger capacity
  o Reception / registration staff to be sat 2m apart / or each desk to be manned by one member of staff / invigilator
Information for Test Centres

Exam room process

- Test centre staff are to disinfect all equipment using antibacterial wipes, ensuring all high touch areas will be sanitised, these areas will include, but are not limited to:
  - Keyboard / monitor
  - Mouse
  - Desktop
  - Chair handles
  - Door handles

- Ensure antibacterial wipes are available to candidates in the exam room if they wish to do their own sanitisation of the workstation prior to starting their exam

- Ensure gloves are always worn when using lockers / secure facilities for personal belongings, locker keys should be placed in disinfectant bowls after use

- Ensure gloves are worn when placing note paper for candidates on desks prior to the exam

- Allow for extra spacing within the exam room, ensuring a 1m space on all sides around each candidate

- Candidates to enter exam room immediately after the admission process, fill room row by row, from the front of the room to the rear of the room to manage social distancing rules

- Candidates to bring their own pens / pencils and ensure these are not left in the exam room
• If assistance is required, candidate should raise their hand and will be directed to the ‘help desk’ station outside the exam room – invigilator will pause the exam immediately

• The invigilator will provide the relevant support to manage the candidate query and ensure the candidate is permitted back into the exam room once resolved and resume the exam

• All toilet break processes will remain the same, with centre staff ensuring social distance measures are in place at all times

• Manage candidates leaving the exam room once they have finished their exam to prevent large numbers gathering in communal areas

• Ensure candidates leave the test centre following the correct exit route / door

• Confirm with candidates that all note paper needs to be placed within a box when leaving the exam room. All papers are to be saved for the appropriate timeframes and disposed of appropriately

• Ensure the exam room is fully cleaned / disinfected after each exam session, providing notices to confirmed once cleaned

• Do not permit anyone into the exam room until the next session is due to start

• To avoid large numbers in communal areas between exam sessions, candidates should be encouraged to leave the test centre until the admission process is due to start for the second exam session

Information for Test Centres

Invigilator/Centre staff support

• BTL to provide additional guidance / training for test centres if required

• There is a possible option for staggered arrival times for candidates – which will apply to a limited number of centres (with large seat numbers) and BTL should be contacted in advance to for consultation
• Ensure that vulnerable or at-risk staff are not working on exam days

• Each invigilator to self-certify to ensure that they are not high risk or asymptomatic using track and trace app or other agreed measures

• Invigilation staff to wear PPE at all times