

ASSESSMENT REGULATIONS

Please read these regulations in conjunction with **Signature Qualification Specification** and **Signature General Regulations** on our website.

PART 1 of 3

Entering Candidates for Assessment

1.1 Reasonable adjustments for candidates with particular assessment requirements

Centres requesting a reasonable adjustment on behalf of a candidate should make the request when they register the candidate on-line.

Signature will contact the centre to indicate whether the adjustment requested has been approved. Centres should not assume that all requests for reasonable adjustments will be approved.

Awarding bodies are responsible for assuring and maintaining the assessment standards within each of their qualifications. The Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) and other provisions allow for 'reasonable adjustments' to the assessment process, to make it more accessible under certain circumstances. Awarding Bodies are not required to alter the assessment standards themselves, if these are a justifiable measure of the competence that is being assessed. Reasonable adjustments must not give the candidate an unfair advantage or disadvantage in relation to other candidates taking the assessment.

Before requesting a reasonable adjustment on behalf of a candidate, the centre should be satisfied that the adjustment applied for will enable the candidate to attempt to meet the same standards of assessment as a candidate without the disability, difficulty or special need concerned.

1.2 Candidate registration

Signature will only accept candidate registrations from centres that are approved to offer this qualification.

Approved centres should register candidates on-line for this unit at least 14 days prior to the assessment date, using the on-line Candidate Registration process on the Signature website. The assessment date is chosen by the teacher-assessor. It is the date when the teacher will carry out the assessment of the group.

Centres should provide the Signature unique learner ID number, if the candidate already has one. New candidates will be issued with a unique learner ID number by Signature. Centres should also provide the national Unique Learner Number (ULN), if the candidate already has one. New candidates should be allocated a national ULN by the centre. This number should be entered in the appropriate field.

Signature will acknowledge on-line registration of candidates by email.

Centres will be invoiced for candidate registration fees. Centres wishing to use an official purchase order should quote the order number on the on-line registration form.

Following submission of the candidate registrations, centres can access the Application for Achievement Form via the centre portal.



1.3 Changes to assessment arrangements

Centres wishing to change arrangements for their assessments already submitted to Signature (e.g. change of date or adding/deleting candidates) must contact their Signature Customer Support Officer. Charges may apply. Signature cannot guarantee that all the changes requested can be accommodated.

Fees will not be refunded for candidates who withdraw from an assessment once the candidate registration has been submitted, unless medical evidence or details of bereavement are received.

1.4 Confirmation of assessment arrangements

Signature will acknowledge on-line registration of candidates by email.

Ten days prior to the assessment date, Signature will send assessment details and materials to the centre. The assessment materials will be provided in a sealed envelope. This must be kept secure until the day of the assessment and must not be communicated to candidates until they are in the preparation room, on the agreed date/time of the assessment.

Centres will also receive an envelope containing relevant documents to be sent with the assessment recording to the external assessor.

PART 2 of 3 Carrying out the Assessment

2.1 People involved in the assessment at the centre

See also General Regulations on Signature's website.

a) Assessment co-ordinator

It is the responsibility of each centre to appoint an assessment co-ordinator. Centres are responsible for briefing assessment co-ordinators, and for ensuring that they are familiar with the appropriate regulations governing the conduct of external assessments. Assessment co-ordinators act for the centre, and are responsible for ensuring that Signature regulations are followed. They may not take part in the assessment as a candidate.

b) Teacher

It is the responsibility of each centre to appoint suitably qualified and experienced people to act as teachers. Centres are responsible for briefing teachers on their role in the assessment, and for ensuring that they conduct the assessment in accordance with Signature regulations.

2.2 Rooming requirements

The centre will provide 2 rooms:

- a preparation room for the candidates to prepare undisturbed for their assessment;
- a separate room for the assessment itself (see 2.4).



In addition, a separate waiting area must be provided.

The assessment room:

- must be identified by an appropriate sign outside the room;
- must not contain displays of material which could be deemed to be of assistance to candidates in their completion of the assessment (however, teachers may have materials to assist them with the assessment);
- must be set up correctly, with video recording equipment checked and in place for the best position for the candidate to be shown on the video recording.

The preparation room is a 'restricted area' for the purposes of the assessment. No unauthorised personnel are allowed in the preparation room and assessment room. Where another person has been given permission by Signature to be in the waiting area/preparation room or assessment room (for example as a result of a reasonable adjustment request), Signature will have informed the centre in advance.

2.3 Preparing for the assessment

Thirty minutes before the first candidate is due to arrive in the preparation room, the assessment co-ordinator will:

- open the sealed envelope supplied by Signature containing the choice of titles;
- write the 3 titles on a flipchart or other suitable display in the preparation room. It is permissible for the choice of titles to be communicated to the candidate in BSL;
- **give the teacher the letter with the 3 titles and ensure that the teacher goes to the assessment room to prepare for 20 minutes or more.**

The centre must ensure that each candidate arrives in the waiting area in good time.

When candidates arrive for assessment, the assessment co-ordinator will:

- remain in the waiting area with candidates waiting to be prepared (If candidates prefer to practice alone there is no need for the co-ordinator to be present in the preparation room);
- carry out adequate checks to confirm the identity of all candidates;
- ensure that candidates have checked that the spelling of their names is correct on the Application for Achievement Form;
- ensure that candidates have signed the Application for Achievement Form;
- ensure that mobile telephones are switched off;
- ensure that candidates do not take any unauthorised items into the preparation room or assessment room unless agreed to by Signature beforehand;
- inform candidates that they are now subject to the rules of the assessment;
- at the appropriate time, instruct each candidate to move to the preparation room to await collection by the teacher, and explain that they have **at least 5 minutes to prepare for the assessment**;
- instruct the candidates to leave the building once their assessment has finished, without communicating with other candidates waiting to be assessed or with the invigilator.

It is permissible for the choice of titles to be communicated to the candidate in BSL in the preparation room. No further coaching or other assistance with BSL can be given to candidates whilst in the preparation room, except where previously authorised by Signature.

It is advised that the centre arranges a timetable to ensure a smooth operation of the assessments. An example of a timetable is provided in the Appendix.



2.4 Assessment of candidates

The assessment specification outlined in the unit specification must be followed.

Assessment is administered by the teacher on the assessment date requested by the centre. Each candidate must be assessed individually in a separate room (the assessment room). Assessments must be carried out under 'examination conditions', that is, the candidate must not receive help from anyone during the assessment.

Video recording the assessment

The entire assessment for each candidate must be recorded on unused acceptable recording medium. More than one DVD/tape may be used depending on length as long as each DVD/tape is fully used before starting a new one (unless the assessment does not fit). Both the candidate and the teacher involved in the assessment must be visible on the recording.

Signature no longer accepts VHS and Hi8/8mm tapes. Acceptable formats are Mini DV tapes and DVDs.

The centre is responsible for ensuring that suitable electrically-operated (not battery) equipment is provided and in good working order.

The assessment can only be carried out once. No editing of the DVD/tape is permitted. No additional recording can be made after the original assessment.

All candidates must appear on the acceptable recording medium, and the order in which they are recorded must be entered on the Application for Achievement Form ('Video Order Number').

Carrying out the assessment

The teacher must:

- collect each candidate in turn from the preparation room to carry out their assessment;
- ensure that the camera is switched on for each candidate and that they are visible before the conversation starts;
- ensure sound is switched on during the recording of the assessment;
- ensure that no other person is being recorded with the candidate and teacher;
- ensure that each candidate fingerspells his/her full name and surname at the start of their assessment in order to identify themselves and that the candidate gives the choice of the title. This is not marked as part of the assessment, and not included in the assessment timing;
- **start the assessment time** when the conversation starts;
- **switch off** the recording equipment after each candidate has finished their conversation;
- check (before the candidate leaves the room) that the DVD/tape is viewable;
- reset the DVD/tape at the right place for the next candidate;
- ensure candidates are not distracted or disturbed during the assessment.

It is acceptable for a responsible person, authorised by the centre, to be present to operate the video camera and/or time the conversation, providing that they do not disrupt or take part in the assessment.

2.5 Late arrival of candidates

At the discretion of the centre and teacher, candidates who arrive after the timetabled start of their assessment may be allowed to continue with their assessment.



2.6 Misconduct

If the teacher or assessment co-ordinator observes any misconduct, they must take steps to stop it.

They should:

- inform the candidate of what they propose to do;
- make a note on the Application for Achievement Form;
- note the time of the action;
- send an email to Signature (quoting the assessment ID) with a brief description of the incident.

2.7 Emergencies

If an emergency occurs during the assessment, e.g. fire alarm, bomb warning:

- the assessment room must be evacuated in accordance with the instructions of the appropriate authority;
- a report detailing the date and time of the incident must be sent to Signature;
- if the candidates have been closely supervised and the teacher and co-ordinator can be assured that there has been no breach of assessment security, i.e. candidates did not communicate with each other, nor any other person, nor consult any books or notes whilst they were out of the assessment room, then the assessment may be resumed and the full time given;
- if the security of the assessment has been compromised or the timing of the assessment is integral to the assessment, the centre should make a note on the Application for Achievement Form, and send an email to Signature (quoting the assessment ID) describing the incident and, where appropriate, requesting special consideration on behalf of the candidates.

PART 3 of 3 After the Assessment

3.1 Appointment of assessors for Unit BSL102/103

It is the responsibility of Signature to train and appoint suitably experienced people to act as external assessors.

3.2 Application for achievement

The Application for Achievement Form (AAF) for each assessment can be downloaded from the centre portal on the Signature website.

The assessment co-ordinator must:

- ensure that the Application for Achievement Form is correctly completed:
 - complete the video order column,
 - ensure that candidates have checked that the spelling of their names is correct,
 - ensure that candidates have signed the form,
 - keep the signed copy and complete the details online;

Signature reserves the right to refuse to process any Applications for Achievement which have not been sent in accordance with these instructions.

- ensure that all candidates' recordings are viewable;
- ensure that the assessment ID appears on both the inside and outside cover;
- **ensure that they make and keep a copy of the DVDs/tapes of candidate work.** Signature is happy to provide guidance about how copies of assessment DVDs can be made;



- ensure that the DVD/tape and Application for Achievement Form are sent for marking **within 7 days of the assessment date** following the instructions contained within the pre-assessment document letter;
- destroy the titles which have been sent by Signature for this assessment.

3.3 External quality assurance

If, as a result of quality assurance checks, there is cause for concern about the assessment standard, results may be delayed beyond the normal processing time.

Candidates' recorded evidence will be viewed by Signature approved staff only.

3.4 Issue of results

Signature will issue the results online of the assessment within 8 weeks of the assessment date.

Signature will issue results and/or certificates using the spelling of the name as it appears on the Application for Achievement Form. It is important that the candidate has verified that the spelling is correct. There will be a charge for duplicate certificates.

3.5 Appeals

See Signature's website for Appeals Policy.

3.6 Retention of evidence

Centres must retain candidates' recorded evidence and signed AAF. This must be stored in a locked cabinet for a period of 12 months.



APPENDIX – NOTES FOR CENTRES/TEACHERS

Timetable

This is a suggestion of a timetable that a centre could use. However, centres may devise timetables different to the one below.

Example of a Timetable for BSL102 and BSL103

Names	Waiting Room (Arrive at the room and check spelling of name on AAF and sign the form)	Preparation Room (to practise the selected title) Minimum: 5 minutes	Assessment Room (to be collected by the teacher and have the assessment)
Ann Apple	09.50	10.00 – 10.05	10.05 – 10.15
David Smith	10.00	10.10 – 10.15	10.15 – 10.25
Sarah Watt	10.10	10.20 – 10.25	10.25 – 10.35
Daniel Booth	10.20	10.30 – 10.35	10.35 – 10.45

NOTE: For a large number of candidates, it is suggested that the teacher take appropriate breaks.

