

	Document Title	<b>Security &amp; Integrity of Assessment Policy</b>		
	Doc. Number	ADM-POL-002	Doc. Owner	Head of Training & Development
	Author	Angela Byrne	Revision	Rev. 03
	Reviewed by	Angela Byrne	Approved by	John Kelly
	Next Review Date	17/08/2024	Approved Date	17/08/2023

## 1. Document Statement

At Shorcontrol Safety we require that all assessment activities are conducted to a high standard and that the assessment procedures are applied fairly and consistently to all learners. Assessment materials shall be stored, accessed, handled, and transported in a way that always protects their confidentiality. This applies to the receipt/issue of assessment materials to the point of their return to the training administration team at Shorcontrol Safety.

Our awarding organisations also require us to ensure the security and integrity of assessments. Any breaches in this assessment security and integrity policy and procedures may result in maladministration, malpractice and represent a major quality assurance non-compliance. This may have adverse implications for Shorcontrol Safety as an education provider as well as significant consequences for the learners.

Shorcontrol Safety's strategy to implement this policy includes awareness training for all tutors, assessors, relevant managers, and employees involved directly and/or indirectly in delivering education and training programmes assessment activities. Further appropriate actions regarding the successful implementation of this policy will be identified and implemented as required, on a continuous basis.

## 2. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to clearly identify how Shorcontrol Safety ensure that in carrying out its various assessment activities, will have due regard in maintaining the security and integrity of all assessment materials.

## 3. Scope

The scope of this policy aims to comply with the requirements outlined in the following:

- City & Guilds 'Remote Assessment Centre Guide', Version 1.0 December 2022
- City & Guilds 'Centre Assessment Quality Assurance Standards', Version 1.0 August 2021
- City & Guilds 'Remote Invigilation Live', Version 2.1 September 2022
- QQI 'Quality Assuring Assessment, Guidelines for Providers' Version 2 2018

and is applicable to all tutors, assessors, relevant managers, IQA and employees involved directly and/or indirectly in delivering education and training programmes assessment activities.

## 4. Definitions

Term	Definition
<b>QQI; Quality and Qualifications Ireland</b>	A national awarding body for further education and training that develops and accredits training courses.
<b>City &amp; Guilds</b>	An educational organisation which develops and accredits training courses.
<b>Solas</b>	An ROI state agency which develops and accredits training courses.
<b>PHECC; Pre-Hospital Emergency Care Council</b>	An independent statutory agency with responsibility for developing and monitoring standards for education and training of pre-hospital care courses.

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<b>IOSH; Institution of Occupational Safety &amp; Health</b>	A global organisation composing of health and safety professionals which develop and accredit training courses.
<b>NEBOSH; National Examination Board in Occupational Safety &amp; Health</b>	A UK based independent examination board which designs, develops, and provides qualifications, training opportunities and learner engagement in occupational health, safety, environmental, well-being, risk and related subjects.
<b>Remote Assessment</b>	Where an assessor is examining a learner, or reviewing a supervised recording of them, from a different location to that of the learner. Remote assessments do not cover the independent completion of tasks or generation of evidence by a learner, without the direct observation by an assessor.
<b>Integrity</b>	The overall processes and controls governing the conduct of assessments are sufficiently robust to minimise the risk of conscious or unconscious transgression of assessment practice and security.
<b>Malpractice</b>	Any act, default or practice which is a breach of the regulations that give rise to prejudice to learners, that compromises public confidence or qualifications, that compromises, attempts to or may compromise the assessment process, the integrity of any qualifications or the validity of a result/ certificate, damages the authority, reputation or credibility of any awarding organisation or centre or any officer, employee or agent of any awarding organisation or centre.
<b>Maladministration</b>	Any activity, practice or omission which results in centre or learner non-compliance with administrative regulations and requirements.
<b>Walled Garden</b>	City & Guilds secure online administration system.
<b>JotForm</b>	Shorcontrol Safety's secure online administration system.

## 5. General Policy Requirements

The following guidelines outline key procedures and practices in relation the security & integrity of assessments. Please be advised that this is not intended as an exhaustive or definitive list and is subject to change depending on best practice, as well as awarding organisation guidelines and requirements.

### 5.1 Assessment Material Administration

Shorcontrol Safety are responsible for administering internally marked assessments according to relevant awarding organisation requirements. At a minimum, ensuring that they are:

- Delivered safely, securely, and compliant with GDPR regulations,
- That learners are neither advantaged nor disadvantaged,
- That the relevant external quality assurance monitoring can be undertaken.

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Shorcontrol Safety are responsible for ensuring that anyone involved with the delivery of qualifications and assessments are familiar with the relevant assessment documentation. Assessment documentation includes:

- Information and guidance on how to administer assessments,
- The levels of control under which the assessment must be administered,
- The assessment specific forms and/or documentation that must be used,
- The levels of assessor support permitted and any required equipment or resources.

## 5.2 Access, Authorisation, Storage & Transport of Assessment Materials (*hardcopies*)

The following guidelines apply to all paper-based confidential materials including assessment papers and source materials, to ensure the security and integrity of the assessments.

### **5.2.1 Pre-assessment/ Uncomplete Materials**

- Shorcontrol Safety shall be able to demonstrate and account for the receipt, secure movement, and secure storage of confidential assessment materials at all times.
- Shorcontrol Safety shall ensure that confidential assessment materials are only issued to personnel authorised by the head of training and development, no more than one working day prior to the commencement of
  - Shorcontrol Safety shall ensure that all assessment packs containing confidential materials are signed for by personnel authorised by the head of training and development.
  - A record/log shall be kept at the initial point of issue and point of receipt, for all confidential materials including tutor/assessor details, issued date and number of packages issued.
  - All received assessment material packs shall be carefully checked for tampering, significant damage or any signs of security breach by tutor/assessor prior to use.
- Confidential assessment material must be stored securely at Shorcontrol Safety's registered address, in a space which is solely assigned for the purpose of administering assessment materials.
- This secure space shall be restricted and authorised to between two and four key holders only, who are to be determined by the head of training and development at Shorcontrol Safety.

### **5.2.2 Offsite Assessment Materials**

- If assessments are not being taken onsite at Shorcontrol Safety i.e., at an alternative location, the assessment materials must be kept at the facility's secure storage space until one working day before the scheduled assessment.
- It is the responsibility of Shorcontrol Safety to arrange secure transport of the assessment materials for all assessments not conducted onsite, no more than one working day before the scheduled assessment.

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- Assessment materials can be despatched as per the following:
  - By post, using registered delivery,
  - Using a secure courier service (with package signed and tracked),
  - By the tutor/assessor or personnel authorised by the head of training and development, in a sealed pack which has not been left unattended at any time.
- Assessment material should be kept in their sealed packs and only opened in the assessment facility, in front of the learners just before the beginning of the assessment.
- If assessment materials are despatched by registered post, Assessment pack one and two shall be despatched using two separate registered packages. This is to ensure that all assessment materials are not kept together. Furthermore, marking schemes shall not be despatched with same materials but rather given directly to each instructor during standardisation.
- To avoid any potential breaches of security, due care must be taken by Shorcontrol Safety to ensure that the correct packs are opened. If the tutor identifies any signs of tampering or significant damage to the assessment material, they must contact the head of training and development immediately.
- The head of training and development remains accountable for ensuring that all/any assessments taken at an alternative location, are done so in accordance with this policy.

### **5.2.3 Completed Assessment Materials**

- Completed assessment material must also be kept secure at all times. Assessments are confidential between each candidate and the assessor. No-one may read or photocopy them prior to marking, under any circumstances.
- Once assessments have been marked the assessor returns all assessment material in a sealed pack to Shorcontrol Safety’s administration team to record results to relevant awarding organisation portal at a maximum of ten working days after the scheduled assessment has been completed.
- All assessment material records completed shall be securely stored as per identified secure storage requirements, for period of time as determined by the respective awarding organisation.

<b>Awarding Organisation</b>	<b>Retention Requirements</b>
QQI	Live: 3 years Archived: 7 years
City & Guilds	Live: 3 years Archived: 7 years
PHECC	Live: 2 years Archived: 7 years
Solas	Live: 3 years Archived: 7 years
IOSH	Live: 3 years Archived: 7 years

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NEBOSH	Live: 3 years Archived: 7 years
Shorcontrol Safety (Internal)	Live: 3 years Archived: 7 years

#### **5.2.4 Secure Storage of Uncomplete and Complete Materials (*hardcopies only*)**

<b>Requirements</b>	<b>Additional Information</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Strong safe non-portable security cabinet or metal cabinet with locking bar.</li> <li>○ Two to four key holders only.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Bolted to wall or floor.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Walls, ceiling, and floor of strong solid construction.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Unless wall is solid brick, cabinet must be secured with reinforced metal.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Solid door or a door with extra metal reinforcement.</li> <li>○ Strong secure hinges.</li> <li>○ Security lock.</li> <li>○ Two to four key holders only.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Any metal sheeting must be screwed on the inside of the door.</li> <li>○ Cylinder locks are not acceptable.</li> <li>○ There must be a minimum of 2 keys.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Secure room in a fixed building.</li> <li>○ Walls, ceiling, and floor of strong solid construction.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Preferably on an upper floor with no windows.</li> <li>○ The room must only contain assessment related material.</li> </ul>

### **5.3 Access, Authorisation & Storage of Assessment Materials (*digital copies*)**

With the growing increase in online and blended learning, some internal assessments may be delivered online to offer learners a more flexible method of assessment, providing Shorcontrol Safety can do so safely, securely and within the relevant level of controls.

#### **5.3.1 Secure Storage of Uncomplete and Complete Materials (*digital copies only*)**

<b>Requirements</b>	<b>Additional Information</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Access control on a 'need to know' basis.</li> <li>○ Access control by authorised personnel only.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ GDPR articles 25, 32</li> <li>○ Data Protection Act 2018</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Access authentication through unique identifier.</li> <li>○ Automatic screen lock/ screensavers after inactivity period.</li> <li>○ Anti-virus software, Firewalls, Encryption.</li> <li>○ Controlled secured remote access.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Passwords, Passphrases, Smart card, Biometrics, Multi-factor authentication etc.</li> <li>○ Additional security layers.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Physical facility security.</li> <li>○ Secure disposal of stored data.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Offices locked, CCTV, Alarms etc.</li> <li>○ Effective wiping of electronic data and any paper records made of such.</li> </ul>

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The following guidelines apply to all digital copies of confidential materials including assessment papers and source materials, to ensure the security and integrity of the assessments:

- Shorcontrol Safety shall ensure that all assessment materials used for remote assessments are maintained and up to date, when providing access to learners.
- Shorcontrol Safety shall ensure that all necessary materials required for the test are ready and available to the learner prior to beginning the assessment.
- Technical checks shall take place at an agreed time frame prior to the assessment date to ensure access is possible and that the learner is familiar with operating the system and assessment software before undertaking any assessment.
- Shorcontrol safety ensure that assessment materials are made available to learners via a secure internal system and not sent via email, social media or any shared form that would allow learners to download, copy, print, share or locally save them. The assessment or any of its contents must not be recorded or saved in any other way by the learner.
- Assessments may be completed at the learners' workplace, or at home with consent, depending on them meeting the minimum technical and equipment requirements.

<b>Awarding Organisation</b>	<b>Secure System</b>
Shorcontrol Safety	Jotform
City & Guilds	Walled Garden
QQI	QBS certification system
SOLAS	NCS D Portal
IOSH	IOSH Training Provider Portal
PHECC	N/A – Shorcontrol Safety internal management
ROSPA	N/A – Shorcontrol Safety internal management
Lantra	Quartz Booking System

- Where possible, Shorcontrol safety shall ensure that tutors/assessors provide supervision to the remote assessment via some of the following approaches:
  - Learner identification checks,
  - Artificial Intelligence (AI)/ Computer based monitoring,
  - Audio-visual recording of the test,
  - Assessor observing the test through a live recording.

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- Under no circumstances shall Shorcontrol Safety use live assessment materials or any of their contents for any purpose other than live assessments.
- Remote Assessment terms and conditions must be communicated to all learners prior to assessment commencement.

#### 5.4 Additional Information

- The head of training and development remains accountable for ensuring that all/any assessments taken onsite or at an alternative location/ online/ remotely, are done so in accordance with this policy.
- In the event that assessment maladministration or malpractice has been identified, Shorcontrol Safety shall investigate and deal with any form of such which may impact on the validity of the assessment.
- Investigating an allegation of malpractice shall be conducted in sufficient time that does not disadvantage the learner against whom an unproven allegation is made.
- See policies and procedures referenced in '*Section 8 Related Documents and Information*' for further details.

### 6. Responsibilities

Employee Title/Classification	Responsibility
<b>Directors, Top Management &amp; Senior Management</b>	To ensure the necessary resources are available within the organisation for the implementation of this policy. To ensure the contents of this policy are implemented effectively. To investigate and act upon any breaches or violations which may arise or be reported in relation to this policy.
<b>Employees/ Staff/ Instructors/ Sub-contractors</b>	To adhere to the requirements set out in this policy. To report any breaches or violation of this policy to top/senior management for investigation and resolution.
<b>Internal Quality Assessor (IQA)</b>	To ensure the documentation including assessment materials, produced for and from courses, adhere to the QA processes as required by the relevant awarding organisations, auditing companies, internally and various NGO accreditations.
<b>Learners/ Delegates</b>	To adhere to the requirements set out in this policy. To report any breaches or violation of this policy to instructor/employees/staff for investigation and resolution.

### 7. Enforcement

Employee Title/Classification	Responsibility
<b>General Manager</b>	Has the discretion of determining the repercussion on the discovery of any member of staff, tutors, managers, visitors, or subcontractor's breach or violation of this policy.

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	Has the discretion of determining the repercussions on the discovery of a manager or assigned responsible personnel's failure to enforce or follow this policy or its procedures.
<b>Managers and Heads of Departments</b>	Has the discretion of determining the repercussions on the discovery of any subordinate or learner's breach or violation of this policy.
<b>Internal Quality Assessor (IQA)</b>	Has the discretion of determining the respective repercussions on the discovery of any tutor/assessor in breach or violation of this policy.

## 8. Related Information and Documents

Document ID	Title
ADM-POL-001	Malpractice and Maladministration Policy
GEN-POL-010	Data Protection and Privacy
TRA-POL-002	Fair and Consistent Assessment of Learners
TRA-POL-017	Teaching & Learning Policy

## 9. Policy Review

This policy shall be reviewed when:

- There is a change of General Manager at Shorcontrol Safety.
- There is a change in any of the related policies or procedures found in section 8. *'Related Information & Documentation'* of this document.
- As prescribed in Shorcontrol Safety's policy and procedure review schedule.
- As determined or requested by the General Manager at Shorcontrol Safety.

Revision Date	Author with Title	Rev. Level	Description
07/02/2023	Angela Byrne QHSM	01	Initial release of policy.
14/02/2023	Louise Byrne ADM	02	'Awarding body' changed to 'Awarding organisation'. 5.2.2 Updated for posting of assessment packs (if applicable).
17/08/2023	Angela Byrne, QHSM	03	Update of Document codes in section 8.