

One Awards/NOCN Contingency: *Remote EQA Visits*

1. Scope of Contingency

When EQAs are not able to carry out EQA Visits to centres face-to-face due to:

COVID-19, or where NOCN has to cancel all face-to-face EQA activities, this contingency guidance applies to all EQAs and all planned face-to-face EQA activities.

This contingency plan should be read in conjunction with 'EQA Guidance COVID-19'.

2. Remote *Sampling* or Remote EQA Visits?

- **Remote Sample:** Some qualifications allow for remote sampling activities. Where remote sampling is already planned, or where the qualifications allow, remote sampling could be planned as an interim measure.
- **Remote EQA Visit:** Where qualifications do not allow, where a centre or qualification is High Risk/Moderate Risk, or where a Centre Approval risk assessment visit is needed a Remote EQA Visit should be undertaken.
- **Postpone the visit:** In some cases it will be appropriate to postpone the visit to a later date, for example a familiarisation or support visit which is not currently required due to suspension of delivery/assessment.

3. EQA Planning Requirements

The EQA planning process is critical for establishing what monitoring is most appropriate, and for ensuring remote EQA visits are effective.

As part of the planning process, EQAs must ensure:

- All EQA activities are discussed with the centre to establish the best approach, via telephone or email.
- The appropriate visit planner is sent at least **10 working days (where possible)** in advance of the visit or remote visit. Use NOCN External Quality Assurance remote Visit Planner (V1.0 202003) for a remote visit.
- They document **exactly** what is required in the visit planner and make it clear how the centre should submit this remotely.
- They set up a Skype/Zoom/Teams link for the visit and issue this to the centre, if required.
- They have access and are able to use remote meeting technologies to facilitate meetings effectively and co-ordinate with the centre to ensure compatibility.

4. EQA Remote Visits

Where an EQA *remote* visit is required EQAs should ensure:

- They notify the Quality Team of the proposed arrangements.
- They ensure proposed arrangements for transfer of sample and documents is secure e.g. ask for sensitive documents/documents containing learner details to be password protected.
- They do not store learner details on devices, especially when using personal phones or laptops.
- They still speak to learners and staff remotely.
- They still approach the visit in a customer centric way, starting with the usual catch-up.
- They feedback to the centre at the end of the visit.
- They carry out appropriate activities to the qualification.
- They use the EQA Visit Report form and **record** this as an EQA *Remote* Visit in the EQA Decision section.

5. Remote Meeting Technology

Skype – <https://www.skype.com/en/>

Skype guidance can be found [here](#)

Zoom - <https://zoom.us/>

Zoom guidance can be found [here](#)

Teams - teams.microsoft.com/downloads

6. REMOTE VISIT ACTIVITIES

The following activities could be carried out as part of remote visits:

1. Catch-up with staff
2. Learner interviews
3. Assessor/IQA/Employer/Witness Testimonies Interviews
4. Remote sampling of portfolios (where possible e.g. via e-portfolios, portfolios scans where reasonable, secure recorded posting of copies)
5. Sampling of assessment and IQA records (emailed, uploaded or paper copy sent etc)
6. Sampling of learner feedback (emailed, uploaded or paper copy sent etc)
7. Review of policies and procedures (emailed, uploaded or paper copy sent etc)
8. Review of staff credentials and CPD (emailed, uploaded or paper copy sent etc)
9. Observations of assessment– live via Skype/Zoom/Teams or request recordings in advance.
10. Review of standardisation records (emailed, uploaded or paper copy sent etc)
11. Provide information, advice and Guidance to staff via Skype/Zoom/Teams or telephone.
12. Provide feedback at the end of the visit.