

Remote Assessment Guidance for UKAS Customers



WHAT IS A REMOTE ASSESSMENT?

A remote assessment is one that is conducted off site either in whole or in part. Remote assessments generally make use of technology, such as Skype, Microsoft Teams, Zoom Meeting or GoTo Meeting, to support the Assessment team when a site visit is not possible / appropriate.

The assessment may include everything that is usually covered during a site visit, but it is likely that some activities, particularly our witnessing of staff conducting their technical functions will not be able to be covered. These technical aspects may need to be assessed at a later date, but this will be discussed and agreed during the remote assessment.

WHAT SHOULD CUSTOMERS EXPECT?

The structure of the visit will be quite familiar; we will conduct opening and closing meetings and review information with you to ensure ongoing competence although there will clearly be some changes as to how we achieve these reviews. The duration of a remote assessment may differ to that of your on-site assessment, depending on what aspects are planned to be covered. In addition, it is also likely that the assessment may be fragmented with individual activities happening over the course of a longer period. Therefore, you will not necessarily need to be available at all times when the assessment is occurring, but a schedule of planned web-conferencing will be agreed with you.

When assessments are conducted via web-conference technology it is recommended that both parties use screen sharing and web-cam functionality. This reduces the amount of data and information that has to be transferred between your organisation and UKAS. However, it is also likely that the assessors will ask for documentation to be submitted for them to review offline because this is often done more efficiently with large amounts of information. You may be asked to email documents or use file sharing sites to provide the documentation to the Assessor. Please be assured that the information you send us will be securely managed in accordance with our existing confidentiality and data privacy policies.

WHAT DO CUSTOMERS NEED TO DO TO MAKE SURE THEY ARE READY?

Remote assessment is heavily reliant on technology, so we recommend taking the following actions to ensure you are ready:

- Check your IT systems will allow to access one of the following web-conferencing solutions Skype, Microsoft Teams, Zoom Meeting, GoTo Meeting. Confirm with your Assessment Manager which of these applications works for you (NOTE: You do not need to have a licence for these applications as UKAS will initiate the meeting request).
- If you cannot access these applications and wish to use your own web-conferencing solution, contact your Assessment Manager so that UKAS can check whether it is accessible to us.
- If online connectivity is not possible, then the assessment will be carried out using telephone conferencing and the emailing/file sharing of documentation.

As well as checking access, please ensure you are familiar with the technology, particularly the management of your audio and screen sharing prior to your assessment to avoid unnecessary delays.

WHAT DO CUSTOMERS NEED TO MAKE AVAILABLE FOR THE REMOTE ASSESSMENT?

PERSONNEL

Key personnel who normally support the on-site UKAS assessment need to be available for web-conferences and answering ad-hoc queries from the assessment team as the assessment progresses.

Personnel with specific technical or administrative responsibilities will need to be available for their relevant parts of the assessment.

Top management and members of the leadership team will need to be available for relevant parts of the assessment as well as the opening and closing meetings.

DOCUMENTATION

We will review as much of the management system as possible remotely. This can be done via screen share or by sending the information to your Assessor via email/file sharing;

Your assessment team may well request documentation to be sent in advance of the assessment so they can review beforehand.

Typical documents your assessment team may request are:

- Internal audit programme and supporting records or reports
- Minutes of management system review
- Reports of complaints and nonconforming work
- Case/Job Files
- Training records of new staff
- Details of changes affecting your organisation
- Proficiency testing data (where relevant)
- Quality control data (where relevant)

WITNESSING OF TECHNICAL ACTIVITIES

This is the most challenging part of any remote assessment, but it can be achieved by a mix of live streaming, recordings, post audit reviews or technical interviews.

- For live streaming, check you can live stream visual and have two-way audio at the location the activity is performed. This often requires use of mobile networks or wi-fi so check connectivity at the location;
- For recordings, these need to be agreed with the assessment team in advance. Make sure that the recording is of suitable clarity for both visual and audio. Also, the personnel conducting the activity should narrate what they are doing and why. It is also likely that the technical personnel will need to be available for discussions with the assessor to explain elements of the recording when it is assessed.
- For post audit reviews the UKAS team will select job files which will then be reviewed with the individual(s)

WHAT HAPPENS IF CONNECTIVITY FAILS DURING AN ASSESSMENT?

The assessment team will try to continue with the assessment wherever possible. If the issues cannot be corrected quickly, then your assessment team will revert to conducting the assessment by telephone conference.



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FURTHER QUERIES

If you have any further queries regarding your remote assessment, please contact your assessment manager.