

Guidance on the use of the mobile phone detection scanner

Introduction

This mobile phone detection scanner is provided by the **National Association of Examinations Officers (NAEO)** in partnership with **The Exams Office** to support centres in maintaining the integrity and security of examinations.

The scanner is primarily designed to detect mobile phones but can also identify other unauthorised metal objects that candidates may attempt to bring into an examination room.

The scanner is intended to **supplement, not replace**, existing centre procedures for preventing and detecting unauthorised items during examinations. It acts as an additional deterrent by reducing the opportunity for candidates to conceal mobile phones or other prohibited metal objects.

Centres should inform candidates and parents/carers that a mobile phone detection scanner may be used during examinations to detect mobile phones and other prohibited metal objects.

Any questions, concerns or objections regarding the use of the scanner should be referred to the Head of Centre or an appropriate member of the Senior Leadership Team.



Intended use

The Exams Office and the National Association of Examinations Officers (NAEO) recommend that the scanner is used as part of the centre's existing examination security arrangements to help deter and detect the possession of mobile phones and other prohibited metal objects.

The scanner is particularly effective when candidates temporarily leave and re-enter the examination room, for example when using the toilet, as these situations may present a greater opportunity for the unauthorised use of a mobile phone.

The scanner may also be used where there are reasonable grounds, in accordance with the centre's procedures, to suspect that a candidate is carrying an unauthorised metal object.

Centres should not routinely scan all candidates as they enter the examination room where doing so could delay the scheduled start of the examination.

Any use of the scanner should be proportionate, practical and integrated into the centre's existing examination procedures.

Safeguarding

It is the responsibility of centres to ensure that exams office personnel, including invigilators, are appropriately trained in accordance with relevant safeguarding requirements and the centre's own procedures when using a scanner to check candidates.

When using the scanner, invigilators must, among other things:

- **Avoid physical contact with candidates at all times**
- **Ensure that vulnerable candidates are treated sensitively and are not made to feel uncomfortable or intimidated**
- **Respect candidates' personal space and maintain appropriate professional boundaries**

Exams managers/officers must also ensure that invigilators understand how to respond if the scanner identifies an item that is not a mobile phone, such as a prohibited or potentially dangerous item such as a weapon.

Centres may wish to consider adopting one or more of the following approaches:

- **Invigilators report only a suspicion** that a candidate may have a mobile phone or other prohibited electronic device in their possession. They should not attempt to investigate or identify the item themselves
- **The candidate is retained at the end of the examination**, where appropriate, so that **scanning is undertaken by appropriately designated senior staff**. This will allow for the exams manager/officer, Designated Safeguarding Lead and/or senior leader to oversee/undertake the scanning process.

Centres should ensure that their procedures clearly distinguish between the role of the invigilator in identifying and reporting a concern and the responsibility of appropriately designated staff to determine how the concern should be managed.

Important information

The scanner is intended to support centres in deterring and detecting the possession of unauthorised mobile phones and other prohibited metal objects. It does not identify the specific item that has been detected and should not, on its own, be regarded as evidence of malpractice.

Where the scanner alerts, centres should follow their established examination procedures to determine the cause of the alert and take any appropriate action in accordance with JCQ and awarding organisation requirements.

The use of the scanner should always respect the dignity and privacy of candidates and should form part of the centre's wider arrangements for safeguarding, examination security and the prevention of malpractice.

Features

The scanner is:

- A lightweight, handheld device that is simple and easy to use
- Battery operated, allowing it to be used throughout the examination venue without the need for mains power
- Designed to detect mobile phones and other metal-based objects
- Equipped with audible, vibration and LED visual alerts that activate when metal is detected, enabling it to be used in a range of examination environments