



# Learning Resource Network

## CANDIDATE HANDBOOK FOR ESOL INTERNATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS

## Contents

Background to LRN	Page 3
Registration	Page 4
Assessment Booking	Page 4
Refunds and Transfer	Page 5
Exam day	Page 5
Exam Rules	Page 7
Result	Page 10
Re-sit Policy	Page 10
Special Consideration	Page 10
Reasonable Adjustments	Page 10
Monitoring and Evaluation	Page 11
Diversity and Equality Policy	Page 11
Appeals	Page 11

## BACKGROUND TO LRN

Learning Resource Network - LRN - is an awarding organisation that offers qualifications to candidates, educational institutes, training providers, schools and employers who can access qualifications either through registered educational institutions.

It was founded by a group of educators and business people and specialises in ESOL and management qualifications.

A full list of LRN qualifications can be found on the [register of regulated qualifications](#).

LRN London head office is supported by a team of representatives around the world.

LRN can be contacted at the following address:

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[www.lrnglobal.org](http://www.lrnglobal.org)

## REGISTRATION

LRN requires candidates to be registered at least 10 working days prior to attending an examination session. Centres must register candidates undertaking delivery and assessment at their centres by completing an LRN registration form. This is accessible by centre portal on LRN's website.

## ASSESSMENT BOOKING

LRN approved centres book assessments 5 working days prior to the session using the LRN assessment booking form accessible via LRN Centre portal on the LRN website.

## IDENTIFICATION

All candidate identification is checked in all instances prior to the assessment. LRN will **only** accept the following forms of identification:

- Original Passport (non-expired)
- Original National Identity Card (non-expired)

### **Taking the exam outside of your country of origin**

Candidates taking the test outside of their country of origin must use a valid (non-expired) original passport as identification.

### **National Identity Card**

If you are taking an exam in your country of origin, LRN will accept a government issued valid (non-expired) original national identity card, your national identity card must contain the following details:

- Full Name
- Date of Birth
- Gender
- National Identification number
- Date of expiry
- Signature
- Photograph

LRN is unable to conduct an assessment for any candidate who fails to provide any one of the documents listed above. There will be absolutely no exceptions made to this policy - candidates must clearly understand this principle: if a single one ; if any of the documents listed above is missing, they **will not** be granted access to the examination room.

Staff at LRN centres are trained to detect fraudulent submissions by candidates. Candidates are required to submit one form of ID (valid passport or valid National Identity Card).

The candidate's photographic ID must be laminated - that is, his/her photograph must be placed behind clear sticky-backed plastic on their passport and endorsed with an official stamp or their photograph must be directly embossed onto the card. Non-laminated or non-embossed ID where there is no clear sticky plastic over the photo cannot be accepted.

Official documents usually have an official seal or watermark. Staff inspect for seals and watermarks and where the relevant marks are absent, ID is refused.

Candidates are provided with detailed guidance to ensure they are aware of the importance of identifiable ID. i.e. – guidance states ‘the photograph must be recent - that means that the photograph must look like you. If the photo does not look like you, you will not be allowed to sit the test unless you bring along a second supporting official document with a laminated photograph where the picture does resemble you’.

If a candidate produces ID which does not look like him/her, we reserve the right to prevent them from taking the test. We also reserve the right to inform any relevant authorities, including visa granting authorities and their home university, of any attempt to take the test fraudulently or to act as an impostor for other test candidates.

## **REFUNDS AND TRANSFER**

LRN will accept instances where tests are cancelled, or transfers are requested on medical grounds, (backdated to 5 weeks prior to the test) provided supporting medical evidence is received within five working days of the test date. Only evidence of serious illness will be considered. Medical certificates will be accepted and this must state inability for the candidate to appear for the test on the scheduled test date.

If an assessment is cancelled within five weeks of the test date for any reason other than a medical issue, bereavement or substantial traumatic hardship, cases of refunds will not be considered.

In cases where an assessment session is cancelled due to bereavement, valid evidence is required for exemptions and will only be considered in cases of close family relatives.

Appropriate documents and/or evidence must be received by LRN no later than five working days after the test date. Documents accepted include a medical certificate from a qualified medical practitioner, a death certificate or a police report.

Refunds will be issued in cases where assessment sittings are cancelled within five working days of the test date.

## **EXAM DAY**

Candidates are required to present their original ID and sign the candidate register before gaining entry to the examinations environment. Candidates’ signatures are verified against their official photo identification document on the day of the test.

The identity of all candidates is verified on the day of their examination.

Each candidate’s unique evidence of identity (referenced by number), name, date of birth, nationality, gender must correspond to the reference number entered on the application form during registration. No other forms of identification are deemed acceptable.

Candidate must have the original Identification available for inspection when registering for the exam and when beginning the exam, and at any other time these are required during the course of the exam (for example when returning following a break).

LRN spoken exams are conducted by LRN-trained examiners. LRN's examiner checks each candidate's identification additionally for the spoken exam. All LRN exams are 100% externally assessed by an LRN examiner. LRN speaking components are digitally recorded for moderation and voice recognition checks.

The following instances may result in candidate disqualification from the test, or in the voiding of the test results. In all these cases, candidates are not eligible for transfer, cancellation or refund in any form:

- Failure to present the appropriate identity document.
- An invalid or incorrect identity document is presented (such as expired passport or National Identity Card) at any time during the test.
- Any other case where a candidate's identity cannot be verified on the test day.
- The centre staff will guide you to where and when to go to your exam; each candidate has been allotted a desk number for each examination.

### **Exam day – skill facets and ID checks**

#### **Four facet skill tests**

LRN exams sitting consists of the four facet skills in one continuous assessment session on the same day but in some instance speaking tests are scheduled between one and three days before or after the main test sitting in the same centre. It is essential that candidates understand they are required to undertake the four facet skill test at the same LRN approved centre.

#### **Speaking and listening skill tests**

LRN Centres must perform the same identification checks as mentioned above for speaking or main sitting as well. Where the candidate is taking a single level qualification in speaking and listening, this will be completed in one sitting in the same centre. It is essential that candidates understand they are required to undertake the two facet skill test at the same LRN approved centre.

#### **Tests on different days**

Where candidate is taking re-sits or taking facets tests on different days, the centre will perform full identification checks.

## EXAM RULES

You must have the original of your valid passport or valid National Identity Card available for inspection before beginning the exam and at any other time that these are required during the course of the exam.

- You must sit in the seat allocated to you throughout the exam.
- Only pencils, pens, erasers and sharpeners are allowed on the examination desk. Other possessions must be in the secure area provided by the centre.
- You must answer the written parts of the exam on the answer sheet provided. No other papers are allowed on the exam desk.
- No examination materials, neither question papers nor answer sheets, may be removed from the exam room. Candidates will be asked to write their candidate numbers on all examination materials given to them.
- Mobile phones, alarms, iPhones and other forms of electronic equipment must be switched off and kept in a secure locker provided by the centre.
- You should not leave your seat in the examination room until you are told you may do so by the invigilator. If you believe you may need to leave the exam room during the exam due to medical reasons, please inform the Centre before you attend for the exam.
- Once each module of the exam has started you may not communicate with anyone else in the exam room apart from the invigilator. Please raise your hand and do not leave your seat if you need to talk to the invigilator.
- Only answers written on the official LRN answer sheets will be marked. Answers written on the question papers are not seen by the examiners and cannot be taken into consideration.
- You must follow the invigilator's instructions exactly and should stop writing when the invigilator tells you to do so.
- Please note that failure to comply with the rules and regulations for the exam will be reported to LRN and may result in disqualification.
- You must notify the invigilator immediately if such rules and regulations hinder your performance in the assessment.

### **You must not do the following in the examination**

- Cheating, copying from others or disrupting the test will not be accepted. Any candidate involved in such activities will automatically be disqualified from the test.
- Use or attempt to use a dictionary, pager, spell-checker, mobile phone or any electronic recorder during the test: any candidate doing so will be disqualified.

- Talk to or disturb other candidates from the start of the test to the end of it.
- Smoke, eat or drink in the examination room.
- Copy any part of the test in any format/medium. Any candidate found doing so will have their test results cancelled and be liable for prosecution.
- Cut off or remove any material used during the examination. This includes, but is not limited to, examination paper, answer papers and working paper.

### **Advice and Information**

- You must make sure you attend the exam on time.
- You may not be allowed to take the examination if you arrive late for any of the papers.
- You should report to the supervisor or invigilator immediately if you are late.
- You must arrive in the exam centre on time.

### **What to take into the exam room**

- Take only what you need for the exam.
- Take pens, pencils and erasers.
- Correction fluid must not be used.
- Don not take anything which you do not need for the exam or which you are not allowed to take into the exam room or as instructed by invigilators.
- You may not borrow anything from other candidates or lend them anything during the exam.

### **Exam directives**

- Follow the instructions of the supervisor or invigilator.
- Inform the supervisor or invigilator immediately if you have not been given the right question paper or the question paper is incomplete or illegible, or if there is any other confusion.
- Follow carefully the instructions printed on the question paper and on the answer sheet.
- Fill in all the information requested in the question paper and on your answer sheet before the start of the examination.



### **Guidance and support in the exam**

- If you are in need of an explanation regarding the format of the exam (not the content of questions) just raise your hand to draw the attention of the invigilator. The invigilator will come to your assistance. You should not speak during the exam.
- You should not ask for, and will not be given, any explanation of the questions.
- If you feel your work may be affected by ill health or any other reason during the exam, you must inform the invigilator immediately.

### **Exit from exam room**

- You must not leave the exam room without the permission of the supervisor or invigilator even if you have finished the exam.
- You cannot leave your seat until all papers have been collected and you have been permitted to leave the room.
- You must leave behind the question paper, your answer paper, any paper used for rough work clearly crossed through and any other materials provided for the examination.
- You must not disturb or make any noise near the examination room.

### **Information for Candidates (Speaking Test)**

Below is a breakdown of rules that must be adhered to by candidates when sitting for LRN speaking assessment.

#### **Candidates must**

- leave all personal belongings in a secure place, outside the examination room;
- ensure that mobile phones, alarms, i-Phones and other forms of electronic equipment are switched off and kept in a secure locker provided by the centre;
- present valid identification to the examiner as indicated in the Identification section;
- answer the questions directly asked by the examiner;
- not partake in any communication, in any language, without the prior approval of the examiner;
- not seek advice or guidance from their paired partner with regard to the structure of the assessment;
- follow the examiner's instructions exactly as provided.

Please note that failure to comply with the rules and regulations listed above will result in the report of those actions to LRN, which may result in disqualification.

## **RESULTS**

Results for LRN ESOL International qualifications are electronically distributed via LRN Candidate Portal within 4-6 weeks of the assessment being received by head office. Candidates are required to enter their username and password to gain access. Grading is also given on the result.

## **RE-SIT POLICY**

Candidates who receive a 'Fail' result or below the total number of marks required are advised to wait until they have progressed to a sufficient level before registering to retake the examination. Candidates are not permitted to sit the same test paper twice.

## **SPECIAL CONSIDERATION**

Learning Resource Network (LRN) employs such assessment methods which test the candidates' knowledge and understanding and whilst reasonable consideration can be given to allow for a degree of special consideration, LRN wish to make it clearly understood that should a candidate fail to attend an examination due to, or should their performance in an examination be affected by circumstances such as, conditions of illness, injury or temporary incapacity, LRN will accept a request for the candidate to sit the examination at the next scheduled sitting (with no charge). If a candidate fails to attend their examination, they are to follow the laid down guidelines as shown within the candidate handbook.

## **REASONABLE ADJUSTMENTS**

LRN intends to ensure reasonable and fair access to its assessments and in so doing, intends to provide all candidates with any reasonable assistance they may require to complete their examinations. Candidates who feel their circumstances merit assistance are strongly encouraged to make contact with LRN at least one month prior to their examination date. Candidates will be asked to provide documented evidence (e.g. a medical certificate) to support their request and are required to complete form RA1.

Candidates who have a medical condition that may affect their performance or the performance of any other candidate should advise LRN in advance of the examination. Where a candidate provides the requested information as to their special circumstances and provided documentation is provided in support of an adjustment to their assessment, LRN will consider this when arriving at its decision.

Note: With regard to ESOL International qualifications, candidates are reminded that those with impaired speech; will be given an unrestricted amount of time to complete the ESOL International (Speaking and Listening) examinations – at all levels. Furthermore, candidates are asked to note that in keeping with the standard on which the qualification is based, the use of British Sign Language (BSL) as an interpretive tool is not permitted across its ESOL International suite of qualifications.

In cases where alternative test versions are needed, two months advanced notice is required. Examples of alternative versions are as follows:

- lip-reading versions for listening tests
- Braille versions for reading tests

- amended graphical versions for candidates with dyscalculia

It is also possible for candidates with other disabilities to apply for special arrangements to be made. Examples are such as extra time or a scribe. Further examples of this would relate to candidates with a physical disability (that would impair speed in writing) dyspraxia or dyslexia.

In instances where paired candidates are inappropriate such as pairing restrictions due to religious reasons or security (i.e. prison settings), procedures suiting each individual case are followed to ensure treatment of candidates is standard, non-biased and fair.

## **MONITORING AND EVALUATION**

Our policy on reasonable adjustments and special consideration will be monitored and formally reviewed as part our annual statement of compliance. The results of this will be reported and formally signed off by the Responsible Officer of the Awarding Organisation and Chair of the Education Committee (Governing Body).

## **DIVERSITY AND EQUALITY POLICY**

LRN is committed to ensuring fair and equal access to its qualifications, examinations and support materials. Our Diversity and Equality policy seeks to eliminate unfair treatment and ensure all candidates are treated fairly regardless of race, gender, disability, age, origin, religious or political beliefs, sexual orientation, socio-economic background, and marital or civil partnership status. For full policy please refer to [www.lrnglobal.org](http://www.lrnglobal.org)

## **APPEALS**

Any appeals by candidates will be dealt with in accordance with LRN's appeals policy, which can found at [www.lrnglobal.org](http://www.lrnglobal.org). Candidates who require support or assistance, within reasonable limits, are able to apply to LRN for special consideration or reasonable adjustment.