

## **Procedure: Detecting Electronic Earpieces (and other non-approved electronic devices) during Invigilated Examinations**

To maintain the integrity, fairness, and security of all in-person examinations, Queen Mary University of London will use handheld security detection wands to identify electronic earpieces and other non-approved electronic devices. This includes devices that may be small, concealed, or not immediately visible (for example, hidden within or near the ear, under clothing, or otherwise discreetly carried), and is not limited to situations where a student's ears are visibly covered.

All procedures will be conducted respectfully, inclusively, and with minimal disruption to the exam environment. The purpose of these checks is solely to detect the presence of non-approved electronic devices and not to make assumptions about individual students.

This procedure is being introduced as a pilot and will be reviewed after the examination period, with feedback from students and staff informing any future adjustments.

### **1. Checks Conducted at Examination Desks**

- Checks will take place at students' desks inside the examination hall prior to the start of the exam, carried out by a designated invigilator.
- Checks may be conducted regardless of whether a student's ears are visible, as some non-approved electronic devices can be very small or concealed and may not be detectable by sight alone.
- For inclusivity and comfort, students will be asked whether they are happy to show their ears to the invigilator or would prefer the security wand to be used to check for electronic devices. Showing ears is optional and not required where a wand check is preferred.
- If a student wishes to show their ears, they will be offered the opportunity to do so in a private space with an invigilator of the same sex if they do not wish to do this in the examination venue.
- Students arriving late will be checked as they are being seated. This may include a wand check even if their ears are visible.
- The screening process is strictly non-intrusive and limited to determining the possible presence of non-approved electronic devices. No physical contact will be made with the student's body.
- Prior to being scanned by a security wand, students will be asked if they have any medical devices that might be disrupted by use of the wand e.g. pacemaker.

- Refusal to cooperate with an invigilator, or to follow an invigilator's instructions in relation to revealing ears or the use of a security wand is deemed to be potential misconduct and will be dealt with under the Academic Integrity and Misconduct Policy.
- For the purpose of the pilot, any student known to be wearing an authorised hearing aid will be excluded from this procedure. The Exams and Awards team will collaborate with the Disability and Dyslexia Service to identify safe ways of managing the detection of devices ahead of the next examination period.

## **2. Procedure When a Device Is Detected**

- If the security wand indicates a possible device, the student will be discreetly taken aside by an invigilator of the same sex.
- The student may be asked to clarify whether an electronic earpiece or other non-approved electronic device is present and, where appropriate, may be asked to show their ears or the relevant area.
- All checks will be undertaken with dignity, privacy, and sensitivity, and with minimal disruption to the examination.
- Detection by a wand does not, in itself, constitute an allegation of misconduct; it triggers a proportionate and respectful follow-up check.

## **3. Checks During Exam Breaks**

- Students who leave the exam hall (e.g., for toilet breaks) may be subject to additional wand checks when exiting and/or re-entering the examination hall.
- These checks aim to prevent the introduction, concealment, or use of non-approved electronic devices during exam breaks, including devices that may be small or hidden.

## **4. Academic Misconduct**

- Any student found using prohibited devices, including electronic earpieces or other concealed electronic equipment, to gain an unfair advantage will be reported under Queen Mary University of London's Academic Integrity & Misconduct Policy.
- Cases will be referred to the Appeals, Complaints and Conduct Office for further investigation.
- Confirmed violations may result in disciplinary action in line with the Academic Integrity & Misconduct Policy.
- Any prohibited device found during checks may be temporarily confiscated for the

duration of the examination and returned after academic misconduct procedures have been initiated, in accordance with University policy.

**5. Commitment to Fairness, Inclusivity, and Privacy**

- All checks will be conducted with professionalism, courtesy, and sensitivity.
- The University is committed to supporting an examination environment that is fair, inclusive, and respectful of students' privacy and dignity, while ensuring that assessment conditions are equitable for all candidates.

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