

Aptis

Aptis Remote: Candidate Step-by- Step Guide

October 2024



Table of Contents

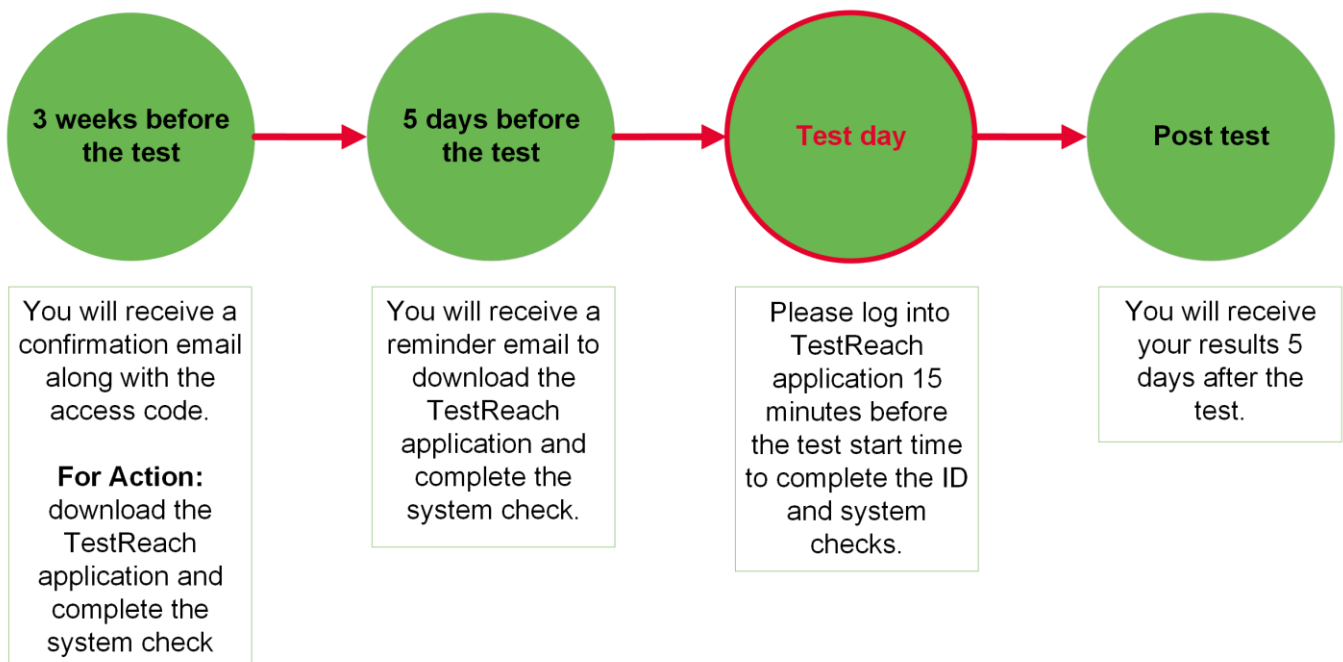
Introduction to Aptis Remote.....	3
Overview of the Aptis Remote test process.....	3
Data protection.....	3
Safeguarding.....	4
Aptis for all.....	4
Video Guide.....	4
Taking Aptis Remote.....	5
Step 1: Prepare your test environment.....	5
Step 2: Check the minimum system requirements.....	5
Step 3: Download the TestReach software and perform the system check test.....	6
How to complete the system check.....	6
Step 4: Confirm the completion of the system check.....	9
Step 5: Prepare for your test day.....	10
How to close all applications.....	10
Test environment requirements.....	11
Reasons why a supervisor may suspect malpractice or infringement of the Test rules.....	12
Step 6: On the day of your test.....	13
Test security and candidate actions.....	13
Step 7: Receiving your results.....	17
Troubleshooting Guide.....	18
1. Webcam troubleshooting.....	18
2. Disabling a firewall.....	18
3. TestReach application not opening.....	20
4. Audio troubleshooting.....	20

Introduction to Aptis Remote

Aptis Remote offers a new way of secure testing. It combines the benefits of online testing with live remote invigilation to ensure a secure experience and reliable results. Aptis Remote has the same format, structure, and timing as a standard Aptis test.

With this remote method, Aptis is delivered using the TestReach platform. Candidates will be monitored by live supervisors over the Internet and connected to them by video, audio, remote screen share and instant messaging to ensure good communications and security. With TestReach, both the online exam and the invigilation are in one application.

Overview of the Aptis Remote test process



Data protection

For the purpose of the test, we collect and use personal data to ensure the delivery of the test is conducted smoothly. We also need to protect the integrity of the test and prevent any malpractice. The video recording footage will be retained for 42 days.

We apply the UK Data Protection Act (incorporating the EU General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)) to all our global operations unless the local equivalent law is stronger. This policy will apply in all locations where we operate, to all forms of information and to all systems used to collect, store, process or transfer information.

The UK Data Protection Act (and GDPR) works in two main ways. It gives individuals rights over how their personal information is used and sets out rules for organisations that process personal information.

Find out more information [here](#)

Safeguarding

We aim to create a safe environment in which no child or adult will experience harm or exploitation during their contact with us. We recognise our responsibility to protect them from abuse, exploitation and negligence, applying zero tolerance and aiming to create a safe environment for them. Therefore, we have measures in place when we deliver the Aptis test remotely.

We are committed to:

- complying with relevant UK and international laws and standards and ensuring local legal compliance by providing all remote supervisors with the British Council safeguarding and child protection trainings
- valuing, respecting and listening to children and adults
- minimising and managing situations where abuse could occur, through maintaining strong protection systems and procedures including planning, risk assessment and safeguarding systems
- sharing safeguarding best practice and information regarding safeguarding concerns with relevant parties, maintaining confidentiality so far as possible and involving children and adults where appropriate
- taking action and investigating suspected abuse proportionately and appropriately.

Aptis for all

We believe that the Aptis tests should be accessible to anyone who wants to take them. We also believe that each person should have the opportunity to perform to the best of their ability on the Aptis tests.

If you have a disability and believe that Aptis is not accessible to you or believe that the form of the test will not allow you to show your true level of English, please contact your local British Council centre to talk about the ways in which the test can be modified for your needs.

We can make adjustments such as providing pen and paper tests, face-to-face tests, Braille and large font tests, adjusting timing, and a range of other modifications. Please discuss it with us to ensure that we can support you with a test which is both fair to you and maintains the high standards and reliability of Aptis.

Video Guide

A video version of this guide is available. Click the following link to view:

<https://vimeo.com/1012791502/0a83e61d95>

Taking Aptis Remote

Once you are registered by the administrator, you will receive a confirmation email 3 weeks before your test with your **unique access code**, asking you to complete the onboarding process.

Please note that **you will also use this code on the test day**. It will not be active during your onboarding process – you will be able to complete the system check, but it will only allow you to start the test 15 minutes before your test time. After you successfully complete the system check, please close the application.

No later than 5 days before your test date, **you will receive an email with further instructions** on your test day preparations. Ensure you regularly check your email inbox as well as your junk or spam folders. Please **get in touch** with us if **you do not receive emails by the specified deadlines**.

To minimise the possibility of any technical issues on the day of the test, you are required to complete the following set-up procedure **as soon as you are notified about the test**.

Step 1: Prepare your test environment

- **Ensure your equipment meets the minimum requirements -**
See the “Minimum system requirements” annex to make sure your computer will work for the test.
- **Ensure your testing environment meets the requirements -**
See the “Test environment requirements” annex to make sure your room and workspace are suitable.
- **Familiarise yourself with the behavioural requirements -**
See the “Test security and candidate actions” annex to best understand what you need to do, and what to avoid, during onboarding and on the test day.

Step 2: Check the minimum system requirements

Please ensure that all the system requirements below have been checked and are functioning correctly.

- A laptop or computer running the following operating system versions:
 - Windows v7.0+ (64-bit version)
 - MacOS 10.10+
 - MacOS BigSur 11.3+.

Mobile phones, tablets, Chromebooks, or Surface Pros cannot be used.

- Intel Core i3 (or equivalent) and 4GB RAM.
- A working microphone, laptop speakers or headset with built-in microphone.

- Minimum internet speed of 5.0 Mbps download and upload.
- A screen size of at least 13" and a resolution of 1024 x 768.3 is recommended.
- A working webcam.

We strongly recommend candidates to use a wired headset with built in microphone that connects to the computer using either a USB or 3.5mm jack cable connector. Wireless headsets or mobile phone earbuds with built in microphones are not recommended.

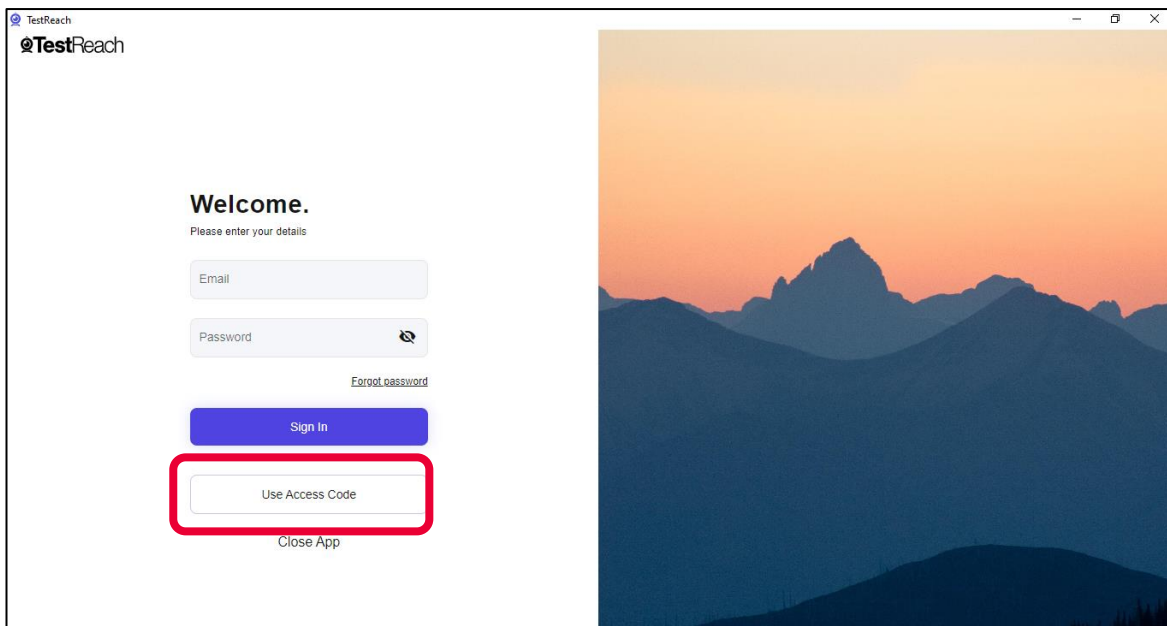
Step 3: Download the TestReach software and perform the system check test

To download the TestReach app please use the following URL:

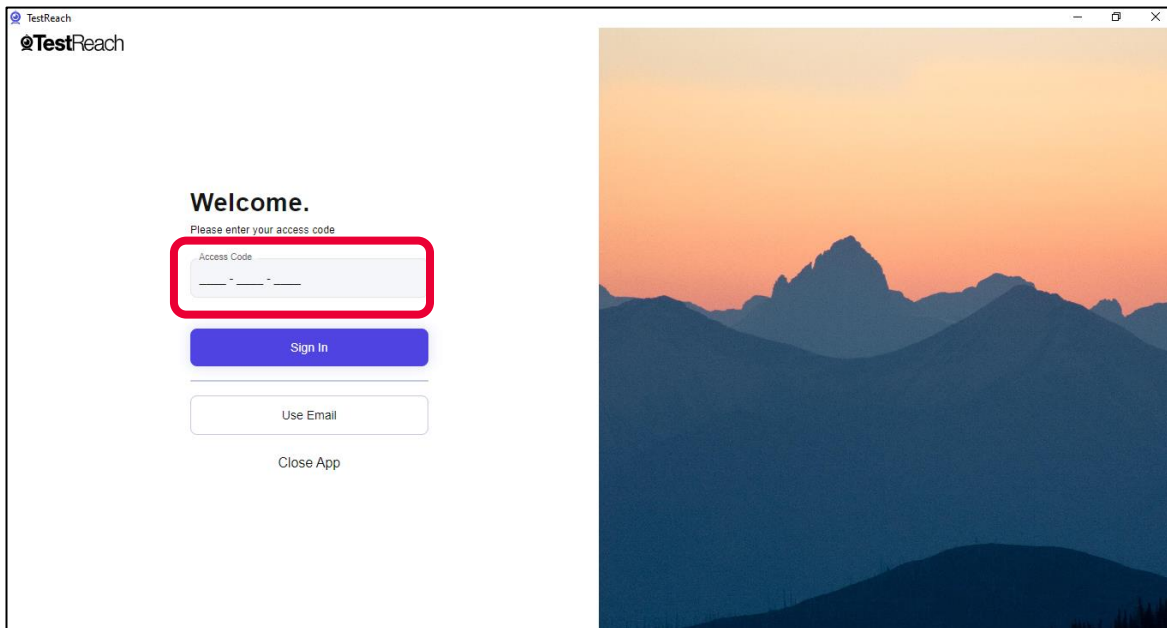
<https://download.testreach.com/>

How to complete the system check

When you open the TestReach application, you will be presented with the following screen. You must click on the "Use Access Code" button, marked in red below:

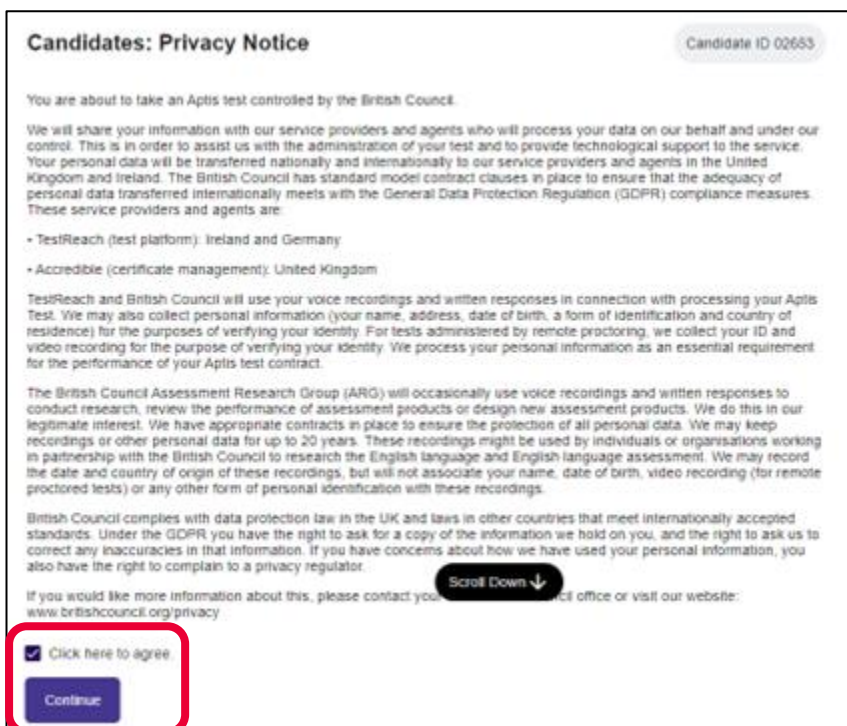


Now please enter the 12-digit access code from your confirmation email, in the field highlighted below:



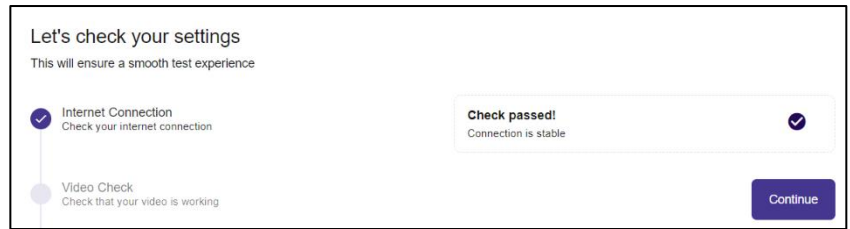
Click "Sign in" to progress to the Privacy Notice.

To consent to the Privacy Notice, you must click on the box highlighted in red below and then click "Continue":

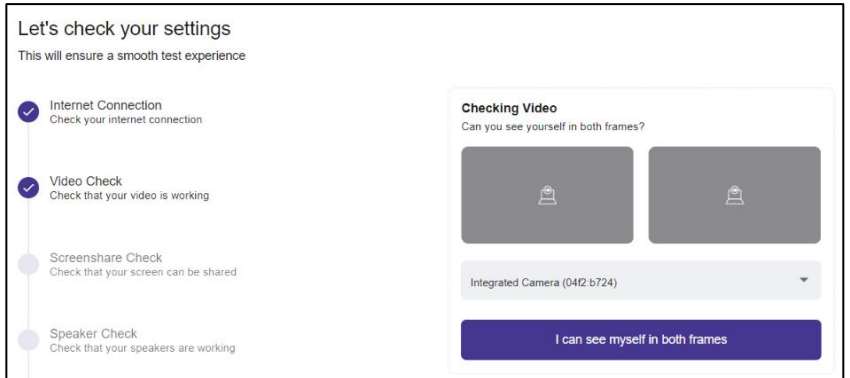


After accepting the Privacy Notice, the TestReach application will perform a system check. It will check the following:

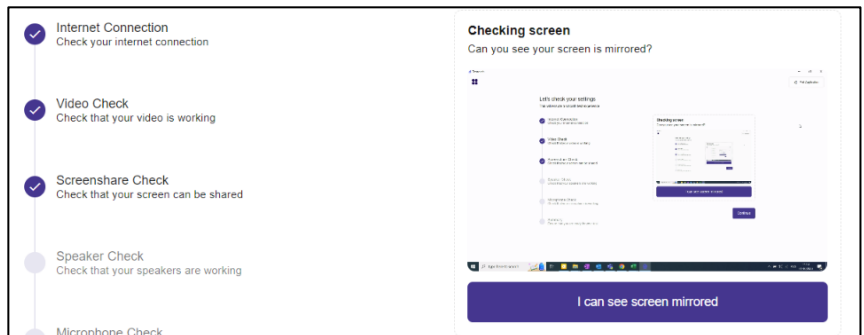
Internet Connection:



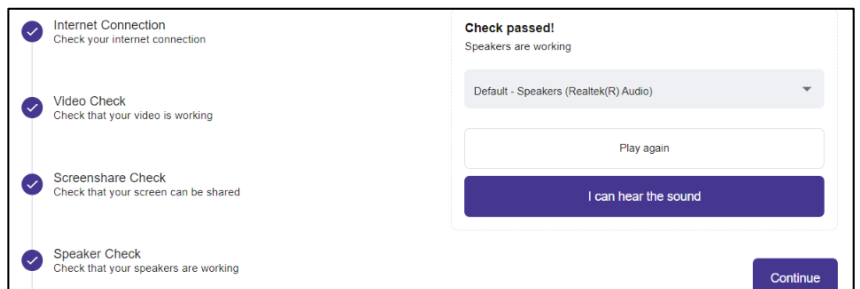
Video:



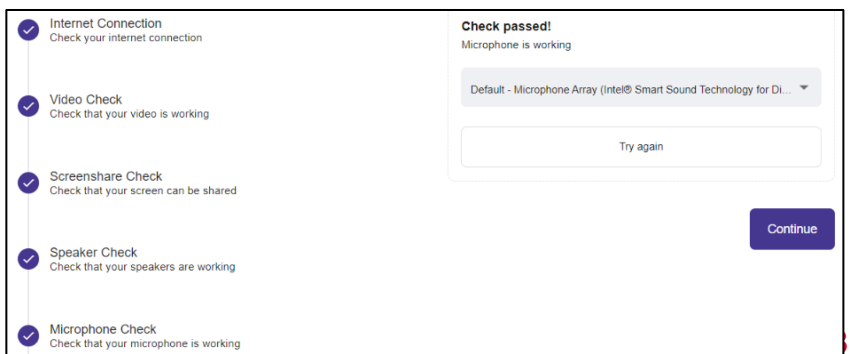
Screensharing capability:



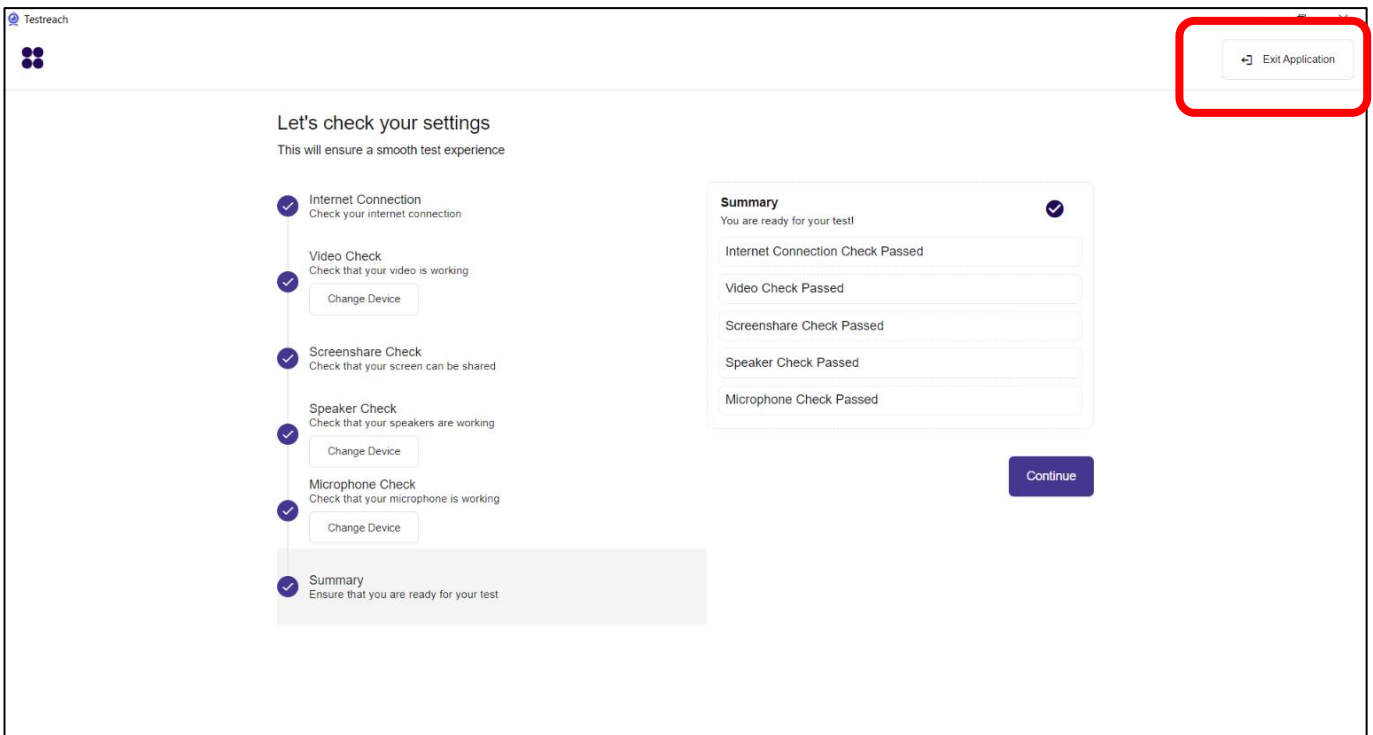
Speakers:



Microphone:



Once a check is passed successfully, you can move to the next one by clicking the “Continue” button. Once you arrive at the Summary, you should click the “Exit Application” button, as indicated in red below.



This will ensure that your computer, internet connection, speakers and microphone are all set up correctly prior to the test and minimise the possibility of interruptions on test day.

If you encounter any issues during the system check, please contact your local British Council office.

Step 4: Confirm the completion of the system check

Once you successfully complete the system check, please access the following link and confirm the completion by filling out the form:

<https://forms.office.com/e/x8KKsVkEx4>

You should submit the form no later than 3 days before your test.

Step 5: Prepare for your test day

Approximately 5 days before your test day you will receive a second email entitled 'IMPORTANT: Confirmation of your upcoming Aptis Remote test'. Within the email, you will receive your unique access code again.

Ensure you regularly check your email inbox as well as your junk or spam folders. Please get in touch with us if you do not receive the emails by the specified deadlines.

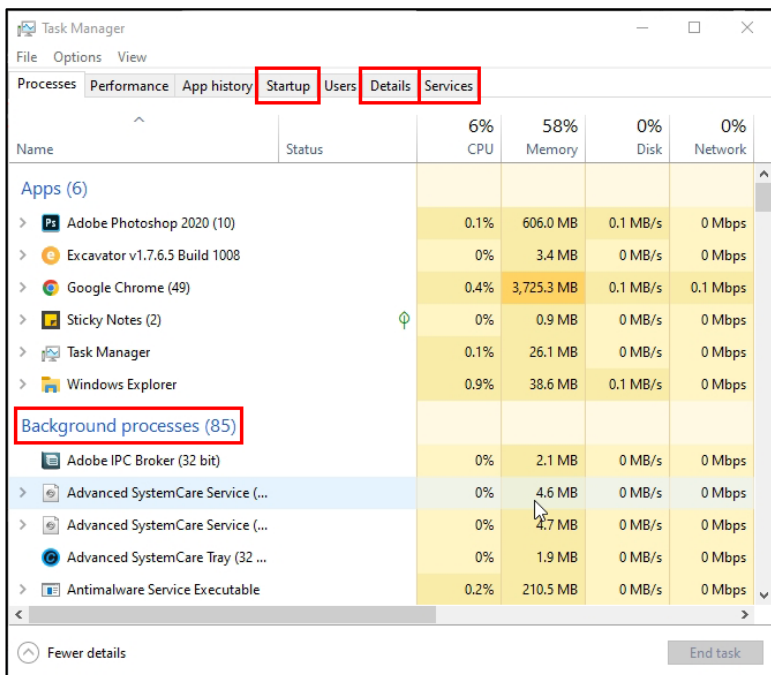
Please do not attempt to access the test before the required test date and time. You should:

1. Write down your live access code provided in the email and have it nearby during your test, as you cannot access your emails during the test.
2. Familiarise yourself with the guide and the test day procedure.
3. Familiarise yourself with the behavioural requirements -
See the "Test security and candidate actions" annex to best understand what you need to do and what to avoid during onboarding and on the test day.

Before the Aptis test begins, the TestReach application will enter "Lockdown" mode. This means **no applications can be opened or used during the test** and any **open applications must be closed**. It is relatively easy to close visible applications on your computer, but sometimes, non-visible applications are running in the background and the Aptis test cannot start until they are closed. The following steps explain how to close non-visible applications:

How to close all applications

1: On Windows – open **Task Manager** (Alt+Ctrl+Delete) and look for the name of the open application, process or service. If unable to locate it, check in the **Background Processes** tab of Task Manager, then the **Details** tab and then the **Services** tab.



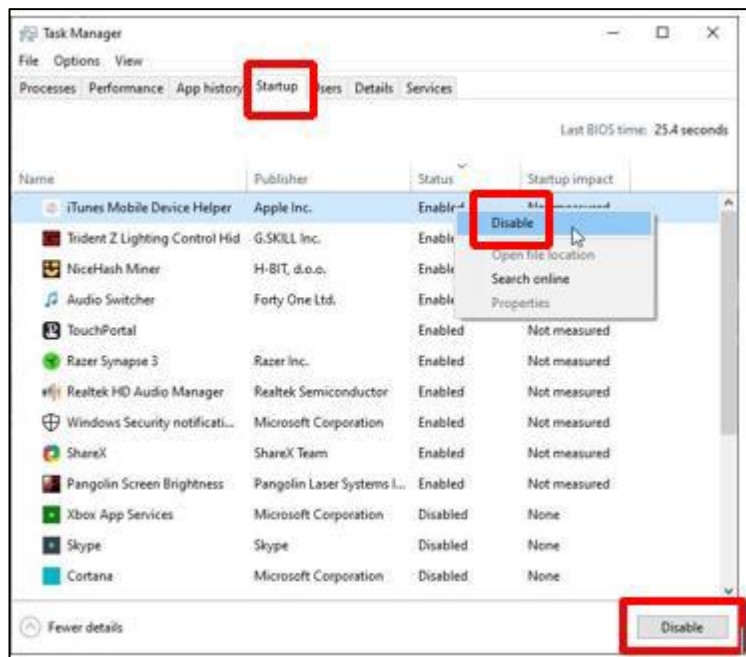
On MacOS – open **Force Quit** (Cmd+Opt+Esc) and look for the name of open application.



2: Once located, select **'End Task / Stop'** (Windows) **'Force Quit'** (Mac) for the application causing the browser violation.

3: Close Task Manager or Force Quit dialog.

4: If you are unable to find and close the application appearing in the error message, or the application keeps relaunching and prevents the test from being released, the application can be searched for in the **'Startup'** tab in Task Manager and closed by clicking on **'Disable'** from there.



Test environment requirements

Here is a reminder of the requirements for a Remote Invigilated test which will ensure that your test will go smoothly:

i. Use a private testing area - Sit upright in an area where other people won't talk and cannot pass behind you.

ii. Turn off all noise-making devices - Remove mobile phones from the room. Any sound from a mobile device may cause the supervisor to contact you about it as a potential infringement.

iii. Ensure your face is clearly visible - Hair, sunglasses, hats or anything that covers your face can cause your test to be flagged for low integrity. Eyeglasses are accepted.

iv. Close all applications - The only application open during the session should be the TestReach software. Do not take screenshots, this will cause the supervisor to contact you about it as a potential infringement.

v. Sit directly in front of your webcam - Make sure to stay in the middle of the webcam's view. Leaving the frame or looking away from the computer screen may cause the supervisor to contact you about it as a potential infringement.

vi. Ensure proper lighting - Sit in a consistently well-lit room with as plain a background as possible.

vii. Maintain the stable internet connection throughout the test – Ask other household members not to overload the network with activities such as streaming, uploading or downloading big amounts of data for the duration of your test.

Reasons why a supervisor may suspect malpractice or infringement of the Test rules

A “**Blocker Infringement**” is one that is deemed a **high-level exception**, which compromises the test and causes the test to be **terminated**. Supervisors will warn the candidate in advance if they observe any actions which they suspect is a Blocker Infringement. Examples are listed below:

- accessing (or trying to access) another site / document when online.
- not removing objects that are deemed interactive such as smart watches.
- not agreeing or responding to the validation questions asked by the supervisor.

A “**Minor Infringement**” is one that is deemed a **low-level exception**. Minor Infringements may not compromise the test, and can be rectified immediately, however **all minor infringements are logged**. Examples are listed below:

- glancing at other areas of the room that the supervisor cannot see (in this instance, prior to raising an infringement, the supervisor will question the candidate and ask the candidate to show the room with their camera, in particular the area that cannot be seen.)
- hand movements which could be interpreted as sign language
- leaning out of the view of the camera.

If you are having any technical difficulties setting up the TestReach application and preparing for the test day, please refer to the Troubleshooting Guide at the end of this document.

Step 6: On the day of your test

Sit in a quiet and private room and check your computer and headset again.

On the day of your test, you will need to repeat the process described in the previous section:

1. Close all applications you have running on your computer.
2. Open the TestReach application.
3. Click “Use Access Code” and then input your access code.
4. Agree to the privacy notice.
5. Complete the system check ensuring all required components are working properly.

It is advisable to **have your laptop connected to a power source** during the test to avoid the possibility of running out of battery power during the test.

To maintain the quality of the internet connection necessary to complete the test, it is recommended for other household members not to overload the network with activities such as streaming, uploading or downloading big amounts of data for the duration of the test.

Test security and candidate actions

Your actions will be monitored in real-time and recorded. Suspicious activity will be flagged by the live supervisor and may result in the cancellation of your test.

Therefore, you should:

- Prepare your valid ID in advance. Valid forms of ID include your passport, identity card and biometric residence permit (if a photo is included). The ID must contain your full name and a photo of yourself on the same side.
- Sit directly in front of your computer screen and ensure you are always clearly visible.
- You are not allowed to leave the room or take breaks during the test.
- Actions or behaviours not permitted during your test include but are not limited to:
 - cheating of any kind
 - answering or checking your phone during the test
 - allowing another person to enter your test space
 - looking away from your computer screen for an extended period
 - recording and taking screenshots of the test questions
 - copying and pasting, and visiting another website during the test
 - having food or drinks
 - having any other electronic devices
 - having personal items such as wallet, sunglasses and other items not necessary for testing.

You must log in 15 minutes before the test start time.

Once you have logged in, you will be placed in a queue. It may be up to **30 minutes** until you are connected to the supervisor. However, it is important that you **do not log in earlier than 15 minutes before the start time**. If you log in too early, you will see this message and will be required to logout of the application and log back in again:

Looks like you are early!

Your test has not started yet. Please come back no more than 15 minutes before the start of your test.

Logout

If you log in 15 minutes before test start time, you will see this message while you wait for a supervisor:

Waiting for a supervisor...

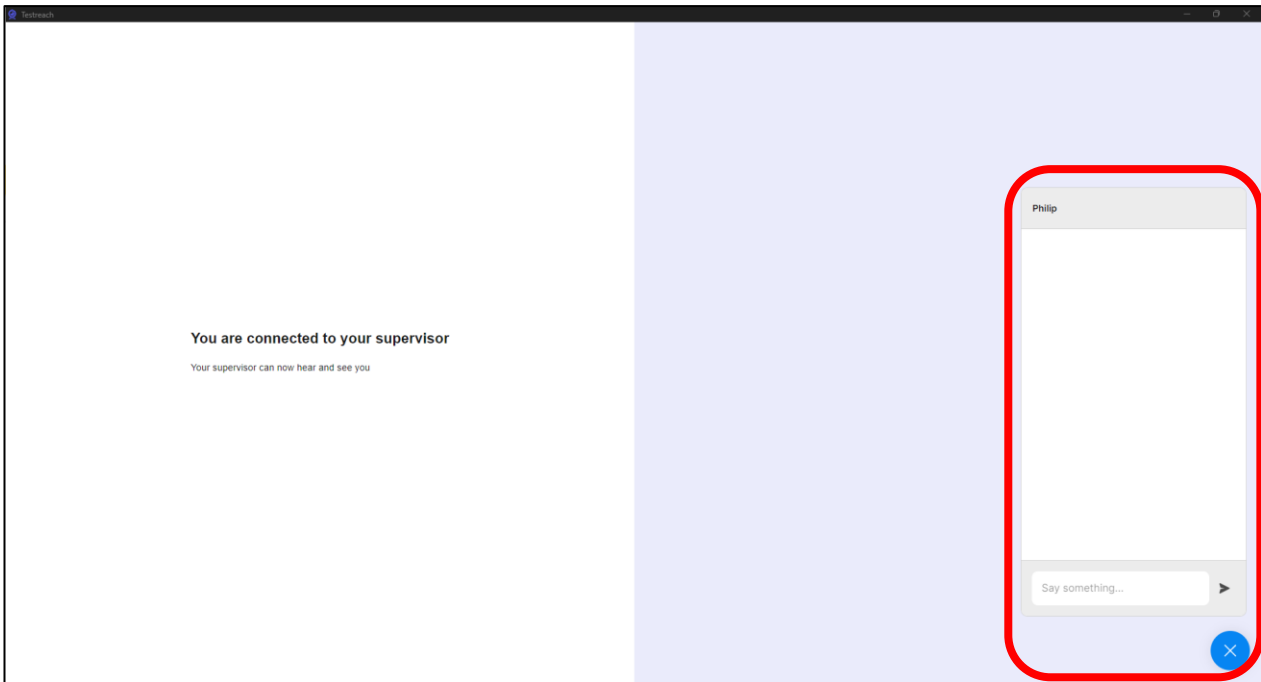
This may take a few minutes, but will not affect the time in your test

Once connected to a supervisor, you will see the following message:

You are connected to your supervisor

Your supervisor can now hear and see you

At the same time, a chat window will appear on the right of your screen (highlighted red, below). This gives you the option to either speak to the supervisor using your microphone, or write to the supervisor using the chat window:



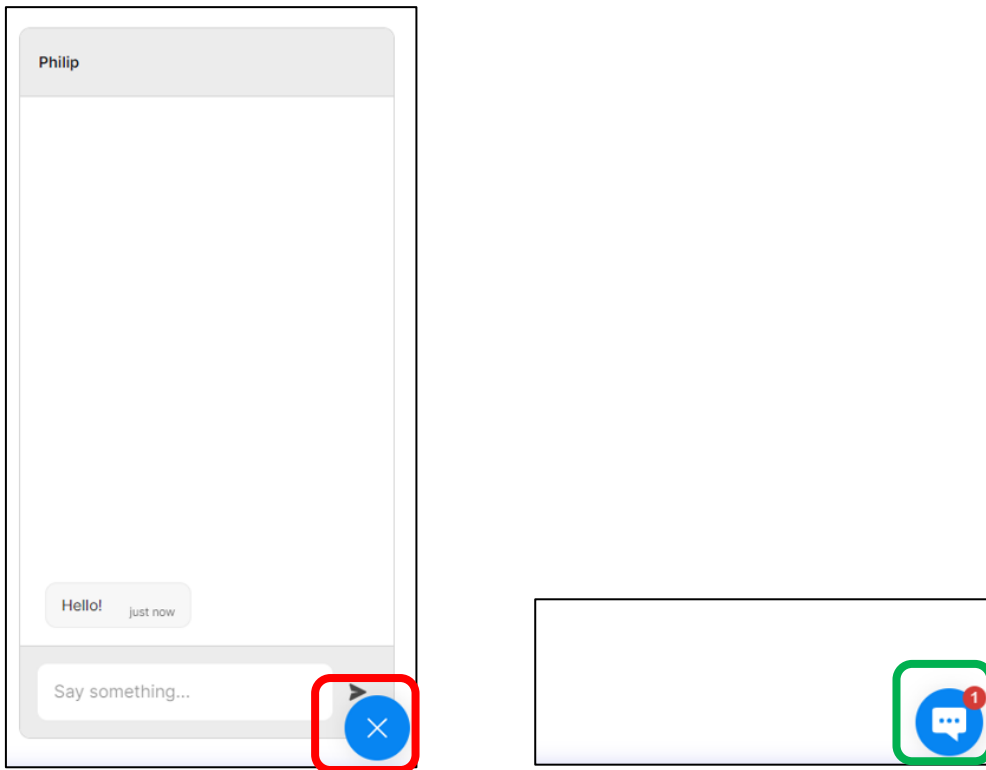
Before the test begins, the supervisor will then perform the following:

- check your ID;
- explain the exam timing rules;
- explain that unacceptable activity will be taken very seriously and will have consequences;
- give you access to the exam.

During the test the supervisor will:

- ensure the test starts and ends when it is scheduled to;
- monitor the behaviour of students against the standards imposed by the awarding body;
- make notes of any suspicious or prohibited items or behaviours.

The chat window is available during the test. You can communicate with the supervisor using the chat window, if required. The chat window can be opened and closed using the blue button highlighted **red** below. If the chat window is closed and you receive a message, you will be notified - highlighted **green** below:



Once you have completed the test, it is important to click the “**logout**” button (highlighted in red below) to ensure you stop the connection between yourself and the supervisor.



You may experience issues during the exam related to your home internet connection.

Please look at the following scenarios which could occur and the expected response from your invigilator:

Scenario 1: The candidate experiences poor internet connection during the exam.

Resolution: If poor connection prevents progress in the exam and requires the exam to be “resumed” by the supervisor, this can be done up to a maximum of 3 times. If you lose connection more than 3 times, the exam cannot be resumed, and you will be asked to contact the British Council.

Scenario 2: The candidate reports an issue with the exam paper content, such as a missing image or listening recording.

Resolution: You will be advised by the supervisor to continue with the exam to the best of your ability. The supervisor will record the issue in your candidate profile.

Scenario 3: The candidate has lost internet connection during the exam and cannot return to the exam in a timely manner.

Resolution: In this situation, if the candidate can re-establish internet connection, then the supervisor can resume their exam. But, if the candidate does not re-establish the internet connection, or the internet connection is re-established, but the candidate does not return to the exam, then the exam is submitted automatically.

If candidates get disconnected it may take up to 30 mins to connect with a supervisor after the candidate has been disconnected and is waiting to resume the test.

Step 7: Receiving your results

Your results will be available 72 hours after the test has been taken and successfully uploaded. They will be sent to you by your test centre.

Troubleshooting Guide

Guidance is provided in this section to help test takers overcome some of the technical difficulties they may face when using the TestReach application to take the Aptis test.

1. Webcam troubleshooting

If you're having issues getting your webcam to connect to the TestReach app, it is typically because:

- A) Your webcam is being used by another application e.g. Teams/Zoom/Facetime.
- B) An anti-virus/ firewall application is blocking TestReach from accessing the device.

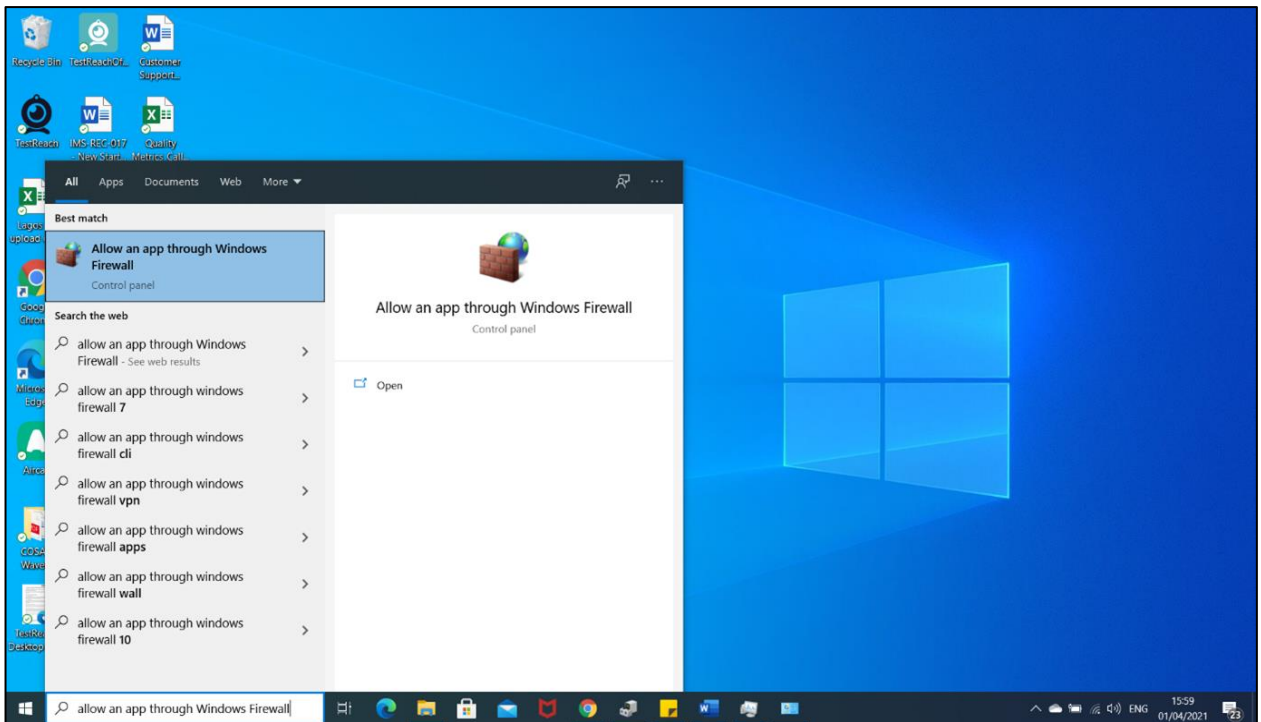
In order to troubleshoot webcam issues, please try the following:

- Check for applications using the camera. Typically, only a single app can use the camera at a time. Ensure TestReach isn't being denied access to the camera, because something else is using it at the present moment. You can attempt to fix this issue by closing all other open applications that might be using the camera. Some example apps include MS Teams, FaceTime and Skype. If you aren't sure which applications might be accessing your camera, save all of your work, then close all open apps to rule everything out.
- Search for 'camera privacy settings', ensure allow apps to access your camera is turned to 'on'.
- Restart the computer. If any processes are using the camera in the background, a restart may fix the issue, providing you full access to the camera once again. Once the computer is back on, check to see if TestReach can now access the webcam.
- Make sure that any antivirus programs installed on your machine are adjusted to allow for webcam use.
- Ensure you are as close to your router/modem as possible. You can also try a different source of wifi, such as mobile hotspot, to see if this works.
- Update your camera drivers. This can be done by searching 'Device manager' > clicking on Camera > Drivers tab > Search for updates > Update automatically.

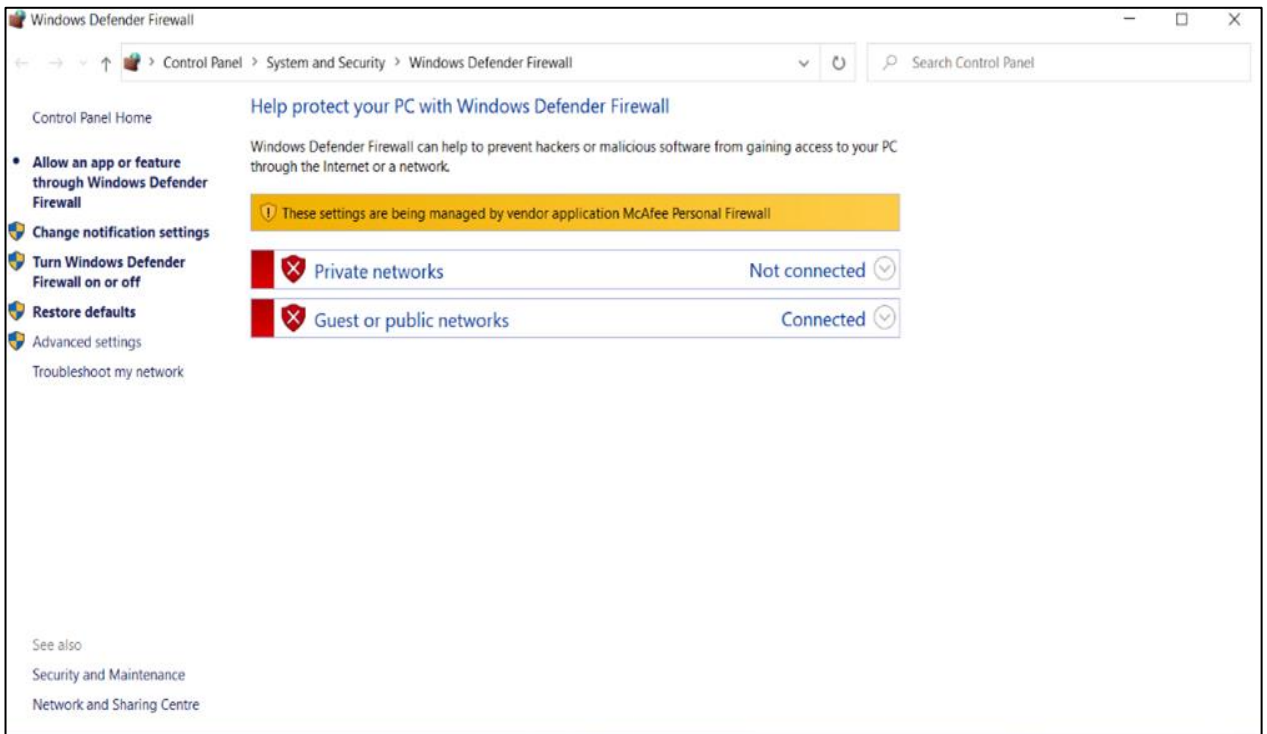
2. Disabling a firewall

To disable your firewall, please take the following steps:

1. First, click on the Windows icon in the bottom right-hand corner of your desktop and type in '**Allow an app through Windows Defender Firewall**', it should come up as the first result – Please see the image below:



2. Now, scroll down to where it says “TestReach” (this can also appear as ‘Take a test’) and ensure both boxes, Private and Public, are ticked.
3. Alternately, click on the Windows icon, in the search bar type the following ‘Windows Defender and Firewall’, again, it should be the first result that shows up.
4. Next, click where it says, ‘turn Windows Defender Firewall on or off’. Ensure this is turned off for both private and public – please see the image below:



For an **Apple Mac** device please follow the steps here to check/disable the firewall:

1. First click on the little Apple icon in the top left corner.
2. Next click on 'System Preferences'.
3. Click on 'Security and Privacy'. There will be four options: 'General', 'FileVault', 'Firewall' and 'Privacy', click on 'Firewall'.
4. You will need to click the gold lock in the left corner and enter the password for your Administrator account on your Mac to make any changes.
5. Then you will be able to check your firewall options or turn it off.
6. You will have to click on the gold lock to save any changes made.

3. TestReach application not opening

If the app is not working or loading, it is a good step to **try an alternative wifi network**, such as a mobile hotspot, in case internet connection is the issue.

If the app is not working on one device, if it is possible, you should **try downloading the app on to a different device** using this link: <https://download.testreach.com/> to rule out device incompatibility issues.

4. Audio troubleshooting

If you are experiencing any issues with speakers or microphone, please first make sure that all other apps, including Microsoft Teams and Zoom are completely shut down and that your Wi-Fi connection is strong (speed needs to be at least 5 MBPS). Then restart your computer and try the check again.

If you are still having issues with your audio please follow these steps:

1. Search for 'Manage Audio Devices' on your computer.
2. Under playback, double click on the speakers/headphones that have a green tick next to them.
3. Then open 'Levels' and ensure the volume is turned all the way up and are not on mute.
4. Then click 'OK' or 'Apply'. Now, under Recording, double click on the microphone/headphones that have a green tick next to them.
5. Then open 'Levels' and ensure the volume is turned all the way up and are not on mute.

As with the webcam, anti-virus or firewall software may block permissions for your speaker and/or microphone. Please ensure that permissions are turned to 'on' for the TestReach app and if necessary, consider the steps to disable the firewall while using the app.