



THE INSTITUTION OF FIRE ENGINEERS
Founded 1918 • Incorporated 1924

2018 IFE Qualifications - Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

IFE Qualification Content

Q: How can I find out about IFE qualifications?

A: Information about all qualifications (including links to the relevant syllabus) can be found on the IFE website on the page entitled “IFE Qualifications (with Syllabus Links)”.

Candidates are advised to read the introduction to each qualification to find out about the aims of the qualification, the structure of the qualification and the way that the examinations work. To open the documents on the website, please click on the red text.

Q: What changes have been made to IFE qualification syllabuses for 2018?

A:

IFE Level 2 Certificate in Fire Science, Operations and Safety

The syllabus for this qualification has been updated. The broad areas of content remain the same (ie Fire Engineering Science, Fire Operations and Fire Safety) but information has been re-structured and some additional content has been added. There are no changes to the format of the examination.

IFE Level 3 Certificate in Fire Science, Operations, Fire Safety and Management

The content for three of the units has been updated ie: Unit 1- Fire Engineering Science, Unit 2 - Fire Operations and Unit 3 – Fire Safety.

The format of the examinations will also change. Each unit will be assessed by a one hour examination as in previous years. However, the number of multiple choice questions will be reduced from 20 to 15; instead of 30 marks allocated to short answer questions, the marks for this section of the paper will increase to 35.

Level 3 Diploma

Unit 2, Fire Safety – the content of this unit has been updated.

Level 4 Certificate

Unit 2, Fire Safety – the content of this unit has been updated.

Q: I have passed IFE examinations in previous years. Will I still be able to use my existing examination passes towards the full qualification?

A: As long as the passes have been achieved within the timescale stated in the syllabus it will be possible to count them towards a full qualification. For the Level 3 Certificate, Level 3 Diploma and Level 4 Certificate, the timeline specified is “within five years” so candidates taking examinations in 2018 will be able to include papers achieved in the four previous years ie: 2017, 2016, 2015 and 2014.

The IFE automatically checks past achievements over the relevant five-year period at the point when results and certificates are released. Where candidates have successfully met the requirements for a full qualification, the IFE will issue a certificate accordingly.

Q: I have achieved qualifications awarded by a different awarding organisation. Can I use my qualification(s) in place of one or more of the IFE units and count it towards a full IFE qualification?

A: No. There are no qualifications that are sufficiently similar to the IFE’s units to enable the IFE to identify a direct equivalence in terms of content. In order to award a qualification, the IFE must be able to certify that each candidate has been assessed on the content set out in the published IFE syllabus in the way (ie IFE examination) specified in the syllabus.

Q: Can I use any of my previous training and/or experience to secure an exemption (or Accreditation of Prior Learning) towards one or more of the IFE units?

A: No. In order to award a qualification, the IFE must be able to certify that each candidate has been assessed on the content set out in the syllabus in the way (ie IFE examination) specified in the syllabus.

Q: How do I decide which qualification is best for me?

A: Individuals have a range of reasons for choosing qualifications. The decision depends on many different things such as what you are hoping to achieve and where you are starting from in terms of your existing knowledge, understanding and experience.

The IFE recommends that candidates look at the syllabuses in detail and use this as the basis for their decisions. The introductory section of each syllabus provides information on who the qualification is for, the aims of the qualification, the entry requirements and the way the qualification is assessed; the individual sections and units of the qualification set out the detailed knowledge and understanding that will be tested. In addition, candidates are advised to look at past examination papers to assess the level and scope of the questions that may be asked in an examination.

Q: How many examinations should I enter?

A: Although candidates need to achieve four units to attain the full qualifications for the Level 3 Certificate, the Level 3 Diploma and the Level 4 Certificate, candidates do not have to achieve all four units at the same time. Level 3 and Level 4 are challenging levels (eg A Levels are typical of Level 3 qualifications) and the IFE syllabuses are wide-ranging. Few candidates pass all four papers in the same session.

Candidates may choose to enter only one paper per session if they wish or they may enter any combination of units. The IFE advises candidates to enter only for the examinations that they have studied for.

Q: Can I apply to sit for any of the units within a qualification, or do I have to start with the Level 2 Certificate?

A: There are no restrictions on entry and no requirement for candidates to start at Level 2. Candidates may enter as many or as few units as they wish at whatever level they choose to enter. However, candidates are advised to review the introductory and subject content areas of the syllabus to determine whether or not the qualification is appropriate for them.

Q: How often are the IFE examinations available?

A: In 2018, all examinations will be available in March 2018. The Level 2 Certificate, all Level 3 Certificate examinations and the Operations Unit (Unit 6) from the Diploma will also be available in October 2018.

Applying for Examinations

Q: How do I apply to take IFE Examinations?

A: Information on entry arrangements for 2018 is available on the IFE website from 1 September 2017. Information on entry arrangements for the October 2018 examinations will be available on the website from 1 June 2018. Dedicated pages for each examination session are provided within the Qualifications section of the IFE's website. Please see the website page for the examination session that you are interested in.

Candidates are advised to read the "Guidance for Candidates Applying to Enter Examinations" document before completing the application form.

Q: What should I do if I miss the closing date?

A: Please see the "Guidance for Candidates Applying to Enter Examinations" document which sets out late entry arrangements and late entry fee arrangements. Although the IFE will try to take entries after the specified closing date for examination, it is not possible to guarantee that this will be possible or that the candidate can secure a place at their chosen venue.

Q: What should I do if I wish to change my examination entries?

A: Please see the "Guidance for Candidates Applying to Enter Examinations" document which sets out the timelines for changing entries and refunds. Please note that examination fees are not refundable after the date stated in the guidance document.

Q: What should I do if I need to request reasonable adjustment arrangements due to a disability?

A: Information on the reasonable adjustments that may be requested and the process for applying for them can be found on the IFE website, on the page entitled "FAQs, Policies and Procedures". Please see the relevant procedure and application form.

Q: Is it possible to change the published examination timetable?

A: No. The timetable follows a standard format. All candidates are required to take examinations at the same time.

If there is a timetable clash and you are unable to take all of the examinations that you wish to take in a single examination session, you will need to choose which examination(s) you wish to take in 2018 and then take the additional examination(s) at a later examination session.

In some instances where candidates wish to take two examinations that are scheduled at the same time (eg the Diploma Unit 7 in Fire Investigation and Unit 5 in Leadership and Management where

both units are scheduled for 2.30 on Friday afternoon), the IFE will be prepared to consider allowing candidates to change the time of one of the examinations as long as both papers are taken on the same day. However, this arrangement can be made only where the examination centre is able to make appropriate security arrangements and where the candidate can take both papers on the same day (eg the IFE can give permission for one of the papers to be taken in the morning and the other in the afternoon).

It is not possible to change the days of the examination so no examination can be taken on a day other than the day that is scheduled in the timetable.

Preparing to take Examinations

Q: How should I prepare for my examination?

A: Each candidate brings their own particular mixture of knowledge and experience to the examination process so an individual's preparation needs depend on their starting point.

The IFE advises all candidates to use the examination syllabus as the basis for their study programme and to ensure that their study covers all elements of the syllabus.

Candidates are strongly advised to read the Candidate Guide which is provided on the Preparing for Examinations page of the website. This guide provides information about the examinations including guidance on how questions are marked, the type of answers that examiners expect at different levels and how candidates should answer questions in response to different instructions (eg describe, explain, etc).

The IFE has provided a recommended reading list, which can be found on the website. In addition, candidates are advised to look at past examination papers/sample questions as this will enable them to assess the level and scope of examination questions as well as to familiarise themselves with the format of the examination.

Q: What books should I buy?

A: The IFE has provided a list of reading materials and resources on the website. The listing is advisory and the IFE does not recommend specific books that candidates should buy. Many of the resources can be downloaded free of charge from external websites. Candidates could also consider using books available from libraries as reference sources. Some of the books can be purchased directly from IFE.

Candidates should note that the listing provided is not comprehensive in that the books recommended have not been written specifically as learning resources for the IFE examinations. The books do not provide learning programmes tailored to the syllabus. *Candidates are responsible for ensuring that they study all of the topics and this will mean undertaking self-directed reading, using a wide range of sources.*

Candidates are advised to use the opportunity to read widely to extend their knowledge and understanding.

Q: Does the IFE provide courses?

A: No, the IFE head office does not provide training courses either for candidates or for teachers/training preparing the candidates for the examinations. However, some local branches

sometimes run courses for particular subjects. Please contact the IFE local branch for information on any courses that may be available.

Q: How can I access past examination papers?

A: Past papers for all of the Level 3 Diploma and Level 4 Certificate units can be downloaded from the IFE website. Sample questions are available for the Level 2 Certificate or the Level 3 Certificate examinations on the IFE website on the Qualifications page under “Sample Questions, Past Papers & Exam Reports”.

Examiner reports are also available for most papers. All of these documents are available free of charge.

Q: What do I need to do ahead of the examination day?

A: Candidates should read all of relevant documents provided by the IFE including those that set out the instructions for the conduct of the examination. Please see “Information and Rules for Candidates taking IFE Examinations” for the relevant examination session. This will be available on the page for the examinations session.

After the Examination

Q: How soon after the examination will I receive my result?

A: After the examination, the IFE will log all examination scripts, arrange for marking of the scripts by experts, quality assure marking, review the examination process overall and then issue results. This process takes around three months. The timeline for the posting of examination results is published on the IFE website and is also available in the “Information and Rules for Candidates” booklet which is produced for each examination session.

Q: If I fail an examination, can I re-sit it? How many times I can re-sit the same examination?

A: Candidates may re-sit examinations as often as they need to. However, candidates should note that there are timescales for the completion of full qualifications eg candidates have five years in which to achieve all of the examinations required to achieve a full Level 3 Diploma qualification.

Q: What do I do if I wish to have my examination result checked/appeal against the result issued?

A: The procedure for results enquiries and appeals is available on the IFE website on the page for the examination session under “Enquiries about Results and Appeals”.

Certificates

Q: How soon after the examination will I receive my certificate?

A: The IFE will forward certificates to successful candidates at the same time as results are issued.

Where candidates have passed all of the examinations required to achieve a full, overarching qualification (eg where a candidate has passed the four papers required to achieve the Level 3 Diploma), the IFE will automatically produce and forward the relevant certificate at the point where the last unit is achieved.

Q: What should I do if I do not receive my certificate or if I notice an error on the certificate?

A: Candidates should contact the IFE immediately if they have concerns about the certificate forwarded to them (eg if the candidate’s name is not presented correctly) or if they do not receive their certificate. The IFE will replace/re-issue certificates free of charge as long as candidates

contact the IFE within six months of the issue of the results (the date that results are posted is published on the IFE's website, on the page for the examination session) – if queries are raised after six months, a replacement fee will be charged.

Q: I have lost my certificate. Can the IFE issue a replacement certificate?

A: The IFE charges an administrative fee for replacing and re-sending certificates. From 1 September 2017, the fee for replacing certificates is £25.00.

IFE Examinations and IFE Membership

Q: Do I have to be a member of the Institution to take examinations?

A: No. All IFE qualifications are open to all individuals whether they are members of the Institution or not.

Q: I have achieved the Level 3 Certificate qualification. Can I apply for Technician grade membership?

A: Achieving the Level 3 Qualification means you have the academic requirement for Technician grade of membership. Please see the IFE website membership section for more information about how to apply and further requirements for this level of membership. This can be found under Join and then Technician.

Q: I have achieved the Level 3 Diploma qualification. Can I apply for Graduate grade membership?

A: Achieving the Level 3 Diploma means you have the academic requirement for Graduate grade of membership. Please see the IFE website membership section for more information about how to apply and further requirements for this level of membership. This can be found under Join and then Graduate.

Q: I have achieved the Level 4 Certificate qualification. Can I apply for Member grade membership?

A: Achieving the Level 4 Certificate means you have the academic requirement for Member grade of membership. Please see the IFE website membership section for more information about how to apply and further requirements for this level of membership. This can be found under Join and then Member.

Further Information

Q: What should I do if I have any queries or need any further information?

A: Please email the IFE at exams@ife.org.uk