



THE INSTITUTION OF FIRE ENGINEERS
Founded 1918 • Incorporated 1924

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) 2019 Examinations

These FAQs provide general information on IFE qualifications that are tested by examinations that are available in 2019.

IFE Qualification Content

Q1: Which IFE qualifications are tested by examinations and how many examinations do I need to pass to gain the full qualification?

A:

Qualification	Number of examination papers
IFE Level 2 Certificate in Fire Science, Operations and Safety	One
IFE Level 2 Certificate in Passive Fire Protection	One
IFE Level 3 Certificate in Fire Science, Operations, Fire Safety and Management	Four – one examination for each of the four units that make up the qualification
IFE Level 3 Diploma in Fire Science and Fire Safety	Four – one examination for each of the two mandatory units (Fire Science and Fire Safety) and one examination for each of two optional units. Optional units cover: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Fire Service Operations and Incident Command• Leadership and Management• Fire Investigation• Aviation Fire Operations
IFE Level 4 Certificate in Fire Science and Fire Safety	Four – one examination for each of the two mandatory units (Fire Science and Fire Safety) and one examination for each of two optional units. Optional units cover: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Fire Service Operations and Incident Command• Leadership and Management• Fire Investigation• Aviation Fire Operations• Civil Emergency and Disaster Management (<i>last examination for this subject in March 2019</i>)
IFE Level 3 Certificate in Passive Fire Protection	One

Q2: 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 all of the information available for each qualification including any separate introductions as this will provide additional information on 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.

Q3: What changes have been made to IFE qualification syllabuses for 2019?

A: There are no significant changes to any of the IFE syllabuses although minor changes have been made to clarify some information or to advise on the scope of specific requirements. Candidates are advised to work with the versions of the syllabus currently on the IFE website.

Candidates who are interested in the Level Four unit in Civil Emergency and Disaster Management should note that this unit will be withdrawn after 2019 and therefore the last time that the examination will be available is March 2019.

Q4: Some qualifications require candidates to pass four unit examinations before they can achieve the full qualification. Do I have to achieve all of the units to obtain a certificate or can I take only the unit examination(s) that I am interested in?

A: Candidates can take as many or as few unit examinations as they wish. The IFE provides unit certificates where candidates achieve a unit rather than the full qualification. These certificates look different to the certificates for full qualifications but they fully record achievement and have value in their own right. The certificates state that candidates have passed the unit examination and, where relevant, show the pass grade achieved.

Q5: If I am working towards a qualification that requires success in four units, how long do I have to pass all of the examinations?

A: Candidates should always check the detail in the relevant syllabus. However, for the qualifications listed above, the timeline specified is “within five years” so candidates taking examinations in 2019 will be able to include examinations achieved in the four previous years (ie: 2018, 2017, 2016 and 2015) as well as their passes in 2019. Examinations passed prior to 2015 will no longer be sufficiently current for the achievement to count towards a full certificate.

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.

Candidates who do not pass all examinations in the same five years but who have passed unit examinations will have been awarded unit certificates reflecting the examinations passed at different times – please see Q4 above on unit certificates.

Q6: 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 specific way (ie IFE examination) specified in the syllabus.

Q7: 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 examinations?

A: No. In order to award an examination-based 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. (Note: different arrangements apply for qualifications that are not tested by examination)

Q8: 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.

Q9: 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.

Q10: Do I have to start with the Level 2 Certificate?

A: No. There are no restrictions on entry and no requirement for candidates to start at Level 2. Candidates may enter as many or as few examinations 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.

Q11: How often are the IFE examinations available?

A: In 2019, all examinations will be available in March 2019.

A smaller selection of examinations will be available in October 2019 ie The Level 2 Certificate, all Level 3 Certificate examinations, the Fire Service Operations and Incident Command Unit (Unit 6) from the Level 3 Diploma, the Fire Service Operations and Incident Command Unit (Unit 3) from the Level 4 Certificate and the Level 3 Certificate in Passive Fire Protection.

Booking Examinations

Q12: How do I book to take IFE Examinations?

A: Information on entry arrangements for March 2019 is available on the IFE website from 1 September 2018. Information on entry arrangements for the October 2019 examinations will be available on the website from 1 June 2019. 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 and the detailed guidance on booking. This page will also provide information on late bookings, fees, examination venues available and changes to examination entries.

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

Q13: 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.

Q14: 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.

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

Q15: 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).

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.

The IFE has provided a list of recommended reading materials and resources for each examination. 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.

Q16: Does the IFE provide training courses?

A: No. The IFE head office does not provide training courses either for candidates or for teachers/trainers 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.

Q17: How can I access past examination papers?

A: Past papers for all of the Level 3 Diploma and Level 4 Certificate unit examinations for the past three years can be downloaded from the IFE website. Sample questions are available for the Level 2 Certificate or the Level 3 Certificate examinations. Examiner reports are also available for most papers. All of these documents are available free of charge and be found on the Sample Question, Past Papers and Examiner Reports page of the website.

Q18: 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 relevant examinations session.

After the Examination

Q20: 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.

Q21: If I fail an examination, can I re-sit it?

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. Please contact exams@ife.org.uk to confirm current fees.

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 an IFE qualification. Can I apply for IFE Membership?

A: Please see the IFE website membership section for more information about how to apply and the specific requirements to attain different grades of membership.

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