



Examination Centre Handbook

Information and Regulations for Conducting IFE Examinations

March 2020

This handbook brings together all of the information and regulations for examination centres managing the conduct of IFE examinations. The IFE's processes and regulations are based on standard examination practice and are designed to provide consistent standards across examination centres and to ensure an equitable experience for all candidates.

The handbook has been designed to be used by Examination Centre Managers, Invigilators and all of those engaged in managing the examination process.

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1. Introduction - Purpose and Scope of the Handbook

This handbook has been developed to provide all of the information and regulations that examination centres need in order to manage the IFE examination process. It covers the process of receiving and securing examination materials, organising the examination venue and examination/invigilation team, managing the examinations on the day of the examination and returning the examination materials to the IFE after the examinations have been completed.

The handbook does not cover candidate entry/application arrangements, training for candidates or post-examination arrangements such as the issue of results or results enquiries. Information on application processes and post-examination arrangements is available on the IFE's website along with information about the IFE's qualifications and links to relevant policies and procedures.

For further information, please email exams@ife.org.uk

2. Role and Responsibilities of the Examination Centre in Managing IFE Examinations

IFE examination centres play a critical role in:

- enabling candidates to access the IFE's examinations
- ensuring that the examination environment and surrounding arrangements maintain the integrity of the examinations
- ensuring that examination conditions provide an equitable and consistent experience for all candidates

The IFE agrees and publishes lists of examination centres prior to each examination session. A provisional list of centres for March examinations is published on the preceding 1 September; a provisional list of centres for October examinations is published on the preceding 1 June. The IFE is able to accept additional centres for the March examinations up to the end of November; additional centres for the October examinations can be accepted up until 15 August.

In order to act as an examination centre, potential centres must demonstrate that they can meet the responsibilities of an IFE examination centre for each examination session. Each centre is asked to complete an Examination Centre Management form for **each** examination session confirming the arrangements that are in place and confirming that they will meet the requirements set out in the Examination Centre Responsibilities document. This document is provided in Appendix A.

The IFE reserves the right to refuse to accept centres where there is insufficient evidence that they can meet the requirements for centres. All new centres are reviewed prior to acceptance as IFE centres; the IFE takes into account previous experience of existing centres before inviting/accepting centres to act as centres for a particular examination session.

The IFE acknowledges, with thanks, the valuable contribution of examination centres that consistently provide robust and high quality examination arrangements.

3. Roles and Responsibilities of the Examination Centre Manager and the Invigilators

The Examination Centre Manager

The Examination Centre Manager is the person accountable for the following:

- taking responsibility on behalf of the centre for following the IFE's quality assurance procedures and managing the examination centre.
- ensuring that the venue and the members of the examination team are properly prepared for the examination session.
- receiving, checking and holding securely the IFE's examination materials before and after the examination sessions take place.
- appointing and overseeing the invigilators, ensuring that all invigilators are prepared for the examinations, aware of their responsibilities and comply with invigilation standards.
- ensuring that there are at least two invigilators for each examination room for the first 30 candidates. One further invigilator will be required for each additional 25 candidates (or part of 25) in excess of the first 30. The Examination Centre Manager may take on an invigilator role. [Note: where only one candidate is present in the invigilation room, only one invigilator is needed; however, at no point should the examination room be left either unlocked or unattended. Should the candidate need to leave the room during the examination, the invigilator must either lock the room whilst he/she accompanies the candidate or, if the door can't be locked, must ensure that a second pre-approved invigilator either stays in the room or accompanies the candidate.]
- overseeing the conduct of the examination session and ensuring that examination candidates are appropriately supervised at all times. This includes ensuring that candidates that leave the room and intend to return are supervised whilst they are out of the room.
- the Examination Centre Manager has the authority to take appropriate action to meet any unforeseen circumstances which may arise.
- if the Examination Centre Manager is not attending the examination session themselves, they should ensure that one of the invigilators has been designated as the Senior Invigilator and authority is duly delegated.
- arranging for the safe return of examination materials and completed scripts once the examination sessions have been completed.

Invigilators

Invigilators are appointed by the Examination Centre Manager. The Examination Manager must ensure that invigilators fully understand and comply with the requirements for invigilation and that they do not have conflicts of interest in relation to the examination (eg a relative amongst the candidates). Each invigilator must undertake to:

1. ensure that examination regulations are adhered to
2. respect confidentiality and impartiality
3. maintain an ordered examination environment

The key purpose of the invigilators is to facilitate the smooth and efficient running of the examination processes, remaining vigilant before and during the examination process and ensuring that there is no malpractice.

Invigilators should ensure that all candidates are supervised **at all times**. This must include:

- maintaining a view around the examination room at all times – positioning invigilators in different parts of the room (eg one at the front of the room and one at the back) is recommended.
- accompanying candidates who need to leave the room for temporary periods during the examination(s).

Invigilators must **NOT** carry out other tasks during the examination such as reading a book. They must **NOT** engage in conversation with other invigilators or visitors to the room unless essential to the organisation of the examination environment.

If it is necessary for one invigilator to leave the room at any time (including to accompany candidates who need to leave the room for toilet breaks and plan to return), the centre must ensure that adequate supervision is in place whilst this invigilator is out of the room.

4. Pre-examination Processes and Responsibilities

Receipt of Examination Materials

Examination materials, including the candidate attendance register and relevant forms for completion, will be forwarded to the Examination Centre Manager between one and three weeks before the scheduled date of the examinations. Centres should contact the IFE if they have not received materials one week before the examinations are scheduled to take place.

On receipt of the materials, Examination Centre Managers should check that the packages have not been damaged and that all materials are secure. They should open the sealed plastic packing bag (this will be either red or blue). Information for Centre Managers will be included in the package and can be found in a clear plastic wallet. This plastic wallet will include the attendance

register as well as other documents required by the centre such as seating plans and the invigilator report.

The Examination Centre Manager should check the information on the attendance register, the labels on the sealed question paper packs against the lists provided and the labels on the packs of answer books/examination stationery to ensure that the right materials have been provided. If any anomalies are identified, or if the Examination Centre Manager has any queries or concerns, the IFE should be contacted immediately at exams@ife.org.uk.

All materials should be kept securely at all times. Envelopes containing examination papers should remain sealed until the time of the examination.

In most instances, the IFE will pack papers separately where candidates need to be accommodated separately eg candidates with dyslexia who need to be seated in a separate room. However, in exceptional circumstances, an envelope may need to be opened ahead of the examination so that a paper can be taken to a different room; in this situation, specific permission will be given by the IFE to open the envelope up to an hour ahead of the examination and instructions to manage security will be provided by the IFE.

Preparing the Examination Room

Examination Centre Managers should oversee the preparation of the examination room in advance, ensuring that:

- there are sufficient desks/tables and chairs
- the environment is appropriate with suitable conditions such as light, heating, ventilation and outside level of noise
- candidates must be seated individually at single desks – under no circumstances should candidates share desks
- the distance between the desks should afford an invigilator ease of movement between them longitudinally and laterally (in practice this distance should not be less than one and a half metres) – candidates should not be able to see the scripts of candidates seated across the aisle from them
- facilities for the safety and comfort of candidates are available or accessible (please give consideration to lavatory and washing facilities)
- the relevant stationery, including an appropriate answer book/answer sheet is placed on each desk before candidates are admitted to the examination room
- there are no materials around the room or on the walls which could benefit candidates by providing information that will assist them with their examinations
- a reliable clock should be clearly visible to each candidate in the room
- the start and finish times for the examination and the centre number should be visible to all candidates eg written on a flipchart/board

- there is somewhere secure for candidates to store belongings that may not be taken to their desks

Planning for Seating

- Using the attendance register provided by the IFE, the Examination Centre Manager or the invigilators should draw up a seating plan for the examination room before the start of the examination.
- Candidates should be identified on the seating plan by their candidate number. The seating plan should also identify those candidates for whom reasonable adjustments have been agreed eg those with dyslexia who have been granted additional time.
- It is helpful to seat candidates taking the same examination in the same row. Candidates should normally be seated in candidate number order (within the examination group).
- Candidates who need non-standard arrangements such as additional time may be seated away from other candidates so that they are not disturbed when other candidates complete their examinations and leave the room. Candidates who are taking examination papers that have a shorter duration than other examinations scheduled during the same session may be seated close to the door so that they do not disturb other candidates when they leave the room.
- The seating plan must be submitted to the IFE as part of the pack of returned examination materials.

Preparing for Alternative Arrangements for Individual Candidates

Reasonable Adjustments. The IFE will contact Examination Centre Managers in advance to discuss cases where alternative assessment arrangements have been agreed with individual candidates eg where candidates with dyslexia have requested and been granted additional examination time.

Where reasonable adjustments have been agreed, these candidates should arrive 40 minutes before the start of the examination and identify themselves to the Examination Centre Manager or the Invigilator.

Please note: alternative assessment arrangements must always be agreed in advance with the IFE.

Other Special Arrangements. Candidates who are suffering from temporary illness or injury at the time of the examinations, or who need to take medication during an examination, should arrive 40 minutes before the start of the examination with medical evidence of their condition. This must be shown to the Examination Centre Manager or Invigilator before the examination starts.

Candidates should always be allowed to take medication during an examination when it is necessary for them to do so.

Other reasonable provisions can also be made (eg placing an injured candidate near a doorway for convenient access to the examination room) but this is at the Examination Centre Manager's discretion because time and resources may be limited.

Where special arrangements are in place, an entry should be made in the Invigilation Report stating the candidate's name and giving details of the illness or injury and of any medication being taken.

Please see Appendix 2 for further information on Reasonable Adjustments and alternative arrangements for individual candidates.

Preparing for Invigilation

- All invigilators should arrive in the examination room at least 50 minutes before the examination is due to begin. This will provide time for invigilators to familiarise themselves with the arrangements for the examination and to ensure that all preparations are in place.
- Invigilators should ensure that they are familiar with the IFE's regulations and with the specific examination requirements.
- The Examination Centre Manager should ensure that there are enough invigilators for the session and that there is a rota in place as needed.

Note: There must be at least two invigilators for each examination room for the first 30 candidates. One further invigilator will be required for each additional 25 candidates (or part of 25) in excess of the first 30.

5. Conducting the Examinations

Access to the Examination Room

Preparations should be completed and the examination room opened to candidates 30 minutes before the advertised starting time of the examination.

The Examination Centre Manager/Invigilators may allow into the examination room only:

- candidates taking the examinations. Centres should arrange for photographic identification to be checked if the candidate is not known by the invigilators **before** the candidate is directed to their seat. Centres must be totally confident as to the identity of candidates before allowing them to take examinations.
- other invigilators.

- officers of the IFE or inspectors appointed by the IFE who are witnessing the examination.

The Examination Centre Manager/Invigilator should check each candidate's name against the Attendance Register Reports provided by the IFE and should clearly identify which candidates were present at the examination. The attendance register, with details of attendance, must be returned to the IFE as the IFE will use this record in checking and logging returned scripts.

The Examination Centre Manager/Invigilator should direct candidates to their desks according to the seating plan.

Where candidates arrive late (by up to 30 minutes) for an examination, they may be allowed to sit the examination at the discretion of the invigilator; however, no extension time beyond the published time for the examination may be allowed. The circumstances should be included on the Invigilation Report. No candidate may enter the room and start an examination 30 minutes or more after it has begun. No candidate may leave the examination until 30 minutes have elapsed.

Candidate Belongings

- The Examination Centre Manager/Invigilator should ensure that only authorised materials are brought into the examination room.
- Candidates are not permitted to bring cases, bags, books, mobile telephones, smartwatches (or a wrist watch which has a data storage device) or any other items to their desks in the examination room except where they have been authorised for use in a particular examination.

Examination Materials

Answer books/answer sheets may be placed on candidates' desks prior to candidates entering the room.

The sealed packets containing the question papers must be opened in the presence of the candidates. Examination papers must be distributed to the appropriate candidates. Papers should be placed face-up on desks so that the front cover (with the examination title and instructions) is clearly visible to candidates. Candidates must be reminded that they may not open the examination paper until instructed to do so.

The titles used on the answer books are aligned to the name *of the overall qualification* rather than the names of the individual units that make up the qualification. Answer books are colour-coded to the colour of the associated examination paper. The format for examination papers and answer books is as follows:

Qualification (all units)	Examination Paper Colour	Answer Book – colour of front sheet
Level 2 Certificate in Fire Science, Operations and Safety	Blue	Single-page answer sheet - white
Level 2 Certificate in Passive Fire Protection	Salmon	Salmon front cover
Level 3 Certificate in Fire Science, Operations, Fire Safety and Management	White	White front cover
Level 3 Diploma in Fire Science and Fire Safety	Green	Green front cover
Level 4 Certificate in Fire Science and Fire Safety	Yellow	Yellow front cover
Level 3 Certificate in Passive Fire Protection	Cream	Cream front cover

Invigilation - Instructions for Candidates

Prior to the start of each examination session, the Examination Centre Manager/Invigilator must remind candidates about the rules that surround the examination and inform them:

- that they should check that the examination papers handed to them are the correct ones.
- that they should read and follow the instructions printed on the cover of the examination papers.
- that they should use the answer books provided and complete all information required on the cover of the answer book.
- that answers should be written in English.
- about the start and finish times of the examination(s) and direct candidates to the flipchart/board where the times have been recorded. (This information must be visible to candidates throughout the examination.)
- about the arrangements for collecting and distributing examination papers.
- that candidates are not to introduce any unauthorised item into the examination room.
- that the only communication allowed during the examination is with an invigilator, by first raising a hand.
- that candidates who intend to return to the examination room cannot leave the examination room without an invigilator's permission and must be accompanied by an invigilator when they do so.

The IFE has provided wording for the announcement that must be made at the start of the examination period. This can be found in **Appendix 5**. The wording includes the instructions above.

Conducting the Examination

- After 30 minutes, candidates may be allowed to leave the examination room for a brief absence at the discretion of an invigilator. The candidate must be accompanied by an invigilator during this temporary absence. *No more than one candidate for the same examination should be permitted to leave the room at any one time.*
- Candidates who finish writing their answers early may leave the examination room after 30 minutes have passed. However, no candidate may leave the room during the last 30 minutes of an examination. For Level 3 Certificate examinations, which are only one hour in duration, candidates should be advised that they should not leave the examination room except in an emergency.
- Smoking during an examination (including the use of artificial cigarettes) is not allowed.
- Eating and drinking may be permitted at the discretion of the Centre Manager/Invigilator. (For example, diabetic candidates may have sweets, and candidates may bring bottled drinks with them.)
- Invigilators should regard slide rules and some calculators as acceptable for use in examinations. **(Mobile telephones, smartwatches or other electronic devices including smart watches capable of storing information must not be allowed on desks for use as calculators.)**
- Continuation sheets are provided by the IFE for distribution as required.
- Spare graph paper and formula sheets are provided for Level 3 Diploma and Level 4 Certificate Fire Engineering Science examinations; these sheets can be requested by candidates. Note: formula sheets will be included within each examination paper and, where examination papers include questions that require the use of graph paper, the IFE will have included graph paper within the examination paper.
- The Centre Manager/Invigilator should maintain the invigilation record during the session, which will include the temporary absence of candidates and accompanying invigilators (other than absences involving toilet breaks), as well as any incidents, such as malpractice, sickness or emergency.
- In the event of an emergency, the Invigilator should instruct candidates:
 - to stop writing and to leave all examination papers and answer books on their desks
 - not to communicate with other candidates during the emergency unless given express permission
 - to follow a named invigilator to a designated assembly point
 - if and when it is safe to do so, to return to the examination room under supervision and to continue with their answers for the rest of the allotted time.

Note: if candidates leave the room, invigilators should ensure that the room is secured and that candidates continue to be supervised at all times.

- Invigilators should announce when there are thirty minutes left, when there are five minutes left and when the examination ends.

In the exceptional circumstance that the Examination Centre Manager or Senior Invigilator considers a question to be open to serious misinterpretation, clarification should be sought by telephone from IFE Head Office.

Finishing the Examination Session

- The Invigilator should inform candidates when the examination has finished and that they have to stop writing.
- Candidates should be instructed to insert any continuation sheets securely at the back of the answer books. (Invigilators may staple these sheets into the answer books after they have been collected if this is convenient.)
- Candidates should be reminded to remain seated and silent while the examination papers and answer books are collected.
- As they collect materials, invigilators should check that all relevant details (ie the candidate and examination centre numbers and the examination code) have been written onto the answer books and that the candidate's number has been written clearly on any continuation sheets.
- Candidates may take nothing with them when they leave the examination room except the items they brought into the room. Invigilators should ensure that all question papers, answer books and continuation sheets are collected *before candidates leave*.
- Silence should be maintained until all candidates have left the room.
- Please note that scripts are confidential between the candidate and the IFE so they should not be read or photocopied prior to them being sent to the IFE.
- All scripts should be securely packed away immediately after the examination and should be kept in a secure (locked) area to prevent any tampering with the paper and/or any viewing of the paper by unauthorised persons.

Malpractice

Generally, any activity that undermines the integrity and fairness of the assessment process, whether committed by candidates or centre representatives, will be viewed as malpractice. The IFE takes all cases of malpractice seriously. The Malpractice Procedure is available in **Appendix 3** of this document.

If a candidate is suspected of malpractice by an invigilator, the invigilator must warn the candidate that he/she will be reported to the IFE and that this may lead to sanctions being taken against them. Candidates may be removed from the examination room if the situation continues. The invigilator must note the suspicion and the action taken on the invigilation report. Any unauthorised materials should be confiscated and forwarded to the IFE with the candidate's

examination script. The Examination Centre Manager has the authority to remove a candidate from the examination room but should do this only if the candidate would disrupt others by remaining in the room.

The IFE will investigate all cases of potential malpractice and will determine appropriate actions.

The Examination Centre Manager has a responsibility to monitor the performance of the Invigilators and other centre staff. Examination Centre Managers should report to the IFE any potential malpractice on the part of invigilators or other staff/volunteers.

6. Post-Examination Processes and Responsibilities

Completion of IFE Documents

The Invigilation Report should be completed as soon as candidates have left the room. Centres should ensure that the attendance register and seating plans are fully and accurately completed.

All completed documents, scripts and examination materials should be kept securely until they are returned to the IFE.

Complaints

In the event of any complaint by a candidate, the Centre Manager or Invigilator should note the details on the Invigilation Report and forward a copy of the details of the complaint to the IFE with the completed examination scripts. The candidate should initial this entry on the report to show agreement with its contents.

Returning Examination Materials and Documents to the IFE

The following items **must be returned to the IFE** in the mail bags provided as soon as possible after the examinations: Please note that the red and blue ziplock bags the papers arrive in are NOT to be sent through the post unless they are placed inside the PostSafe bag provided.

- all completed answer books and answer sheets
- all question papers for the Level 2 Certificate in Fire Science, Operations and Safety and Level 3 Certificate in Fire Science, Operations, Fire Safety and Management
- the attendance register(s)
- the Invigilation Report
- the seating plan(s)

Unused stationery such as answer books, continuation sheets and graph paper may be retained by the centre. However, it must be kept securely until needed for a future examination. Out of date materials should be destroyed confidentially. If centres are not able to guarantee the

security of the material until the next examination session where the centre is offering examinations, they must return all materials to the IFE.

Centres may retain question papers related to the Level 3 Diploma, Level 2 Certificate in Passive Fire Protection, Level 3 Certificate in Passive Fire Protection or the Level 4 Certificate. These papers may be used for preparations for future examinations. (Please note: all other question papers **must always** be returned securely to the IFE.) If centres retain examination papers for the subjects stated above, they should ensure that these papers are kept securely for at least a further 48 hours after the scheduled examination time before they are released to trainers/candidates.

Centres should contact the IFE when the parcel of examination materials is ready for collection – helen.rasul@ife.org.uk or exams@ife.org.uk

7. Inspection – Unannounced Centre Visits

The IFE is committed to quality assurance. As part of the quality assurance process, the IFE operates a system of examination centre inspection. The inspection process covers the period from the arrival of the examination materials in the centre to the point where the materials are returned to the IFE.

IFE-appointed inspectors may visit centres at any time and without prior notification. They will identify themselves by means of a letter of authority from the IFE. Inspectors will focus on the security arrangements and the conduct of the examinations. They may attend for all or part of an examination session or may visit the centre before/immediately after the examination to view security arrangements, examination rooms etc.

The form used by Centre Inspectors is provided in **Appendix 4** for information.

8. Centre Review and Sanctions

All IFE examination centres submit an Examination Centre Manager form prior to each examination session. The IFE reviews the content of this form and, where applicable, checks information with the centre prior to confirming that the centre has been accepted for the specific examination session. In reviewing the form and confirming the centre's status, the IFE will also draw on additional information such as performance in previous examination sessions and feedback from candidates.

The IFE reserves the right to reject examination centres. Decisions to reject potential examination centres are made where centres have previously failed to comply with the IFE's requirements and/or where the IFE is not confident that the centre will be able to fully meet the responsibilities of an IFE examination centre.

Where concerns about a centre are raised after the centre has been approved for a specific examination session, the IFE will investigate the concerns. If appropriate, the IFE will withhold secure assessment materials until any issues have been resolved and/or will re-direct candidates to an alternative examination venue.

Where issues are identified, the IFE will advise the centre of the concern(s) and provide the centre with the opportunity to take any corrective action required. Where serious issues are identified (such as breaches of security of assessment materials or malpractice) or where a centre fails to address any issues identified by the IFE, the centre will be removed from the IFE's list of examination centres.

Prior to re-instating centres that have previously been removed from the centre list, the IFE will carry out a full review of the centre and an inspection to ensure that the centre is able to fully meet the responsibilities of an IFE examination centre.

9. Further Information

Please see the IFE website for general information on qualifications, policies and procedures. Information specifically for examination centres is available on the Information for Examination Centres page of the website - <https://www.ife.org.uk/Information-for-Examination-Centres>

Queries and requests for further information should be forwarded to: exams@ife.org.uk



2020 Examination Centre Responsibilities

Introduction

This document provides a summary of the responsibilities of examination centres hosting examinations on behalf of the IFE in 2020. It is based on best practice standards and on the requirements set out by the Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulation (Ofqual) as the regulator of vocational qualifications and assessments in England.

By completing and returning the Examination Centre Management Form, centres are agreeing to meet the responsibilities set out below.

Centre Responsibilities

Centres must meet each of the requirements detailed below.

- **Examination Staff:** ensure that there are adequate examination team members to oversee and deliver the examinations including a nominated centre manager and the correct number of invigilators. All examination staff must be familiar with the content of the Examination Centre Handbook.
- **Malpractice:** ensure that all team members are aware of the examination conditions set by the IFE and take all reasonable steps to prevent incidents of malpractice or maladministration from occurring. Centres must notify the IFE promptly of any incidents of malpractice or maladministration.
- **Examination Location:** use buildings that provide access in accordance with relevant equalities legislation.
- **Examination Room:** ensure that seating arrangements comply with IFE requirements and that the full range of equipment required to complete the examinations is supplied.
- **Security:** ensure the security of any examination material in respect of storage and the handling process in line with the requirements of the IFE.

- **Candidate Identity:** take appropriate and reliable steps to confirm each candidate's identity prior to assessment taking place. This includes checking photographic ID where candidates are not known to the centre.
- **Inspections:** enable access for IFE Centre Inspectors and cooperate with the IFE in investigations and other monitoring activities.
- **Third parties:** implement and maintain an effective system for the management of any third party/sub-contracted services e.g. venues, invigilators.
- **Legislation:** comply with relevant legislation including Health and Safety, General Data Protection Regulations and Equalities law when managing examination arrangements and conducting the examinations.
- **General Data Protection Regulations:** ensure that candidates are directed to the IFE Awarding Organisation's Privacy Policy prior to accepting examination bookings.
- **Information:** take all reasonable steps to comply with requests from the IFE for information in relation to the examination process and complete the examination documents provided by the IFE.
- **Changes in plans to act as a centre:** co-operate fully with the IFE if either the centre or the IFE decides that the centre will withdraw/be withdrawn.
- **Payments:** promptly submit any invoices/receipts to IFE e.g. for delivery of scripts to the IFE.

IFE Responsibilities

The IFE will:

- provide all examination materials to time.
- set out all the requirements for centres in a centre handbook.
- take all reasonable steps to protect the interests of learners where a centre withdraws from the delivery of a qualification.
- upon request, provide the centre with guidance on how to best prevent, investigate and deal with malpractice or maladministration.
- provide information in relation to:
 - the Privacy Policy to ensure compliance with the General Data Protection Regulations.
 - the policy for issuing invoices and payment of invoices.
 - a written complaints procedure.
 - information on the results enquiry and appeals process to enable the results of assessments to be appealed.
 - a specification for each of the qualifications made available.
 - details of arrangements for making Reasonable Adjustments.
 - details for arrangements for giving Special Consideration.

- timescales for the issue of results.
- not disclose information if to do so would breach a duty of confidentiality, data protection or any other legal duty.
- apply a sanctions policy in the event that a centre fails to comply with these requirements.



Reasonable Adjustments

Introduction

The IFE operates a system of reasonable adjustments. This system is in place to enable candidates with disabilities (including medical conditions and learning disabilities such as Dyslexia) to access the IFE examinations whilst ensuring that the assessment process remains valid with all candidates receiving an equitable assessment experience.

All decisions on reasonable adjustments rest with the IFE.

What is meant by “reasonable adjustments” and who can apply?

A reasonable adjustment is any action that helps to reduce the effect of a disability or difficulty that places candidates at an unfair disadvantage in an examination. Reasonable adjustments must not affect the reliability or validity of what needs to be assessed; the adjustments should provide an arrangement to give candidates fair access to examinations and must not give them an unfair advantage over others.

Candidates who have physical, sensory or mental impairments, which have a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities, may apply for reasonable adjustments. Candidates must submit evidence which specifically states the degree to which the impairment has this adverse effect.

Under equalities legislation, candidates are deemed to have such an impairment if they can show that their condition:

- is more than minor or trivial
- has an effect that has lasted or is likely to last for at least twelve months
- affects everyday things like eating, washing, walking and going shopping

What types of reasonable adjustments are available?

Although reasonable adjustments must not compromise the validity and reliability of examination results, they should be based on individual needs and reflect the ways in which affected candidates normally work.

Examples of reasonable adjustments that might be requested include:

Where candidates have dyslexia:

- 25% extra time for all examinations
- use of a laptop on which to type their answers
- use of a reader or scribe in severe cases
- use of audio-cassettes in severe cases
- use of electronic aids
- use of modified print and/or paper colour (eg examination papers provided on a different colour paper; text printed in a different colour or printed in a bigger/different font)

Where candidates have a hearing impairment:

- use of a communicator
- use of suitable aids recommended by teachers of the hearing impaired

Where candidates have a visual impairment:

- use of a reader and scribe
- use of audio-cassettes
- use of modified print and/or paper colour

Where candidates have a permanent physical impairment or a temporary injury:

- use of a reader or scribe
- use of electronic aids
- use of an assistant for mobility

The IFE will consider all requests as long as the requests are supported by appropriate evidence and do not compromise the integrity of the assessment process.

Applying for reasonable adjustments

Candidates who wish to request reasonable adjustments should apply to the IFE using the form provided on the IFE's website. Each examination must be listed on the application form where the candidates would like to have access to reasonable adjustments.

Applications for Reasonable Adjustments must be made to the IFE **at the time that candidates apply to take IFE examinations**. This will enable the IFE to assess the nature of the application

and to determine whether or not the reasonable adjustments requested are appropriate and/or can be made by the centre.

Each request for reasonable adjustments will be treated on its own merits and should include the following:

- the nature of the candidate's disability or learning need
- the supporting evidence
- the special assessment arrangements that are being requested

The IFE will confirm either by letter or email whether or not reasonable adjustments are acceptable and appropriate and, if so, the nature of the arrangements that are permitted and any conditions that should be observed in the implementation of the arrangements.

Candidates should note that the IFE will provide specific guidance for some arrangements including those involving third parties such as scribes and the use of electronic equipment.

Please note the IFE reserves the right to reject requests for reasonable adjustments; for example, requests may be refused where the arrangements proposed are not supported by appropriate evidence or where the arrangements appear to compromise the integrity of the assessment process.

Implementing reasonable adjustments

The IFE will engage with examination centres in order to confirm whether or not the centre can manage the arrangements (eg where the arrangements require the centre to provide an additional examination room and/or additional staff to act as invigilators/scribes). This will enable examination centres to plan for the adjustments and to make any relevant preparations.

Candidates who have agreed a reasonable adjustment directly with the IFE should ensure that they bring the confirmation from the IFE with them on the day of the examination.

Invigilators at examination centres will be asked to confirm via the post-examination Invigilation Report that the arrangements that were agreed with the IFE were made on the day and will be asked for feedback on the implementation process.

Candidates with short-term conditions

In unusual situations, some candidates may require special arrangements at short notice eg due to an unexpected injury or illness. In most situations, these conditions do not affect the way the candidate approaches the examination and can be accommodated by the examination centre without prior agreement with the IFE. Such special arrangements may include enabling a candidate to sit at a desk with additional space so that they can stretch an injured limb – in this instance, the candidate will take the examination with exactly the same examination conditions as other candidates.

Where a short-term condition appears to require an arrangement that affects the way in which the candidate takes the examination so that the conditions are different from those experienced by other candidates (eg the need for additional time and/or a scribe due to an injured wrist), the candidates and/or the examination centre must always seek agreement from IFE before making any alternative arrangements.

Examination centres must report any short-term conditions as part of the Invigilation Report.

Special consideration

In most instances, reasonable adjustments will meet candidates' needs in enabling access to the assessment process. However, in a small number of instances, the reasonable adjustments may not operate as anticipated and candidates may be disadvantaged eg equipment may not work on the examination day, or a third party such as a scribe may not be able to provide the support required. In this instance, the candidate and the centre should notify the IFE immediately after the examination via the Special Consideration process. Information on this is available on the IFE website.

Queries and IFE contact information

Candidates or centres who have queries on who is eligible for reasonable adjustments and the reasonable adjustments that may be permitted should contact the IFE examinations team - exams@ife.org.uk

Date issued: August 2017



Malpractice – Procedures

Introduction

The IFE has established standards for the implementation and administration of its examinations. These processes are in place to ensure that all candidates taking the IFE's examinations experience the same assessment conditions and therefore all examinations take place in equitable circumstances.

Candidates are made aware of the conditions via the "Rules and Information for Candidates taking Examinations" handbook which is issued to all candidates; this is also available via the IFE's website. In addition, Invigilators read out the rules to be followed during examinations at the start of each examination session. Examination centres are reminded of the conditions via the Examination Centre Handbook and via the Invigilation Announcement document.

Unfortunately, examination circumstances are occasionally different from those specified by the IFE. Any act that is a breach of the examination arrangements specified by the IFE and which confers an unfair advantage on one or more candidates constitutes malpractice.

The IFE will investigate all possible cases of malpractice and, where warranted, apply appropriate sanctions in order to preserve the integrity of the IFE's qualifications and to ensure that all candidates have been treated in an equitable way.

The IFE's procedures have been designed to comply with the requirements of its regulators and to follow common best practice applied by other UK awarding organisations.

What is Malpractice?

Malpractice may be committed by candidates or by examination centres. Generally, any activity that undermines the integrity and fairness of the assessment process will be viewed as malpractice. The following list of examples is not exhaustive but provides an indication of the types of activity which will be investigated by IFE.

Examples of candidate malpractice:

- use of notes, books or other unauthorised materials in examinations
- use of mobiles phones, smart watches or other electronic devices to access information during examinations
- collusion with other candidates to copy/share answers

- causing disruption during the examination
- falsifying information

Examples of centre malpractice:

- failing to comply with invigilation requirements and/or behaving in a way that undermines the integrity of IFE examinations
- allowing the use of unauthorised materials, such as notes, text books, in examinations
- allowing access to electronic devices during the examination
- failing to maintain confidentiality of examination materials and of the work submitted by candidates
- failure to notify IFE of malpractice or to conduct investigations as requested by IFE
- falsification of documents

Process for dealing with suspected malpractice

The procedure applied by the IFE is as follows:

- Where malpractice by either candidates or centres is suspected, the IFE will consider the evidence available (eg the candidate's script, the documents such as invigilation reports and seating plans submitted by the centre), feedback from all relevant sources including examiners, centre officials, candidates and relevant witnesses.
- The issues raised will be reviewed by IFE staff in the first instance in order to identify whether or not there is an immediate explanation for any anomalies identified. If it appears possible that malpractice has taken place, an investigation will be initiated.
- If an investigation is undertaken, the IFE will inform the candidate and/or examination centre that this is the case. Candidates/Centres will have the opportunity to provide their feedback. Candidates/Centres should present their feedback **in writing**.
- The IFE's investigation will include **all** examinations entered by the candidate for the examination session in question.
- Where more than one candidate is involved in suspected malpractice, the IFE will automatically extend the investigation to the examination centre. Centres should be aware that the IFE will carry out a full investigation that considers historical information as well as feedback from candidates and centre officials.
- Whilst the investigation process is underway, the IFE will hold back the issuing of results for candidate(s) affected by the investigation; if a centre is being investigated, the IFE will discontinue the use of the centre until the situation has been resolved.
- All cases will be reviewed by the IFE Investigation Panel. The report from the initial investigation will be presented to the IFE Investigation Panel for consideration and for a decision as to the next stage of the process. Any feedback provided by candidates or centres will be presented to the panel.
- If the panel determines that malpractice has taken place, the panel will determine the sanctions to be applied.

- The IFE will inform centres and candidates of the panel’s decision and the actions to be taken.
- Candidates/Centres will have the right to appeal against sanctions. Candidates/Centres who wish to appeal must register their appeal **within one calendar month** of the date that the decision was posted/emailed to them by the IFE (i.e. the date appearing on the letter/email). Appeals must be made in writing, clearly setting out the reason for the appeal and using the form provided by IFE. Candidates/Centres should request the appeals documentation from IFE.

Sanctions

Where the IFE Investigation Panel determines that malpractice has taken place, or has been attempted, sanctions will be applied in line with the nature of the malpractice.

Examples of the types of sanction applied to candidates by the IFE follow:

- **Loss of marks** for a particular section or component of an examination
- **Disqualification from a specific paper/unit** – eg where candidates have used unauthorised materials in completing one paper or there is evidence of candidate collusion, the candidate(s) will be disqualified from that paper. Entry fees will not be refunded.
- **Disqualification from all papers towards the full qualification undertaken in the same year** – eg where candidates have used unauthorised materials in completing more than one paper/unit, the IFE reserves the right to disqualify the candidate from all papers/units undertaken during that session ie if a candidate has entered three papers and there is sufficient evidence that the candidate has used unauthorised materials for two of the papers, the IFE reserves the right to disqualify the candidate from all three papers. No entry fees will be returned.
- **Bar entry to future examinations for a set period of time** – eg where the behaviour of the candidates is found to be unacceptable and undermines the credibility of the IFE’s examinations, candidates will be disqualified from all papers in the current session and will not be allowed to enter future examinations within the period of the bar. No entry fees will be refunded.

Where a centre is involved in malpractice, the IFE will review whether or not it is possible to use the centre as an examination venue in the future. If the incident is so severe that the IFE has no option but to sever the link with the centre, the IFE will inform other parties (ie the regulators and other awarding organisations) that should be aware of the risk posed by the centre.

The IFE appreciates that sometimes malpractice can be due to accident and/or error. Where it is clear that the circumstances are due to accident/error, the IFE will endeavour to protect the interests of candidates who are accidentally caught up in malpractice eg through errors made by the examination centre. In these instances, IFE may apply a lesser sanction eg disqualify the candidate for the current examination but provide a deferral option so that candidates can re-take the examination in the following year without the need to pay a further entry fee.

Procedure Review

This procedure is reviewed on an annual basis.

Date updated and issued: June 2018

Appendix 4



IFE Inspection Report 2020

General Information

Name of IFE Inspector:
Name of Centre:
Date of Visit:
Time of Visit (Please state arrival and departure times):
Did the visit include inspection during an examination? Yes/No

Centre Contacts

Please list the names and roles of centre representatives met during the visit. (Note: the visit should include a meeting with the designated centre manager.)

Name	Role

Centre Information – General

Please complete the table below:

Questions for the Centre	Yes	No
Is the centre familiar with the IFE Centre handbook?		
Is the centre familiar with the requirements for conducting examinations as set out in the IFE Centre Handbook?		
Is the information provided to the IFE on the IFE Centre Management Form still correct? Eg are the invigilators the same as those named on the form?		

Security Arrangements

Examination Papers

Please comment on the storage facilities for the examination materials used by the centre and access to the secure storage facilities. Please describe the arrangements the centre is employing to maintain the security of materials before, during and after the examinations. (Note: inspectors should visit storage facilities.)

Candidate Identity

Please describe the arrangements for checking and confirming candidate identity prior to candidates taking the examinations.

Examination Venue

Please describe the accommodation arrangements for the examinations. If more than one examination room is in use, please explain how the different rooms will be used and managed, including the invigilation process. (Note: inspectors should visit and view accommodation.)

Feedback on the conduct of the examination

If the visit included inspection of the examination, please complete the table below:

Points to check	Yes	No	Not seen
Were examination papers kept securely until it was time to open them?			
Were examination papers opened in front of the candidates?			
Were the invigilation arrangements in line with requirements (ie correct number of invigilators)?			
Was the examination environment appropriate (eg well ventilated, quiet)?			
Was the seating arrangement appropriate (ie in rows, and suitably spaced)?			
Were appropriate security arrangements imposed (ie only appropriate equipment on the desk, no phones, no resource materials)?			
Did the lead invigilator provide appropriate information for candidates (ie in line with the invigilation slip)?			
Were the timings followed correctly (ie as published)?			
Was security maintained throughout the examination?			
Was security appropriate at the end of the examination (ie were papers collected and returned to safe storage)?			

General Comments

Please use this space to provide a brief summary of the visit. Please identify any issues that the IFE should be aware of.

Signature:

Date:

Appendix 5

Invigilation Announcement - Instructions to be read to Candidates

(Information relating to the Level 2 Certificate in Fire Science, Operations and Safety may be deleted if there are no candidates taking this examination.)

1.	Only authorised material and equipment is allowed in the exam room. You must not have on, or near you, any other material or equipment.
2.	Check your pockets for things such as notes, books, papers, iPods and mobile phones. Please also ensure that you are not wearing a smartwatch or a wrist watch which has a data storage device. If you have any unauthorised items in your possession, you must hand them in to an invigilator now. Failure to do so may lead to disqualification.
3.	You must not communicate in any way with, ask for help from, or give help to another candidate while you are in this exam room.
4.	If the fire alarm sounds, please stay seated – wait for instructions from the invigilator.
5.	If you need to leave the room and intend to return, an invigilator will escort you. Please put up your hand to attract the invigilator’s attention.
6.	If you require any additional paper, you should put up your hand to attract the invigilator’s attention.
7.	You may not leave the examination room in the first 30 minutes of the examination or during the last 30 minutes of the examination.
8.	If you finish the examination early, you may leave the room (but not during the final 30 minutes). Please bear in mind that other candidates are still working, so please exit as quietly as possible.
9.	Please check the question paper on your desk to make sure that you have the correct question paper. Please check that the answer book is the correct answer book for the examination that you are taking. Candidates for the Level 2 Certificate should have an answer sheet rather than an answer book.
10.	Read the instructions on the front of the question paper carefully. Please make sure that you know how many questions you should answer and where you should write your answers. Candidates for the Level 2 Certificate in Fire Science, Operations and Safety should use the answer sheet provided. All other candidates should write all of their answers in the answer book provided.
11.	Fill in all the details needed on the front of your answer book or answer sheet. Make sure you fill in your candidate number on all additional sheets that you use. Please record the examination reference code in the space provided on the top left hand corner of the answer book.
12.	Check that you have all the materials you need for the exam. Candidates for the Level 3 Diploma Fire Engineering Science examination and candidates for the Level 4 Certificate Fire Engineering Science examination will have access to a formula sheet. The formula sheet will be included with the question paper.
13.	Remember, you must write clearly. You should use pencil for drawings and rough notes and for completing multiple choice questions.
14.	You may now begin the examination.

Appendix 6



March 2020 Examination Timetable

Date	Start Time - Finish Time	Qualification and Unit Name
Thursday 12 March - morning sessions	09.00 – 10.00	Level 3 Certificate Unit 1: Fire Engineering Science
	10.30 – 11.30	Level 3 Certificate Unit 2: Fire Operations
	10.30 – 13.30	Level 2 Certificate in Fire Science, Operations and Safety
	10.30 – 13.30	Level 3 Diploma Unit 2: Fire Safety
	10.30 – 13.30	Level 4 Certificate Unit 1: Fire Engineering Science
Thursday 12 March - afternoon session	14.30 – 17.30	Level 3 Diploma Unit 6: Fire Service Operations and Incident Command
	14.30 – 17.30	Level 3 Diploma Unit 4: Aviation Fire Operations
	14.30 – 17.30	Level 4 Certificate Unit 3: Fire Service Operations and Incident Command
	14.30 – 17.30	Level 4 Certificate Unit 4: Aviation Fire Operations
Friday 13 March - morning sessions	09.00 – 10.00	Level 3 Certificate Unit 3: Fire Safety
	10.30 – 11.30	Level 3 Certificate Unit 4: Management and Administration
	10.30 – 13.30	Level 3 Certificate in Passive Fire Protection
	10.30 – 13.30	Level 3 Diploma Unit 1: Fire Engineering Science
	10.30 – 13.30	Level 4 Certificate Unit 5: Leadership and Management
	10.30 – 13.30	Level 4 Certificate Unit 6: Fire Investigation
Friday 13 March – afternoon session	14.30 – 16.00	Level 2 Certificate in Passive Fire Protection
	14.30 – 17.30	Level 3 Diploma Unit 5: Leadership and Management
	14.30 – 17.30	Level 3 Diploma Unit 7: Fire Investigation
	14.30 – 17.30	Level 4 Certificate Unit 2: Fire Safety