



THE INSTITUTION OF FIRE ENGINEERS
Founded 1918 • Incorporated 1924

IFE Awarding Organisation Arrangements for Special Consideration and Deferral of Examinations

Introduction

The IFE provides the opportunity for candidates who have encountered unexpected disadvantages or severe situations outside of their control to apply for special consideration or the deferral of examinations. The arrangements are in place to support candidates who are affected by exceptional and unexpected situations that either prevent them from attending on the day of the examination or that potentially affect their performance in one or more examinations.

Special Consideration: Where candidates take their examination, **special consideration** is the process by which the IFE makes a post-exam adjustment to a candidate's mark to make allowances for any unexpected adverse situation that could have affected performance in the examination.

Deferral: Where candidates are not able to attend on the day of the examination due to circumstances that are severe, unforeseen and outside of the control of the candidate, the IFE will consider providing a **deferral arrangement** for the candidate so that the candidate can take the examination at a later date.

All decisions on special consideration and deferral arrangements rest with the IFE.

Timelines for decisions: As both special consideration and deferral arrangements are aligned to the date of a specific examination, the IFE will **not** normally advise candidates as to the outcome of their application until **after the date of the examination**.

Special Consideration

Any candidate who has experienced unexpected adverse circumstances outside of their control that could affect their performance in the examination can apply for special consideration. Examples of situations which could merit an application for special consideration include:

- illness on the day of the examination
- bereavement
- temporary injury such as a sprain/break
- disruption to an examination by noise/emergency
- problems associated with the implementation of previously agreed reasonable adjustments

- issues regarding an error/ambiguity on the examination paper which affected concentration and performance during the examination.

In order to apply for special consideration, candidates **must** have attempted the examination. Special consideration will not be applied where candidates have not completed a sufficient proportion of the examination (ie at least 50%) to enable the Special Consideration Panel to make a valid judgement on the candidate's ability.

In order to determine the special consideration arrangements that can be applied, the IFE will convene an expert panel to review requests for special consideration. In each instance, the panel will examine and consider:

- the nature of the adverse situation and its potential impact
- supporting evidence including any medical/doctor documents
- feedback from the examination centre where the candidate sat the examination
- the candidate's performance in the examination/parts of the examination that were completed
- the candidate's performance in any other examinations taken during the examination period

If the panel members determine that there is justification for providing special consideration, a decision will be taken as to the additional marks that should be awarded to the candidate.

Additional marks will not exceed 5% of the total marks available for the paper.

Applying for Special Consideration

Candidates who wish to request special consideration should apply to the IFE using the appropriate form.

Requests for special consideration should be made **as soon as possible after the examination has been completed**. Where candidates need additional time in order to secure evidence from doctors or other sources, they should advise the IFE that this is the case. The IFE will **not** accept applications without supporting documents. ***In no circumstances will requests for special consideration be accepted after results have been issued.***

All requests for special consideration **must** be supported by either:

- medical evidence
- a written statement of support from either the examination centre manager or the candidate's employer.

The IFE will confirm receipt of the application. The review panel's meeting will take place prior to the issue of results; results for candidates making an application for special consideration will be issued at the same time as results are issued for all other candidates for the same examination.

Please note: the IFE reserves the right to reject requests for special consideration which do not comply with the description of unexpected adverse circumstances as set out in this document and/or which are not supported by appropriate evidence.

The IFE will observe a strict cut-off date of 5 April 2021 in relation to the March 2021 examinations. Applications and/or supporting documents submitted after this date will not be processed.

Deferral Arrangements

Deferral arrangements are in place to support those candidates who are not able to attend on the day of the examination due to ***severe and unforeseen circumstances*** that are outside of their control. Examples where deferral arrangements may be made include:

- unexpected severe illness or injury
- death/funeral of close family member (ie parent, child, sibling)
- unexpected surgery/medical treatment where it is not possible to change the timing of the appointment for medical reasons

The dates and times of the examinations, together with the syllabus, are available to candidates at the time when the examinations are booked and the IFE expects candidates to take responsibility for ensuring that they are able to attend on the day of the examination. Therefore the following situations are examples of situations where deferral arrangements will **not** be made:

- candidates have not prepared for the examinations eg due to a lack of time/changes in personal circumstances/environment etc
- candidates have committed to holiday over the examination period
- candidates have changed jobs/shifts and have not arranged to have time off to take the examinations
- candidates have changed their employment arrangements (eg due to new job roles) and no longer need/wish to achieve IFE qualifications
- candidates are not able to attend due to alternative commitments such as alternative courses/examinations which have been arranged either by themselves or by their employers
- ongoing medical conditions that candidates were aware of at the time that they entered the examination
- new baby due within two weeks of the date of the examination
- family/personal arrangements eg the need to take children/family members to school/appointments on the day of the examination/house moves

Applying for Deferral Arrangements

Requests for deferral arrangements must be made in writing using the appropriate form. The form may be downloaded from the IFE's website. Requests must be supported by evidence eg medical document in the case of illness or confirmation from employer/examination centre in situations involving family bereavement/funeral.

The IFE will observe a strict cut-off date of 5 April 2021 in relation to the March 2021 examinations and applications submitted after this date will not be processed.

Please note: the IFE charges a fee for managing deferral arrangements. Further information regarding the fees can be found on the deferral application form.

Deferral Arrangements – Covid 19

Separate arrangements are in place where candidates are unable to attend due to self-isolation as a result of Covid-19 infection.

Candidates who have symptoms of the Covid-19 virus **must not** attend the examinations. Candidates must also stay at home if anyone that they are living with either has, or is showing symptoms of, the virus; in addition, if they fall into other categories where self-isolation is required (eg quarantine due to being contacted by NHS Test and Trace), they must also stay at home

The IFE will not apply deferral charges where candidates are unable to attend examinations due to Covid-19 isolation and candidates provide supporting confirmation of their situation such as evidence of testing positive, a doctor's note or a statement from their employer. Candidates in this situation should either apply for a deferral through their centre manager (where bookings were initially made in this way) or else complete and submit a deferral form to the IFE (please see below). Examination bookings will be moved to the October 2021 examination session wherever possible

Queries and IFE Contact Information

Candidates or centres who have queries on special consideration or deferrals should contact the IFE Education team - exams@ife.org.uk