



IFE Level 3 Diploma in Fire Science and Fire Safety (VRQ)

Qualification Number: 500/6216/5

Introduction

The IFE Level 3 Diploma in Fire Science and Fire Safety (VRQ) has been developed by the Institution of Fire Engineers (IFE), representatives of Fire and Rescue services and other fire professionals. The content and structure of the qualification has been established to reflect best professional practice.

Aims of the Qualification

The IFE Level 3 Diploma in Fire Science and Fire Safety (VRQ) has been designed to enable individuals to demonstrate a wide range of critical knowledge and understanding relevant to a number of fire professional roles such as Watch Manager in the Fire and Rescue Service, Fire Safety specialist and Fire Investigation specialist. It focuses on the underpinning understanding of fire engineering science and safety that individuals need in order to assess buildings and to respond to diverse hazards and incidents.

Additionally, success in achieving this qualification will enable candidates to meet the academic requirement for membership of the Institution of Fire Engineers at Graduate grade (GIFireE).

Target Audience

The qualification will meet the needs of:

- Those employed in fire and rescue service roles across the world, particularly those who are either already in Watch Manager or equivalent roles or those who wish to develop and demonstrate knowledge and understanding relevant to the role of Watch Manager in preparation for promotion to this role
- Those operating in specialist fire and rescue contexts such as aviation or fire prevention/fire safety audit roles who need to develop and apply a wide range of knowledge and understanding in their role
- Other fire professionals who wish to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of fire science, fire safety and other specialist areas

Qualification Structure

In order to achieve the IFE Level 3 Diploma in Fire Science and Fire Safety (VRQ), candidates must achieve four units, two mandatory units and two optional units.

Mandatory Units

Unit 1: Fire Engineering Science (formerly, paper 3 – Fire Engineering Science)

Unit 2: Fire Safety (formerly paper 1 – Fire Safety)

Optional Units

Unit 3: Fire Service Operations and Incident Command – International (formerly Paper 2a – Fire Service Operations - International)

Unit 4: Aviation Fire Operations (formerly Paper 2c – Aero Fire Studies)

Unit 5: Leadership and Management in Fire and Rescue (formerly Paper 4 -Human Resource Management in Fire **and** Rescue Services and Paper 6 – Leadership and Management in Fire and Rescue Services – UK Specific)

Unit 6: Fire Service Operations and Incident Command – UK (formerly paper 5 – Fire Service Operations – UK Specific)

Restrictions on Optional Units

Candidates should note that Unit 3 and Unit 6 may **NOT** be used in combination towards the Level 3 Diploma in Fire Science and Fire Safety due to the level of content overlap between these units. Candidates should choose **only one** of these units.

Selecting Units

Other than the restriction on the choice of either Unit 3 or Unit 6, candidates may choose the two units that are most appropriate to their own situation and/or the requirements of their workplace.

Candidates who are employed as, or who are working towards the role of, Watch Manager (or other equivalent role) may wish to undertake Unit 3/Unit 6 in combination with Unit 5 as these units have been designed to reflect occupational standards for this type of role in fire and rescue services.

Form of Assessment

Each Unit is assessed separately via written examination. The duration of the examination is three hours.

Candidates will be required to complete six questions from a choice of ten questions. Question-types will vary depending on the subject assessed but could include in-depth essay questions, questions requiring calculations and questions requiring the drawing/annotation of plans and diagrams.

Certification

Candidates achieving the required combination of units will be awarded the IFE Level 3 Diploma in Fire Science and Fire Safety (VRQ). The qualification is not graded.

Candidates do not need to achieve all four units at the same examination session. Candidates who achieve fewer than four units at one examination session will receive a Unit Certificate for each unit achieved. Candidates have five years in which to achieve the relevant four units.

The IFE will automatically issue a full Level 3 Diploma in Fire Engineering and Fire Safety (VRQ) certificate at the point where candidates have achieved all four of the units required.

Unit Certification and Grading

Unit certificates are issued where candidates achieve fewer than four units at an examination session.

Achievement at unit level is graded. Candidates, who achieve a Pass at unit level, will be awarded one of the following grades: A, B, C or D. Candidates who are unsuccessful in the examination will receive Grade E (Fail).

In order to achieve a Pass grade, candidates must demonstrate a thorough understanding of a range of subject areas and must demonstrate that they fully appreciate the critical safety issues. They will need to achieve at least 40% of the marks available.

The notional grade boundaries for the Pass level grades are as follows:

Grade D	40-49%
Grade C	50- 59%
Grade B	60-69%
Grade A	70% and above

Candidates who do not achieve a Pass will receive Grade E (Fail).

Note: Grade boundaries are reviewed and confirmed by an expert awarding review panel following each examination session in line with standard examination and awarding procedures.

Entry Requirements

There are no formal entry requirements.

However, candidates are advised that this specification provides progression from the Level 3 Certificate in Fire Science, Operations, Fire Safety and Management (VRQ); therefore, candidates who have previously achieved the Level 3 Certificate will be able to build upon relevant knowledge and understanding. Candidates who have not achieved the Level 3 Certificate are advised to ensure that they have developed the fundamental knowledge and understanding covered in the specification for the Level 3 Certificate.

Candidates should be aware that most examination questions will take the form of essay questions. Candidates will therefore need to be able to communicate effectively in writing. In addition, candidates are advised that mathematical skills will be required in order to complete the Fire Engineering Science examination and relevant calculations in other units.

Progression

Candidates who are successful in achieving the Level 3 Diploma will be able to progress to the Level 4 Certificate in Fire Science and Fire Safety (HL). Candidates may choose to progress to specific units (e.g. Aviation Fire Operations or Fire Safety) if they prefer to extend specific aspects of their knowledge rather than achieving the full qualification.