

Assessment regulations

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Purpose

The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) is the global professional body for public finance professionals and recognises practitioners at every level, from those starting out in their career to those innovating and leading the profession. CIPFA organises, sets and runs professional assessments to enable our members to attain high levels of competence in the field of public finance.

Scope

This document sets out the regulations pertaining to, and procedures for members who are sitting, or intending to sit CIPFA assessments. This document also serves to signpost members and staff to more detailed policies in specific areas.

Associated Policies

Assessment Appeals Policy
Invigilation Policy
Reasonable Adjustments Policy
Recognition of Prior Learning & Exemptions Policy
Special Consideration Policy

CIPFA Procedures before assessments

Eligibility to register for assessments

CIPFA runs 2 main assessment sessions in December and June, with 2 additional assessment sessions, for re-sits or first sits, in September and March.

To be eligible to sit CIPFA assessments students must:

- Hold current and active student membership with CIPFA
- Register for the assessment before the published registration deadline. Late entries may be allowed in exceptional circumstances but will incur additional fees.
- Have access to a computer, internet connection, suitable room, and invigilator as appropriate.

Students who are part of a programme run by an Accredited Training Provider (ATP) must complete the agreed registration process before the registration deadline.

The times of UK assessments are set by Greenwich Mean Time (March and December) and British Summer Time (June and September). The timetable for overseas sitting of assessments will be set to the local time and confirmed by CIPFA.

Assessment delivery

All CIPFA assessments are delivered online via an e-assessment platform and students can take their assessments using a remote or local invigilator. Or in exceptional circumstances in pre approved CIPFA venue.

Remote invigilation (flexible location)

- Remote online assessments are supervised by a remote invigilation service. Students take their assessments in CIPFA Assessment but are monitored remotely by the invigilation service through their webcams and microphones. This assessment is completed on a computer with a stable, continuous internet connection. The computer can be in any suitable quiet location, including the student's home or a workplace. It requires a private room, web camera and functioning audio (microphone and speakers).
- CIPFA's assessment sites will only work with Google Chrome.
- Those using work computers/laptops for their live assessments can find the administrative security settings blocking the downloads required for a successful remote invigilation experience.
- Chromebooks and computers linked to virtual machines are not compatible with the remote invigilation system. TalkTalk & Virgin Media customers may find that they are blocked from fully accessing the remote invigilation system and will need to ask them to either whitelist or remove Scam Protection.
- The full details of the e-assessment and remote invigilation system requirements link can be found on the login page of CIPFA Assessment.

Local invigilation

- This route requires an invigilator to be present in the room and does not use a remote invigilator.
- The local invigilator route uses the e-assessment software and Chrome web browser. Students can sit their assessments at work or any other educational recognised establishment. Those students taking the assessment at work, will have to find an invigilator who is not their direct report or is not directly reporting into them. CIPFA will need to approve the invigilator in advance of the assessment.
- To enable an assessment to take place outside of pre-arranged partner organisation venues, students must make all arrangements for an assessment centre and an invigilator for the assessments. British Council offices are recommended wherever available; local colleges, universities or other educational organisations can be used in the absence of a British Council office. All information including the location of the assessment, invigilator name and email address must be updated on the student's MyCIPFA page. All arrangements are subject to CIPFA's approval.

Pre-approved CIPFA venue

CIPFA venues are only available to those who are unable to sit the assessment with a remote or local invigilator. These arrangements must be approved by CIPFA Assessments team in advance of the assessment registration.

Reasonable adjustments

CIPFA recognises that there are students who are able to cope with the learning demands of a course and can demonstrate attainment in the skills and knowledge being assessed, but for whom the standard arrangements for the assessment of their attainment may present an unnecessary barrier which could be removed without affecting the validity of the assessment.

This can apply to students who have long-term learning problems but also to students who are affected nearer the time of the assessment.

Categories of Reasonable Adjustment vary according to the category and type of impairment but are typically spread across four areas:

- Cognition and learning needs
- Communication and interaction need
- Sensory and physical needs
- Social, mental and emotional needs

Students are responsible for notifying CIPFA of any Reasonable Adjustment requests. Applications for Reasonable Adjustments are open at least one month before the registration deadline on the CIPFA website (Assessments page). Each submission must be accompanied by appropriate and relevant evidence. Applications will be considered only on the merit of the evidence supplied. CIPFA's decision thereon is final.

Only those arrangements considered and approved by CIPFA in advance of the summative or End-point assessment will be honoured.

Full details, including example arrangements and how to apply, can be found in the Reasonable Adjustment Policy on the MyCIPFA website.

Assessment refunds and deferrals

Assessment registration fees refunds

A full or partial refund of assessment fees will be made in the following circumstances;

- Where the exam booking window is open and a student requests to cancel their assessment, a 100% refund will be offered. In this circumstance. The student needs to contact Student Support to inform CIPFA of their decision to withdraw from the assessment.
- Where the exam booking window is closed and the student is prevented from attending the assessment due to medical circumstances, bereavement, or local emergency, a 50% refund will be offered. If the student does not meet any of the referenced criteria, a refund will not be offered.

The Assessment Deferrals Application process procedure (section 6.3 onwards) should be followed in order for a refund to be considered.

Assessment deferrals

Once a deferral is applied, if this subsequent assessment booking is then cancelled, no refund or further transfer is permitted unless a new deferral application is approved.

A student may defer each module, up to a maximum of two attempts. Once the second deferral has been applied, no refund or further transfer is permitted.

Criteria for deferral

- Assessment deferrals will be considered if the student is prevented from attending the assessment and an application is received after the assessment booking window closes and before the date of the assessment.

- Applications will only be considered if received after the assessment booking window closes and before the assessment date.
- If the application is made more than 5 days prior to the assessment date then no evidence is required, If the application is made 5 days or less prior to the assessment, supporting evidence must be attached.

For full details please refer to Deferrals policy.

Exemptions

Exemptions from CIPFA assessment may be awarded in recognition of previous academic achievement. Students are not required to complete the assessment for any assessment from which they have been granted exemption. An exemption will not be granted if the student has previously attempted an assessment and not been successful.

Full details on the most up to date exemption process can be found on the CIPFA website

Assessment conduct requirements

During the assessment

- Any student failing to comply with the requirements as stipulated below, or with any given by the invigilator, may be liable for disqualification.
- Invigilators will report any perceived breach of these rules to CIPFA. Where the circumstances of any potential breach of these rules reveal that there may be an Assessment Offence or a breach of Byelaw 23 of the CIPFA Byelaws, the matter will be dealt with pursuant to the Assessment Offence Policy and/or the Disciplinary Scheme.

ID Verification

Students must bring a valid photo ID (passport, photo driving license or national ID) to the assessment at each session and show it to the invigilator when required.

If students have been granted Reasonable Adjustments, the confirmation letter from CIPFA will be provided in advance of the assessment. Invigilators will also have a copy of the letter.

Please note, any specific details provided will be treated as confidential and will not be included in the letter.

Female students covering their face with religious garments will be escorted to a private room with a female invigilator or female staff member at the assessment venue to check their identity at the end of the assessment.

Students sitting their assessment via online invigilation that require a female invigilator to check their identification must notify CIPFA 15 working days in advance of the assessment.

Conduct during the assessment

- Complete silence must be observed throughout the assessment.
- Students must conduct themselves in a considerate, professional, and courteous manner at all times.
- In no circumstances may students communicate with other students during the assessment.
- If there is an invigilator in the room, students who wish to attract the attention of the invigilator must do so by raising their hand. Students must not call out.
- Remote invigilators can only be contacted through the provided chat box on the remote invigilation system.
- If students perceive an error or some other problem with an assessment question, they should make an appropriate assumption, state it in their script, and carry on. In such circumstances, students should not seek the advice of the invigilator.

- Students will follow the instructions of the invigilators.
- Invigilators will have discretion to exclude students from the assessment and may escort students from the assessment room for unreasonable or disruptive behaviour.
- Malpractice: CIPFA will not tolerate any action which constitutes cheating, including communicating with others in speech or text, bringing prohibited information to the assessment, or any other action which compromises assessment security. They must not have any webpages open in the background during the assessment, especially not search engines such as Google.

Leaving the assessment room and breaks

For the purpose of these Assessment Regulations, an 'Assessment room' is any space in which a student is undertaking a formal assessment. This includes spaces being used for local and/or remote invigilation.

- Toilet breaks should be avoided if possible. Any toilet break, including its duration, will be reported by the invigilator. The assessment time will not stop on the computer during any break.
- Students may not leave the assessment room during the first 30 minutes or the last 15 minutes of the assessment's writing time.
- If students need to leave the room during an assessment for any reason, they should attract the invigilator's attention by raising their hand. Students sitting remotely will need to send a message to their invigilator via the chat box.
- If students do not intend to return to the assessment room, they must hand their assessment script and any supplementary sheets to the invigilator before leaving.
- When leaving the assessment room after the finish time, students should consider other students (some of them may have extra time) and leave in silence.
- If for any reason the assessment room must be evacuated, students must follow the invigilator's instructions. Students must leave all assessment materials in the assessment room.

Permitted and unpermitted materials during the assessment

Calculators

Students may use either their computers' built-in calculator, or a handheld device (scientific or non-scientific). Students may bring more than one calculator in the exam. The following requirements apply:

Calculators **must** be:

- of a size suitable for use on the desk
- either battery or solar powered
- noiseless and cordless

Calculators must **not** be designed or adapted to offer any of these facilities:

- language translators
- communication with other machines or the internet
- be borrowed from another student during an assessment for any reason
- be the calculator function on a mobile telephone, smart-watch, tablet, or other computing device

Students are responsible for their calculator's power supply and working condition. Calculator cases and any instruction leaflet are not allowed in the assessment.

The decision of the invigilator on any matter to do with the use of calculators or other aids is final.

Mobile phones

Students must switch off mobile phones and place these in their bags or coats for the duration of the assessment. If a student is found to be using a mobile phone during the assessment, it will be confiscated by the invigilator for the duration of the assessment (local sittings) and returned to the student once the assessment has finished.

- The invigilator will record the full details of the incident and time of the incident.
- The student will be allowed to continue taking the assessment.
- Students who are found using a mobile phone during the assessment will be referred to CIPFA's Disciplinary Committee.

Food and drink

Food is not allowed in the assessment room unless for medical reasons and permission has been given by CIPFA in advance – please see details of Reasonable Adjustments. All students may bring a small clear bottle of water to the desk, but the label must be removed.

Authorised materials and software

Students are allowed to bring into the assessment:

- 4 clean sheets of blank paper (8 pages)
- A pen, pencil and rubber
- A mirror is also permitted to show the screen to the remote invigilator.

Unauthorised materials and software

The items that are strictly **not** permitted during the assessments are listed below:

- Smart watches.
- Monitors and screens that are not attached to the assessment are allowed in the room but must be switched off and out of arms reach.
- Unauthorised materials. Books, dictionaries, notepads, magazines, post it notes must be removed from the assessment space.
- Unauthorised web pages (search engines etc..) web extensions or software.
- CIPFA Learning or VLE pages must not be open during the assessment.
- Smoking, including the use of e-cigarettes or electronic vapes, is always strictly forbidden during the examination

CIPFA Liability

CIPFA is not liable for any loss of, theft of, or damage to personal belongings left in or outside the assessment room. Any personal items brought to the assessment are held at owner's risk.

Post-assessment procedures

Special Consideration

Special Consideration applies to the mitigating circumstances that happened very close to or on the day of the assessment when a student could not be aware of the possible complications.

In cases when, closer to the assessment date, the student feels unable to make a reasonable attempt on the assessment day, they should consider deferring the attempt.

If the student decides to take the assessment, they may be asked for their reasons for not deferring the attempt.

If extenuating circumstances occur immediately prior to or during the assessment, an application for Special Consideration can be made within 10 days of the assessment.

Full details on the CIPFA Special Consideration Policy and the relevant form are published on the CIPFA website.

Results release

Student's completed answers are the property of CIPFA. Once students have finished their assessment and submitted answers for marking, they do not have any rights to the answers. Assessment scripts will not be returned to students under any circumstances.

Assessment questions transcripts cannot be externally published after assessments – these are CIPFA's intellectual property.

The dates of results release are published on the CIPFA website. On results day, students will be able to view their grades by logging on to either their MY CIPFA account or the e-assessment platform. Only nominated employers will have access to results through the employer portal.

Students who do not wish their results to be published or released to their nominated employer should write to studentsupport@cipfa.org a minimum of 5 working days before results day.

Assessment Appeals submission

Consideration of an appeal does not normally involve the review of a student's work.

Assessment scripts will **not** be sent out as part of these services.

CIPFA do not offer re-marks, as robust quality assurance processes are employed throughout the assessment process.

Students must be able to provide clear evidence that the decision against which they are appealing meets at least one of the following criteria:

1. There is evidence of bias, prejudice or discrimination as defined by the UK Equality Act 2010.
2. New evidence exists of extenuating circumstances which, for valid reasons, the student could not disclose to CIPFA in line with the published timetable for Special Considerations applications.
3. There is evidence of a substantial procedural irregularity with respect to an aspect of the conduct of the assessments and/or determination of results.

The completed appeal form must be submitted within 10 working days from the day the assessment results are released.

A fee of £75 must be paid and proof of payment included with the appeal form.

Full details on CIPFA Assessment Appeals Policy and the relevant form are published on the CIPFA website.

Policy version and owner

Policy owner	Head of Qualifications & Membership
Version	3.0
Update	September 2022
Approval	SMB 05 September 2022
Policy review date	September 2023

Regulatory references

Ofqual General Conditions of Recognition
Condition G8: Completion of the assessment under the required conditions
Condition G9: Delivering the assessment
Additional links to Conditions G4, G6 and G7