

CIPR course regulations

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1. Principles of CIPR assessment

1.1 Candidates should note that the purpose of assessment is to enable them to demonstrate they have achieved the objectives of the programme of study at the standard required for the award they seek.

1.2 Candidates' performance must accord with the assessment requirements provided for the specific unit of study. Examiners are required to use established methods to assess candidates fairly and consistently.

1.3 Candidates are advised that assessment involves judgement, not simply computation. Grades are not absolute values but indicators used to communicate examiners' judgement of different aspects of a candidate's work in relation to achievement of assessment objectives.

1.4 Within the constraints imposed by the assessment objectives and regulations, examiners have wide discretion in reaching decisions on the awards to be recommended for individual students. They are responsible for interpreting the assessment regulations for the programme in the light of the CIPR requirements and of good educational practice.

1.5 Assessments are subject to a robust evaluation process that includes steps to verify the quality and consistency of individual examiners. This includes particular emphasis on work submitted for assessment that is judged to marginally fail to reach the criteria for any particular grade award (pass, merit or distinction).

1.6. The CIPR issues guidelines to the centres in respect of selecting samples for internal moderation. When completed, a Centre's marking and internal moderation is then subject to the external moderation of the CIPR's Chief Examiner for the award in question.

2. The procedures – checking, authorising and releasing results

2.1 A Chief Examiner, appointed by the CIPR, is responsible for moderating the assessment process across all Centres prior to the submission of results for consideration by the Board of Examiners of the CIPR AB.

2.2 This Chief Examiner shall report on the results of all candidates for the particular assessment for which s(he) is responsible, to the Board of Examiners of the CIPR AB.

2.3 The Qualifications Dept of the CIPR AB simultaneously gathers all statistical data from the marked assessment submissions, and ensures that these are presented for the consideration of the Board of Examiners.

2.4 Assessment results are then subjected to the scrutiny and consideration of the CIPR Board of Examiners of the Awarding Body (AB). This Board meets four times a year and on each occasion, is responsible for authorising the release of the results of all assessments taken by students of CIPR qualifications. The external moderation process and then the scrutiny of the Exam Board exist to ensure that justice is done to the individual student and that the standard of the CIPR awards is maintained.

2.5 This Board of Examiners has the authority to accept the recommendations presented by the Chief Examiner and the Qualifications Dept., and that the results of the assessment in question

be released accordingly. Alternatively the Board may authorise such amendment to the results as it sees fit, prior to its authorisation that they be released.

2.6 Assessment results are released by email by the Qualifications Dept. only after they have been subject to a careful check to ensure that they are in accordance with the decisions of the Board of Examiners.

3. Information provided in results notifications

3.1. The results provided to candidates in respect of their assessed work by the CIPR AB shall be by grade only. The grades will be as determined in the relevant assessment criteria for individual Units. The grades are:

- Fail
- Pass
- Merit
- Distinction or Clear Distinction

3.2 Each Unit will be awarded a grade. For full details of the workings of this for the units see Grading the units (3.4).

3.3 In order to achieve the overall qualification, candidates must pass all three units of the award for which they have studied. Candidates failing one or more unit will be allowed two further attempts only.

3.4 Candidates achieving passes in all three units and thereby achieving the overall award, will be eligible for that overall award to be granted with the appropriate grade. This overall grade will be established by applying the following formula:

- A pass will score 1 point
- A merit will score 2 points
- A distinction will score 3 points.

The total score will be divided by 3 to obtain an average, and the overall grade shall be that nearest the average. e.g. 2 merits and a distinction (or a clear distinction) will be $2 + 2 + 3 = 7$. Average is $2.3 =$ overall Merit

4. How are results sent out?

The initial notice of an assessment result shall be sent by email (by the Qualifications dept.) within five working days of the meeting of the Board of Examiners that authorises their release. A formal results letter and certificate will be sent by first class post (to the home address of the student unless prior notice, by email to the Qualifications Dept, is given to use an alternative despatch address) within two weeks following the relevant meeting of the Board of Examiners. Candidates should note it is their responsibility to inform the CIPR AB of any changes to address or other contact details.

5. Enquiries, complaints and appeals procedures

5.1 Enquiries – Obtaining further information on results

Candidates should apply for further feedback on assessment of their work to their teaching centre.

5.2 Enquiries – Obtaining a re-mark

5.2.1 Grounds for candidates to seek a re-mark.

Candidates may request that their work is re-marked on the basis of a specific disagreement with the academic judgement of the examiners in assessing the merits of an individual piece of work or in reaching an assessment decision on the grade awarded.

5.2.2 Procedure for obtaining re-marks

5.2.2.1 Candidates should approach the CIPR AB directly. Any such application to the CIPR AB must be submitted in writing (by post or email) to the Qualifications Dept of the CIPR AB to arrive as soon as possible, but no later than three weeks after the assessment result has been published/released. Any such application must be accompanied by a fee of £50 together with a copy of the script in question and corresponding feedback document. The candidate's full membership number must be stated. The Qualifications Dept will acknowledge receipt of such an application within one week. The application letter must clearly set out which parts of the examiner's judgement is disputed.

5.2.2.2 The candidate's work will be re-marked by a Chief Examiner of the CIPR AB's choice, other than the Chief Examiner responsible for the initial marking of the assessment in issue. This Chief Examiner will assess the work on the basis of the original assessment criteria with reference to the candidate's detailed argument for disagreement and the assessment of the initial examiner(s).

5.2.2.3 The result of the re-mark will be despatched to the candidate as soon as possible and in any event no longer than six weeks after the CIPR AB's receipt of the application. Candidates are advised that such a re-mark may result in an increase or a decrease of their final grade. Should the re-mark result in the upgrading of the original grade to a higher grade, the application fee of £50 shall be refunded.

In the case of a re-mark that shows the initial marking to have been unfair, the CIPR AB shall ensure that the Chief Examiner responsible for the re-marked submission, shall also reconsider the submission of other candidates from the same cohort. The Chief Examiner will bring this matter to the attention of the next meeting of the Board of Examiners, or – if awaiting that meeting will unduly and unreasonably delay providing students with revised results hence; the matter will be referred to the Chairman of Examiners who will act with the Board of Examiners' delegated powers.

Revised results – as appropriate – will be despatched to the candidates in question within a week of the decision reached by the Board of Examiners or Chairman of Examiners.

The CIPR AB shall ensure that in such circumstances, candidates involved are kept fully informed until such time as the reviewed results are despatched.

5.2.2.4 Should the candidate be dissatisfied with the result of the re-mark s/he may have recourse to appeal to the Professional Development & Membership Committee as set down in paragraphs 5.4.1 and 5.4.3 below.

5.3 Complaints Where a candidate wishes to submit that any action of the CIPR AB, its servants or agents, has had an inappropriate or prejudicial influence upon his/her pursuit of a CIPR AB qualification, the following procedure shall apply.

5.3.1 The candidate must lodge his/her complaint with the CIPR Director of Professional Development and Membership within two weeks of the occasion of the subject of complaint. The complaint will be acknowledged within one week and recorded within the Qualifications Dept.

5.3.2 Where such a complaint relates to the services provided by the candidate's teaching organisation, the candidate will be asked if he/she is content that the CIPR AB discloses the identity of the candidate in raising the matter with the teaching organisation. The wishes of candidates preferring that their identity is not disclosed will be respected, although such candidates should be aware that frequently teaching organisations will infer their identities.

5.3.3 In the case of a complaint as in 5.3.2 above, the complaint shall be referred to the teaching organisation for its comment. The teaching organisation will be told that its response is likely to be passed on to the candidate complaining. The response shall be expected within a maximum period of two weeks.

5.3.4 In the case of a complaint, as in 5.3.2 and 5.3.3 above, the response of the teaching organisation will be considered by the CIPR Director of Professional Development & Membership. The Director of Professional Development & Membership shall, as he/she deems appropriate, dismiss the complaint as unwarranted; require the teaching organisation to take immediate and appropriate action; or refer the matter to directly to the Board of Examiners.

5.3.5 Where a complaint relates to some act or omission committed by the CIPR AB itself, the Director of Professional Development & Membership will undertake to provide a response, detailing any action to be taken, within two weeks of the receipt of the original complaint.

5.4 Appeals Procedures – Against the results of re-marks or in respect of the outcome of other complaints.

5.4.1 In respect of the result of a re-mark.

Candidates shall have a right of appeal against the outcome of a re-mark. Any such application must be made within three weeks of the candidate's receipt of the result of the re-mark, and it must be made with full details supporting the candidate's grounds of appeal. A review on appeal will be granted only if the candidate can show reasonable evidence that supports their view that the re-mark does not reasonably reflect either the quality of the assessment submission in issue, or fails to take account of other factors previously disclosed to the CIPR AB. Any such appeal must be submitted to the CIPR Director of Professional Development and Membership, who will send an acknowledgement of receipt of the appeal within two weeks. The Director of Professional Development shall refer the matter to the Professional Development and Membership Committee for a decision/course of action. Should the Appellant reject the

decision of the Committee the Appellant shall have recourse to the Independent Review procedure set out below in Section 5.4.3. There is no fee involved.

5.4.2 Independent Review

5.4.2.1 Candidates have the right to appeal against any decision of the Exam Board taken under 5.4.1 or 5.3 above. Any such appeal for Independent Review shall be referred to the CIPR's Independent Adjudicator. The Independent Adjudicator is a Barrister retained by the CIPR to consider such appeals. The Independent Adjudicator is wholly independent from the CIPR Professional Development Committee and the Awarding Body. The Independent Adjudicator acts alone but may in his absolute discretion appoint one or more assessors to advise him on any technical matter on which the Appeal may turn. The CIPR is responsible for the payment of the fees of the Independent Adjudicator and any assessor appointed by him.

5.4.3.2 The Independent Adjudicator acts at discretion in matters of procedure but the general framework for the convening and adjudication of Appeals will be as set out below. In all matters within his competence the decision of the Independent Adjudicator shall be final.

5.4.3.3 Full particulars of the Appeal (the Appeal Statement) and any supporting evidence shall be submitted to the CIPR Director of Professional Development and Membership within three weeks of the decision at issue. Receipt of the Appeal will be acknowledged within two weeks of receipt and a copy sent to the Chairman of the Professional Development Committee for comment within a further two weeks. Any comments on the Appeal Statement made by the Chairman shall be submitted to the CIPR Director of Professional Development and Membership with a certificate that they have been copied to the Appellant by registered post. Any such comments submitted by the Chairman of the Exam Board on the Appeal Statement will be sent with the Appeal Statement (collectively referred to here as the Appeal Papers) to the Independent Adjudicator within one month of the acknowledgement of the Appeal. If the Independent Adjudicator requires further information from either of the parties or any independent source he will seek it within two weeks of his receipt of the Appeal Papers.

5.4.3.4 The Independent Adjudicator shall convene an oral hearing within six weeks of his receipt of the Appeal Papers having agreed a date and venue convenient to the parties. The Independent Adjudicator will inform the parties in writing of the procedure to be followed at the hearing.

5.4.3.5 The parties to an Appeal shall be entitled to have a friend present at the hearing. However, any such friend shall not be entitled to speak on behalf of the Appellant or the Chairman of the Exam Board.

5.4.3.6 In exceptional cases the Independent Adjudicator may permit the parties to be legally represented and or to introduce expert witnesses and in that event he will consider on their merits any applications for the reasonable costs of such representation.

5.4.3.7 The Independent Adjudicator shall send his award in writing to the parties within two weeks of the hearing.

5.4.3.8 The Independent Adjudicator may in exceptional cases consider applications for the costs of preparing an appeal but as a general rule such costs will not be awarded and Appellants will be informed of that rule when receipt of an Appeal is acknowledged.

5.4.3.9 The Independent Adjudicator is empowered in exceptional cases to award the Appellant compensation where he considers that the acts or omissions of the CIPR AB or any of its servants or agents have been unreasonable or unconscionable and such compensation shall not exceed £1,000. He shall certify such an award to the Chairman of the Exam Board.

5.4.3.10 The Independent Adjudicator is also empowered to request the Chairman of the Exam Board to take such action as he considers may be necessary to remedy a non-pecuniary injustice sustained by an Appellant, which he has recorded in an Award. He shall certify such an award to the Chairman of the Exam Board.

5.4.3.11 If the Chairman of the Exam Board fails to take the action requested under paragraphs 5.4.3.9 or 5.4.3.10 within one month of the date of the Independent Adjudicator's certificate the Independent Adjudicator shall lay a report before the Chairman of the Professional Development Committee.

6. Procedures - dealing with malpractice

6.1 Malpractice can arise in different ways. Examples of malpractice committed by candidates can include:

- Plagiarism or deliberate copying of another's work, passing it off as one's own.
- Using the services of somebody else to produce work submitted for assessment.
- Bringing undue pressure and influence to bear on assessors thereby compromising their impartiality.

6.2 It is the CIPR's centres that will discover such malpractices in the first instance. It is the clear duty of CIPR centres to investigate all such cases and report their conclusions to the CIPR AB Qualifications Department by written communication, as soon as possible and not later than one week after the matter has come to the centre's attention. The CIPR AB Qualifications Department will acknowledge all such notifications within one week. It will bring the matter in question to the attention of the candidates involved and seek their response.

6.3 Should it come to the attention of the CIPR AB that a centre's staff is alleged guilty of an act of malpractice, an extreme example being its production of work to be assessed in the name of its candidate(s), the CIPR AB Qualifications Department shall inform the centre of its concerns to this effect and require its full response (within one week).

6.4 Once the Qualifications Department has been able to gather a full report on the alleged malpractice and obtained the response of those alleged to have committed the malpractice, this information shall be laid before the meeting of the Board of Examiners at which the assessment submission is to be considered in any event. The Board of Examiners shall have the prerogative to:

- dismiss the allegation as unsubstantiated; or
- withhold the release of the result pending further investigation, or
- declare the assessment submission(s) as null and void.

6.5 Should the Board of Examiners decide that the allegation of offence is well founded and take the action 3 listed above, copies of the evidence laid before the Exam Board and a report on the grounds on which the Exam Board adjudged the evidence, shall be made available to the candidate or centre (whichever party is adjudged to have committed the offence). Also, a copy of this report shall be passed to the CIPR Professional Development Committee (PDMC).

6.6 Candidates and Centres are advised that they will have a right of appeal against a decision to declare their scripts null and void. The appropriate appeal process is that described in full above – in Section 5.4.

6.7 Judgement against a candidate

Should the judgement of malpractice against a candidate be upheld, the CIPR Professional Development and Membership Committee (PDMC) shall have in its discretion the power to:

- admonish a candidate,
- withhold his/her certificate
- admonish and exclude the candidate from presenting for further assessments for a period of not less than three years
- admonish and exclude the candidate from presenting for further assessments indefinitely

The Board of Examiners is duty bound to make a full report on such matter pertaining to a candidate, who shall also be a member of the CIPR, to the CIPR Professional Practices Committee.

6.8 Judgement against a centre

Should the judgement of malpractice against a centre be upheld, the Professional Development and Membership Committee shall have in its discretion the power to:

- admonish a centre and require its declaration that it shall undertake that there shall be no recurrence of the malpractice
- withhold certificates from candidates in the affected cohort from that centre
- admonish and exclude the centre from providing courses for CIPR AB awards for a period of not less than three years
- admonish and exclude the centre from providing courses for CIPR AB awards indefinitely

7. Teaching centre requirements

7.1 As noted in 6.2 above, Centres are responsible for the assessment of all candidates' work, subject to CIPR external moderation. Centres are provided with clear instructions on the level of standard to be applied to the marking of candidates' submissions; with guidance documents on how to carry out the assessment and complete the first two marking stages as well as the assignment feedback form and the internal moderation report to enable its consistent operation. In all of this, Centres are required to co-operate with the appointed CIPR Chief

Examiner and the CIPR Qualifications Dept, submitting by designated dates, full information on the evaluations made so that the CIPR Chief Examiner may thereupon select a sample of the Centre's assessed candidate submissions, in accordance with CIPR sampling rules. The CIPR Chief Examiner shall scrutinise the submitted samples, reporting on his/her findings to both the CIPR Board of Examiners and the Centre. The Centre is required to implement any adjustment to its approach to assessing and in consequence the grades it has awarded, if so instructed by the Chief Examiner.

7.2 It is the duty and responsibility of each Centre's Course Leader to ensure that the assessment of candidates' submissions by the Centre, and the Centre's compliance with instructions from the CIPR Chief Examiners, are carried out in full, in accordance with CIPR instructions and rules, and according to the agreed timetable. Centres employ markers for the assessment of each submission; larger centres sometimes employ a number of markers for this purpose. The Centre's Internal Moderator (usually the Course Leader) must ensure that the Centre's various markers are marking consistently; he/she must investigate any substantial variance between the marks being given by his/her markers, discuss the matter with them and ensure that corrective action is taken immediately, and prior to the submission of full sets of marks to the CIPR Chief Examiner, who will make a selection to sample from that full set of marks.

7.3 A Centre that fails to follow the instructions, guidance and timetable for the assessment of students' submissions, or which negligently allows its assessors to mark at variance from each other - where no reasonable explanation may be adduced, and where the variance derives from the uncoordinated personal approaches of the assessors, will be:

7.3.1 In the first instance, reported accordingly in the Chief Examiner's report for that Centre for the assessment in question. The Centre will be required to take immediate corrective action, prior to the submission of the results for confirmation, to the Board of Examiners.

7.3.2 Should the Centre fail to take this action, the Board of Examiners shall take such action as it considers necessary to ensure the final results reflect parity of assessment and the application of the stated standard. In extreme cases, the Board may not be able to take such action, requiring either partial or total re-marking of the candidates' submissions, before final results may be issued.

7.4 A Centre that is the subject of action 7.3.1 above, will be admonished and required to give a firm undertaking that it will take steps to preclude a recurrence of the negligent action. An explanation of the action to be taken will be required from the Centre, and evidence submitted within a period of one month that that action has been carried out. A Centre which fails to do this, or a Centre that is the subject of action 7.3.2 above, shall be reported to the Board of Examiners. That Board shall have the power to withdraw CIPR AB accreditation from the Centre for a period of up to three years, or indefinitely as it sees fit. In taking any such action, the Board shall ensure that it protects the interests of the Centre's existing students. It will however, have the prerogative to delay the issue of final results to the Centre's students, if this is necessary to ensure their fairness.

8. Reasonable adjustments and special consideration

8.1 Reasonable Adjustments

8.1.1 Policy

The CIPR AB aims to ensure that all candidates are treated fairly and consistently. Candidates with particular requirements should not be disadvantaged in any way when being assessed and demonstrating performance. The CIPR AB thus commits itself to compliance with criteria 14 to 20 of the CAEQ.

8.1.2 What are Reasonable Adjustments for?

The CIPR AB recognises that some candidates may find standard arrangements for assessment can cause unnecessary problems, and so prove to be unnecessary barriers. These can often be overcome without compromising the validity of the assessment. Such barriers can arise where candidates have:

- known and permanent or long term disabilities or learning difficulties, or
- temporary disabilities or illnesses, or
- temporary illness, injury, indisposition or comparable adverse circumstance at the time of assessment, that could influence performance to the candidates' detriment.

8.1.3 What are the Reasonable Adjustments?

Reasonable Adjustments are arrangements that are approved before an assessment so that a candidate can take part and perform to the best of their ability. Adjustments can be provided for reasons mentioned in 8.1.2 (i) and (ii) above. The CIPR AB deals with all applications for Reasonable Adjustments and will authorise assessment centres to carry out Adjustments on its behalf. It is the responsibility of the candidate to ensure that any request for Reasonable Adjustments is based on firm evidence. Evidence may be produced from a variety of sources, including documents from medical practitioners and educational psychologists. If a candidate is in doubt over this, the CIPR AB's Qualifications Dept. should be contacted for advice.

8.1.4 Examples of Reasonable Adjustments

A candidate may develop a visual impairment and be unable to use a personal computer to complete a test in the time allowed. A Reasonable Adjustment in this case could involve the provision of tape recording facilities or the supply of an amanuensis. In extreme cases, candidates could be supplied with assessment exercises in Braille and produce their answers in Braille.

- A candidate may have suffered an accident or illness, and be unable to travel to a place where they could use a personal computer.
- A Reasonable Adjustment could be the provision of a PC for the assessment.
- A candidate may be diagnosed with a condition such as dyslexia. Depending on the severity of the condition, a Reasonable Adjustment could involve the provision of tape recording facilities or the supply of an amanuensis.

Note : In CIPR AB assessments the provision of additional time is of no value, and so this is not an Adjustment that is normally allowed.

Reasonable Adjustment arrangements are made with the objective of enabling candidates to take the assessment with neither advantage, nor disadvantage, in comparison with other students on the course.

8.1.5 When should a candidate make an application?

Candidates with a learning difficulty or with a permanent or long-term disability should apply in writing (by email or post) for a Reasonable Adjustment at least three weeks before the assessment. This will enable the CIPR AB to make appropriate arrangements with the centre.

8.2 Absence from the assessment

Where a candidate chooses to defer submitting an assessment exercise for any reason, the candidate can submit for the next available session. An administration charge of £75 will be made per assessment. Candidates should be clear however, that this will require that they take the new assignment set for the next session in question. (See appendix 2 at the end of these Regulations). After that, no further opportunity to defer will be made available, except in very exceptional circumstances. (For full information on deferral regulations and procedures governing both assessment matters AND teaching/attendance (course deferral) on CIPR courses, please see appendix 2 - "CIPR Deferral Procedures" at the end of these Regulations.)

However, an application can be made to the CIPR AB for an aegrotat award, providing that the candidate has already passed two out of the three units for the Advanced Certificate or Diploma before applying for this aegrotat award. That application may be supported by recommendations from the candidate's course tutor, and must be supported by appropriate medical evidence. The decision to make an award will be taken by the CIPR Professional Development Committee at its first available meeting. The result of that decision will be sent to the candidate within three days. If the Committee decides in favour of the candidate, it will state on the candidate's certification that the unit in question was granted as an aegrotat award.

9. Retention of candidates' work

9.1 All candidates' work assessed for a CIPR qualification will be kept for six months from the date of the Board of Examiners at which the results were ratified. Centres are responsible for retaining students' work accordingly. Appeals involving any piece of student work will be considered at next meeting of the Board of Examiners. Where an appeal against the decision of the Board is referred to the independent adjudication procedure and this appeal extends beyond the six month period then the CIPR AB or the independent adjudicator will keep the piece of work in question for as long as necessary (to facilitate the appeal process to its final conclusion point).

9.2 At the end of a six month period the CIPR and its Centres will dispose of the assessment material in their possession. It will not be made available or be recognisable for future use in any way, unless by the prior consent of its author.

10. Certificates

10.1 Candidates will be awarded a certificate on successful completion of the award.

10.2 Candidates whose original certificate has been lost or destroyed, who consequently wish to obtain a replacement certificate, must apply in writing to the Qualifications Department, explaining that the original certificate has been lost or destroyed. There is a fee of £25 for producing and sending a replacement certificate. The new certificate issued will show clearly that it is a replacement, and its individual identifier shall reflect this. The issue of such a certificate will be recorded on the Awarding Body's database for this purpose.

11. Monitoring and reporting

11.1 The CIPR Awarding Body is committed to analysing its own performance through reporting on all aspects of its work to its governing Committee – the CIPR Professional Development and Membership Committee. Prominent activities include detailed reviews of the syllabuses and the types and appropriateness of assessment exercises, and their administration.

Appendix 1: Assessments for candidates who have previously failed

Candidates are entitled to reattempt any failed assessment exercise on TWO occasions only. After that, they shall be deemed to have failed the award and a letter confirming success in any unit(s) passed will be issued by the Qualifications Dept.

Appendix 2: Deferral procedures

This document clarifies the CIPR's deferral procedures.

There are two types of deferral – course deferral (where a candidate suspends both elements of studies: teaching and the assessment) and assignment deferral (where the candidate attends for teaching but defers taking the assignment to the next available opportunity). Both are dealt with separately below.

a) Course deferral

Reasonable grounds must be provided and these must be detailed in writing (by email) to the CIPR Education Officer, wherever possible such requests must be accompanied by 'evidence' (i.e. medical note or a letter from your line manager if grounds for deferring are work related). The CIPR Education Officer may seek the teaching centre's approval and for the tutor's recommendations. The decision to approve or not approve the deferral request will be communicated by email to the candidate and copied to the study centre (for information and record keeping). Please note that all requests for a course deferral must be requested in advance, retrospective deferral requests (for teaching days missed) are not possible. In such cases students should contact their study centre to discuss how to catch up on teaching. Also, it is not possible to request a course deferral from or just before the teaching for the final unit (as this is mainly self-study). Deferral of the final unit must be done by applying for an assignment deferral (see point b below).

Note: Deferrals for longer than one academic year will be considered only under exceptional circumstances. In any event a study gap cannot exceed 24 months from the initial course start date. To resume studies after this time a fresh application must be made and this includes a new charge of the course fee (for tuition and assessment).

Acceptable grounds and evidence required for a course deferral

In the case of personal circumstances such as marriage breakup or bereavement, a detailed letter from the student will suffice.

If appropriate a doctor's letter detailing related medical conditions (e.g. stress or depression) should also be submitted. Such requests will be treated with the utmost confidentiality.

Requests for deferral on work grounds should be accompanied by a letter explaining the special circumstances that are contributing to an increased workload. A general on-going heavy workload will not normally be considered a valid reason. However having to cover for a long-absent colleague, a new role or company restructuring, for example, would be. In such cases a letter from the candidate's employer explaining the problem and how it has affected their workload will be required.

Entitlement to further teaching/attendance

Once a deferral has been approved by the CIPR the candidate and the centre will be notified accordingly. The onus is then on the candidate to liaise with their centre to discuss how to proceed. Generally speaking a centre will only allow a deferred candidate to attend those parts of the course which he/or she has missed. For example if a candidate attended the first semester, and then deferred, the centre would then only allow them to attend the second semester the following year. The exact amount of teaching a deferred candidate is entitled to is entirely at the discretion of the centre.

Charges

The CIPR Awarding Body does not make any charge for such course deferrals. However candidates should note that CIPR membership lasts for one year only. It continues to run regardless of whether or not a candidate defers. It is a requirement that candidates who defer continue their CIPR membership (which will be charged at the full rate) from the date at which their membership ceases until they complete the course.

Centres will however be free to make reasonable additional charges at their discretion. This could for example be to cover library access/student cards for a further year. This is something candidates should discuss with their centre.

b) Assignment deferral

Candidates may choose to defer each assignment for one submission date only. No grounds need to be given.

Procedure

Candidates will be required to complete the online deferral/re-registration form in the Study Hub on the CIPR website, a £75 fee is charged. The deadline for completing the deferral form is midday on the last working day before the submission date for each assignment and candidates will automatically be booked on the next available submission date for that assessment. Assignment deferral forms after the cut-off point will not, under any circumstances, be accepted.

It is only in very exceptional circumstances that candidates will be permitted to defer the same assignment more than once. And in this case a special appeal, with evidence, must be made in writing (by email) to the CIPR Education Officer.

Charges

An administration charge of £75 will be made by the CIPR for deferral of each assignment.

In addition students are required to remain in membership of the CIPR until their final assessment has been successfully completed.

Failure to submit an assignment

Any candidate who does not request a deferral by the deadline given and who then does not submit the assessment (or who submits work which, in the opinion of the examiners, does not constitute a serious attempt), will fail that assessment. In this case the candidate will be required to complete the Deferral/re-registration form (as above) to re-register for this assessment at the next available date. There will be a charge for re-registration of £75 and the mark for the assessment concerned will be capped at a Pass grade.

Appendix 3: Plagiarism

Plagiarism is the use of another's thoughts and ideas, presenting them as if they were your own, using words identical or close to the original. This is not acceptable.

It is however standard academic practice to use a review of others' work to build an argument. Any such work that is used in this way, whether by direct quotation or paraphrasing, must be indicated by proper referencing and supported by a full bibliography. (see the instructions on the Harvard referencing system in the "Guide to Writing Assignments").

If plagiarism is suspected, the tutor must first inform the Course Leader, who will in turn call a meeting with the candidate as soon as possible to investigate the matter. If the Course Leader feels that plagiarism has indeed occurred, the work will be marked as ungraded and the CIPR Qualifications Department informed. The CIPR Qualifications Department will refer the matter to the Board of Examiners who have the power to take the action more fully set out in Section 6, or; if the investigation that has been carried out by the centre indicates, without doubt, that a

genuine oversight has occurred on the candidate's part with regard to correct referencing, the candidate will be required to resubmit that element of assessment, and be restricted to only that ONE resubmission, should the re-submission be successful the grade awarded will be capped at Pass.

Centres should be aware that they may have candidates who work closely together for the same employer and that they may want to pursue topics for their personal projects that are largely similar. When negotiating these topics, and later when assessing candidates' submissions, centres need to pay particular attention to a natural tendency to collaborate over such project work, and that this must not be allowed to lead to the unfair advantage of one or more candidates in relation to the objectives of the assessment exercise. Centres are therefore encouraged to negotiate topics with individual candidates that obviate, so far as may be, such an eventuality.