

CIPR COURSE REGULATIONS

(for courses that started *BEFORE* August 2015)

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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, distinction or clear distinction).
- 1.6 The CIPR issues guidelines to the teaching centres in respect of selecting samples for internal moderation. When completed, a teaching 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 teaching centres prior to the submission of results for consideration by the Board of Examiners of the CIPR Awarding Body (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 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 CIPR 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 CIPR AB 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. The Board may in some circumstances determine that consideration of individual centres' results should be delayed, for example, if a submission was not received by the published deadline or if suspected malpractice has been identified.
- 2.6 Assessment results are released by email by the CIPR AB 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:

- Clear Fail
- Fail
- Pass
- Merit
- Distinction
- Clear Distinction

3.2 Each Unit will be awarded a grade. For full details of the workings of this for the units see 3.3.1.2.

3.3 Certificate and information provided in results notifications on successful completion of an award:

3.3.1 Advanced Certificate and Diploma

3.3.1.1 In order to achieve the overall qualification candidates must pass all three units of the award. Candidates failing one or more unit will be allowed two further attempts only.

3.3.1.2 The grade attained for each unit determines the overall qualification grade and this overall qualification 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 will be $2 + 2 + 3 = 7$. Average is $2.3 =$ overall Merit

Note: Clear distinction will be awarded to candidates who achieve either three clear distinctions or two clear distinctions and one distinction. Two clear distinctions and one merit will result in an overall award of distinction.

3.3.1.3 Where the overall grade is Merit, Distinction or Clear Distinction it will be displayed on the certificate. An overall grade of Pass is not displayed on the certificate.

3.3.1.4 Students are entitled to re-attempt 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 CIPR AB. Such candidates who wish to attain the award will have to make a fresh application to their teaching centre to start the course again. This will involve submission of all three assignments and a full set of fees (tuition and Awarding Body) will apply.

3.3.2 Foundation Award, Internal Communication Certificate/Diploma, Public Affairs Diploma, Crisis (Response) Communication Diploma

3.3.2.1 In order to achieve the overall qualification, candidates must attain a grade of Pass or higher for their assessment attempt.

3.3.2.2 Where the grade attained is Merit, Distinction or Clear Distinction it will be displayed on the certificate. An overall grade of Pass is not displayed on the certificate.

4. How are results sent out

The initial notice of an assessment result shall be sent by email (by the CIPR AB) by the Friday of the week *after* the meeting of the Board of Examiners that authorises their release. Within two weeks of the email being issued a formal results letter, transcript and certificate will be sent by first class post to the home address of the student unless prior notice (by email to the CIPR AB) is given to use an alternative despatch address. 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 failure on the part of the CIPR or its examiners to apply the marking criteria accurately or follow processes correctly.

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 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 application of the marking criteria to have been inaccurate 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 Chair of Examiners who will act with the Board of Examiners' delegated powers.

Revised results – as appropriate – will be despatched to the students in question within a week of the decision reached by the Board of Examiners or Chair 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 he/she may have recourse to appeal to the Professional Development & Membership Committee as set down in paras 5.4.1 and 5.4.2 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 CIPR AB.
- 5.3.2 Where such a complaint relates to the services provided by the candidate's teaching centre 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 centre. The wishes of candidates preferring that their identity is not disclosed will be respected, although such candidates should be aware that frequently teaching centres 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 centre for its comment. The teaching centre 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 centre 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 centre 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, for the candidate 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 and Membership 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 5.4.2. 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 5.3 or 5.4.1 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/her absolute discretion appoint one or more assessors to advise him/her 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/her.

- 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/her 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 Chair of the Professional Development Committee for comment within a further two weeks. Any comments on the Appeal Statement made by the Chair 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 Chair 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 s/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/her 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 Chair 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 s/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/her 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 s/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. S/he shall certify such an award to the Chair of the Exam Board.
- 5.4.3.10 The Independent Adjudicator is also empowered to request the Chair of the Exam Board to take such action as s/he considers may be necessary to remedy a non-pecuniary injustice sustained by an Appellant, which s/he has recorded in an Award. S/he shall certify such an award to the Chair of the Exam Board.

5.4.3.11 If the Chair 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 Chair of the Professional Development Committee.

6. Procedures - dealing with malpractice

6.1 Malpractice can arise in different ways. Examples of malpractice committed by students 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 often the CIPR's teaching centres that will discover such malpractices in the first instance. It is the clear duty of CIPR teaching centres to investigate all such cases and report their conclusions to the CIPR AB 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 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 teaching 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 shall inform the teaching centre of its concerns to this effect and require its full response (within one week).

6.4 Once the CIPR AB 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. 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 Candidates and teaching 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.

6.6 Judgement against a candidate

Should the judgement of malpractice against a candidate be upheld, the CIPR Professional Development and Membership Committee (PPC) 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

If the candidate in question is also a member of the CIPR The Board of Examiners is duty bound to provide a full report to the CIPR Professional Practices Committee.

6.7 Judgement against a teaching centre

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

- admonish a teaching 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 teaching centre from providing courses for CIPR AB awards for a period of not less than three years
- admonish and exclude the teaching centre from providing courses for CIPR AB awards indefinitely.

7. CIPR requirements of teaching centres in respect of implementation of marking standards, and procedures for devolved assessments, including sanctions for non - compliance

7.1 As noted in 6.2 above, teaching centres are responsible for the assessment of all students' work, subject to CIPR external moderation. Teaching centres are provided with clear instructions on the level of standard to be applied to the marking of students' 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 to enable its consistent operation. In all of this, teaching centres are required to co-operate with the appointed CIPR Chief Examiner and the CIPR AB, submitting by designated dates, full information on the grades that the centre has awarded to its students, so that the CIPR Chief Examiner may thereupon select a sample of the centre's assessed student 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 teaching 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 teaching centre's Course Leader to ensure that the assessment of students' 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. Teaching centres employ markers for the assessment of each submission; larger centres sometimes employ a number of markers for this purpose. The teaching 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 teaching 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 unco-ordinated personal approaches of the assessors, will:

7.3.1 in the first instance, be reported accordingly in the Chief Examiner's report for that teaching 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; or

7.3.2 should the teaching 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 students' submissions, before final results may be issued.

7.4 A teaching 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 teaching 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 recommend to the Professional Development and Membership Committee the withdrawal of CIPR AB accreditation from the teaching 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 teaching 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 is committed to ensuring equal access to qualifications and assessment for those candidates that fall under any of the eight protected characteristics (age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnership). Due consideration of these groups is made at every stage of the assessment process so that discrimination is actively avoided.

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 above. The CIPR AB deals with all applications for Reasonable Adjustments, and will authorise teaching 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 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 teaching 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. 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 1 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. Teaching centres are responsible for retaining students' work accordingly. Appeals involving any piece of student work will be considered at the 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 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 AB and its teaching 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 Students will be awarded a certificate on successful completion of the award.

10.2 Students whose original certificate has been lost or destroyed, who consequently wish to obtain a replacement certificate, must apply in writing to the CIPR AB, explaining that the original certificate has been lost or destroyed.

10.3 Students who change their name after being awarded their certificate can obtain a new one in their new name and must apply in writing to the CIPR AB. Their request must be accompanied by legal documentation (i.e. marriage certificate, deed poll certificate, or appropriate) and the original CIPR certificate in question before a new certificate can be issued. Any legal documentation provided in support of their request will be returned to the candidate by the CIPR AB.

10.4 There is a fee of £25 for producing and sending a replacement certificate in 10.2 and 10.3 above. 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 CIPR AB'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 syllabi and the types and appropriateness of assessment exercises, and their administration.

Appendix 1: Deferral procedures and extension requests

The CIPR AB recognises that in some instances students will need to request to defer an assignment, or request a short extension to the original submission date of an assessment, owing to extenuating circumstances. Students can only request this on the following grounds:

- Serious illness of the student or a close family member
- Personal difficulties (i.e. divorce)
- Unforeseen circumstances (i.e. bereavement)

Extension Requests:

Requests must be made in writing before the assessment submission deadline directly to the teaching centre and must be accompanied by evidence such as a note from a medical practitioner. In the case of bereavement or divorce a detailed letter from the student will suffice. The teaching centre can determine the exact number of days up to a maximum of seven calendar days. Teaching centres will not be able to accept work post the agreed extended submission date and, in such instances, students must be informed that a no show entry will be made in their student record by the CIPR AB and that grade capping penalties will be applied to a subsequent successful attempt. A re-registration fee of £75 will also apply.

Note: Teaching centres must inform candidates that they will not be allowed to subsequently defer an assignment if an extension has already been granted.

Deferral Procedures:

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

1. Course deferral

Reasonable grounds must be provided and these must be detailed in writing (by email) to the CIPR AB. Wherever possible such requests must be accompanied by 'evidence' (i.e. medical note or a letter from a student's line manager if grounds for deferring are work related). The CIPR AB 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 teaching centre (for information and record keeping). Please also 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 teaching 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 2 below).

Note: Deferrals for longer than one academic year will only be considered under exceptional circumstances. In any event all assessments must be completed and submitted within three years 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).

1.1 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 work load

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 student's employer explaining the problem and how it has affected their workload will be required.

1.2 Entitlement to further teaching/attendance:

Once a deferral has been approved by the CIPR the student and the teaching centre will be notified accordingly. The onus is then on the student to liaise with their teaching centre to discuss how to proceed. Generally speaking a centre will only allow a deferred student to attend those parts of the course which he/she has missed. For example if a student 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 student is entitled to is entirely at the discretion of the teaching centre.

1.3 Charges

The CIPR AB does not make any charge for such course deferrals. However, students should note that CIPR membership lasts for one year only. It continues to run regardless of whether or not a student defers. It is a requirement that students 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.

Teaching 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 students should discuss with their teaching centre.

2. Assignment deferral

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

2.1 Procedure

Students will be required to complete the online deferral/re-registration form in the Study Centre 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 students will automatically be booked on the next available submission date for that assessment. Deferral requests submitted after the cut-off point will not, under any circumstances, be accepted.

It is only in very exceptional circumstances that students 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 AB.

2.2 Charges

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

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 student 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 student 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.



Note: These students will NOT automatically be booked to the next available submission deadline. They must complete a re-registration request and submit it – with payment – to the CIPR AB.

Appendix 2: 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, should be indicated by proper referencing and supported by a full bibliography. (see the instructions on the Harvard referencing system in the "Guide to Writing Assessments").

If plagiarism is suspected, the tutor must first inform the Course Leader, who will in turn call a meeting with the student 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 AB informed. The CIPR AB 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 teaching centre indicates, without doubt, that a genuine oversight has occurred on the student's part with regard to correct referencing, the student 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.

Teaching centres should be aware that they may have students 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 students' submissions, teaching 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 students in relation to the objectives of the assessment exercise. Teaching centres are therefore encouraged to negotiate topics with individual students that obviate, so far as may be, such an eventuality.

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