

# ***Instructions to Candidates – Exam Centre***



This document contains essential information regarding the administration of ICAEW Professional and Advanced Level exams in an exam centre. You must read these instructions fully and carefully to make sure you are familiar with our processes and procedures before you start your exam(s).

It is your responsibility to adhere to the following instructions. Failure to do so may result in being denied entry to the exam centre, or a charge of misconduct, which may include your exam script being awarded a mark of zero, or your script not being marked.

If you are taking your exam remotely, please [read the alternative Instructions to Candidates](#).

If you are sitting Certificate exams, please [read the relevant Instructions to Candidates](#).

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## ACCESS ARRANGEMENTS

If you require any access arrangements for your exam you can apply anytime from registration, but you must have submitted your application before the end of the booking window of the exam you need them for

If you have access arrangements awarded when booking an exam these will be visible in the booking process and you can check them at any time before the exam in your exam application summary.

In the exam the introduction page shows standard exam time only. Any additional time will be reflected in your timer once you have started the exam, any concerns please ensure you see assistance immediately. If you have been awarded stop the clock rest breaks these will not be reflected in the timer, to take a break you must pause your exam using the function in the accessibility drop down. Stop the clock is not additional time to take your exam and when a break is taken you must not type, write notes or read permitted texts.

## WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW BEFORE EXAM DAY

- **Your exam venue**

When you have booked your exam, you will receive an email to confirm the application. Check the application is correct and complete by viewing your Application Summary at [my.icaew.com/examsonline](https://my.icaew.com/examsonline)

- **Make sure everything on your exam application summary is correct**

- Have you booked on to the correct exams?
- Have you chosen the correct delivery method (remote or centre-based)?
- Have you booked the correct venue or has the address changed since your booking?

- **Keep your email address up to date and check it regularly**

This is how we will communicate key information regarding your exam to you, for example, any unavoidable changes to your exam application. You can update your contact details via your [online training file](#).

- **Plan your journey before the exam day**

Consider adverse weather, traffic or transport issues that may impact your journey to the venue. Late arrival will result in deduction of exam time. You will also not be able to enter the exam room if you are more than 30 minutes late.

- **Stay up to date with exams**

We advise that you regularly check the [exam system status page](#) for any updates before your exam.

## PERMITTED TEXTS

Permitted texts are the resources that ICAEW recommend you use within an exam sitting. During the exam, you will have a tab that takes you to the permitted text that you can open alongside the question and answer area. It will also have a search functionality available.

For open book exams, Level 4 Role Simulation, Business Planning and Advanced Level exams, you will have a link to your ICAEW Bookshelf that will allow you to view all purchased learning materials. You can also take any relevant hard copy notes into the exam, subject to space restrictions.

Full details of the texts and the specific editions we recommend is available at [icaew.com/permittedtexts](https://www.icaew.com/permittedtexts).

## WHAT YOU CAN TAKE INTO YOUR EXAMS

Consider carefully what you take to the exam centre as we cannot guarantee secure storage spaces for your personal belongings. Space on and around desks is limited and restrictions (detailed below) apply to items permitted into the exam room.

### Identification

You are required to provide one of the following forms of official, **original** (no photocopies or digital IDs), **valid** (unexpired) ID.

- international travel passport;
- national identification/residency card;
- driving licence;
- military ID;
- employer ID;

The identification provided must contain your name as it appears on our records and recent recognizable photo. Only original documentation will be accepted, photocopies or digital copies of documents will not be accepted.

If you are not able to provide suitable ID, the exam centre has the right to refuse you entry.

### Calculator

An on-screen calculator is available within the exam software; however you are permitted to bring your own to use in the exam.

You may provide your own calculator to use in the exam. You can use any basic calculator. You may be asked, by the invigilator, to show that the memory within the calculator is empty; if you are unable to do so, you will not be allowed to use the calculator during your exam.

### Ear plugs

If you are sensitive to noise within your exam such as keyboard/typing noise or traffic/construction noise, it is recommended you bring ear plugs.

Disposable foam ear plugs are preferred as these cannot be confused with headphone/earphones.

Please ensure you listen to the announcements from the invigilators prior to the exam start before.

### Water and a light snack

The exam venues will not provide or allow food or drink, but the following items permitted:

- Clear bottled water, with a lid. The exam centre may ask you to remove any labels or packaging.
- Cough sweets/lozenges.

- Nut-free Cereal bars.  
*No other food is permitted in the exam room, unless awarded as an access arrangement. If you have been granted permission to take food into the exam room for medical reasons, please ensure your exam confirmation clearly states this.*

If you spill something and damage your exam notes or equipment, no consideration or extra time will be offered.

All packaging must be taken with you at the end of the exam and be disposed of responsibly.

### **Pens and pencils**

You will be given note paper by the venue, but you should take your own pens/pencils. Pencil cases and other stationary are not permitted.

## **WHAT YOU CANNOT TAKE INTO YOUR EXAM**

### **Watches or desk clocks**

Watches and desk clocks are **not** permitted in any Professional or Advanced Level exam. The timing of the exam will be managed by a timer within the software. Therefore, you are advised to practise the exams with a timer and within the practice software.

### **Medication or special equipment (without pre-approval from ICAEW)**

You will only be able to take medication into the exam room with you if you have been granted access arrangements by ICAEW. This includes any painkillers or over the counter medication.

Any ergonomic equipment, including but not limited to, laptop stands, screen height adjusters, mice and supports are **not** permitted unless granted access arrangements.

Go to [icaew.com/accessarrangements](https://www.icaew.com/accessarrangements) to find out more about the access arrangement process, including guidance and how to apply.

### **Electronic devices**

Electronic devices including, but not limited to, mobile phones, tablets, computers (including external hardware such as screens or keyboards), smartwatches, headphones or USBs are not permitted in the exam room.

You will be advised where to store these, along with your other personal items, before entering the exam room.

## **WHAT TO EXPECT ON EXAM DAY**

### **Entering the exam room**

You must arrive at the venue no less than 30 minutes before the exam starts. This is to ensure that the invigilators can complete the exam administrative procedures, such as checking candidate identification, before the start of the exam. Please follow the venue

guidance on entry. You may be requested to wait outside until they are ready to permit you into the exam room.

You will be directed to your exam room/computer. You will be provided with one screen and equipment that meets ICAEW technical specifications.

### **Personal belongings**

You must leave your personal belongings, including mobile phones/wallets, in the designated area indicated by the invigilator.

You must turn off all electronic devices such as mobile phones, tablets and anything with an alarm. If any of your personal belongings make a noise during the exam, you will be asked to silence it and will lose exam time. It may also be reported as misconduct which may include marking your exam script at zero.

### **Lateness**

If you arrive within 30 minutes of the start of the exam, you will be allowed into the exam room, but your invigilator will reduce your exam time within the exam software by the number of minutes you were late.

This means that if you arrive five minutes past the scheduled start time, your invigilator will deduct five minutes from your total exam time.

If you arrive more than 30 minutes after the start of the exam you will not be allowed into the exam room, or able to start your exam.

### **Note paper**

You will be provided with five pieces of paper that you may use to make notes during your exam. You may ask for more paper throughout your exam; raise your hand and wait for an invigilator.

This paper will not be marked and must be placed in the designated tray/box when exiting the exam room.

### **Administration procedures before the exam starts**

The invigilation team will:

- Check ID on entry or at your desk.
- Provide you with your exam log in details, username and password.
- Ask you to verify that your candidate information is correct on your screen.
- If anything is incorrect, you should raise your hand to make the invigilator aware.

## **DURING YOUR EXAM**

Please ensure that all work in the spreadsheet area is accurately copied over to the word processing area to be marked, with sufficient time before the conclusion of the exam to allow for time to review and make any necessary revisions before submitting.

## WHAT IF SOMETHING GOES WRONG?

ICAEW endeavours to provide excellent exam facilities for all candidates; however, some circumstances are beyond our control. For example, construction work and power cuts.

If you feel your exam attempt is being negatively impacted by any circumstances, you must raise your hand immediately and report it to the invigilator who will assist you and make a record of the issue along with any action taken. It is then your responsibility to appeal your exam disruption within seven days of the exam date.

Failure to report an issue during its occurrence may result in an exam disruption appeal being declined.

If you are ill on exam day or affected by other adversity, e.g., bereavement or shock, you should withdraw from your exam(s), as you will not be eligible for exam disruption appeal if you attempt the exam.

## AT THE END OF YOUR EXAM

Your exam will automatically end once your allotted exam time has finished.

While within the venue you are still under exam conditions until notified otherwise by centre staff or an invigilator.

You must exit the exam room, and centre, as quietly and as considerately as possible, as other students may still be completing their exam.

## YOUR CONDUCT

As an ACA student, we expect you to act in a professional manner and in accordance with the ICAEW Student and ACA Assessment Regulations. To read these in full, please visit [icaew.com/regulations](https://www.icaew.com/regulations)

During your exam you must always follow the instructions of the invigilator and the guidance within this document. Failure to do so will be considered misconduct.

Please consider the below behaviours:

- You must remain seated during the exam.
- Toilet breaks are permitted, but you must inform the invigilator before leaving the room.
- Raise your hand if you wish to get an invigilator's attention.
- Be considerate of your fellow candidates when speaking to the invigilator.
- If you leave the exam room without permission, you will not be allowed to return.
- If you want to leave the exam and you do not want to return, you must make the invigilator aware.
- Candidates taking exams in the UK are not allowed to finish their exam and leave the exam room during the first 30 minutes of the exam.
- If you finish your exam before other candidates, you must exit the exam room as quietly and considerately as possible (UK students only).
- Candidates taking exams **outside the UK** are not allowed to leave the exam room until the end of the exam, unless for supervised toilet or authorised rest breaks.

- Within the venue you are still under exam conditions until you are advised otherwise by your invigilator.
- Inappropriate language or behaviour towards invigilation staff or other students will not be tolerated.

The invigilator is authorised to stop your exam if they feel your conduct is improper. Failure to follow the above behaviours will be reported to ICAEW and may be considered misconduct, this may include your exam script being marked at zero.

### What is misconduct?

Misconduct may include any action or conduct that the invigilator reports as unacceptable or against ICAEW regulations or instructions given within these Instructions to Candidates. Misconduct may include deliberate actions or omissions which give you an advantage in the exam, to which other candidates would not have access.

The invigilator will complete a report which will be sent to ICAEW. In addition to this, you must also provide a statement in writing within seven days of the incident and email it to [examdisruptionappeal@icaew.com](mailto:examdisruptionappeal@icaew.com)

Reports of misconduct are discussed with the Assessment Committee who will consider the appropriate action for each case.

Disciplinary action may include awarding your exam script a mark of zero, or any other measure deemed appropriate by the Committee. Cases of misconduct may also be referred to ICAEW Professional Standards and involve further disciplinary action which could affect your future membership of ICAEW.

You will be made aware of the Assessment Committee's decision and given the opportunity to appeal.

Misconduct includes, but is not limited to:

- Not complying with invigilator instructions.
- Not complying with instructions within this document
- Disrupting other candidates.
- Speaking with other candidates within the exam room.
- Sharing exam materials or permitted texts with other candidates within the exam room.
- Taking unauthorised materials or objects into the exam room.
- Leaving the exam room in such a way that disturbs or impacts other students' exam attempt; and
- Cheating.

For more information, please see the [ACA Assessment Regulations](#).

## EXAM DISRUPTION APPEAL

**You must read the exam disruption appeal [policy](#) in full before you attempt any exam.** You must read the exam disruption appeal policy in full before you attempt any exam. Exam disruption appeal applies to circumstances where you feel that your performance in an exam has been adversely affected by illness or other circumstances. You can apply to have these factors taken into consideration during the results determination process.



The deadline to apply for the exam disruption appeal is seven days from your exam. It is your responsibility to understand the exam disruption appeal process before you sit an exam so that you can act accordingly. ICAEW will not take your circumstances into account unless you have followed the exam disruption appeal policy. The policy can be found at [icaew.com/examdisruptionappeal](https://www.icaew.com/examdisruptionappeal).

## EXAM SURVEY

After the exam session ends you will receive a link to a survey by email, please take the time to let us know about your exam experience so we can continue to make improvements.

## WITHDRAWING AND REFUNDS

### During the exam session booking window.

Only during the exam session booking window can any modifications be made to a student's application including withdrawing, amending the exam(s) selected, changing the exam centre or moving to remote invigilation. Once the exam session booking window closes no further amendments can be made.

Students can withdraw during the exam session booking window, by going online to their exam application and select the modifying application option. When withdrawing during the exam session booking window students will be refunded their exam fee. Refunds are issued back to the original payment method within 20 working days of the booking window closing date.

### After the exam session booking window closing date

Students do not need to notify ICAEW if they are unable to attend their exam(s).

If a student is unable to attend their exam(s) and wishes to be considered for a refund, evidence will need to be submitted via the online training file within 7 days of the examination date.

Refunds will only be considered with the following evidence:

- Illness - appropriate medical evidence from a qualified medical doctor obtained and dated no later than 48 hours after the examination date.
- Bereavement - a copy of the death certificate of the family member. A family member would be mother, father, spouse or partner, child.

If a refund is granted this will be provided back to the original payment method 20 working days after the exam date.

ICAEW are unable to defer an exam or hold a credit on a student's account. A student will need to apply again at the next available session.

You can [amend your application online](#) up to the entry deadline. No amendments can be made after the exam entry deadline. [View the exam dates and deadlines](#), which includes closing and cancellation dates. [View the full details of our refund policy](#)