



GUIDANCE FOR ACA STUDENTS APPLYING FOR ASSESSMENTS

Before applying for an assessment

You must check that you are eligible before you apply for an assessment. Please see the assessment eligibility regulations for more details. These can be found at:

www.icaew.com/index.cfm/route/163440

Submitting an entry – computer-based assessments (knowledge modules)

For knowledge module assessments, you or your employer are responsible for booking your assessment. To book an e-assessment, visit: www.icaew.com/index.cfm/route/146192

Submitting an entry – paper-based assessments (Professional Stage application and Advanced Stage modules)

It is your responsibility to make sure that you are entered for a paper-based assessment before the closing date.

There are two ways in which you can apply for assessments:

- online at www.icaew.com/acastudents or
- by downloading an application form from www.icaew.com/acastudents or by contacting the student support helpline on +44 (0)1908 248 040 or studentsupport@icaew.com

Acceptance of entries

You must ensure that your applications for paper-based assessments reach the ICAEW on or before the closing date. We will accept entries that we receive up to seven days after the closing date but you will have to pay **double** the normal fee. Our applications manager will decide whether to accept any other entries received after this time, but you will incur either a double or triple payment depending on when we receive the application.

- **Postal entries** – we recommend that you submit paper-based assessment applications well in advance of the closing date to ensure that we receive them in time. We won't make allowance for late delivery for any special circumstances or for any error or omission by yourself, by any person acting on your behalf or by the postal authorities.

If there is any chance that your postal application may not reach the ICAEW in time, we recommend that you scan the application form and email it to applications@icaew.com. You may also deliver it in person. You can do this at the ICAEW offices at Chartered Accountants' Hall in London, or at Metropolitan House in Milton Keynes, up to 17.15 on the closing date.

- **Online entries** – you must submit online applications for paper-based assessments by midnight on the closing date for each assessment session.

Checking receipt of an application

Once you have submitted your application, you can monitor its progress using the application status facility on our website. Go to www.icaew.com/acastudents, access the applications area and click on application status.

Transfer of entry

You cannot transfer your entry for a paper-based assessment to a subsequent session. You must withdraw the original entry and submit a new entry form in the usual way. We will be able to credit the fee for the subsequent session.

Change of assessment centre

You can change the venue for your assessment online up until the closing date for the assessment. Once the closing date has passed, we will consider sympathetically any special cases supported by appropriate evidence. Each case is considered individually. You should put such requests in writing to applications@icaew.com. We will charge an administrative fee if you ask to change a centre after the closing date. You may not change exam venue within a centre, for example if you have chosen London as your centre, you may not change your allocated venue to another London venue.

Refund of fees

If you cancel the assessment before the entry deadline, you can [withdraw yourself online](#) and receive a full credit. If you cancel after the entry deadline, you must tell us in writing or by email at studentsupport@icaew.com

If you withdraw after the entry deadline but before the refund deadline, we will hold the full fee as a credit against your record for re-use at a later assessment session.

The refund deadlines for 2009 and 2010 are as follows.

2009

- Monday 16 November – December 2009 Professional Stage

2010

- Monday 1 March – March 2010 Professional Stage
- Monday 24 May – June 2010 Professional Stage
- Monday 5 July – July 2010 Advanced Stage
- Monday 23 August – September 2010 Professional Stage
- Monday 11 October – November 2010 Advanced Stage
- Monday 22 November – December Professional Stage

We don't usually offer a credit or refund after the refund deadline has passed. If you are unable to attend an assessment because of illness or other reason beyond your control, you can ask for your assessment fees be credited or refunded. You should email your request to applications@icaew.com within 28 days of the date of the assessment and you must provide appropriate evidence.

Admission details

Admission details will be available to view online. To access them, go to www.icaew.com/acastudents and use the application status facility in the assessment application area. You will be able to view your candidate number (a unique four-digit number for use in the relevant assessment session only), the address of the relevant assessment hall and detailed instructions. You should print out these admission details and take them with you to the assessment hall. An email will be sent to you when these details are available.

Along with the admission details, you can also access the 'Instructions to Candidates' document online. Please read these notes carefully to avoid any problems with the issue of results after your assessments.

The 'Instructions to Candidates' document is also available on the website in the exam application area.

Alternative assessment arrangements for students with disabilities

If you have a disability (as defined by the Disability Discrimination Act 1995) you should let us know and provide relevant evidence as soon as possible after registering. This will ensure that we can support your particular assessment needs.

If you need to apply for alternative arrangements for a paper-based assessment, you must do so before the closing date for the appropriate assessment. Please see **applications for assessment arrangements** below for further details.

For a knowledge module assessment, you must apply at least 30 days before sitting the assessment.

If your disability is permanent, you will only need to make one application for special arrangements. Once they have been agreed, the arrangements will automatically be put in place for every assessment.

If your disability is temporary, you will need to apply for special arrangements for each assessment as necessary.

If your medical evidence confirms that you would benefit from using of a word processor or scribe you can apply for this. At the moment, the use of a word processor is limited to an assessment centre at the ICAEW's offices in Milton Keynes, UK. If you request the use of a word processor you must do so by the closing date of the relevant assessment.

If you request a scribe for any assessment you must do this as early as possible and at least three months before the assessment. The scribe can be appointed by the ICAEW or a training office. The ICAEW will pay the scribe's fees for the assessment only. So you may contact the scribe to arrange mock assessments in advance of the assessment, but you (or your training office) must pay any fees for this arrangement.

You can apply to sit an assessment in a venue that isn't in our published list of assessment centres, but you must do this at least three months before the assessment. You must include appropriate medical evidence with this application under the conditions outlined in **applications for assessment arrangements** below.

Alternative assessment arrangements

If you have specific needs, you can request provisions in either knowledge module (computer-based) assessments or paper-based assessments, as long as the ICAEW is satisfied that the request is reasonable. Such requests include:

- the use of your own chair for knowledge module e-assessments. Although the ICAEW may authorise this, the e-assessment centre will make the final decision on whether or not they can accommodate your request
- cushions to relieve backache
- an extra desk for pregnant students (paper-based assessments only).

You will need to make an application for each separate assessment session and include up-to-date evidence.

You must apply for alternative arrangements for an assessment at least four weeks before the assessment date. Please see **applications for assessment arrangements** below for further details.

We will consider all reasonable applications for extra time in an assessment, but may refuse to grant them for temporary disabilities. Students sitting knowledge module e-assessments will not usually be given any special assessment arrangements for a temporary disability; it will be up to the student and the training office to re-schedule the assessment.

Applications for alternative assessment arrangements

The ICAEW will consider any reasonable application as long as you meet the following conditions:

- we must receive your application by the closing date of the relevant assessment
- give us as much time as possible to make any necessary assessment arrangements
- each application must include the application for special arrangements form and appropriate medical evidence
- medical evidence must:
 - be provided by a medical expert in the relevant field
 - be up to date
 - clearly identify what reasonable adjustments you require in the assessment
 - explain exactly under what grounds the application is being made
 - where appropriate, recommend the exact amount of extra time needed and how that extra time will be used.

If you have dyslexia, these points apply to you.

- You must provide an adult assessment report written by a chartered educational psychologist. This assessment must be a post-16 report (ie, have taken place after your 16th birthday).
- To be awarded assessment concessions (eg, additional time, use of a word processor), the report must clearly state what the concessions should be.
- We consider each case on an individual basis. We will consider the medical evidence and the recommendations for assessment arrangements as the basis of our decision, but reserve the right to grant alternative arrangements, request further information or evidence and ask for a second opinion.

AT THE ASSESSMENT CENTRE

General information

Our Assessment Committee appoints chief invigilators to be responsible for the proper conduct of the paper-based assessments at each centre. Their rulings are final on any matters which arise during the assessment. The chief invigilators may contact the ICAEW assessment department for clarification on any decision.

Entry to a centre

You are allowed to enter the centre after an assessment has started, but you must explain your lateness which, together with your student number and time of arrival, will be reported to the Assessment Committee.

You will not normally be granted extra time but you can apply to have your performance and your reason for lateness considered by the Assessment Committee when they determine the results. The invigilator's comments and any lateness report will **not** be considered during the assessment unless you submit a separate application of explanation and evidence.

You will not normally be allowed into the assessment hall if you are more than 30 minutes late.

For further details, see **Results: factors affecting performance** later in this document.

Proof of identity

You will need to show **two** forms of identification at the assessment centre, one of which must contain an identifying photograph. The following are acceptable as identification:

- current passport
- company identification card containing photograph and signature
- driving licence containing photograph and signature
- for some foreign nationals, a national identity document containing photograph and signature.

You must obtain appropriate means of identification before the date of the assessment. There is no special consideration if you don't have the right identification on the day.

Desks

You will be allocated your own desk and your candidate number (which was included in your admission email) will be displayed on it.

Signature slips

At every paper-based assessment, you must record your attendance by completing the signature slip which is on your desk.

Assessment materials for paper-based assessments

We will give you an answer booklet. For papers with an objective test component, we provide special answer sheets.

You must only use the answer booklets provided for the assessment, we won't mark a script that is submitted on any other paper. We will consider it to be misconduct if you use materials brought into the assessment centre other than those allowed (see **open books** below). See **misconduct** below for further details.

You must bring your own pen, eraser, ruler and pencil (HB pencils for objective test answer sheets). You can use correction fluid. Complete your assessments in pen.

You can use a pocket calculator during the assessment provided that: it doesn't display information or run programs stored before the assessment; it isn't operated in such a way as to disturb other students; it doesn't need a mains power supply.

Permitted books – Professional Stage knowledge level e-assessments

There are no permitted books or texts for the Professional Stage knowledge level assessments. Any information you need will be provided on screen.

Permitted books – Professional Stage application level paper-based assessments

Please see the ACA assessment regulations for updated information at www.icaew.com/acastudents

Any Professional Stage texts allowed into an assessment can **only** be annotated by **underlining and highlighting**. You can use Post-it notes and Tab stickers to mark pages and text, but they must not be written on.

You can only take the following into an assessment:

- one copy of each of the permitted books/texts
- an edition of a permitted book/text of a year other than the one listed in the assessment regulations (ie, 2009 instead of 2010). Assessments are set on the edition listed in the regulations; if you take a different edition into the assessment, you do so at your own risk.

Permitted books – Advanced Stage paper-based assessments

You can take whichever books/texts you choose into the assessment, including your own pre-prepared material which may be annotated. You must not submit any pre-prepared material directly with your assessment answers.

All Advanced Stage scripts must be written on the answer booklets or lined paper given out in the assessment centre at the start of the assessment.

The following restrictions apply to all paper-based assessments:

- you cannot take electronic devices, other than calculators, into the assessment centre (ie, no laptops, palm tops etc)
- you must be able to store safely any texts taken into the assessment. The invigilators will ask you to put any texts to the back of the hall if they cause obstruction in the aisles or any other breach of safety
- if you are sitting the assessments with computers you are not allowed to use computer-read electronic files such as CDs or USBs.

Leaving an assessment centre

After a paper has started, if you leave an assessment centre without permission or unescorted you will not be allowed to return.

If you leave during an assessment and you do not intend to return, you must hand in your answers to the chief invigilator. If you do not wish to submit your answers for marking you must sign an official declaration confirming this. You must also complete the top portion of your objective test answer sheet and write 'no answers submitted' on the sheet and on your answer folder or across your answer booklets. Scripts answered 'no answers submitted' will be given a mark of zero and will be considered as an attempt at that paper.

You may not leave a hall during the first, or last, half hour of any assessment unless there are exceptional circumstances, and only then when you have permission from the chief invigilator.

Students sitting in assessment centres outside the UK may not leave the hall until the assessment is finished.

At the end of an assessment, you must remain seated until the chief invigilator tells you that you may leave.

If a fire alarm is raised during the assessment, you should wait for instructions from the chief invigilator. Throughout any disturbance like this, you must remain silent unless to do so would jeopardise the safety of yourself or others.

Misconduct

The Assessment Committee will investigate any student suspected of involvement in any irregularity or misconduct. If a case for misconduct is being considered, we will notify you and give you the opportunity to write to the committee to explain the circumstances of the case. You will not be allowed to appear in person before the committee.

The chief invigilator or assessment administrator (at e-assessment centres) must report to the ICAEW all cases of irregularity or misconduct in connection with an assessment. Chief invigilators have the authority to stop your assessment if you behave improperly. If it is absolutely essential, you will be sent out of the assessment centre.

You can only bring authorised material into the assessment, as stipulated in the open books section above. The chief invigilator will remove any unauthorised material which you bring into an assessment centre and send it to the ICAEW. If this happens, the Assessment Committee will consider it to be misconduct.

You may not pass any information from one person to another during an assessment, unless you have been expressly authorised to do so.

If we suspect that you have been involved in any irregularity or misconduct relating to an assessment, the Assessment Committee has the right to withhold publication of your results until investigations are completed. The Assessment Committee also has the right to stop you from attempting any further ICAEW assessments and may refer the case to the Investigation Committee.

The Assessment Committee reserves the right to contact your training office about cases of misconduct.

Preparation of answers in the assessment

You must submit your answers on the stationery we provide at the start of the assessment.

Unless otherwise indicated, you must start the answer to each question on a new sheet of paper. For questions with two or more parts; each part should continue on the same page.

You must write the question number on each sheet or page, and your student number on each separate sheet or booklet. You don't need to write your name.

For objective tests you must enter your answers with an HB pencil on the answer sheet provided, following the instructions given in the question paper and on the answer sheet.

Use pen for written answers. You can draw flow charts, graphs and diagrams in pencil.

In your written answers (with the exception of the Case Study), you should submit details of all relevant calculations and workings. If you can't incorporate these in the answer, mark them as rough workings and attach them to the script. Answers to the Case Study are not generally submitted with workings; there will be instructions on each question paper.

We will only mark answers which are submitted at the end of the assessment. We won't mark any answers submitted after the papers have been collected.

The end of an assessment

When a particular assessment is declared to be over, you will be told to stop writing immediately and to put down your pens and pencils. If you continue to write after this instruction, you will be reported to the Assessment Committee for misconduct.

For the Case Study, invigilators will allow you a short time to assemble answer folders and fasten your complete scripts using the tags provided. You are responsible for ensuring that all your answers are included.

If you leave the assessment hall before the end of the paper, please hand in your answers to the chief invigilator. All other students will be allowed to leave only when they have handed in their answers according to the chief invigilator's instructions.

Collection of scripts

The chief invigilator and invigilation staff will collect a script from each student in numerical order. Objective test answer sheets will be collected separately. Only when all scripts have been collected will the chief invigilator inform students that they can leave.

No answers submitted

If you don't want to submit a script you must sign a declaration confirming this and write 'no answers submitted' on the front of your answer folder. Your script must contain all rough work, even though it won't be submitted for marking. We will give a mark of zero for this script, and it will count as one attempt at that paper.

Return of scripts

Your application to enter any of our assessments counts as an agreement by you that all written replies to question papers are the property of the ICAEW and will not be returned.

Removal of materials

You may not remove any paper or other materials supplied, including the printed question paper, from the assessment hall unless you have permission from the chief invigilator.

RESULTS

Factors affecting performance – applications for special consideration during the results determination process

If you feel that your performance in a paper-based assessment has been adversely affected by illness or other special circumstances you can apply to have these factors taken into account during the results' determination process.

However, you should be aware that, although circumstances may be taken into consideration, only a result that is within two marks of the Pass mark will be considered for a change to the overall result.

We usually award one extra mark for most circumstances, but only if this will result in an overall pass. In some specific cases we may consider an award of two marks but, again, only if this will result in an overall pass at the paper.

If you want to apply for special circumstances to be taken into account, you should write to the assessment manager and enclose appropriate medical or other evidence. You must ensure that your application complies with the following:

The grounds for an application must be:

- for circumstances beyond the applicant's control; and
- for circumstances that directly impact on the **assessment period only** (we won't consider periods of study leave, tuition courses or any other time before the assessment).

The application must:

- include details of the circumstances experienced during the assessment
- provide information about which specific assessment papers were affected

- provide information about how you felt your assessment performance had been affected; and
- be accompanied by suitable evidence, see the following paragraph We won't consider applications without any appropriate evidence.

The evidence must be:

- up to date, collected during the assessment period, and no more than two days after the date of the last assessment attended
- from an appropriate source – for medical circumstances, it must be from a GP or other medical practitioner; and
- sufficiently detailed - it must give details of the circumstances (including any medical symptoms) and confirm how your assessment performance may have been affected.

We will not accept statutory sick notes as sufficient medical evidence.

We will not contact third parties for further information even if you have given us permission.

Application deadline

You should send your application as soon as possible after the assessment. We must receive it no later than **three weeks** after the final examination.

If the circumstances arise at the assessment centre, you should report the incident to an invigilator, and make an application in writing to the assessment manager straight after the assessment.

It is your responsibility to ensure that we receive your applications on time.

We will not consider late applications.

Further information

We **won't** consider information from the invigilator's reports as sole evidence. If you have raised circumstances in the exam hall with an invigilator, you must still apply, with evidence, to the assessment manager.

We won't consider any incomplete applications with insufficient information or evidence.

You must make a separate application at each assessment session. We won't keep applications or evidence for future assessment sessions.

We acknowledge in writing all special consideration requests. You must ensure that the assessment manager receives all correspondence and appropriate evidence.

If you want to complain about the conduct of the ICAEW's assessments, you must write to the assessment manager at the ICAEW as soon as possible after the assessment. We will consider any such complaint alongside the chief invigilator's post-assessment report. The Assessment Committee may accept these circumstances, but would not necessarily be prepared to give any consideration.

We won't accept applications if part of the assessment is affected or missed because of your personal arrangements.

The decision-making process

We may accept the circumstances of an application but it will not necessarily lead to an increase in marks.

Marks will only be adjusted if the outcome is a change in the overall result of the relevant exam to a Pass. We won't tell you if your mark is changed due to the consideration process; the mark on the results notification will include any consideration we have given.

We will only consider applications received after the deadline if:

- it has been overlooked in error by the ICAEW and is confirmed as so by the assessment manager; or
- medical evidence emerges about your condition which proves that you must have been affected by that condition at the time of the assessment, even though the problem revealed itself only after both the assessment and the results' determination process were over.

Declaration of results for paper-based assessments

Your admission details will include the date on which you should receive your results. We distribute the Pass and Credit List to the press and district societies. The published results will also be available on the ICAEW website on the day that the results' letters are posted from the ICAEW.

You can also choose to have your results sent by email or SMS text message. Please visit www.icaew.com/acastudents for details.

Marks review service

We don't re-mark students' scripts once the results have been issued. If you have a reason to query your results, you can request a marks review to make sure that the marks have been correctly processed and the marking key appropriately applied to the script. We make a charge for these checks for each assessment paper.

We must receive your marks review request within two weeks of the date of your results notification letter. The request form you need to complete is on the website.

You can also apply for a marks feedback (again, we will charge for each paper) up to 12 months from the results of an assessment. The application form for this is also available on the website.

If you want to enter for the next assessment session and are waiting for the results of a marks review, you must send in your application form **before the deadline** for the receipt of applications. If the outcome of the review changes your results, we will refund all assessment fees.

PRIZES

If your performance in the assessments is of an exceptionally high standard you will be listed in our Order of Merit which is published with the Pass and Credit List. You will then be awarded a prize from funds specially bequeathed or contributed for this purpose. We hold an annual ceremony where the ICAEW president presents the prizes.

ENQUIRIES

The marking of papers and the results of such marking are final and binding for all students. The ICAEW does not have to enter into any correspondence about the results of individual students with the students themselves, your training office, your employers, your parents, or any other persons or organisation claiming interest, except as required under the Data Protection Act 1998.

Examiners reports

There is more information on students' performance in the assessments in the Examiners Reports available at www.icaew.com/acastudents. These reports contain general guidance for students,

copies of the written question papers, detailed mark plans used to mark students' scripts and commentaries from the written and objective test examiners.

Confirmation of previous results

We can send confirmation of previous results to any bona fide educational institution or prospective employer if you send a request to the applications manager. We will charge a fee for this service.