

The Actuarial Profession

Syllabus objectives to be covered by CA3

Subject CA3 – communications consists of two parts as follows:

CA3 Part A – Written Communication

CA3 Part B – Oral Communication

Links to other subjects

The overall objective will be to draft communications intended for an actuarial or non-actuarial person who is assumed to have some business knowledge. The examination will be based on material taught in Core Applications subject CA1.

Overall objectives

PART A – written communication

To gain a clear pass in the examination, a candidate will be required to draft communications intended to be read by a recipient with some assumed business knowledge, to a standard where (bearing in mind that it has been produced under examination conditions) the drafts would:

- be acceptable as final documents without major changes or rewriting, though a moderate number of more minor changes might still be required
- be to a standard which might be appropriate for a newly qualified actuary, rather than a specialist experienced actuary
- convey the most important points clearly and contain no major mis-statements of fact or omissions or unsupported opinion
- Omit superfluous detail which would detract from the core messages

The overall objective against which the candidates' answers will be measured against is to draft a communication which the recipient:

- is likely to understand clearly the written communication
- will be satisfied that the issues raised have been answered
- is pleased with the way in which the messages have been communicated

PART B – oral communication

To gain a clear pass in the examination, a candidate will be required to prepare an oral communication, with or without visual aids, intended to be received by a panel of actuaries and/or non-actuaries with some assumed business knowledge, to a standard where (bearing in mind that it has been produced under examination conditions) the presentations would:

- be acceptable as final versions without major changes or rewriting, though a moderate number of more minor changes might still be required
- be to a standard which might be appropriate for a newly qualified actuary, rather than a specialist experienced actuary
- convey the most important points clearly and contain no major mis-statements of fact or omissions or unsupported opinion
- Omit superfluous detail which would detract from the core messages

The overall objective against which the candidates' answers will be measured against is to draft an oral presentation which the recipient:

- is likely to understand clearly the points presented
- will be satisfied that the issues raised have been answered
- is pleased with the way in which the messages have been communicated

Specific objectives

Part A – written communication

- (i) Demonstrate the extent to which technical terms need to be defined/explained considering the needs of different audiences including:
1. student actuaries (memoranda to colleagues at work, instructions to junior students in the office)
 2. more senior actuaries (report on work in progress to a boss)
 3. clients with a degree of financial/business awareness (reports or letters to pension scheme trustees, company finance directors)
 4. non-actuarial managers (reports, letters or memoranda to a marketing manager, customer service director, human resources director, manager or a press team, investment manager.)

- (ii) Demonstrate the ability to use the appropriate tone and language in written communication:
 - 1. Use the appropriate degree of formality in a written response (for example a report to the Board of Directors compared to a briefing memorandum to a customer services manager).
 - 2. Employ a positive and tactful approach to drafting a written response.
 - 3. Demonstrate recognition and appropriate empathy with the audience's request and situation.
 - 4. Avoid colloquial language in a written response.
- (iii) Identify the key issues which need to be addressed. Ensure that a written response states the main messages clearly and prominently
- (iv) Present the points in a response in an appropriate order, understanding the different structures required for different forms of written communication:

Be able to include appropriate key elements of structuring which might include any of:

- 1. appropriate addressing (address, date, dear sir or dear John etc)
 - 2. title
 - 3. introduction
 - 4. executive summary
 - 5. content
 - 6. appropriate use of headings
 - 7. conclusion or summary
- (v) Demonstrate a written communication that is clearly worded and easy for an audience to understand and:
 - 1. is free from inappropriate technical terms or detail
 - 2. is technically correct
 - 3. does not include irrelevant points
 - 4. is free from grammatical errors
 - 5. is free from spelling mistakes
 - (vi) Demonstrate an appropriate use of numbers where required:
 - 1. Correctly use approximate or accurate numbers according to the context of the question and the audience.
 - 2. Use numerical examples where necessary to enhance the audience's understanding.

Part B – oral communication

- (i) Demonstrate the extent to which technical terms need to be defined/explained considering the needs of different audiences including:
1. student actuaries (presentations to colleagues at work, training sessions for junior students in the office)
 2. more senior actuaries (oral report on work in progress to a boss)
 3. clients with a degree of financial/business awareness (oral reports at pension scheme trustee meetings)
 4. non-actuarial managers (oral reports or presentations to a marketing manager, customer service director, human resources director, manager or a press team, investment manager.)
- (ii) Demonstrate the ability to use the appropriate tone and language in oral communication:
1. Use the appropriate degree of formality in an oral response (for example a presentation to a meeting of the Board of Directors compared to an informal training session for peers in the office).
 2. Employ a positive and tactful approach.
 3. Demonstrate recognition and appropriate empathy with the audience's request and situation.
 4. Avoid colloquial language.
- (iii) Identify the key issues which need to be addressed. Ensure that an oral response states the main messages clearly and prominently
- (iv) Present the points in a response in an appropriate order, understanding the different structures required for different forms of oral communication:

Be able to include appropriate key elements of structuring which might include any of:

1. appropriate addressing (Good morning, good afternoon, hello etc)
2. title/subject
3. introduction/agenda
4. executive summary
5. content
6. signposting
7. conclusion or summary
8. question and answer session

(v) Demonstrate an oral communication that is clearly worded and easy for an audience to understand and:

1. is free from inappropriate technical terms or detail
2. is technically correct
3. does not include irrelevant points

(vi) Demonstrate an appropriate use of visual aids where required:

Be able to include appropriate visual aids which might include any of:

1. charts (bar charts, pie charts, graphs)
2. diagrams
3. pictures
4. tables of numbers
5. slide presentations
6. bullet points
7. flipchart pages