

Notes

Americas – Global Student Consultative Forum

Wednesday 26th June – 15:00-16:00 (UK Time) Blue Jeans Conference Call

Attending: Matt Tennant (MT) - Quality Manager

> Andrew Berrow (AB) - Head of Learning & Operations Brian Blake (BB)- Lead Student Representative Amarpreet Modha (AM) - Student Representative Katherine Wang (KW) - Student Representative

Apologies: Caroline Taylor-Steele (CTS) – Senior

Quality Executive

Item	Discussion Points	Actions
1	Welcome and Introductions	NA
	MT welcomed KW to the forum following her recent appointment as a Student Representative.	
2.	Notes from last meeting	
	No questions or comments were raised in relation to the notes from the last forum meeting.	
3	Students Comments	
	3.1 Exam Bookings	

Item Discussion Points Actions

BB confirmed that all comments received from students in the region regarding exam bookings were positive and suggested everything went smoothly. AM & KW commented that getting feedback was difficult as they are not currently in contact with many IFoA students in their area of work. MT advised that the IFoA will continue to offer support by sending out regular communications to students in the region promoting the forum.

3.2 Exam Centres

Comments relating to the New York and Toronto exam centres were received as part of the feedback survey. Complaints that a number of exams were being held simultaneously and in a cramped space at the Toronto exam centre were received again this session. AB confirmed that this would be something that could be looked into.

Noise during exams was reported at the New York venue. AB advised that the Exams team do their best to source venues as free of noise as possible however things can happen on the day which are beyond our control. If the Exams team repeatedly receive complaints regarding a particular location then they will look at alternative location. He advised of the importance of continuing to receive feedback.

It was discussed that the Fullerton venue in California is still working well. No further comments were received.

3.3 Online Exams

BB raised the issues concerning the unsociable times certain online exams are held in the region and how this impacted students' performance. This issue seemed to be particularly worse during the April session. Suggestions received by the forum was to carry out more exams during the year and to increase the number of papers available so students may sit at different times depending on their location. BB advised that this issue is making the IFoA qualification route less attractive to certain students.

AB advised that the IFoA understood students concerns however there are certain factors which would make creating additional papers difficult such as the limited resources available for the setting and marking processes. AB advised this is something the IFoA is looking at however there is unlikely to be any changes within the next 24 months. BB suggested further communication around the reasons for the situation would help students to better understand.

MT informed that this issue also affects students in other regions. MT outlined the process for exam paper setting and highlighted some of the potential problems with having students in different regions sitting multiple papers. MT encouraged the forum to continue sending in feedback relating to this issue.

AM advised of feedback received regarding a student who experienced issues during their CP3 exam. AM suggested this could have been down to the laptop the student was using and the restrictions caused by firewalls. AB commented that the instructions for the CP3 exam were late coming out for the April session and were not as clear and concise as they could have been. The Exams team will be looking to revise these for September.

AB to investigate issues at the Toronto exam centre.

AB to communicate the issues faced with online exam timings to students in the region

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MT informed the forum that a substantial amount of work had been carried out before the April session to stress test the CP3 platform to ensure that the previous issues experienced were avoided. It was discussed that on the whole the student experience was improved.

BB mentioned that there were a lot of issues experienced with uploading the B paper for CS2 at the end of the exam as the platform closed before the allotted time. AB confirmed that the setup of the exam was very complex and this issue was caused by human error. AB apologised for any stress caused and assured the forum that the process has now been changed.

3.4 April 2019 Exam Questions

Comments received in the survey suggested that the model in CP2 paper was too complex when compared to the syllabus and previous CA2 papers. Students were now expected to redesign the model as opposed to previous sessions where it was only necessary to make alterations. MT suggested it may be worth checking the Examiners report which will contain comments on how other students performed on this paper, this will be available on our website following the release of the exam results.

Another issue raised as part of the survey was the content of the SA3 exam, students were complaining of ambiguous questions, uneven mark allocation and little connection to the syllabus. Also SA7, there were also comments received regarding too much focus on prior knowledge from SP5 rather than focus on the course material for the subject. MT advised that we won't be able to comment on this at this stage until the release of the Examiners report.

BB suggested that more specimen papers would be useful for students. MT advised that specimen papers would need to go through the same process as setting live papers as they need to be of the same standard so this would be difficult. Further past papers will be available to students once more sittings have taken place.

3.5 Other - Exam Related

Due to the amount of content covered by subject CS2 the forum received a suggestion that the R element should be covered as a separate module or exam. MT thanked the forum for the feedback however confirmed that the format of the subject had been agreed by various boards and committees when developing the new curriculum and therefore there were no immediate plans to make any changes at this stage.

BB reiterated his concerns raised during the last forum meeting around the lack study support for students in the Caribbean as companies are no longer offering help. MT advised that these comments would be passed onto the relevant parties. AM advised that, the IFoA study material is very clear and concise and gives students a good idea of what is likely to come up during as exam.

3.6 Work Experience Requirements

No comments or issues were raised in the survey. It was discussed during the meeting that the work experience requirement is fair and has now been simplified by moving it online.

3.7 Student Communications

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Item	Discussion Points	Actions
	BB advised that he felt the communication from the IFoA is very good, particularly the newsletter as this is very informative.	
	MT requested that if the forum had any comments relating to student communication then these should be fed back to the IFoA.	Forum to feedback any comments to Quality Team regarding student communication
2.3	AOB	
	IFoA Presence in the Caribbean	
	BB advised that there was minimal IFoA presence in the Caribbean and the SOA was more dominant in this region. Students automatic choice is to therefore join the SOA. BB advised that FIA's in the regions could be used more to promote the IFoA. MT suggested that he would pass this feedback on to our Global markets Team.	MT to pass feedback onto the Global Markets team.
	Forum Membership	
	It was raised that there is currently no representation on the forum for Central and South America. BB suggested that it would be good for the IFoA to make contact with students in these region to encourage them to provide feedback. MT advised that we are unable to give out students details due to GDPR however the Quality Team could send out targeted emails. AB confirmed that in the July student newsletter we could also include the generic web link to try and encourage students to get in touch with students representatives.	AB to include the link to the GSCF page in the July Student Newsletter
3	Proposed date of next meeting November 2019	

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Student Consultative Forum Feedback Return Form April 2019 Exam Session

Topic:	Exam Booking
Feedback:	
To cover feedback and comme	nts relating to the process of booking exams.
(Q/C) As in the last sitting, the contacted and in the survey.	exam booking process was pleasant for most students



of Actuaries	
Topic:	Exam Centres
Feedback:	
For Exam Centres, please ensuto centres, noise and disruption	ure you use this section to report your specific feedback relating a etc.
Please ensure you make refere applicable.	ence to the subject and name of the Examination Centre where
(Q/C) Difficulties expressed at t spacing of candidates and nois	the exam centres in Toronto and New York with regards to e respectively.
in September. (A) Thank you for the feasupervisors at either ceasincidents should occur supervisor aware, so the We are always looking students. We will take you	milar issues were raised for the Toronto centre in the last sitting eedback regarding our Toronto and New York centre. Our examentre have not reported any issues for the April 2019 session. If (such as, disruption) candidates should make the examiney are able to highlight this to us in their incident report. At ways to improve the services which we provide for our your feedback on board when reviewing our centres and ways in a student's experience for the future sessions.



Topic:	Online Exams
Feedback:	
For Online Platforms, this shou equipment/software/download/	ld cover technical questions e.g. upload etc.
Please ensure you make refere	ence to the subject in order for us to respond.
(Q/C) Issues with timing of the	exam discussed below.



Topic: Other – Exam Related

Feedback:

Please consider grouping your responses into the following: Access Arrangements, Mitigating Circumstances, Results, etc. This ensures your feedback will go to the correct team.

(Q/C) The current start time for online exams in the Americas time zones continue to pose difficulties for candidates. Several students believe their ability to do well is impeded due to the time of day.

(A) Currently online exams are hosted on an online platform and ran to UK time only. We are currently reviewing our exam times worldwide and if any changes are made, we will inform candidates of this.

(Q/C) It is noted that this was discussed at the last meeting. If nothing can truly be done to facilitate I believe it is important to communicate for each exam sitting why the current is how it is currently.

(A) Currently online exams are hosted on an online platform and ran to UK time only. We are currently reviewing our exam times worldwide and if any changes are made, we will inform candidates of this.

(Q/C) Improvement suggestions -

- Offer more sittings for online exams
 - (A) Currently candidates have one opportunity to sit their online exam and this must but within the same exam sitting. However, your feedback is appreciated and we are currently reviewing our exam times worldwide and if any changes are made, we will inform candidates of this.
- Allow online exams at standardised testing centres
 - (A) Currently online exams are hosted on an online platform and candidates have the option of selecting their exam environment. Having the online examinations held in exam centres could be considered and is currently being investigated.
- Produce more specimen material for practice due to the new exams
- SA7 seems to lack direction and focus
- Due to the amount of material required in CS2 consider offering R as a separate exam

(Q/C) Particular disappointment with the SA3 exam



Topic:	April 2019 Exam Questions	
Feedback:		
To cover feedback and comme	nts relating to exam questions.	
Please ensure you state which	examination the feedback is referring to.	
	(Q/C) CP2 Paper 2 – It was felt the model given was too technical to be deciphered and adjusted in the time given. "It felt as if you were redesigning the model" instead of just adjusting it.	
(Q/C) SA3 – Common consensus (with regards to complaints) of ambiguous questions, uneven mark allocation and little connection to the syllabus.		
(Q/C) SA7 – too much focus on prior knowledge (SP5) as opposed to the actual course reading.		
(A) Questions in relation to examining teams for co	examining paper content, syllabus have been passed to the insiderations in relation	
Topic:	Tuition	
Feedback:		



To cover feedback and comme	ints relating to ActEd
To cover feedback and comments relating to ActEd.	
Topic:	Work Experience Requirements
Feedback:	
To cover feedback and comments relating to Personal and Professional Development and/or	
Work-Based Skills, and Form A	VB.



Topic:	Student Communications	
Feedback:		
To cover newsletters, handbooks, webpages etc.		
(Q/C) Newsletters are considered to be timely and informative.		



Topic:	Other
Feedback:	
To cover feedback and comments relating to any other aspects of the IFoA student experience.	

