



Americas – Global Student Consultative Forum

Wednesday 27th November – 17:00-18:00 (UK Time)

Blue Jeans Conference Call

Attending: Brian Blake (BB)– Lead Student Representative
Amarpreet Modha (AM) – Student Representative
Katherine Wang (KW) – Student Representative
Dipti Kalyandurg (DK) Student Representation

IFoA Executive Staff
Matt Tennant (MT) – Quality Manager
Andrew Berrow (AB) – Head of Learning & Operations

Apologies: Amarpreet Virdee
Tricia Lockhart – Quality Executive

Item	Discussion Points	Actions
1	Welcome and Introductions MT welcomed everyone to the forum	
2.	Notes from last meeting AB highlighted Toronto centre set up remains an issue and the IFoA is continue to look for a more suitable venue. AB highlighted the IFoA continues to face for running online exams in different times. BB requested that can the IFoA can provide some further guidance to students overseas to why our exams have to be sat within UK time. AB noted that the GSCF notes were highlighted in the recent student newsletter.	AB

Item	Discussion Points	Actions
3	<p>Students Comments</p> <p>3.1 Exam Bookings No written comments received. MT reiterated that exams bookings are on a first-come-first serve basis. AB requests that where exams are done within the workplace on a request-basis, can forum members remind fellow students to put in these requests as soon as possible for the IFoA to consider.</p> <p>3.2 Exam Centres BB noted that thanks has been given from students who sat within the Bermuda centre around the recent hurricanes.</p> <p>3.3 Online Exams BB highlighted some students experienced in uploading CP2 paper 2. AB noted that the IFoA experienced a generally positive experience with online exams with around 90% success in uploading their papers. There were some issues in isolated areas but this wasn't widespread.</p> <p>BB highlighted some disparities around the timelines for CB3 within the pre-material documentation. AB explained there has been some changes in moving CT9 and CB3 and with that, had been some changes in the communication and information provided. AB noted the IFoA recognises these issues and are looking to update the information. BB further notes some technical issues with the CB3 exercise in the material and logistics. AB agreed to look at the issue and report back.</p> <p>BB highlight some comments from students in regards to the feasibility of running exam during natural disasters and what backup options are available. AB noted that where natural-disasters threaten examination sittings, they have to be judged on each scenario and what alternatives can be provided.</p> <p>3.4 September 2019 Exam Questions BB provided some comments to how CP2 paper is time tested. AN also noted that CP1 paper is normally weighted towards some particular sectors such as Life Insurance and asked if other 'topics/sectors' are covered. MT agrees to enquire about the syllabus develop and question setting for CP1.</p> <p>BB notes some of the weighing of the topics SA3 exams and can it be more balanced for topics and areas can be included for future meetings.</p> <p>AN noted that for CP1, the 45 planning time was almost 'to reasonable' and didn't need the full amount of time. Once the written section of the examination began, students felt there isn't enough time to complete the paper within the allocated time. MT noted that this had been a recurring comment across other forum and we will feed back to the examining teams.</p>	<p>AB</p> <p>MT</p> <p>MT</p>

Item	Discussion Points	Actions
	<p>3.5 Other – Exam Related</p> <p>BB requested that more support material that is made available for 'R' and can the IFoA highlight further the learning resources and where students can find them. AB informed the panel that there are a number of free-source learning material on 'R' and are in conversations with ActEd on how we can better support students. Some students are very experienced with R software however others are very in-experienced.</p> <p>BB can we build more signposting and information about learning 'R'.</p> <p>3.6 Work Experience Requirements</p> <p>KW requested the IFoA publish some addition good-practice examples to help students benchmark their PPD records against. The mini-guides are quite limited in the scope. MT confirmed we should be able to add more examples within the mini-guides for the more recurring PPD records submitted.</p> <p>3.7 Tuition</p> <p>AN noted that there are some variations between the mock papers and the IFoA examinations. MT explains that the IFoA does not share our 'live' papers with ActEd in advance. AB noted</p> <p>BB noted that ActEd have swapped over software to Adobe to a new platform which is beneficial to hear.</p> <p>3.8 Student Communications</p> <p>BB-students are waiting for updates around mutual recognition. MT gives an overview of the changes to the exemptions and the changes to the policy.</p> <p>KW Asked if this policy change was only for subject-by-subject exemptions or for the overall qualification. MT said that this will confirmed.</p>	<p>AB/MT</p> <p>MT</p> <p>MT</p>
2.3	<p>AOB</p> <p>BB-Previous conversation with TL about setting up a LinkedIn group for America's region. BB has prepared a document for the IFoA's consideration.</p> <p>MT Reminded the forum about the upcoming exam results on the 17th and 19th December. The work experience deadline for 2019 qualifiers was 24th January.</p>	MT/TL

Item	Discussion Points	Actions
	MT thanked the forum for their contribution and closed the meeting.	
3	Proposed date of next meeting June 2020	

Student Consultative Forum Feedback Return Form

September 2019 Exam Session – Americas

Topic:	Exam Booking: <i>To cover feedback and comments relating to the process of booking exams.</i>	
Student Comment	IFoA Response	Further Action Taken (if applicable)
No issues regarding exam booking.		

Topic:	Exam Centres: <i>To cover feedback and comments relating to exam centres, noise and disruption etc.</i>	
Student Comment	IFoA Response	Further Action Taken (if applicable)
There continues to be difficulty with the arrangement of the Toronto exam centre at Willis Towers Watson. The room set up is one large table which is described as restrictive.	If incidents should occur (such as, unsuitable exam conditions) candidates should make the exam supervisor aware, so they are able to highlight this to us in their incident report. We will be enquiring into the room set up for the September 2019 exams, to ensure the room layout meets our standard requirements. We are always looking at ways to improve the services which we provide for our students. We will take your feedback on board when reviewing our centres and	



	ways in which we can improve a student's experience for the future sessions.	
The exemplary conduct of the Bermuda College centre was especially noted due to the difficulties with the hurricane affecting the island.	We thank you for the feedback and it is welcome to hear that students had a good experience despite the adverse weather conditions	

Topic:	Online Exams: <i>For Online Platforms, this should cover technical questions e.g. equipment/software/download/upload etc.</i>	
Student Comment	IFoA Response	Further Action Taken (if applicable)
There was a complaint regarding being unable to upload the 2nd paper for CP2.	The online elements for the CP, CM and CS exams ran successfully, the Examinations teams are not aware of any issues caused by the online platform which affected candidates uploading their exam papers. Candidates are required to test the platform ahead of the examination to familiarise themselves with the platform and to ensure their equipment work correctly.	

Topic:	Other – Exam Related: <i>Access Arrangements, Mitigating Circumstances, Results, etc.</i>	
Student Comment	IFoA Response	Further Action Taken (if applicable)



Mitigating circumstances: There was great distress and frustration expressed by several Bermudan students having to do their exam with a hurricane affecting the island.	Where students believe this has affected their exam performance then candidates should consider applying for Mitigating Circumstances. Where a student is uncertain of the requirements for making an application, they can contact mitigating.circumstances@actuaries.org.uk	
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Topic: September 2019 Exam Questions: <i>To cover feedback and comments relating to exam questions.</i>		
Student Comment	IFoA Response	Further Action Taken (if applicable)
There were several complaints with the difficulty and time needed for paper 1 of CP2.	If a paper appears to have been unexpectedly challenging for candidates in terms of the amount to produce or the time available, the examiners will take that into consideration when determining the overall pass mark for the exam.	
There continue to be issues with the SA3 exam, namely the length and structure being too heavily weighted to one practice area. One student argues this gives candidates who just so happen to practice in that field an “unfair” advantage. Also, that the weighting of the 3 main topics (Pricing, Reserving, and Capital) should be equal in future exams.	Please see the SA3 examiner report.	

Topic:	Tuition: <i>To cover feedback and comments relating to ActEd.</i>
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Student Comment	IFoA Response	Further Action Taken (if applicable)
No new comments since previous forum meeting		

Topic:	Work Experience Requirements: <i>To cover feedback and comments relating to Personal and Professional Development and/or Work-Based Skills, and Form A/B.</i>	
Student Comment	IFoA Response	Further Action Taken (if applicable)
No issues discovered.		

Topic:	Student Communications: <i>To cover newsletters, handbooks, webpages etc.</i>	
Student Comment	IFoA Response	Further Action Taken (if applicable)
Feedback continues to be positive for the content presented in newsletters.	The IFoA is pleased to hear that students find newsletter content helpful. We welcome any further comments or suggestions for improvement.	
There seems to be some disparity in the guide produced for CB3 and the reality of the exam. The guide on the website says instructions and the study materials will be sent 8 weeks before. However,	Please see meeting notes	



students have received the requisite materials within 2 weeks of the exam starting.		
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Topic:	Other: <i>To cover feedback and comments relating to any other aspects of the IFoA student experience.</i>	
Student Comment	IFoA Response	Further Action Taken (if applicable)
There seems to be continuing difficulty with preparations with the R programming portion of the new syllabus. If possible, greater guidance/material could be provided to students.	Please refer to meeting notes	
Students are requesting more reading time for CP2 as planning and executing the model is proving difficult in the current time frame	Please refer to meeting notes	
Some students are awaiting the results of exemption arrangements with the other actuarial associations and are finding the lack of communication on that front very difficult	Please refer to meeting notes	