



## Global Student Consultative Forum – South Asia

Friday 28<sup>th</sup> November. Time: 16:00 to 17:30

BlueJeans Conference Call

<b>Attending:</b>	Ekta Mehta (EM) - Co-Chair Prateek Singh (PtS) - Co-Chair Vrinda Aggarwal (VR) – Student Representative Sophia Benhur (SB) - Student Representative Neel Doshi (ND) - Student Representative Diwaker Goyal (DG) - Student Representative Aayush Murarka (AM) - Student Representative Shrreita Shetty (SS) - Student Representative Payal Saria (PS) - Student Representative Adeetya Tantia (AT)- Student Representative	<b>Apologies:</b>	Vikas Newatia - IFoA India Consultant Gautam Mazumdar – IFoA India Consultant Shyam Dhanania - Student Representative
<b>Executive Staff:</b>	Matt Tennant (MT) – Quality Manager Trisha Lockhart (LH) Quality Executive Andrew Berrow (AB) – Head of Learning Operations		

Item	Title	Action
1.	Welcome	
2.	Notes from previous	
	MT provided some clarification around students receive their mark for papers with an online and written aspect. MT confirmed that a single overall mark is provided however when a student applies for a SAR they will receive a more detailed mark breakdown. A further update will be provided later in the meeting.	

Item	Title	Action
	<p>MT clarifies that since the April meeting, the IFoA have stated Microsoft Office 2010 is the minimum software requirements for exam papers that require excel.</p> <p>MT provides an update to the IFoA library resources and has confirmed they are up to date on new syllabus material.</p>	
<b>3.</b>	<b>Students' Comments</b>	
	<p><b>3.1 Exam Booking</b></p> <p>AT highlighted payment options for international students are quite limited to pay in local currency. AB advised that payment can be done through a Paypal credit card which will pay in UK sterling but charge students in local currency.</p> <p>EM noted that after the CP2 exam booked closed and then reopened, when spaces reopened a number of students experience payment failure on the website. EM noted that the IFoA staff assisted in resolving the issue and was able to book onto exams.</p> <p>EM has requested a 'live indication' for the number of spaces remaining on each exam. AB and MT explained that through the majority of exams are booked via Credit or Debit card which creates an 'instant' booking, many students do book via Bank Transfer. This is a more manual process and therefore we cannot provide 'live' numbers.</p> <p>EM-is there a preference for exam bookings on the phone or via the website. AB explained that in all cases it is easier for both the IFoA and students if exam bookings are done via the website.</p>	
	<p><b>3.2 Exam Centres</b></p> <p>PtS highlighted issues with the Mumbai centres and how these issues should be raised with the IFoA. AM noted that the centres in India are found by the British Council. Can a list of British Council venues be provided so that students can help suggesting alternatives. AB noted the IFoA has previously asked for a list from the British Council, however, they aren't able to provide a list because of commercial sensitivity.</p> <p>MT asked for further information in regards to a comment in regards to the exam invigilators. AT highlighted these issues are in relation to invigilators not being aware of the correct reading time and when the paper starts. AB highlights each year we run invigilator training however there a high number invigilators in India with a higher turnover.</p> <p>EM asks where the IFoA can inform students they can bring water into the exam. AB agrees to include in the student newsletter.</p>	<b>AB</b>

Item	Title	Action
	AM highlighted an issue with the Kolkata centre. Students received notification at last minute which caused anxiety and stress. AM agreed to forward further information to AB for investigation.	AM
3.3	<p><b>Online Examinations</b></p> <p>ND noted that our online exam set up means there is high possibility of copying. ND asked if more invigilation can take place, for example, running online exam in centres to reduce the risk of cheating. ND noted because of the cohorts run at different times, students were able to share their papers for students in later cohorts. AB gives an overview of some of the security features that will be introduced to the new platform. AB also notes that have explored running online exams in a centre.</p> <p>EM noted students experiences of the online exams have been more positive with upload and download compared with previous sessions.</p> <p>ND noted that a lot of students reported CS and CM B-papers exams were quite time pressured. MT gives an overview around how the pass mark is set taking into consideration a range of factors, with one being how difficult students found the exams.</p>	
3.4	<p><b>September Examination Questions</b></p> <p>EM noted that CP1 exam papers were quite focused on life insurance sector areas and was difficult for students not working in that areas. MT noted that all comments on exam questions will be given to the examiner teams and we will respond fully in the comment document.</p> <p>EM noted a number of student comments in relation to the question settings for CB1 and CB2. Students reported an inconsistency between the mark allocation between the theoretical and application based questions. Students also reported that was different to past papers online. MT explains that setting of new papers isn't always based on past papers. AB explains that there has been only two sittings of the exams for students not to base their preparation solely on comparisons with past papers.</p> <p>EM-SP9 error has been identified. MT that's comments are given to the examining teams who may amend marking depending on the extent.</p>	
3.5	<p><b>Exam Results-Other</b></p> <p>EM asked if students can obtain more easily a breakdown of their marks. MT gave an overview of the IFoA project which will allow students receive a full breakdown of their marks via the student section of the website. This is currently in development however we hope it will be in place for the April 2020 results in July.</p>	

Item	Title	Action
	MT gave the forum an update of an upcoming news article about marking timelines and how the marking process takes place. MT advised student members to read the article once published.	
3.6	<b>Tuition</b> No comments received.	
3.7	<b>Student Communication</b> ND noted that students in India receive the Actuary Magazine quite infrequent basis. MT makes sure the comments are sent to our Communications or Membership team.  EM asked can students opt of receiving the Actuary magazine in print as student members can read it online. MT agreed to enquire. ND noted that IAI on annual membership renewal gives students option around receiving their magazine in digital or hard copy.	MT  MT
3.8	<b>Work-Based Skills and PPD</b> MT gives an overview of the differences between CPD and PPD requirements for students. MT advised the forum that where a student is not in employment; at school, college or University they can inform the IFoA Education Services team and they can be granted an exemption for 12 months. MT gave an update of the changes to the PPD webpages and mini-guides. MT detailed the IFoA now sends out automatic reminder emails at 60 days, 30 days and 7 days of their upcoming PPD deadlines if they have not yet met their annual PPD requirements. ND noted the automatic reminders are very useful.	
4.	<b>Student Feedback</b>	
4.1	<b>Headline Student Feedback Report</b> EM asked MT what the satisfaction statistics for Q2 and Q3 mean within the report. MT gave an overview to the forum that the IFoA asks students to rate their satisfaction of 'Very Satisfied' 'Satisfied' 'Not Satisfied' and 'Very unsatisfied' in areas such as exam bookings, IFoA communication etc. We will then combine the positive scores to create the overall % reported.	
5.	<b>Update on Exemptions with other Actuarial Associations</b> MT gave an overview of the exemption policy announcement which was made on the 31 <sup>st</sup> July. MT noted that we hope to make an announcement in regards to the transitional arrangements shortly, but could not provide any further details. EM noted the forum may have more questions in the future when further details are published.	
6.	<b>A.O.B</b>	

Item	Title	Action
	<p>EM asked if the forum could expand its membership to include students based in other regions such as Pakistan and Sri Lanka. MT noted in the January 2020 we are looking to do a recruitment drive across all GSCF forums and will look to recruit members from these regions.</p> <p>MT noted Examination results are due 17 and 19 December 2019 18:00 GMT. 24 January 2020 is the work-experience deadline for those wishing to be listed as a 2019 qualifier.</p> <p>MT thanked the forum for their contribution and closed the meeting.</p>	MT
7.	<b>Date of Next Meeting – June 2020</b>	

## Student Consultative Forum Feedback Return Form

### September 2019 Exam Session – South Asia

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)
Most bookings it seems are done online rather than via phone (resulting in a 40% NA response in the Exam Booking via Phone Quality question). Looking at the exam bookings quality question as well, we find that close to 97% students are at least satisfied with the process in place		
One user complained about an error on the IFoA website regarding availability in the Mumbai centre ( they confirmed that seats were available via Email) during the exam booking process which forced them to take the exam from the Pune centre.	Unfortunately we are unable to give timely booking data because whilst an email may be compiled, sent and read, the centre could be fully booked by the student has read this information. We always recommend our students to book as early as possible to ensure they are able to get the exam and centre required	
Some students were unsatisfied with the payment options limitations in India.	Students are able to book online using global credit and debit cards as well as bank transfers, paypal and cheque. We are reviewing further payment options for future bookings.	
Some students reported that the online platform times out the payment and causes a 30 min lockout, which with limited seats and high number of applicants can cause one to miss out their desired exam centres.	This will only happen when a payment was unsuccessful and will last up to 15 minutes. We always recommend our students to book as early as possible	



	to ensure you are able to get the exam and centre required.	
With respect to phone bookings, with a single Point of Contact being in London, students faced problems getting the phones to connect and communicating with the people on the other end.	Education Services are aware of phone problems, unable to connect. This was investigated at the time and has now been resolved, we sincerely apologise for this connectivity issue. We would recommend that our students book online via the member's area because this is the quickest and simplest way.	
Concerning the email correspondence after exam booking, 96.5% are at least satisfied with the current system (once we remove the NA responses).		
Possible Solutions to Problems – 1. Increase payment options, ideally by allowing students to pay in local currency so that International Debit/Credit cards are not required. 2. Increase staff on phone bookings duty, during peak exam booking times to bridge the demand and supply gap and if possible, look to set up a secondary call centre so that students across the globe can have two, rather than just one point of contact.	1. The IFoA are continually looking into different options for payment, unfortunately no changes will be made in the near future however we will keep you updated of any new changes. 2. We always have full capacity of staff when we have peak periods and extra staff i.e. exam booking. We would always recommend students to book via the members are to ensure your booking is completed quickly and to avoid disappointment.	

<div>Topic:</div> <div>Exam Centres: <i>To cover feedback and comments relating to exam centres, noise and disruption etc.</i></div>		
Student Comment	IFoA Response	Further Action Taken (if applicable)
Bangalore – Multiple students raised issue with the state of the Bangalore exam centre's condition, especially regarding tables, chairs, and lights and outside noise control. Some students even raised	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	



issue that the invigilator was unaware of certain instructions.	room suitability for the September 2019 exams, to ensure the room meets our standard requirements.	
Kolkata – Students complained about a leaky roof.	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 suitability for the September 2019 exams, to ensure the room meets our standard requirements.	
Mumbai – Locations of exam centres are still a problem, with students stating that the centres were too far from the city.	<p>The IFoA works very closely with our centres/suppliers to ensure exam venues are suitable for the examinations based on numbers and meeting the requirements. We will always endeavour to review comments and change were necessary.</p> <p>Overseas candidates can apply for an ‘Exam Centre Request’ if they are unable to attend a centre nearby. However, each request will be reviewed individually and a decision will be made taking into consideration the location of other centres nearby.</p>	
<p>Possible Solutions to Problems –</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Look into the Bangalore centre situation.</li> <li>2. Possible relocation of Mumbai centres.</li> </ol>	<p>The IFoA works very closely with our centres/suppliers to ensure exam venues are suitable for the examinations based on numbers and meeting the requirements. We will always endeavour to review comments and change were necessary.</p> <p>Overseas candidates can apply for an ‘Exam Centre Request’ if they are unable to attend a centre nearby. However, each request will be reviewed individually and a decision will be made taking into consideration the location of other centres nearby.</p>	



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)
<p>Students from multiple online examinations have complained about technical glitches, which sometimes did not allow them to submit their papers on time.</p>	<p>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 works correctly.</p> <p>If you would like to give us additional information on this, we would be able to look into individual cases.</p>	
<p>A student highlighted a possible case of unethical conduct by students, during an examination that had two cohorts with starting times as 9AM and 9:30AM, here students raised the issue that some 9AM cohort students had shared the paper with students of the 9:30AM cohort.</p> <p>The supervision of online exams was inappropriate. For example, students download the question paper from contingent link of other candidates prior to their allotted time and even give exams in groups without informing the IFOA</p>	<p>If you can give us further information we will be able to investigate in more detail.</p> <p>We are currently in the process of implementing a new online platform which will block any internet access during an online exam and will not be using a contingency URL link for future sessions.</p>	
<p>A large number of students have suggested holding online exams like traditional exams, in exam centres. In their feedback, they also found the online exams to be lengthy and difficult to complete in the time allotted.</p>	<p>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 is currently being reviewed.</p>	



<p>Many students found the download/upload speed of documents to be inadequate.</p>	<p>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 downloading or uploading their exam papers.</p> <p>Candidates are required to test the platform ahead of the examination to familiarise themselves and to check their equipment works correctly. The IFoA cannot be held responsible for student's individual internet connectivity. If candidates were experiencing an issue during their exam, the documentation supplied clearly stipulated that students were required to call the Examinations team for further guidance.</p>	
<p>Possible solution to Problems –</p> <p>1. Implementation of Examination centres for Online Exams as well –</p> <p>a) This will allow a quality check as well as keep an eye on unethical conduct. Although the burden to be truthful falls on the student, the institute should also maintain standards that minimize the chances of unethical conduct taking place.</p> <p>b) This reduces the possibility of technical errors for the students and they don't unnecessarily lose out on marks.</p> <p>2. Most students found the online paper to be very lengthy for which the IFoA could maybe consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- increasing the weightage of every question.</li> <li>- decrease the number of questions.</li> <li>- increase the time allotment for online exams.</li> </ul>	<p>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 is being reviewed.</p> <p>The feedback will be passed and discussed with the Exam Setting teams so they can be taking into consideration in the setting of future papers.</p>	
<p>The number of specimen papers aren't enough for students to understand what to expect from the online</p>	<p>We rely on the actuarial community volunteering their time to work with the education teams to create this</p>	



<p>exams. Thus, a greater number of papers can help students to have a better and clear understanding for the same.</p> <p>Students have also requested the Institute to provide additional specimen papers for the online exams for practice.</p>	<p>material. The number of specimen papers created was the maximum we could offer with the volunteers available. The examining team do not have capacity to create further papers in addition to the 2020 exam papers.</p>	
--	--	--

Topic:		Other – Exam Related: <i>Access Arrangements, Mitigating Circumstances, Results, etc.</i>
Student Comment	IFoA Response	Further Action Taken (if applicable)
<p><b>Results:</b> Mention on the IFoA website that students can get a bifurcation of their marks (for subjects like CS1, CS2, CM1 and CM2) by mailing the IFoA, because many students are unaware of it.</p>	<p>The IFoA is currently working of making this information available to our students when results are released. This information will become available on the website and, therefore, students will not need to request it. This will not become available until September 2019.</p>	
<p><b>Results:</b> To provide exam results earlier so that students have more time to plan and prepare for their next paper.</p>	<p>We are sympathetic to the students view on this point and are working on numerous initiatives to try and improve and streamline the marking process. One of the initiatives is the introduction of an online marking platform, which was introduced for a number of our exams in April. We anticipate all exams will be marked on this platform in 2020. This allows us to introduce further technology into the marking process which will hopefully not only reduce the marking period in time</p>	



	but also improve the quality and consistency of the marking, which we are aware has been above the recognised industry norm of 10 marks in some cases.	
<b>Syllabus</b> There seems to be a gap between the theoretical aspects (A paper) and the practical aspects (B paper), kindly make some changes to the syllabus in a way that students can actually understand how to implement the theories into the practical situations and not just on paper.	Assessment	
<b>Requests have been received to</b> a. Conduct online exam in offline mode b. Conduct practical exams post theory exam c. Provide more practice material for practical exams d. Publish theory and practical exam marks separately e. Provide some free videos for R and excel online exams. f. Provide additional notes for CP2 paper in the exam, similar to last year.	Please refer to meeting notes (a-b)  c. See response above regarding specimen papers. d. The IFoA are investigating ways in which to share exam marks breakdown shortly after results have been published for all candidates as standard.  (e) R is an open-source platform and there are significant resources online for students to access. The IFoA is looking to signpost to the most relevant and up-to-date material for students.  (f) The Examiners report for CP2 will be available on release of results.	

Topic:	<b>September 2019 Exam Questions:</b> <i>To cover feedback and comments relating to exam questions.</i>	
Student Comment	IFoA Response	Further Action Taken (if applicable)



<p>CP1 – A few students have complained that the CP1 exam questions largely pertain to life insurance, putting other students who work in fields like general insurance and risk management at a potential disadvantage.</p> <p>CP 1 - Questions were majorly focused towards Life and Retirement side. General Insurance specific questions are always given less proportion of total marks therefore, this becomes easy and advantageous for people who work in that domain and are equally hard and disadvantageous for the people working on General Insurance side. It would be helpful if either this exam can be deliberately made to include equal proportion for General Insurance specific questions as well or maybe it would be better if the papers for Life and Retirement and General Insurance can be made separate like SP series.</p>	<p>There were questions on a range of areas in paper 1 including banking, charities and universities. Given the size of the CP1 it is not possible to ensure that every paper covers every aspect of the syllabus. The intention of the CP1 examiners is that over a small number of exam settings the main areas of the syllabus will be tested.</p>	
<p>CB1 – Past papers consisted of at least 20 marks worth of sums and application based questions, however this time paper was completely theoretical which was unexpected and misleading to students as they use the past papers as a basis for what they should expect in the papers.</p>	<p>The CB1 paper does not always contain a big question on the preparation of accounts, but the syllabus content on the construction and interpretation of accounts was adequately tested. The last question tested syllabus content within a specific scenario. Students need to be ready to apply their knowledge and understanding in new situations.</p>	
<p>CB2- Paper as quite theoretical and case study based, as the weightage to the numerical section was not given.</p> <p>The paper seemed to be biased towards a few topics only, though the syllabus was very vast.</p>	<p>Please see the CM1 Examiner Report</p>	
<p>CS2 - Paper B was very tough. Paper A was very lengthy and was very difficult to complete fully in the given time</p>	<p>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</p>	



	that into consideration when determining the overall pass mark for the exam.	
CM1-A – Too much weightage to the CT5 aspect and very less to the CT1 topics. The topics should be somewhat at a 50-50 or 60-40 distribution.	Please see the CM1 Examiner Report	
CM1-B - Time allocated was insufficient and online paper instructions unclear. Many students found the paper to be very difficult.	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.	
CM2-A - The question pertaining to CAPM had some missing information.  CM2-B – Students found the online paper to be based on technical skills rather than the actual understanding of the topic. It was also more tough than what was expected in comparison to the specimen papers and the past paper.	Please see the CM1 Examiner Report	
CP1-2 CP1 - second paper has second question on commercial mortgage loan which was not relatable to syllabus.  CP1 Paper 2 - The paper was very lengthy, specially part 2 which entailed a lot of reading and analysis.	As outlined in the CP1 syllabus, the examination questions for CP1 may be set on any area of work in which actuaries participate. Students need to be ready to apply their knowledge and understanding of CP1 in new situations.  The scenario provided clearly described how the Commercial Mortgages worked. The CP1 examiners did not require students to have detailed specialist knowledge of Commercial Mortgages, nor did they expect detailed development of particular points.	
CP2 Paper 2 was slightly lengthy when compared to recent previous diets.	As for any IFoA examination, papers are thoroughly guinea-pigged to check the standard. 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.	
SP1 and 2 - Paper were very lengthy	As for any IFoA examination, papers are thoroughly guinea-pigged to check the standard. 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.	
SP1— Error in the 9th question	In the event that the examining team identified an error in the paper, this I taken into account during the marking process	

<div>Topic:</div> <div>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></div>		
Student Comment	IFoA Response	Further Action Taken (if applicable)
Non-working students are not completely aware of the whole CPD and PPD system how to apply for the credits and also unaware what to fill in if they are not working in an actuarial capacity?	Please refer to meeting notes.	

<div>Topic:</div> <div>Student Communications: <i>To cover newsletters, handbooks, webpages etc.</i></div>	
--	--



Student Comment	IFoA Response	Further Action Taken (if applicable)
One student complained about not receiving the magazine regularly. Although he tried to contact IFoA, they said that they have issued it and given it to the contractor however, the contractor could not tell him anything unless he had a consignment number which IFoA does not provide.	Please refer to meeting notes.	