



Institute
and Faculty
of Actuaries

Post-Exam Feedback High-Level Report

April 2020 Exam Sitting

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1. Executive Summary

- 1.1. The post-exam survey was sent to all 7052 exam takers from the April 2020 session. A total of 2610 students provided feedback on their experience, which represented a 37% response rate. The Post-Exam Survey for April did not include the CS and CM papers due to those subjects not running this session.
- 1.2. The impact of COVID-19 on our examinations meant several changes to the regular post-exam survey. Feedback of the COVID-19 communication, alongside 'Open Book' exam format was sort replacing question on exam centre experience.
- 1.3. Overall satisfaction for the April 2020 exam was **6.6/10**, down from 7/10 from the September 2019 exams, however in line with the April 2019 session.
- 1.4. Satisfaction with the IFoA communication around the impact of COVID-19 was broadly positive. It should be noted a disparity between UK & Ireland candidates and our global candidates in satisfaction scores relating to clarity of information, being informed of developments, and candidates awareness of their exam taking place. Areas of higher satisfaction are reported around policy or instruction-based communication such as technical requirements, the refund policy, amended Assessment Regulations and FAQ's.
- 1.5. Written comments concerning COVID-19 communication are primarily on the speed of announcements, clarity of information and unclear information.
- 1.6. High satisfaction was reported on the online exam platform for the April session. This is welcome in the context of the move to solely online exams. Over 99% of students were able to test the platform, which was a crucial step in students determining whether they should request a refund for the sitting.
- 1.7. The majority of candidates reported no problem in downloading their paper, with a smaller percentage of candidates reporting issues in uploading their exam paper. One cohort of students undertaking the CP3 exam experienced issues uploading their paper which the IFoA subsequently accepted submission via email.
- 1.8. In regards to **Paper Difficulty**, students reported CP1, SA4 and SP7 being the hardest papers this exam session. There was an average increase in the reported difficulty of 3.7% compared with September 2019. The most significant reported increases in difficulty were SP1, SA2 and SA4.
- 1.9. In regards to **Time allocation**, SP1, SP7 and SP9 were reported as the toughest to complete in the allocated time. There was an average increase of 9% of candidates reporting being short of time compared to September 2019. The most significant reported increases in the subjects SP1, SP5 and SP7.
- 1.10. Uncertainty of examinations, COVID-19 communication, and time constraints were the highest recurring comments concerning frustrations of the exam sitting. In regards to suggestions for improvement for future sessions, increased time for online exam (should they continue in that format), an email confirmation of upload and adapted paper format was frequently recurring comments.

2. Exam Booking Experience (Very Satisfied & Satisfied)

Question	UK & Ireland	Global Areas	All
Experience of booking onto the exams online	95.1%	96.5	95.7%
Customer service experience booking onto exams via phone	89.1%	94.4%	92.2%
Email correspondence after booking	83%	96.1%	88.8%
Experience of contacting Education Services	6.3/10	8.1/10	7.1/10

3. Covid-19 Communication (Very Satisfied & Satisfied)

Question	UK & Ireland	Global Areas	All
The IFoA kept me informed of developments	60.2%	95.5%	75.0%
I had a clear understanding if my examination was running	60.9%	92.6%	74.1%
The information presented on the website was clear and understandable	61.4%	92.0%	74.2%
The FAQ's provided me with the answers I needed to the new exam arrangements	76.1%	92.6%	83.0%
I understood the changes to the refund policy	93.0%	96.6%	94.5%
I understood the technical requirements for sitting the exams online	91.3%	96.8%	93.6%
I understood the changes to the Assessment Regulations	74.7%	87.1%	79.9%
The instructions emailed to candidates contained the information I needed in advance of the exams.	85.7%	95.3%	89.7%

4. Online Exam Platform (Very Satisfied & Satisfied)

Question	UK & Ireland	Global Areas	All
I was able to test the online platform successfully before my exam	99.6%	99.1%	99.4%
The online platform was easy to use	97.8%	97.6%	97.7%
I downloaded my exam paper without issue	95.2%	96.0%	95.5%
I uploaded my exam paper without issue	85.5%	84.6%	85.4%
I received confirmation that my paper was submitted via the platform	86.7%	90.1%	88.1%

5. Open Book Exam Format

Candidates were asked about their experience of being permitted to use items within the exams, primarily study notes, for the 1st time.

Did you use these materials during the examination?	Yes	No
UK & Ireland	76.6%	23.4%
Global Areas	50.5%	49.5%
All Responses	64%	34%

Did you use these materials during the examination?	A large amount of the time	Some of the time	Not often	Not at all
UK & Ireland	1.5%	27.9%	51.6%	19%
Global Areas	2.4%	20%	38.6%	39%
All Responses	1.9%	24.7%	46.4%	27.1%

With '0' being very distracting and '10' being very help, how helpful or a distraction they were?	
	Average Rating
UK & Ireland	4.7
Global Areas	4.0
All Responses	4.4

Were you able to complete the exam paper?	Yes	No
UK & Ireland	63.3%	36.7%
Global Areas	44.9%	55.1%
All Responses	55.8%	44.2%

6. Learning Experience

6.1. Paper Difficulty

	Very Hard	Hard	Moderate	Easy	Very Easy
CB1	21.8%	53.7%	24.1%	0%	0.4%
CB2	7.2%	35.9%	54.4%	2.1%	0.5%
Later Series					
CP1	16.7%	63.4%	19.6%	0.2%	0%
CP2	6.9%	35.1%	56.2%	1.8%	0%
CP3	16.9%	54.4%	28.1%	0.6%	0%
SP1	27%	46%	27%	0%	0%
SP2	14.1%	56.3%	29.7%	0%	0%
SP4	5.7%	50%	40%	4.3%	0%
SP5	19.8%	45.5%	34.7%	0%	0%
SP6	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
SP7	52.6%	32%	15.5%	0%	0%
SP8	13.6%	48.5%	37.9%	0%	0%
SP9	34.1%	47.7%	18.2%	0%	0%
SA1	9.1%	68.2%	22.7%	0%	0%
SA2	21.4%	55.7%	22.1%	0.7%	0%
SA3	19.6%	50.7%	29%	0.7%	0%
SA4	57.4%	36.2%	6.4%	0%	0%
SA7	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

6.2. Time Allocation

	Too Much Time	About Right	Slightly Short	Not Enough Time
CB1	0.8%	41%	39.5%	18.%
CB2	1.5%	55.6%	30.1%	12.8%
Later Series				
CP1	0.5%	23.9%	39.5%	36.2%
CP2	1.5%	29.7%	40.3%	28.6%
CP3	2.1%	63.6%	26%	8.3%
SP1	0%	17.7%	30.6%	51.6%
SP2	1.6%	46.9%	34.4%	17.2%
SP4	2.9%	30%	50%	17.1%
SP5	1%	27%	34%	38%
SP6	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
SP7	0%	13.4%	22.7%	63.9%
SP8	0%	19.7%	37.9%	42.4%
SP9	0%	15.9%	38.6%	45.5%
SA1	0%	27.3%	40.9%	31.8%
SA2	0%	23.6%	36.4%	40%
SA3	0.7%	31.9%	28.3%	39.1%
SA4	0%	27.7%	25.5%	46.8%
SA7	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

6.3. Syllabus

	Closely Linked to Syllabus	Linked to Syllabus in Parts	Not really linked to Syllabus	Very Distinct from Syllabus
CB1	20.9%	63.5%	13.9%	1.6%
CB2	46.2%	45.7%	7.5%	0.5%
Later Series				
CP1	29.2%	59.3%	8.3%	2.2%
CP2	71.8%	26.3%	1.9%	0%
CP3	32.6%	43.8%	19.9%	3.7%
SP1	37.7%	59%	3.3%	0%
SP2	43.1%	31%	20.7%	5.2%
SP4	44.9%	50.7%	4.3%	0%
SP5	43.3%	50.5%	4.1%	2.1%
SP6	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
SP7	26.3%	50.5%	21.1%	2.1%
SP8	46%	47%	6.3%	0%
SP9	27.9%	58.1%	11.6%	2.3%
SA1	42.1%	57.9%	0%	0%
SA2	30.4%	58.7%	8.7%	2.2%
SA3	26.3%	56.4%	15.0%	2.3%
SA4	7.5%	47.3%	32.2%	12.9%
SA7	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

7. Free Text Comments

7.1. Online Exam Platform

557 comments were received about the candidate's experience of the online exam platform. Many comments related to a desire to have an on-screen or visual confirmation that their script has been uploaded successfully, alongside email. The highest recurring comments received were the following:

- Did receive email confirmation paper was uploaded
- A cohort of CP3 candidates had issues uploading their paper and subsequently emailed it into the IFoA.
- Difficulty or failed attempts to upload the exam paper.

7.2. Exam frustrations

1202 comments were received concerning the candidate's frustrations with the exam sitting. A large portion of these comments concerned the impact of COVID-19 and the move to online exams for all subjects. The highest recurring fall into the following themes:

- Uncertainty around April 2020 exam sitting
- Communication before the announcement that specific online exam was taking place
- Clarification of open-book exam format and changing of revision/studying approach
- Time constraints of the exam paper

7.3. Suggestions for Future Exam Sittings

763 comments were received concerning suggestions for future exam sittings. The majority of these comments were regarding the IFoA running future exams online. The most recurring comments in this free area fall into the following themes:

- Email confirmation of script upload
- Confirmation of 'Open-Book' format
- Increase time for the online exam format
- Adaption of papers for the online format
- Online exam invigilation

8. Overall exam Satisfaction

Thinking about your whole experience sitting examinations in April 2020, how would you rate your experience ('10' being most positive')

UK & Ireland Average	6.2/10
Global Average	6.8/10
All Responses Average	6.6/10



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