



## International Student Consultative Forum

Wednesday 11 November 2015, Time: from 09:00 to 11:00  
Oxford Manor Away Room

<b>Via conference call:</b>	Adina-Maria Ciobotea Leonard Mapfumo Shiva Gupta Raghav Ohri Choong Ooi	Europe Africa India Asia Asia	<b>Apologies:</b>	Ganiu Dare Shefiu - Africa
<b>Executive Staff in attendance :</b>	Registrar – Karen Brocklesby Deputy Registrar – Liz Harriman Education Service Manager – Kirstie Smith			

Item	Title	Action
1.	<b>Welcome</b> The current membership was noted by the group.	Kirstie Smith
2.	<b>Introduction</b>	
	<p><b>2.1 Roles within the Forum</b> Karen gave an overview of the UK Student Consultative Forum.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ISCF was encouraged to feedback to the Executive Team throughout the year for any matters arising.</li> <li>• A pre meeting will be arranged for the ISCF going forward.</li> <li>• Karen explained that we have 14 Regional Societies in the UK, which students feed into as a network, and that we are working towards improving our networks with our International students.</li> </ul>	
	<b>2.2 Overview of process</b>	

Item	Title	Action
	<p>Kirstie explained that the make up of the forum is based on the number of students in that area of the world, which is based on the same number proportions as the UK representation</p> <p>Kirstie also explained the process for managing emailed questions from students.</p> <p>It was agreed that we would continue to use both email and communities for communicating with the group, and that each representative would go back to the students direct with feedback following the meeting, using their work email address, but the questions and answers would also be published with the minutes.</p>	<p>Kirstie Smith All ISCF</p>
<b>3.</b>	<b>Students' Comments</b>	
	<p><b>2.1 April 2015 Exams – Review of administrative aspects</b></p> <p><b>2.2 April 2015 – Exam Questions</b></p> <p><b>CA2 – no questions</b></p> <p>Choong raised concern about availability of CA2.</p> <p>Liz explained that we are about to publish the dates for up to February 2017.</p> <p>Liz also highlighted the recent changes to CA2, in that it has gone from being a weekly sitting to 2 consecutive days. With the development of CA2 moving onto the Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) platform students will see the availability increase, to satisfy the demand of places now the eligibility criteria has now been removed.</p> <p><b>2.3 CA3</b></p> <p>Liz informed the group that we are aware that presenting to a camera, may not feel like a natural environment for presenting and this is taken into consideration during the marking process. We would encourage students to seek peer review within their working environment.</p> <p>Karen commented that this is a frequent discussion at the UK forum, and that we do have a working party reviewing this currently as part of the Education Strategy Review, but we are also looking at the current exam format.</p> <p>Choong mentioned that he would like to see a boarder spectrum of the questions, as feedback to him from students indicates there have been more Life or Pensions questions.</p> <p>Karen responded that CA3 wasn't designed to focus on a specific specialist area, but to be more general, so it shouldn't disadvantage anyone who has answered a question in a particular practice area, but will be passing on this feedback on as part of the review.</p> <p><b>2.4 Tuition</b></p> <p><b>2.5 Other Student Concerns</b></p>	<p>Question and Answers paper 1 attached</p> <p>Karen Brocklesby</p>
<b>4.</b>	<p><b>Publication of Pass Marks</b></p> <p>Karen informed the group that the IFoA are planning to release pass marks in 2016. A notification will be going out to all students at the beginning of 2016.</p> <p>Choong asked what level of marks would be released.</p>	

Item	Title	Action
	Karen clarified that it would be the entire pass mark for the exam, but more information will be released in January 2016.	
5.	<p><b>Virtual learning environment</b></p> <p>Liz updated the group on the latest developments of the VLE. We have been using the platform to deliver our Professional Skills Course for the last year, CA2 has also recently moved onto the platform, and feedback so far has been very positive. Choong asked about the possibility of having a student forum available on the VLE.</p> <p>Liz was happy to put forward the suggestion and mentioned that we would be asking students for input, and encouraged the group to email in their ideas.</p>	All ISCF
6.	<b>Communications</b>	
	<p><b>6.1 Website – to receive an update</b></p> <p>Karen highlighted that the new device responsive website is up and running, and encouraged the group to feedback any thoughts.</p> <p><b>6.2 Exam Counselling</b></p> <p>Karen updated the group that we will be continuing to provide the exam counselling service in the format of a written report with the option of a follow up call to discuss the report. Students who have sat the most recent set of exams (September/October 2015), will be the last group of students with the option to apply for a UK meeting.</p>	
7.	<p><b>CA3</b></p> <p>Liz informed the group that CA3 will be moving into a session format next year, similar to CA2. Further details will be published shortly.</p>	
8.	<p><b>Education Strategy Review</b></p> <p>Karen updated the group on the Education Strategy Review.</p> <p>A consultation document will be sent out to the student forum for feedback in due course.</p>	Kirstie Smith
9.	<p><b>Student Employer Contacts</b></p> <p>Kirstie informed the group that we have started an initiative to improve our relationship with employers. Over the last 3 months we have increased the number of Student Employer Contacts (SECs) by nearly 50%, and we are looking at ways we can encourage employers to support their students.</p> <p>Raghav asked if we could consider running exams on non business days.</p> <p>Liz explained that this request has been raised many times, but realistically this would be very difficult for us to manage, not only</p>	

Item	Title	Action
	<p>from a resource perspective but also the fact that we rely on third party suppliers for our technical support, that are only currently available during UK office hours.</p>	
10.	<p><b>Introduction of means tested fee structure</b>  Kirstie informed the group of the changes that are being made to the education fees structure, which will apply to all services provided after 1 March 2016.  Eligibility for reduced fees will be based on your earnings regardless of where you live. The ‘Special overseas rate’ countries list will no longer be used.</p> <p>Shiva raised the issue that organisations are concerned that they will need to almost double their budget for supporting students through the qualification process, and that he has heard very strong criticisms about this.  Kirstie asked Shiva to pass on direct contact details and encourage those employers to feedback concerns.</p>	Shiva Gupta
11.	<p><b>International student survey</b>  <b>Exam preparation and support from employers</b>  Karen informed the group that a survey will soon be sent out to all international students, focusing on questions around support from employers, and how students prepare for the exams.</p>	
12.	<p><b>Date of next Meeting</b>  Proposed date: <b>3 June 2016</b></p>	
16.	<p><b>Any Other Business</b>  No other business was raised.</p>	



## International Student Consultative - Question and answers

Meeting held 11 November 2015 09:00 – 11:00 (UK time)

September 15 exams – administration

### India

**Q1**, Generally quite good exam conditions.

**Q2**, Repeated complaints with air-conditioning. Temperatures are too low at times.

**Q3**, At times invigilators do NOT provide question papers for ST\CA series in time, about 2-5 minutes of reading time is missed.

### Answer

**We will raise the issues outlined above with the British Council so that they can discuss with the supervisors accordingly.**

**Students have the opportunity to feedback any concerns or issues by completing a [comments form](#). This should be completed and submitted to the IFoA within three weeks of your exam sitting.**

### Europe

**Q1**, Exam Results

The student mentioned that for European students it is complicated to receive information on the exam results. What would be the options for a student outside of UK which wants to have a discussion of the exam paper and necessary for improvement to reach the pass rate?

### Answer

**Exam counselling is currently offered in the format of a written report, with or without a follow up call, the option to request a face to face meeting in the UK is also available.**

**From March 2016 the option to request a face to face meeting will no longer be available, but the written report will continue to be available to all students.**

### Africa

**Q1**, Concern about the way in which the exams centre in Kenya was changed last minute without any official communication... I was personally affected since I was sitting for one of the first paper in the afternoon CT1...That was a bad experience and examiners should factor in such during their marking.

**Q2**, I am a volunteer ambassador here in Kenya. I would like to raise some concerns regarding the exam centre for the October 2015 sitting.

Students here were a little confused because the website and exam permits showed different exam centres. This was a problem especially for those who were writing the CT1 paper since it was the first paper.

Maybe in future, clear instructions could be given?

### Answer

**The exam venue address was confirmed in August as the British Council offices, unfortunately the exam venue was changed at short notice. This was communicated to all students sitting CT1, CT4 and ST7, by phone and email to confirm the address change. This was also updated on the news and updates section of the website.**

**We will raise the timing of the venue change with the British Council as an incident.**

September 15 exams – questions

**India**

**Q1**, ST2 Exam paper – people generally struggled for time. Feedback is it was tough.

**Q2**, CT8 Exam paper was tough.

**Answer**

**These comments have been noted and pass on to the examiners involved with these subjects.**

**Europe**

No questions

**Africa**

No questions

CA2

**India**

No questions

**Europe**

No questions

**Africa**

No questions

CA3

**India**

**Q1**, Have observed fairly poor passing rates with students from India. There is little understanding about what is expected and what is the right preparation?

**Africa**

I feel that the current method, in which it is being tested, is unfair and is not representative of the real world.

My reasons are as follows:

**Q1**, Online Exam: it is very difficult to assess a presentation being delivered via a webcam. Where one has to almost stand in one place to ensure that you are not cut off the frame. It is impossible to use hand gestures to point at graphs because in order to do this, one needs a projector or an additional monitor that is separate to the examination app. One also needs an extra person to click “next” so that one does not have to keep moving back and forth while making sure you are not cut off from the frame.

**Q2**, Time: in real life, there is seldom a situation where one has to read and reply to a letter to a client in 1.5 hours. In real life, one is able to take a little bit of extra time.

**Q3**, Past exam pass rates: Many students are struggling to pass this exam. Past pass rates are very disappointing. For many of us, this is the last exam in order to qualify.

**Q4**, Fees: I am a South African. Each attempt costs 400 Pounds. This works out to about R8000! Since this is not my 1<sup>st</sup> attempt, I have to pay for it myself. In addition, if I would like to improve or find out where I went wrong, I need to pay extra for counselling (this is also in pounds).

**Answer**

The CA3 Guide provides useful information regarding how to deliver the CA3 Presentation. Candidates are able to stand or sit, whichever is most comfortable, and should make sure that gestures are seen. All students, whether overseas or in the UK can only sit CA3 online, so all candidates are given fair and equal assessment. Increasingly, presentations are made via webinar or video conferencing, and students should be able demonstrate an ability to deliver a presentation to an audience over webcam effectively. Students are welcome to address the audience having 'handouts', use printed copies of the slides or use a projector to display the slides behind them as in a normal business environment.

Students are responsible for finding a suitable exam environment, which includes no other person being present. CA3 is an exam like all others and must be taken under exam conditions. Exposing the exam material (which includes the student's presentation) can be considered a breach of exam regulations. All students are required to click through their own slides and this is taken into account.

**Europe**

No questions

Tuition

**India**

**Q1**, Positive feedback about Acted Online courses.

**Europe**

No questions

**Africa**

No questions

Other

**India**

**Q1**, Procedure to resign membership.

**Answer**

Any member wishing to resign their membership must inform the [Membership Team by email](#) or letter before 31 December. The outstanding subscription for the resigning year will be removed.

**Q2**, ST series one to one exemptions with IAI.

**Answer**

The rule is that they need to have passed 2 STs with India to apply for exemptions for them.

**Europe**

Exemptions:

**Q1**, "Is there any way to obtain exemptions if French/Swiss exams are taken? For example, could the CERA qualification be taken under the French system, and then obtain an exemption as ST0? Or must it be taken in the form of ST9?"

**Answer**

If you have qualifications under the French or Swiss system then you can apply for [exemptions](#) with us, this will then be considered by the team and would go through the same system as anyone applying under the route for student with other professional qualifications. Or if you are already fully qualified then you could apply to us under [mutual recognition](#).

**Q2**, The rules for exemptions changed twice in 2015. CT5 was excluded from exemption list in May and CT4, CT4, CT6, and CT8 in September. What are the reasons for these changes? The student prepared already the documents required and wants to know if there will be any further changes expected with regards to exemptions rules.

**Answer**

**These are the more “actuarial” of the CT subjects so it’s very difficult for courses that haven’t been specifically established to cover our syllabuses to demonstrate that they meet the requirements for an exemption.**

**The decision to restrict exemptions for CT subjects 4-6 and 8 was made because the vast majority of the applications for these subjects were unsuccessful.**

**There are no immediate plans to make any further changes to the exemption rules but they are kept under review so we can’t guarantee that there might not be changes in the future.**

**Africa**

No questions

Any additional comments made during the meeting have been recorded on the minutes.