

IPA Advanced Certificate in Communications Planning Qualification Policies

Our policies are updated regularly. Please refer back to our online PDF rather than making a local copy.

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Candidate Obligations

You understand that following your booking you are a candidate member of the IPA professional development community and agree that as such you will behave respectfully to all other members and staff of our community.

You agree that you will familiarise yourself with and adhere to the Candidate Policies for the relevant course or qualification and all other regulations and policies that are brought to your attention.

You agree that you will be responsible for your learning and will pursue your studies conscientiously, making use of the resources and opportunities made available to you. You agree that you will attend any compulsory workshops, webinars, submit assignments and undertake examinations unless agreed otherwise with the IPA because of extenuating circumstances.

You will maintain the accuracy of your personal details, including your email address and other contact details, on the IPA website or by informing the IPA Professional Development Team of any changes. You understand that mail or messages sent at any time to you will be considered as sufficient to meet the IPA responsibility to give due notice of updates or changes to the course or qualification.

1. Qualification Booking

It is the candidate and their agency/company's responsibility to ensure that the candidate is aware they have been booked onto the qualification.

If you are making a booking on behalf of a candidate, it is your responsibility ensure they are informed of the booking and are aware of the Terms and Conditions and Policies in place.

All candidates will need to register an account with the IPA via this [link](#), before any booking can be made on their behalf. The IPA cannot set up IPA accounts on behalf of any individual candidates.

1.1 Booking Deadline

All bookings, whether first or deferred, must be made by the booking deadline, 14 March 2025.

2025 Module Dates:

Module 1 begins 24 March 2025. Essay submission deadline: 6 May 2025.

Module 2 begins 6 March 2025. Exam opens: 13 June 2025.

Module 3 begins 16 June 2025. Essay submission deadline: 28 July 2025.

Module 4 begins 28 July 2025. Exam opens: 5 September 2025.

Module 5 begins on 8 September 2025. Essay submission deadline: 20 October 2025.

1.2 Booking Name Change

Candidate name changes are not accommodated on the Advanced Certificate in Communications Planning. They also cannot be applied against a deferred place.

1.3 Payment

1.3.1 IPA Members (corporate and personal)

Payment by invoice: invoices are raised at the point of booking and payment must be made within the IPA 30-day payment term.

Online payment: made at point of booking.

1.3.2 IPA Non-members

Qualification fees must be paid in full prior to candidates gaining access to the online learning.

All fees must be paid online.

Payment by invoice is only available for sums exceeding £4000, and payment must be made within the IPA 30-day payment term.

If booking on through a Sales Rep, you must follow their payment terms.

1.3.3 Booking through a Sales Rep in association with the IPA

Payment method is determined by the Sales Rep.

1.4 Qualification Access

The Qualification will commence on 27 March 2023. Each module is then opened once the preceding module's assessment deadline has passed.

1.5 Cancellation

If you change your mind about the Qualification, and wish to receive a full refund, you have to give notification within 14 days after we email you to confirm that we received your booking ("Cancellation Period").

You do not have a right to change your mind in respect of the Qualification booking if you have already completed the Qualification.

If you have partially accessed or viewed the Qualification and wish to cancel within the Cancellation Period, you will receive a refund equivalent to 50% of the price that you paid for that Qualification.

To cancel your Qualification booking, please contact the IPA by phone or email. Alternatively, you may write to us, including details of your order and your contact details. We will issue the relevant refund using the same method used for payment within 30 days of you telling us that you wish to cancel the booking.

If you made your booking through a Sales Rep, please contact them by phone or email to make your cancellation. They will issue the relevant refund as per your booking contract with them.

Refunds for cancellation other than as set out above will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis at the discretion of the IPA or Sales Rep and may be subject to an administrative fee.

To qualify for a cancellation free of charge on the grounds of extenuating circumstances, candidates must supply reasonable extenuating circumstances alongside proof/notice of absence from work, by email, to the IPA. This must be validated by the candidate's HR/manager by email. No calls will be accepted. Any requests made due to annual leave or work commitments known or not known at the point of booking will not be accepted as reasonable reason for cancellation at no charge under any circumstances.

1.6 Qualification Deferral

Advanced Certificate in Communications Planning deferrals are charged at £50+VAT per candidate.

Candidates that pay the deferral fee may re-use any assessments submitted before their deferral, but the IPA does not take responsibility for the re-submission or storage of these pieces of work. This is the responsibility of the candidate. The IPA can also not guarantee that the next Advanced Certificate in Communications Planning intake will have the same assessments for re-submission of work.

The deadline for Advanced Certificate in Communications Planning deferrals is the deadline of the third assessment. You may only defer to the next Advanced Certificate in Communications Planning intake.

It is the candidate's responsibility to inform the IPA of this intention.

Candidates may defer a maximum of one time and only to the following intake. Candidates may not defer from the qualification for a second time, instead they will be treated as a new booking and must pay the full qualification fees again.

2. Qualification Assessments

2.1 Assessments

To achieve the Advanced Certificate in Communications Planning, candidates must complete and pass all set assessments.

The candidate and their agency/company accept all responsibility for fulfilling the IPA Examination Honour Code. If any candidate fails their paper due to disqualification, the IPA (and/or its third party sales representative) will not reimburse the candidate/agency/company for any payments made for the qualification.

2.2 Assessment Submission

Where the module assessment is a piece of written work to be uploaded for marking the candidate must upload their work in the appropriate module area in the appropriate format, this is clearly marked in each module.

Please be aware that when you upload work you must not leave the submission in draft form as this will not be marked.

2.3 Assessment Extension

While the IPA expects candidates to submit each module assessment on or before the deadline, we allow candidates to extend assessment submission deadlines.

All extension requests must be made via the online application form.

Following the submission of the extension application form, the candidate will be able to submit their assessment at any time until the following module's submission date, along with their next module assessment. The assessment will then be marked with this set of submissions, and returned to the candidate when the results for this module are released.

If a candidate does not apply for an extension by the next modules' assessment submission date they will be penalised according to the resubmission rules.

While there is no charge for extensions, candidates will incur a penalty to their grade for submitting their work late: for each extended submission the assessment grade will be capped at 64%, a high pass. N.B. The candidate can still fail. This grade cap considers the advantage of extra preparation time.

For example:

Candidate A successfully applies for a Module 1 assessment extension. Candidate A can submit their Module 1 work at any time until the Module 2 assessment submission deadline. Candidate A is expected to also submit their Module 2 assessment on this date. Candidate A's Module 1 and Module 2 assessment marks will both be released on the Module 2 assessment release date. Their module 1 assessment will be capped at 64%.

2.4 Assessment Resubmission

The IPA does allow candidates to resubmit assessments where they are awarded a failing mark.

The IPA assumes that all candidates that receive a fail grade for any module assessment will resubmit their work on the next module assessment deadline. This is assumed because a non-submission would cause a candidate to fail the qualification. As a result, candidates do not need to contact the IPA to inform of their intention to resubmit failed work.

While there is no charge for module assessment resubmission, candidates will incur a penalty to their grade for resubmitting their work:

For each resubmission the assessment grade will be capped at 50%, a pass. N.B The candidate can still fail.

This grade cap considers the advantage of marker feedback, given with every failed assessment, which candidates are welcome, and encouraged, to use in the resubmission of their work.

Following the release of a failed assessment candidates will automatically be able to submit their assessment at any time until the final module's submission date, along with their final module assessment. The assessment will then be marked with this set of submissions, and returned to the candidate with the final release.

2.5 Extenuating Circumstances Deferral/Resubmission

To qualify for an assessment extension or re-submission without the grade cap on the grounds of extenuating circumstances, candidates must supply reasonable extenuating circumstances alongside proof/notice of absence from work, by email, to the IPA. This must be validated by the candidate's HR/manager by email. No calls will be accepted.

Extenuating circumstances will be dealt on a case-by-case basis at the discretion of the IPA. Any extenuating circumstances or deferral requests made due to annual leave or work commitments known or not known at the point of booking will not be accepted as reasonable reason for extension/re-sit without the grade cap or fee under any circumstances.

Acceptable extenuating circumstances include, for example, illness or bereavement.

2.6 Failing

If a candidate fails an extended assessment, they will revert to the resubmission process as above.

If a candidate is awarded a failing mark in their resubmitted work, either after missing the extension deadline or in a second failed assessment resubmission, they will fail the qualification.

2.7 Access Needs

Candidates with dyslexia, dyspraxia and other access needs are entitled to 25% extra time in the online examination, unless a different amount of additional time is stipulated in any supporting paperwork.

Any request for extra time must be submitted through the special requirements submission form.

Any request for extra time/marked with consideration must be submitted before the Module assessment submission deadline in a special requirements submission form.

2.7.1 IPA Exam/Assignment: Access Needs Submission Form

2.7.2 Language Differences

Extra time requests due to language differences do not extend to non-native English speakers sitting the exam in an English-speaking country. Only non-native English speakers sitting the exam in a non-English speaking country are entitled to extra time in the exam; this 50% extra time is allocated automatically at the point of booking.

Non-native English speakers are permitted to use a translation dictionary during the exam. This dictionary must be approved by the IPA prior to the exam date.

2.9 Assessment Feedback

Essay-based assessments include feedback from the qualification examiners. This feedback is written at a university level standard and should be used by candidates to improve their subsequent assessments.

The IPA will not ask for more feedback than is initially given. If, however, a candidate has any questions about feedback, they should contact the qualification's IPA contact.

2.10 Plagiarism

All candidates are expected to adhere to high standards of academic and professional integrity. All work presented as original must, in fact, be original, and the ideas and contributions of others must always be appropriately acknowledged. Quotations must, of course, be acknowledged, but so must summaries, paraphrases, and the ideas of others.

There are various referencing rules and the etiquette can be confusing. For the purposes of these assignments adherence to the Harvard (APA) principles is required but candidates will not be penalised for minor discrepancies or variances from the approved methodology. This is not a test of referencing skills.

Minor variances including italicising the wrong element, using 'accessed' instead of 'retrieved from', using the sign [online], or even getting books, articles and web reports mixed up. Just make sure readers can track the material you cite in-text through the List of References.

A full referencing guide is provided in the online learning.

2.11 Examination Honour Code

All candidates must agree to abide by the Examination Honour Code at the beginning of their online exam. It says:

"I will not give or receive unauthorised assistance, or engage in any activity that could result in gaining an unfair advantage, before, during or after the exam.

I will not refer to any notes, learning or printouts during the exam, as this is a closed book exam.

I will not confer with any other candidate for information regarding my, or their, exam answers during the exam.

I will not use any AI generator tools, such as ChatGPT, during the exam.

I understand that the IPA reserves the right to check my exam answers, including through the use of AI or any other technology, if it has reason to believe that I may have engaged in any activity that could have resulted in my gaining an unfair advantage before, during or after the exam, or otherwise having contravened this policy. I agree that should the IPA reasonably believe that I have so contravened this policy, it shall be entitled to disqualify me from the exam and award me a 'fail'. It is then at the discretion of the IPA to decide whether I may resit the exam for a fee of £50+VAT."

3. Other

3.1 Grades and Grade Publishing

Grades are released to candidates in the online learning portal.

All IPA qualifications go through a rigorous double marking process by independent examiners. The IPA does not provide a breakdown of percentage grades across our qualifications and courses, candidates will only be provided with their grade boundary. The IPA will not, under any circumstances, re-mark any assessment. Grades will not change once released by the IPA.

3.2 Shredding and Archiving

Assessments from IPA qualifications will be archived for a maximum of two years. Unless requested by a candidate they will be deleted/shredded following this date. Original questions and assessments are not available for candidates to request after the exam.

3.3 IPA Assistance: Technical and Otherwise

Technical assistance for the online learning and IPA website is available during IPA office hours: Monday - Friday, 9.30AM - 5.30PM, excluding UK holidays via learning@ipa.co.uk.

We aim to respond to all queries and support issues within two working days.

3.4 Qualification Mailing List

The IPA shares all information regarding the online learning and assessments via email. By making a booking for an IPA qualification, the candidate agrees to be added to the mailing list for communication regarding the qualification and assessments and will not unsubscribe.

It is the candidate and their agency/company's responsibility to ensure that the candidate is aware they have been booked onto the qualification and that they receive updates from the IPA regarding their qualification and assessments. The IPA accepts no responsibility should any

communication regarding their qualification or assessments end up in the candidate's spam/junk/clutter folders.

Should a candidate unsubscribe from our mailing list, they understand that they will miss communication regarding their assessments, grades, digital certificate of completion and any invites to relevant industry events including the graduation event.

Member organisations may request learner progress/completion reports from us in respect of their candidates. This is not something we offer to non-member organisations.

All enrolled candidates will receive regular communications from us relating to their exam, including their exam date/time, expiry of online learning access and final grade.

3.5 Privacy Policy

If you are taking one of our courses or qualifications through your employer or educational establishment, we may need to share your information – including your course or qualification results - with them. For further details about how we treat your personal data, please see our [privacy policy](#).