

December 2022



# EXAMINATIONS HANDBOOK

## Standard Operating Procedure 05 Equal Opportunities and Special Needs

### Amendments and date of issue

Amendments to this Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) can be authorised only by the Chair of the Qualifications Board in consultation with that Board and the Examinations Committee.

This issue is 2022 version 1 and is dated December 2022.

### Register of amendments

Version	Brief description of Amendment	Amendment	Date approved
2020.1	New handbook		23/11/2020
2022.1	Widening the scope of SOP 5 and giving a clear timeline for the application process for special arrangements	pp. 2 & 3	01/12/2022

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## Equal opportunities

- 1 The Institute will take account of all current legislation in relation to equality of opportunity.
- 2 It is the policy of the Institute to take disabilities into account when assessing Candidates' performance at examinations.
- 3 The aim of special examination arrangements is to establish equitable circumstances under which all Candidates can demonstrate their ability and attainment, but not to put any of the Candidates at an advantage or disadvantage.

## Special arrangements

- 4 Special arrangements may be put into place for any Institute examinations to allow a candidate with special educational needs, disabilities or temporary injuries or disabilities to access the assessment without changing the demands of the examination. These arrangements can cover a variety of requirements such as extra time, the use of a computer (see below: use of laptop), the use of a scribe, reader or other assistant or extended rest breaks etc.
- 5 Candidates requiring special arrangements must notify their Course Director of these in writing at the start of the course (preferably, the Course registration form will include a question about special arrangements). Following this, the Course Director must notify the Examinations Officer promptly in writing that the Course includes a candidate requiring special arrangements (since the need to provide facilities for the special arrangements may affect the choice of venue for the examinations). The Course Director will ensure that the candidate is aware of the requirements of this SOP.
- 6 As soon as possible thereafter and in any event no later than **16 weeks** before the date of the examination or at the start of the course for White Badge Examinations, the candidate shall provide to the Examinations Officer, with a copy to the Course Director:
  - i. Details of the special arrangements required;
  - ii. Appropriate professional assessments, and/or medical certificates, to support the need for any special arrangements;
  - iii. If the Candidate proposes to use their own specialised equipment, information to enable the Institute to be satisfied that the equipment cannot be used during the examination to access information relevant to the examination;
  - iv. The name(s) and contact details of any proposed scribe, reader or other assistant.

Late submission of these details, documents and information may result in the request for special arrangements being refused. The above time limit does not apply when the Candidate suffers a temporary injury or disability, so long as the details and documents are provided as soon as possible after the injury or disability arises.

- 7 The Institute may take such steps as it considers appropriate to ensure that any specialised equipment and any scribe, reader or other assistant assists the Candidate only in overcoming their disability. The Institute is not obliged to accept the scribe, reader or other assistant proposed by the Candidate. The Institute will pay the reasonable cost of providing any required equipment or of making any relevant arrangements, and the reasonable fees and expenses of any required scribe, reader or other assistant.
- 8 Any additional time for written examinations depends on the recommendations made in the assessment of individual Candidates or medical certificate. The standard allowance for most Candidates will be an additional 15 minutes per hour (25%).

### **Use of laptop**

- 9 The Institute may permit the use of laptops, provided by the Institute, during written examinations for Candidates with special needs, subject to appropriate supporting medical documentation. Such Candidates will also be entitled to 25% extra time.
- 10 The use of a laptop will not be permitted on the grounds of poor handwriting or for Candidates unfamiliar with Roman script.

### **Candidates whose first language is not English**

- 11 Candidates whose first language is not English will be permitted to bring a bilingual or monolingual dictionary of their choice to the examination room. This may be an electronic dictionary if it is not on a mobile phone or otherwise connected to the internet. Such Candidates will be entitled to an additional 15 minutes per hour (25%).
- 12 This allowance does not apply to those candidates who are bilingual in English and one of the following languages of the British Islands: Welsh, Irish and Scots Gaelic.
- 13 Further information is available in SOP65 (Language Examination Policies).