IPA Sustainability Essentials Certificate

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. All Candidates

If you are making a booking on behalf of a candidate, it is your responsibility ensure they are informed of their booking and are aware of these Policies applicable to their booking.

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 Examination Re-sit

If a candidate fails to pass the mandatory self-tests to unlock the final online examination, they may re-sit the self-tests at their leisure. The IPA recommends that the candidate re-visit the learning, as the questions vary per test sitting. The candidate must successfully pass these tests to access the final exam.

If a candidate fails to pass their final exam, they may re-sit the exam at their leisure. The IPA recommends that the candidate re-visit the learning, as the questions will vary per exam sitting.

1.2 Examination Conditions

By proceeding with the examination, candidates understand and agree to sit the exam under an honest code of conduct as outlined by the IPA in the Examination Honour Code. Should they engage in any activity that could result in gaining an unfair advantage, before, during or after the exam they understand that they risk disqualification.

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.

1.2.1 Examination Honour Code

fcandidates 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."

1.3 Extra Time and Other 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.

1.3.1 IPA Exam/Assignment: Access Needs Submission Form

1.3.2 Language Differences

Non-native English speakers that live and work outside of the UK are permitted to use a translation dictionary during the online exam.

Extra time is not granted due to language differences for the Sustainability Essentials Certificate.

1.4 Grades

The Sustainability Essentials Certificate is a Pass or Fail qualification.

Grades are calculated and released in the online learning, if a candidate does not reach a Pass in either the self-test or the final exam they may re-sit at their leisure until they successfully pass the exam.

The IPA will not query any grades given in the online learning.

1.5 Certificate

Candidates will receive a digital certificate of completion within 14 working days of achieving a Pass in the final exam.

1.6 IPA Assistance: Technical & 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.

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

1.7 Qualification Mailing List

The IPA releases all information regarding the online learning and exam 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 exam 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 exam. The IPA accepts no responsibility should any communication regarding their qualification or exam end up in the candidate's spam/junk/clutter folders.

Should a candidate unsubscribe from our mailing list, they understand that they may miss communication regarding their exam date, time, location, final grade, digital certificate of completion and any invites to relevant industry events.

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.

1.8 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 (please note as above, only IPA members can request learner progress and completion reports for their delegates). For further details about how we treat your personal data, please see our privacy policy.

2. Members of the IPA (Corporate and Personal)

2.1 Booking Deadline

There is no booking deadline for the Sustainability Essentials Certificate. IPA members can access the online learning and exam at any time through the IPA website, except when the qualification is going through a platform or content update.

Learning access will expire three months after the qualification has ended.

3. Non-Members

3.1 Booking and Assessment Deadline

Candidates may book onto the Sustainability Essentials Certificate at any time, except when the qualification is going through a platform or content update.

Candidates must choose and book onto an Sustainability Essentials Certificate annual intake, which runs from 1 January to 31 December each year. The candidate must complete the qualification by 31 December of their intake year.

The cost of the Sustainability Essentials Certificate covers access to the online learning (including the final exam up until 31 December of the intake year.

The length of access to the learning can be shortened at the discretion of the IPA as per Sales Representative or agency instruction.

Learning access will expire three months after the qualification has ended.

3.2 Booking Name Change

Name changes are permitted for the Sustainability Essentials Certificate where the candidate has not exceeded 10% learning progression. The new candidate must adhere to the intake expiry date given against the original booking.

If the former candidate has exceeded 10% learning progression, there will be a name change fee of £50+VAT, charged per change, paid directly to the IPA in full. The new candidate must still adhere to the expiry date given against the original booking.

3.3 Extension

If a candidate fails to pass the final exam by their expiry date, they can apply for a four-week extension at a charge of £50+VAT, paid directly to the IPA in full prior to the extension being granted.

This extension period will begin from the original expiry date, and not the date of request.

If the candidate does not complete the qualification and pass the exam within this four-week extension period and still wishes to complete the qualification, they will be treated as a new booking and must pay the full qualification fees again.

3.4 Extenuating Circumstances

To qualify for an extension 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.

Extenuating circumstances will be dealt on a case-by-case basis at the discretion of the IPA. Any extenuating circumstances 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 at no charge under any circumstances.

If not provided prior to the completion deadline, candidates should endeavour to inform the IPA as soon as they are able.

In extreme circumstances of illness or injury if the candidate cannot complete the qualification within the extension offered by the IPA, they may defer their place to the following year. If the deferred candidate does not sit their examination the following year, the place will be lost and will lose 100% of the fee paid. No name changes can be applied to this place.

3.5 Payment

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.

3.6 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.