IRPM Exam Preparation Guidelines

Foundation, Associate and Member Exam

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Learning requirements

Success in the IRPM Foundation, Associate and Member exams requires exam candidates to undertake independent learning based on an awareness of the syllabus and understanding of the exam structure. There are a range of training courses and technical materials available to the candidates.

The IRPM has had some exam tips available to candidates for some time. Those taking the foundation paper over many years have been advised to “Read each question carefully”. The role of the IRPM examination is to test candidate’s knowledge and skills. There is no attempt to set trick questions, indeed, where possible, the questions relate to everyday activity in the candidate’s own organisation.

Foundation exam

The Foundation exam is an on-line test based on 100 multiple choice questions. The Foundation level requires the demonstration of the knowledge and understanding necessary to undertake the work of the residential property manager. This is factual information and an awareness of the terminology used.

The knowledge required for the Foundation exam is contained in the Open Learning Course (OLC) prepared and operated by the OLC partnership, this learning material is free to access. A cost of £50 is payable when taking the on-line test.

The OLC is approximately 260 pages, structured into three main units (Law, Finance and Land and Buildings) as well as an introduction, appendix and glossary. It contains almost 100 self-check questions and includes detailed answers to each. There is also a series of review exercises for each main section.

Associate Exam

The Associate exam is a written exam of 1½ hours answering 20 short questions and three essay questions. The Associate level requires the demonstration of the application of the knowledge and understanding to real life situations by describing how and when such information should be used.

The knowledge and skills required for the Associate exam includes the requirements of the OLC but, in addition, requires an awareness of the practise of residential management covering the additional elements of the IRPM syllabus of Leasehold Property Management, and Affordable housing and mixed tenure management. The knowledge and skills requirement is based on technical, commodified knowledge drawn from: work experience, the RICS service charge residential management code, ARMA guidance, IRPM technical briefings and wider reading including important case law.
Candidates will have to reach the pass mark in both the Foundation and the Associate exam to move to Associate membership. Candidates will also be required to demonstrate that they have fulfilled and filed up to date CPD requirements before being granted Associate membership. The Associate examination will be available at a number of examination centres twice a year.

Members Exam
The Member level requires the demonstration of reasoned advice supported by a depth of technical knowledge through the ability to explain how and why good practice is implemented and to analyse and relate the learning to a range of problems faced by residential property managers.

IRPM delivers one day workshops for candidates preparing for the exam and ARMA runs a series of introductory training courses covering most aspects of the syllabus. There are specialist training sessions provided by Lease, Solicitors, CIH as well as many in-house programmes delivered by employers. There are podcasts and webinars from a range of providers.

Exam structure

Associate Exam Structure
The Associate exam will consist of two parts. Part 1 will set compulsory questions and Part 2 will offer options on specialist areas of the work of residential property managers. The exam will take one and a half hours.

Part 1 will present a number of different issues that might be faced by a residential property manager and each issue will require a number of factual answers. A total of 10 marks will be awarded for each scenario question. An outline of the likely marking framework is noted below.

Part 2 will require candidates to provide detailed answers to three questions from a choice of eight from a range of specialist areas including service charge accounting, general property management, technical/building/surveying and affordable housing. Two questions will be set for each specialist area.

The likely structure of the questions and the manner of the possible awarding of marks are shown below.

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The pass mark will be 60%. The IRPM consider this will be equivalent to a standard approaching NVQ level 3.
**Member Exam Structure**

The member examination will consist of TWO parts. The time allowed for this exam will be two and a half hours.

**Part 1** will be consist of a single compulsory question and will carry a potential 40 marks. It will present a detailed problem or ‘crisis’ and candidates will be asked to respond to this problem from the perspective of their specialist area of expertise as well as being expected to understand the wider implications of block management.

**Part 2** will require candidates to answer three questions from a total of eight questions taken from a range of four specialist areas: service charge accounting, general property management, technical / building surveying and affordable housing

The likely structure of the questions and the manner of awarding of marks are noted below.

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The pass mark for this exam is set at 60%. The Member examination will be available at a number of centres twice a year. Candidates will also be required to demonstrate that they have fulfilled and filed up to date CPD requirements before being granted Member status.

**Instructions to candidates**

You will see the following on the front page of the exam paper

**Associate Exam**

*Your personal experience may be related to managing property as freeholder, as an employee of the freeholder, as an employee of a fully owned subsidiary of the freeholder or as a managing agent employed by either the freeholder or a Residents’ Management Company. Unless the question states specific criteria you may make any assumptions as to the ownership and your management role. If necessary state any assumptions you are making within your answer.*

The time allowed for this examination is ONE and a HALF HOURS.

PART A of this paper contains TWENTY questions based on a number of practical points that a property manager might face in the course of their duties. You are required to answer ALL the questions in the boxes set out in this exam paper. Two marks are awarded for each question and 40 marks are awarded for this part of the paper. Make at least some attempt to answer all the questions.

PART B of this paper contains EIGHT questions in FOUR sections. You are required to answer THREE questions on the separate sheets of paper provided with this exam paper. Each question carries 20 marks and 60 marks are awarded for this part of the paper.

**Special Instructions**

Candidates must not take anything into the examination that could be construed as being notes, papers or other information relating to the examination.
Do not make any marks on the paper which may indicate your identity and do not put your name or your company’s name on the paper or in your answers. If you need to illustrate an example for a question you may use a ‘made up’ name for a company. You may not leave the exam room in the last 15 minutes of the exam period. The exam supervisor will advise when there is half an hour and 15 minutes remaining.

**Member Exam**

The Time allowed for this examination is TWO AND A HALF HOURS.

PART A of this paper contains ONE compulsory question.

PART B of this paper contains EIGHT questions in FOUR sections, one for each of: service charge accounts, general property management, technical/building/surveying and affordable housing. You are required to answer THREE questions in total and you can answer any of the questions from any section.

The compulsory question at Part A carries 40 marks and this part makes up 40% of the total marks awarded.

The questions in Part B carry 20 marks each and this part makes up 60% of the total marks awarded.

**Special Instructions**

Candidates must not take anything into the examination that could be construed as being notes, papers or other information relating to the examination. Do not put your name on the paper.

You may not leave the exam room in the last 15 minutes of the exam period. The exam supervisor will advise when there is half an hour and 15 minutes remaining for each part of the exam. There is no break between parts A and B in this paper.

*Your personal experience may be related to managing property as freeholder, as an employee of the freeholder, as an employee of a fully owned subsidiary of the freeholder or as a managing agent employed by either the freeholder or a Residents’ Management Company. Unless the question states specific criteria you may make any assumptions as to the ownership and your management role. If necessary state any assumptions you are making within your answer.*