



The Governance
Institute

Enquiries about exam results

This document is for the use of ICSA students who have received exam results and would like more information, and as a reference for those involved in these procedures.

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Section 1: Receiving your exam result

Release of exam results

The dates for release of exam results are published in advance through the news section of your MyICSA page and by email. The release of results is usually around ten weeks after the exam date.

You can log into MyICSA on the release day to receive your exam results, but these are also emailed on the same day.

You will receive one overall result for the exam expressed as a grade band, indicating the range of marks within which the result fell. For example, a 'Pass' grade indicates that the result was in the 50–64% range (these grade margins are included on your results sheet).

Advice and enquiries

After results have been released, you will usually receive an email from the ICSA Qualifications team with some advice about registering and preparing for the next exam. If you have any questions or want to discuss your progress, we would like to speak to you.

Please contact the ICSA Members and Students team by phone or email and we will arrange a time for someone in the Qualifications team to talk to you.

Section 2: How your result is approved

This section outlines the processes which are in place to ensure that ICSA markers apply the same procedure and assessment standard to all scripts, and that marks are moderated and checked before results are released.

Marking procedure

All markers are provided with a copy of the final exam paper and marking scheme.

Before they commence marking, they must be involved in a standardisation exercise with the other markers. This involves marking a small selection of scripts, comparing results and making decisions on any different approaches the markers have taken.

As markers go on to work on their designated scripts, they all follow the ICSA guidance for markers, which includes rules on:

- Recording and transposition of marks.
- Clerical checking of transposition and addition of marks.
- Marking up the script to confirm all pages have been checked.
- Showing where marks have been recorded on the script.
- Including narrative and commentary where required.
- Review of scripts.

Review

All markers have to submit a certain number of scripts for review by other markers. The lead marker will review the results of all reviews, if there is a group of markers, and make the final decision on any changes to marks.

All scripts which arrive at a final mark in the Fail A band have to go through a set review procedure.

Review of marks in the borderline range

Scripts in the 46 – 49% range have to be reviewed and moderated several times. The first marker needs to review any script which falls within this range and either confirm the fail grade or record a different mark – the confirmation or changes made are recorded within the script and on the front sheet.

The script then has to be reviewed by another marker, who is allowed to record and suggest amendments to the mark and record these on the front sheet. The initial marker, or the lead marker, will review any changes made and will need to provide explanation if they do not agree with the suggested amendment.

All scripts within this band are also included in the script sample which is reviewed by the examination board (ICSA Assessment Review Panel) prior to the release of results.

Section 3: Script reports

You may want to find out more detail about which individual questions you passed or failed in the exam. You can receive detailed comment and advice on your performance by requesting a 'script report' – there is a fee for this service.

The script report comprises two elements: an independent clerical and procedural check of the mark awarded, carried out by the ICOSA Exams team, and a report by the examiner written to the student.

Procedural check

The clerical and procedural check is carried out by the ICOSA Exams team. The standard check will confirm whether or not:

- Marks stated within the answer booklet have been correctly calculated in the question totals.
- Question totals recorded in the answer booklet have been correctly transposed to the front sheet.
- Question totals on the front sheet have been calculated to arrive at the correct overall mark.
- Any processes required for this particular script have been carried out correctly. For example, a review has been confirmed for a script in the Fail A band.

The procedural check does not constitute a re-marking exercise, but in the unlikely event that an element of procedure had not been followed, this would be rectified and you would be informed.

Examiner's report

The grade for each part of the question with a separate mark allocation is shown on the script report. For example, if a 25-mark question is split into parts (a) and (b), with 12 and 13 marks respectively, you will see a grade for part (a) and for part (b) as well as the overall grade for the question.

The examiner will write a separate comment for each question about what was done well in your answer, what was wrong, what was missing and what could have been said to make each answer better. The examiner will conclude the report with some general comments about your performance and advice for your next attempt.

ICOSA does not allow access to the exam answer booklets, so you will not be given a copy of your script. The examiner's report is not a review or re-marking exercise.

Section 4: Appealing your result

You have the opportunity, before and after the exam, to let us know about any incident or personal circumstance which you feel may have affected your performance. If you informed us about something, this will have been considered by the examination board before you receive your result.

If there are other circumstances which you feel have not been taken into account or which indicate that your result has not been arrived at correctly, you can lodge a formal appeal of your result.

If you are considering appealing your result, it is important that you read all parts of this section very carefully.

Some examples of grounds for appeal might be:

- The exam was not administered properly or an incident occurred during the exam and was not addressed appropriately.
- There was a problem with the way a question was set, marked or moderated.
- An exam result was affected by a particular extenuating circumstance which could not be revealed before the exam results were issued, for example due to legal proceedings.

Before you submit an appeal

Please read this important information if you are considering submitting an appeal:

- If you want to appeal your result you will need to provide evidence for the claim you are presenting. For example, an appeal related to a medical condition or disability would need to be evidenced with documentation from an appropriate specialist.
- When you submit your exam answers, you accept a process in which ICSA will, through its assessors, exercise professional and academic judgement to arrive at your grade. You cannot appeal on the sole basis that you do not agree with the judgement made on your exam script.
- If you are letting us know about an incident or personal circumstance through the appeal process, this must be something which, for some reason, you were not able to tell us about before the results were released.

If your appeal is not considered valid for any of the reasons indicated above, you will be informed that the appeal is rejected without further investigation.

Lodging an appeal

You must submit your appeal by the deadline date, which is set approximately one month after the deadline for requesting a script report. For the June exam, the deadline date for appeals will usually be in the last week of September, and for the November exam it will usually be the last week of March. Check dates on the ICSA website to be sure.

Your data and the information you submit as part of an appeal will be dealt with in confidence. However, when you lodge an appeal you accept that members of the ICSA Qualifications team and, potentially, ICSA assessors and board members, will see your script and circumstances.

You will need to complete the *Submission of appeal* form. Contact examenquiries@icsa.org.uk for this. ICSA will acknowledge that your appeal has been lodged within one week of receipt of the form.

Consideration of your appeal and the decision

The ICSA Head of Student Experience will lead on investigating your appeal, carrying out the necessary checks and consulting with others as appropriate.

We aim to respond to you in full within 30 days of receipt of your appeal form, and we will inform you within this time-frame if there is any reason for delay.

The process starts with an initial review of your *Submission of appeal* form to determine whether there are grounds for appeal which merit further investigation.

The result of this initial review of your form is that your appeal is either:

- Rejected without any further investigation – this would usually be because you have not presented valid grounds for appeal.
- Investigated– there were considered to be grounds for investigation and you will be informed that the process is ongoing.

Outcomes of an appeal

If your appeal is investigated, the final outcome will be that your appeal is upheld or not upheld.

It is important for you to know that, even if your appeal is upheld, this does not necessarily mean that your mark will be adjusted. Some other possible outcomes if an appeal is upheld could be:

- Your mark is 'withdrawn', meaning that it does not count as a Fail on your record and does not count as one of your four permitted attempts at each exam.
- You could be informed that ICSA procedure is being reviewed or changed as a result of your appeal.
- You could be offered another exam attempt without charge.

Your script would only qualify for re-marking as the outcome of an upheld appeal if serious errors were discovered in the marking process. If the result of an upheld appeal is that your exam script is re-marked, the final result could be higher or lower than your original mark.

If circumstances you presented lead to an upheld appeal and the same circumstances could have affected other candidates, this will be investigated but you will not receive information about decisions made regarding other candidates.

Section 5: Review of the appeal decision

If you have received the result of your appeal and you have reason to think that the appeal has not been carried out properly, you can ask for the decision to be independently reviewed. This would be the final stage of your appeal process.

Requesting a review of your appeal decision

You will need to complete the *Request for review of appeal decision* form, stating what you think has gone wrong in the appeal process and supplying any relevant evidence. Contact: examenquiries@icsa.org.uk for the form.

The review will be led by the ICSA Professional Development Director, working with the Chairman of ICSA Qualifications Committee or a nominated Committee member. The review will not repeat the investigation carried out in the appeal process, but will examine the way the appeal was conducted and how the assessors arrived at your result.

Suitable grounds to request that the appeal should be carried out again might be:

- Evidence that the first stage was not carried out correctly.
- New information which could not be considered in the appeal process has since come to light, and this could have influenced the outcome.
- Evidence of error, prejudice or bias in the original appeal.

Receiving the decision

The result of the review will be communicated within 30 days of receipt of the *Request for review of appeal decision* form. If the review finds that the appeal should be carried out again, the notification of this marks the beginning of the 30 day period in which you can expect to receive a revised decision.

This review represents the final stage in the review process. At this point ICSA will not communicate further on the appeal decision.

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