

Student Guidance Notes

Guide 5

Student guidance notes for students planning to sit the P4 Organisational Management and Information Systems examination of the 2005 syllabus

This guide outlines the issues relating to transition from the Organisational Management (IORG) paper of the Beyond 2000 syllabus to the P4 Organisational Management & Information Systems paper of the 2005 syllabus.

The first section of this guide compares the two syllabuses, highlighting the differences between them.

The second part of this guide focuses on the issues for students who have studied the 'old' syllabus, but must sit the 'new' exam.

The third part of this guide contains a series of frequently asked questions relating to this paper, some of which were asked at the recent lecturer's conference.

If you have any further queries relating to this guide, please contact CIMA Student Services department on + 44 (0)208 849 2404, or email your query to cima.contact@cimaglobal.com

Syllabus Comparison

New syllabus	Old syllabus	Comparison and Comments
P4 - Organisational Management & Information Systems	11 - Organisational Management (IORG)	
A. Information Systems 20%		This material was previously contained in the ISPM syllabus, not IORG. Additional learning outcomes are listed in the next section of this guide.
B. Change Management 10%	11(v) Management of change – 15%	This section is similar, but the learning outcomes have been expressed at a higher level. Detailed study of the syllabus is recommended.
C. Operations Management 20%	11(ii) The functional areas of organisations – 15%	These areas have been significantly expanded. Some material included here was previously in ISPM (quality) and FLBS (operations quality and marketing). Additional learning outcomes are listed in the next section of this guide.
D. Marketing 20%		
E. Managing Human Capital 30%	11(iii) Human resource management – 30%	This section is similar, but many of the learning outcomes have been expressed differently. Detailed study of the syllabus is recommended.
	11(i) Organisational management – 25%	This material is now in paper P5 (Integrated Management). See guide S6.
	11(iv) Management of relationships – 15%	This material is now in paper P5 (Integrated Management). See guide S6.

Transition Issues

Assessment

The format of this exam paper will be (from May 2007):

Section A - 40% Compulsory objective test questions

Section B - 30% Compulsory short answer questions (6x5 marks)

Section C - 30% Short scenario questions (choice of 1 from 2)

This differs from the previous syllabus, and students should therefore practise a number of the new exam-style questions in preparation for this exam.

A number of Section A questions may be based on a common scenario. Section A may contain questions of the conventional 'multiple choice' format, but may also include other forms of objective test question. Generally, the multiple choice format is likely to account for not more than 60% of Section A questions. Other possibilities include:

- ◆ filling in a blank in a sentence.
- ◆ listing items in a rank order
- ◆ stating a definition (in not more than ___ words)
- ◆ identifying a key issue (e.g. advantage / disadvantage) (in not more than ___ words)
- ◆ calculating one specific figure e.g. profit for the period / absorption cost per product
- ◆ completing a blank or partially completed prescribed format using terms and/or numbers e.g. published account format / overhead cost sheet.
- ◆ identifying points on a graph or diagram e.g. break-even point, fixed costs, marginal revenue.
- ◆ identifying a specific term describing action / valuation seen in a scenario e.g. marginal or absorption costing, conditions for a recession.
- ◆ matching items together or with a description e.g. "are the following cash or non-cash items" – identifying depreciation as non-cash or stock as a current asset.
- ◆ Interpreting / analysing numerical or graphical data.

Additional learning outcomes

The following learning outcomes were not included in the corresponding 'old' syllabus:

- ◆ explain the features and operations of commonly used information technology hardware and software;
- ◆ describe how commonly used technologies are used in the work place;
- ◆ identify opportunities for the use of information technology (IT) in organisations, particularly in the implementation and running of the Information System (IS);

- ◆ evaluate, from a managerial perspective, new hardware and software and assess how new systems could benefit the organisation;
- ◆ recommend strategies to minimise the disruption caused by introducing IS technologies;
- ◆ explain how to supervise major IS projects and ensure their smooth implementation;
- ◆ evaluate how IS fits into broader management operations.
- ◆ explain how and why resistance to change develops within organisations;
- ◆ evaluate various means of introducing change;
- ◆ evaluate change processes within the organisation.
- ◆ Evaluate the management of operations;
- ◆ analyse problems associated with quality in organisations;
- ◆ evaluate contemporary thinking in quality management;
- ◆ explain the linkages between functional areas as an important aspect of quality management;
- ◆ apply tools and concepts of quality management appropriately in an organisation;
- ◆ construct a plan for the implementation of a quality programme;
- ◆ recommend ways to negotiate and manage relationships with suppliers;
- ◆ evaluate a supply network.
- ◆ explain the concept of quality and how the quality of products and services can be assessed, measured and improved.
- ◆ explain the marketing concept;
- ◆ evaluate the marketing processes of an organisation;
- ◆ apply tools within each area of the marketing mix;
- ◆ describe the range of contexts within which marketing principles can be applied (consumer marketing, business-to-business marketing, services marketing, direct marketing, interactive marketing);
- ◆ evaluate the role of technology in modern marketing;
- ◆ produce a strategic marketing plan for the organisation.
- ◆ explain the role of the human resource management function and its relationship to other parts of the organisation;
- ◆ produce and explain a human resource plan and supporting practices;
- ◆ evaluate the recruitment, selection, induction, appraisal, training and career planning activities of an organisation;
- ◆ evaluate the role of incentives in staff development as well as individual and organisational performance;
- ◆ identify features of a human resource plan that vary depending on organisation type and employment model;
- ◆ explain the importance of ethical behaviour in business generally and for the Chartered Management Accountant in particular.

Conclusion

This paper differs significantly, in terms of syllabus content and assessment format, from the previous IORG paper. Students are advised to pay careful attention to the syllabus and Pilot Paper.

FAQs

<p>Question 1: Will there be a pilot paper for the new exam, so I can see the differences between the new paper and the old one?</p>	<p>Answer: Yes. Pilot papers are available on the website at www.cimaglobal.com/professionalqualifications.</p>
<p>Question 2: Where can I find the detailed syllabus for this paper?</p>	<p>Answer: www.cimaglobal.com/professionalqualifications.</p>
<p>Question 3: I have passed (or been granted an exemption from) the old IORG paper. What work should I do on this syllabus?</p>	<p>Answer: You should read the Paper P4 syllabus carefully, and selectively study those areas of the syllabus with which you are unfamiliar. Failure to do this will leave you short of knowledge for the Strategic Level and the TOPCIMA.</p>
<p>Question 4: I have taken, and failed, the old IORG exam and must resit paper P4. How much work is likely to be involved?</p>	<p>Answer: Because the learning outcomes for this syllabus have been so significantly re-written, the safest approach would be to start again. You should find that you have some of the knowledge, but many of the learning outcomes require additional preparation.</p>
<p>Question 5: The syllabus mentions modelling techniques such as dataflow diagrams. Might students be asked to draw such diagrams?</p>	<p>Answer: No. Questions will focus on knowledge of how such diagrams are used. The drawing of diagrams will not be required.</p>
<p>Question 6: The Pilot Paper mentions theorists who are not mentioned in the syllabus. With which theorists should students be familiar?</p>	<p>Answer: There are theorists associated with many of the techniques covered by the syllabus. Any theorist who appears in the CIMA Study System can be examined.</p>
<p>Question 7: I must sit Papers P4 and P5. In what order should I sit them?</p>	<p>Answer: Due to the progression in skill levels, you should sit Paper P4 before Paper P5. You could, of course, sit them together</p>