



Updates to Practice Module

The new Practice Module format - what you need to know

The IFoA is pleased to announce a significant overhaul of its UK Practice Module examinations, replacing the current multiple choice examinations with new online modules.

Those new modules will take the form of facilitated workshops, based around relevant case studies and requiring a high level of participation by candidates. They will also be supported by updated and simplified core reading that is designed to give Members the tools to keep themselves up to date with developments in the future.

The new modules will be more closely linked to the IFoA Practising Certificate (PC) roles for which they are required, and will aim to give Members applying for a PC (or contemplating doing so) a grounding in the UK regulatory environment and related practice that they can continue to develop and learn about through their ongoing CPD and practical experience of carrying out the role.

The modules will be facilitated (and participation signed off) by both current (or recent) Practising Certificate holders and members of the IFoA's Lifelong Learning team.

1. Current Practice Modules.

The purpose of the current UK Practice Modules arrangement is to enable individuals to demonstrate that they have attained a minimum threshold of knowledge in UK practice, regulation and professional standards. A pass in the Practice Module is currently a requirement for being awarded a Practising Certificate ("PC") that is required to undertake certain reserved roles in the UK (other than for those who qualified as a Fellow before 2005).

The current UK Practice Modules consist of online, on-demand multiple choice exams, which are assessed on a pass or fail basis and supported by learning material maintained by the IFoA, consisting of facts and figures relating to aspects of UK environment and actuarial practice.

There are currently 5 modules, categorized by the different practice areas of: Health & Care (P1), Life (P2), General (P3), Pensions (P4) and Investment and Finance (P7). There is also a generic practice module P(0) that is common to all areas of practice.

A review of the current UK Practice Modules concluded that while there was still an important role for the modules in ensuring an appropriate grounding in regulation and practice for those taking on senior regulated actuarial roles, they were not, in their current form, delivering on that objective as effectively as they might. The nature of the modules, as multiple choice examinations, as well as the rapidly changing nature of the regulatory content in the learning materials meant that they were no longer optimal and a new approach was required.

This also complements the new approach to PCs, announced recently by the IFoA following consultation, which will be focused on assessing an applicant's competency to carry out a

role and supporting them in the application process. A link to the consultation can be found below:

<https://www.actuaries.org.uk/documents/consultation-proposals-new-practising-certificate-scheme>

2. Proposed new UK Practice Modules

The new modules will involve:

1. Participation in facilitated online workshops, which will look at case studies developed by the IFoA.
2. Facilitation of those workshops by both a PC Holder (or someone that has held a PC in the past) and a member of the IFoA's Lifelong Learning Team, with participation being signed off by the facilitators.
3. Members having access to learning materials online, which will provide guidance on how to keep themselves up to date with current regulation and practice and be supplemented by their own research, experience and employer resources to support their ongoing learning and development.
4. The Modules (and core reading) being more closely aligned to the roles for which PCs are required. Details of the different new modules will be published in due course.
5. Case studies will be prepared for each of the relevant practice areas to include presentations and pre-recorded videos from existing practitioners. Candidates will be expected to participate actively in the workshops and to engage in discussions about the case study exercises. Participation is compulsory but it is participation that will be signed off by the facilitators, as opposed to a "pass/fail" marking system.
6. Material will be available online and facilitated discussions will usually take place on peer group basis (although individual workshops may need to take place with just the facilitators, depending on the demand for assessment in a particular practice area, on a particular date). Dates for the case study assessment will be released in advance and an initial timetable will be confirmed in summer 2022.

3. Interaction with Practising Certificate requirements

The UK Practice Modules will continue to be a key aspect of the PC requirements with the new PC Scheme requiring completion of the relevant UK Practice Module(s) for new applications.

The new PC Scheme will also introduce a requirement that the UK Practice Module is completed within the 2 years before a new application for a PC. This reflects the new format of the modules and the frequency with which regulation and practice changes in the roles for which PCs are required. It also means that those that need to complete the modules again (because the two year period has expired) should still find them valuable given that the participants and case study will have changed.

This new requirement also means that those considering applying for a PC will need to begin their planning and make arrangements for completing the relevant module in the lead up to applying.

It is not anticipated that those who currently hold a PC will be required to engage with the UK Practice Modules unless they give up their PC and then re-apply in the future.

For those individuals who have sat the current UK Practice Modules and have not yet applied for a PC, a transitional period will be allowed for applications to be made without needing to undertake the new modules. Further details of the transitional arrangements will be published along with the implementation arrangements for the overall new PC Scheme in spring 2022.

4. UK Practice Modules as a CPD opportunity

Even for those who are not required to sit the new UK Practice Modules, for example existing PC holders, they will still be available as a new CPD opportunity.

New Practice Module Framework: FAQs

1. *I hold a “pass” in a practice module but do not hold a PC, what does the new regime mean for me?*

There will be a reasonable period of time allowed for you to apply for a PC using the current UK Practice Modules. Details on that transitional period will be published in the spring along with the other dates for the new PC Scheme coming into effect.

2. *What will be cost of the new practice module?*

This will be confirmed in summer 2022 but we anticipate this will be in line with current costs.

3. *What will be time commitment for the new practice module?*

We do not anticipate any significant increase in time commitment from the current modules, although the work involved will be in a different form.

4. *When do the new modules start?*

Summer 2022 – exact dates will be confirmed in the spring.

5. *When do the new requirements around the modules for the purposes of getting a PC come into effect?*

The dates for the new PC Scheme coming into effect (including the changes to the requirements around UK Practice Modules) will be published in spring 2022

6. *When will example case studies become available?*

Example case studies are expected to become available in June 2022.

7. *How many opportunities to complete modules will there be each year?*

The number of opportunities will vary between modules reflecting the different demand and the number of applicants for PCs. There will be between 2 and 4 case study workshops in relevant areas that take place each year and dates will be released in advance. The new arrangements will not delay the application process for any member looking to obtain a PC.

8. *If I have further questions where should I send my questions to?*

Please direct any questions to EP&LLL@actuaries.org.uk