

## PEB Report on the 2022 Qualifying Examination Session

This report to candidates covers general and administrative matters. Feedback on the individual units can be found in the Principal Examiner Reports which can be found on the PEB website [here](#).

### General

Before and during examination sessions, PEB responds to a great many email queries from candidates. PEB would advise candidates to ensure that they familiarise themselves with the information about the examinations that is in the document/s published on the PEB website. Answers to the majority of candidates' queries are in these documents. Unfortunately, at busy times dealing with routine email queries can impact on PEB's ability to give support to candidates with more complex or serious issues.

Candidates are also asked to ensure they take these routine steps which would help their examination administration run smoothly:

- Notify PEB promptly if they change their email address. Every year candidates contact PEB to say they have not received important information. Almost invariably it was sent to the email address that was provided at registration, but which is no longer valid.
- Meet published deadlines for providing essential information (such as Designated Contact details) and requests for reasonable adjustments.

### PEBX

Over 98% of candidates managed their time effectively and uploaded their Answer documents to PEBX well before the End Upload time.

Most of the candidates who failed to upload attributed the failure to their not having seen the PEBX on-screen warnings. However, candidates were given clear guidance before the examinations that they should not rely on the on-screen warnings, or the PEBX clock, because breaks in internet connection or documents open on-screen could result in them not seeing the warning messages. Candidates are reminded that they should arrange to have a traditional clock in their examination room and that it is their responsibility to check it is working and keeping accurate time.

### Foundation – ProctorExam

Most candidates followed the guidance on setting up ProctorExam very carefully. There seem to have been a minute number of issues with ProctorExam.

### Finals – Zoom invigilation

The Zoom invigilation also seemed generally to have worked well.

### The PEBX and ProctorExam Trials

The trial examinations are expensive and they are paid for through the candidate examination fees. It was again very disappointing that some candidates did not take part in the trial, and then asked PEB for a second opportunity to have a trial.

## **Malpractice**

Malpractice was not a serious issue in 2022. However, the Reviewers of the ProctorExam recordings reported a number of instances of administrative breaches of the Malpractice Policy, in particular:

- ProctorExam identity checks not properly completed; and
- books, bags and jackets not having been removed from the room where the examination took place.

PEB expects candidates to act in a way which is consistent with what the IPReg Code of Conduct sets out for members of the profession, namely that they should not do anything that “might compromise ... the dignity and good standing of the regulated person or of the patent or trade mark professions” (Rule 5.2). It is recognised that examinations can be very stressful for candidates, especially if technical difficulties occur. However, PEB will not tolerate rude, disruptive or unprofessional emails or behaviour from candidates.

On examination days, PEB aims to prioritise dealing with candidate emails according to their urgency. It is counter-productive to saturate the PEB inboxes with email messages. Multiple emails from an individual candidate delay, not hasten, the response to their issue.

PEB was extremely concerned when it received a report that a number of candidates had accosted a senior examiner who was attending an event in their non-PEB capacity. It was reported that these candidates had attempted to raise concerns about the non-upload of their Answer documents. Again, this type of unprofessional behaviour is counter-productive and future occurrences will be considered as breaches of the Malpractice Policy.

Concerns about any aspect of the examinations should be sent to [peb@cipa.org.uk](mailto:peb@cipa.org.uk) in accordance with the PEB Customer Feedback Policy [here](#).

## **Special Consideration and Technical Problems**

Special Consideration can only be approved for technical problems that are external and beyond the control of the candidate, for example when a WIFI connection breakdown is due to failure by the internet provider. The number of candidates in this situation was extremely small.

## **2023 Examinations**

The PEB Governance Board has decided the form of invigilation/ proctoring that will be used in the 2023 Qualifying Examinations will be as in the 2022 examination session: Foundation examinations will be proctored by ProctorExam; Finals examinations will be invigilated by PEB invigilators via Zoom.

Further information will be released by the PEB in due course.

## **Patent Examination Board**

March 2023