



Candidates Manual for CIEH Professional Examinations

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Introduction

1. This manual is designed to help you, the candidate, better understand the process of the Professional Examinations and to hopefully smooth your passage through them.
2. By this time you should be considering and preparing for the Professional Examinations. You should have:
 - a) Concluded or be very close to concluding your academic studies
 - b) Registered with the Environmental Health Registration Board (EHRB)
3. If you are enrolled on, or have completed, a course accredited under the 2003, 2007 or 2010 curriculum the CIEH Professional Examinations consist of the following elements:
 - a) A Professional Written Examination
 - b) A Standard Professional Interview.
4. If you are enrolled on, or have completed, a course accredited under the 2011 curriculum the CIEH Professional Examinations consist of the following elements:
 - a) An Integrated Professional Assessment (which will be conducted at your University as part of the course).
 - b) An Extended Professional Interview.

You will not be required to sit the Professional Written Examination.

Applying to sit the Professional Examinations

5. You need to register with EHRB at least 21 days before applying for any of the Professional Examinations.
6. You must make a separate application for each of the assessment elements (excluding the Integrated Professional Assessment) and each application must be submitted at least six weeks before your chosen sitting. If you apply late, your application for your chosen session will be rejected. Dates and venues of both elements are on the appropriate application form which you can download from the CIEH website (www.cieh.org).

7. The application forms also contain other appropriate details; for example, if you have any special needs that need to be met in order to allow you to sit the examinations, then use the space provided on the application form and let the CIEH know. Please note that CIEH will only be able to respond to your special needs if you advise us in advance of the assessment and via the application form.
8. Once you have submitted a complete application the CIEH will acknowledge your application then contact you to confirm the time, date and venue approximately 3 weeks prior to the event.
9. Details of current examination fees can be found on the application forms on our website. Alternatively, contact the Education Team on 020 7928 6006 or via education@cieh.org

The Professional Written Examination

10. It is usual for examinations to start at 11.00am and you should arrive by 10.30am at the latest. This may sound simple and obvious but please bear in mind that travelling even short distances can involve unexpected hold-ups and car parking difficulties and, even though you may be familiar with the venue, the route to the examination room may have changed since your last visit!
11. When you arrive at the venue please make yourself known to the CIEH administrator. He/she is formally required to check your photographic identification so please bring your passport or driving licence or Student Union card etc. – if you don't have proof of identity you may not be allowed to sit the exam!
12. Shortly before the start time of the examination you will be asked to enter the examination room and take your seat. You will be asked to leave any coats, bags, mobile phones (switched off) in a particular area of the examination room. Normally your desk will be designated by your own personal examination pack showing your name and registration number.
13. Once you are seated, the invigilator will address all candidates on the subject of exam conduct. In addition, your desk will also contain a page of written instructions for candidates.
14. The Professional Written exam is an open book format examination; so you may take into the room any reading materials which you feel may assist you in completing the task(s), excluding materials on laptops, printers and mobile phones. However, there will usually be adequate information contained within the 'reading pack' that is normally provided by the CIEH to enable you to undertake the tasks without needing vast quantities of additional material.
15. Prior to the start of the examination the invigilator will ask you to open your examination pack and check the contents which will normally comprise your case file and the reading pack.

16. At the allotted time the invigilator will inform you that you may start the examination, which is in two parts:

Part 1 - 11am to 1pm – reading and preparation phase.

This is the time for you to study the case file and any other appropriate materials and to make any notes that you feel will assist you in the afternoon – plenty of note paper will be made available for you.

Part 2 - 2pm to 5pm – examination phase.

At the start of this phase you will be provided with information on the tasks you will be required to complete and also with your examination answer book(s) and any other material which may be appropriate.

17. A lunch break will be taken between 1pm and 2pm. No restrictions are placed on you during this time.
18. The Professional Written Examination will be intervention based and will cover at least two different intervention fields.
19. A previous paper together with marking advice is available for you to download from the CIEH website (www.cieh.org). You are strongly advised to have a look at this paper in advance of your sitting. In the main the examiner will be looking for you to apply yourself to the required interventions and a detailed knowledge of legislation or technical information is not a pre-requisite; nevertheless, this will be one of your final Examinations and, as such, the attainment of a broad and deep understanding of environmental health processes and procedures is expected.
20. The examination, in its entirety, will be undertaken under examination room conditions – these do not apply during the lunch break.
21. You will normally be advised of the date when you can expect to receive your results from CIEH. Please don't be tempted to ring up to try to get your result before that time.
22. Results will be classified as Distinction, Pass or Fail. You can find details of the classification criteria in the Examination Regulations.

The Standard Professional Interview

23. Aim to arrive early for your interview – even if you are familiar with the venue. You will have been given details of the venue and the start time of your interview when you received your invitation email, approximately 3 weeks prior to the event.
24. If you arrive late, without prior notice, you may not be allowed to take the interview. If you do get a problem on the way to the interview which may delay you, then please call the Education Unit at the CIEH and advise the

CIEH administrator – he/she may be able to make an adjustment to the timetable so you can be accommodated on the same day – but this cannot be guaranteed.

25. On arrival you will be met by a member of the CIEH administration team who will ensure that you are who you say you are by checking your photographic identification and will arrange for safe keeping of any mobile phones, handbags, coats etc.
26. It is possible that the moderator may meet you at the same time. The moderator may also sit in for a part or the whole of your interview. The moderator's job is to ensure the assessors are carrying out the interview in the correct way and according to the Examination Regulations. He/she will not be assessing you.
27. At your appointed time one of the examiners will meet you and escort you to the Interview room where you will be introduced to the second examiner.
28. The normal layout of the interview room is a table with the two examiners sitting at one side and you sitting opposite. On the table will be a clock, some water and cups, a copy of the Examination Regulations, notepaper and pens.
29. The examiners will explain the process of the interview. Listen carefully to your instructions and if you are in any doubt please do ask at this stage.
30. You will be presented with three scenarios (e.g. a food poisoning case, a complaint of noise and a young family living in a house affected by dampness). The examiners will then leave the room for 20 minutes, usually agreeing a 'return time' with you. During this 20 minute period you will have the opportunity to study the three scenarios and to make any notes you wish – you can refer to your notes during the interview. At the end of the 20 minute period the examiners will re-enter the room and the interview, which will last between 35 and 45 minutes, will commence.
31. During the interview the examiners will want you to determine an order of priority, in terms of public health risk, for the three scenarios. You will be asked to explain the reasoning behind your choice. The examiners may ask you a number of 'what if' questions, some of which may lead you to consider changing your original order of priority, others may not! The examiners will not try to trick you, but they may test your reasoning and professional justification skills. You will then be asked to choose one of the scenarios to talk about in detail. The choice is entirely yours – it is not related to the order of priorities which you determined; choose the scenario you feel most comfortable with.

The examiners will then discuss your chosen scenario with you and will be looking for you to demonstrate to an acceptable level:

- a) A professional attitude and approach
- b) An ability to determine an appropriate course of action/intervention

- c) An awareness of the wider implications surrounding the scenario including reference to any additional health impacts and others with whom to work to secure a desirable outcome

Do not expect the interview to follow the above order. You are likely to find that the Interview becomes a 'conversation between colleagues'; this is perfectly normal.

- 32. Use the 20 minutes wisely to make notes – it is not a lot of time but it is adequate to enable you to jot down a few keywords/bullet points referring to why you think one scenario is a more significant public health risk than the others, which scenario you will choose and some of the main issues which you think arise out of that scenario.
- 33. Remember you can refer to your notes during the interview.
- 34. Bear in mind that you may be cast in any role as an EHP (newly qualified). This need not necessarily be in the role of a local authority EHP. It may be as a consultant, or as an advisor to a large commercial chain, or as someone working for the NHS etc. Expect this and do not be fazed by it.
- 35. There are no trick questions – try to consider what you would do, or what should be done, in the real world of environmental health. The interview is not a test of detailed technical or legal knowledge; although there may be some reference to legislation etc.
- 36. Remember that our examiners are all EHPs and colleagues – if there's anything you don't understand please ask.
- 37. At the end of the interview you will be given the opportunity, if you wish, to add anything to what you've discussed – just in case you think the examiners have 'skated' over something which you think is important. It's worth just spending a few seconds glancing at your notes at this point rather than rushing out of the room – although you're not obliged to add anything unless you wish to do so!
- 38. Don't forget to collect your mobile phone etc. before you leave the venue!
- 39. Results will be sent to you within 21 days of the date of the assessment and will be classified as Distinction, Pass or Fail. You can find details of the classification criteria in the Examination Regulations.

The Extended Professional Interview

- 40. The Extended Professional Interview is divided into two parts. The first part follows the same format as the Standard Professional Interview outlined above and all guidance offered above is applicable.
- 41. The second part is a Viva Voce based on a Public Health report from your Portfolio of Professional Practice (PPP). During the assessment of your PPP three Public Health reports will have been assessed as part of the sampling

scheme, the Education Unit will keep a copy of these reports and will select one of them at random for the Viva.

42. You will not know which report has been selected before your interview, so you should prepare to discuss any of your three PPP Public Health reports that were assessed.
43. The examiners will have read your report before the interview and will have prepared some questions. They will have also seen the PPP assessor's feedback on your report, therefore you should consider any comments provided by the PPP assessor carefully because these may give you an indication of the type of questions the examiners have in mind.
44. When the Standard Professional Interview ends the examiners will inform you that they are moving on to the Viva Voce. They will provide you with a copy of your report and you will be given a few moments to familiarise yourself with it before the Viva commences. The Viva lasts between 15 and 20 minutes.
45. The examiners will be looking for you to demonstrate that you can engage in a discussion about your report, you can expand the reflection provided in the report and show that your knowledge, practice based skills and competencies are embedded. You can find details of the marking descriptors in the Examination Regulations.
46. The Extended Professional Interview will be classified in two parts. The Standard Professional Interview part will be classified as a Distinction, Pass or Fail and the Viva will be classified as a Distinction, Pass or Fail. If you fail the Standard interview part but pass the Viva you can 'bank' this mark and you will not be required to re-sit the Viva. The same applies if you pass the Standard interview part but fail the Viva, in this case you will only be required to re-sit the Viva. Full details of the classification can be found in the Examination Regulations.