

EXAMINATION GUIDELINES



The Institute of Carpenters

Do your best

We want you to do well in your Institute of Carpenters exams and tests and in your career, so we've written '**Taking your tests - how to do your best**', which we hope you'll find useful. The I.O.C. has a general policy on equal opportunities for candidates and to help those with special needs, such as specific learning difficulties or, for example, deafness. If you have any particular difficulties or disabilities, please tell your local examination centre at the earliest opportunity.

And remember I.O.C. certificates are recognised by employers as evidence of your achievements, so they're well worth working for!

Taking your tests - how to do your best

We want you to do as well as you can in your I.O.C. Exams which will give you, the candidate, an opportunity to provide evidence of your skills and knowledge sufficient to meet specified industrial standards.

In preparing for exams, remember that

- All materials are carefully written by experienced people who may be involved in industry, business, commerce, technology, teaching or training.
- Examinations are designed to let you show that your skill and knowledge have reached the right standard; if you reach that standard you will pass the exam.
- Examiners are **not** required to fail a certain number or percentage of candidates for any assessment.

An exam is your chance to give the examiner a true picture of what you can do and what you know.

To help you do your best, here are some tips on how to prepare yourself for the examinations.

Formal Assessment

For example, end-of-course written tests, set practical tasks.

Before your test

- Look at your course notes and, if possible, the syllabus and devise a revision programme - consult your tutor if necessary.
- Start your revision early.
- List the facts and techniques that are essential for your subject.
- Check for gaps in your skills and knowledge and work on them.
- Make sure you know how much time you will be given and how many questions you should answer.
- Read past papers or sample papers to become familiar with the style of the tests.
- Talk questions through with tutors and classmates.
- The more you practise, the more confident you will feel and the more easily your thoughts will flow in the test. Practice and revision will increase your confidence. You'll know what to expect, what you are to do, what materials are to be used, where you are to take the test and how much time you'll have.

The day before

- Get ready - collect all the equipment you'll need and any spares you may need, for example, pen cartridges or calculator batteries.
- Have a relaxing day and a good night's sleep.
- Whatever the temptation, don't drink alcohol before taking a test.
- Don't cram - last minute revision may confuse you.
- Double-check that you have correct details of where and when the test will take place.

The day of the test

- Arrive at the test room early and try to relax.
- Once in the test room listen carefully to everything the invigilator says. He/she has important instructions to give you.
- If you don't understand the instructions, ask.
- Use all the time you are given - you don't get extra marks for finishing early and you may lose marks by rushing.
- Pace yourself, plan your time.

Practical tests

- Make sure you are familiar with all the materials and equipment you will be expected to use.
- Make sure you have available everything you will need for the test, and suitable clothing if required.
- Before the test begins, if you don't understand exactly what you have to do, ask the examiner.
- At the start of the test, plan your sequence of work using all your training and experience.
- Don't rush or you'll make mistakes. The test has been designed to allow sufficient time for the task to be completed.
- Avoid short-cuts that could be regarded as bad practice.
- Be safe. Work to health and safety guidelines.

Written tests (all)

- Make sure you write in information requested, such as your name, candidate number, the centre number, the name of the paper, the date and your signature on your answerbook/sheet, drawing paper and any additional answer sheets you hand in.
- Read the instructions carefully.
- Make a quick calculation of how much time you can spend on each question - allow for reading the question, planning your answer, writing it and reading it over.

Written tests (short-answer or structured question)

- Read through the whole paper before starting to answer.
- Make sure you know how many questions you have to answer and whether the paper has sections (these details will be shown on the front sheet of the question paper).
- Make sure you answer compulsory questions and answer only the correct number of questions overall.
- You can answer the questions in any order you prefer, though compulsory questions are best tackled first.
- Underline the key words in the question to help you keep to the point in your answer.
- Don't waste time by repeating the question in your answer.
- Look for instructions words in the question such as 'describe' and 'explain'. These tell you the type of answer to give.

Common instruction words are

List/Name	Give list or name facts required rather than sentences
State	Give the relevant fact(s) briefly and to the point

Describe/Detail	Give a full account with examples of the procedure, term etc specified in the question
Outline	Briefly give all the essential points
Compare/Contrast	Point out similarities and differences, advantages and disadvantages of the items mentioned in the question
Define	Give the exact meaning (eg of a term, principle, procedure)

What is meant by..? More than just define - give a definition but go on to give some explanation and discuss its significance and limitations

Explain why..... Give the reason(s) for

Sketch Do a freehand drawing

Draw Do a fine-line-ruled drawing - to scale if required.

- If you start to 'dry up' on one question leave a space and move on. You are likely to gain more marks on the next question than you will by struggling on with the present one.
- If you feel your answer is incomplete, leave sufficient space below so you can come back to it later and keep it all together.
- With structured questions, answer all the parts - each part carries marks.
- Write down the answers the examiner has asked for, not all the things you can possibly tell the examiner on the subject. For example, if you are asked to list **three** items, list **three** - you won't get extra marks for listing more.
- Help your examiner by numbering your answers clearly. Show all your working on your answer-book. If you make a mistake, don't rub out - cross through.
- Make your sketches and drawings good-sized, label them clearly and include all essential points.
- If you start to run out of time, write short accurate notes instead of sentences.
- If you have the time, read through your answers and check any calculations you have made.

Good-Luck!!