

Statement from the Joint Insolvency Examination Board

Today, the results for those who took the examinations in November 2018 have been published and we congratulate all who have passed either one or both of the papers. As always, these were demanding examinations to test the skills of those wishing to qualify as a Licensed Insolvency Practitioner.

As a Board, we were informed at an early stage that issues had arisen with the administration of the examinations and which had caused concern to candidates. The Board was approached by some firms and tutoring organisations and a number of candidates submitted applications for special consideration, detailing the issues that had arisen. All the issues raised have been taken very seriously by the Board which, once the normal marking and moderating process had been completed, spent a full day analysing and discussing all aspects of this matter.

The Chairman of our Board, Stephen Allinson, has written personally to every candidate who has raised any issue and apologised on our behalf for what has occurred. He is also writing to those firms and tutoring organisations which have approached the Board.

Following careful consideration, and in accordance with recognised educational practice, we have awarded up to 6 extra marks to all candidates on all papers to recognise the following:

- computer hardware and software failings;
- the increased time and other pressures brought about by the issues experienced; and
- for all candidates who sat either paper at the London Borough High Street centre, the particular and specific problems experienced at that venue.

We also asked the Senior Moderator to ensure that the scripts of all candidates, who although having been awarded additional marks as above had still marginally failed a paper, have been moderated.

We do acknowledge that there will still be some candidates who will be disappointed that they have not passed, but that is the case every year and regrettably the nature of professional examinations. Once again, we apologise unreservedly that the administrative services (which we subcontract to ICAEW) were not fulfilled to the standard we require and all candidates deserve, but we are as satisfied as it is possible to be that no candidate that should have passed a paper has failed to do so as a result of these deficiencies.

Any professional organisation must take failings such as we have seen seriously and it is important that we look to ensure such events will not occur again. To that end, we have requested that ICAEW, who as we have said undertake all our secretariat services pursuant to a clear contractual agreement, undertake a full and comprehensive review of all their processes and procedures to seek to provide us with the requisite guarantees on all candidates' behalf moving forward for the November 2019 sitting and beyond.

We have already identified certain matters surrounding consistency of equipment delivery at all examination centres. It is also important that we communicate fully to all tutors and candidates the exact specification of equipment that will be supplied so that appropriate practice can be undertaken by all candidates. In that regard, at the Tutors and Firm Representatives meeting on 13th May at 2 pm we have asked that ICAEW Operational and Facilities Staff should be present to deal with these matters well in advance of the November 2019 examination and to explain their processes.

We do realise that these steps cannot correct what occurred for the 2018 candidates but we are determined to learn from them and provide an examination delivery that befits the qualification sought.

Stephen Allinson Eileen Blackburn Guy Hollander Anna Hughes Calum Jones

Andrew Kelsall

Directors of the Joint Insolvency Examination Board.