

FAQs from Learning Providers

Thank you for supporting us with our first session CBE (F5-F9) exam session. These FAQs have been collated from learning providers during our engagement process and we would like to share them with you, in case they help with any questions you may have.

Remember you can find more information and resources at www.accaglobal.com/examchanges

1. Will students have to complete the three sections of the exam in order?
Students can go back and forward between questions in the exam, as they wish. In addition, in the live exam they will have a Navigator function that will allow them to select which questions, in any section of the exam, they wish to go straight to. Students can go back and forward between questions and sections in the exam as they wish and they can change their answers at any point during the exam.
2. Will students be able to track their progress in the exam?
There is an item Review screen which appears when they click next on the last question in the exam – this allows them to see the status of each question and they can select questions to revisit. There will also be a section summary screen giving a summary of the content of the next section.
3. Will students have 15 minutes reading time, like they do in paper-based exams?
No, however students will have 10 minutes reading time to go through instruction screens ahead of the exam starting. The exam will automatically start after 10 minutes, although they can start the exam at any time during this period. As soon as the exam has started the exam timer will start and their exam will automatically finish after the time has allotted.

This means students can start the exams at different times, however all students will have to remain in exam hall until the full time (10 minutes instructions plus exam time) has allotted. The exam instructions can be accessed at any point during the exam by accessing the Help button.
4. Will students be able to use cut, copy and paste functionality within the exam?
Students will be able to use cut, copy and paste features within a single Word Processing and Spreadsheet answer/response area or with the scratchpad. It is not possible to cut, copy, or paste from one response area to another nor from the scratchpad into a response area.
5. Will keyboard shortcuts be available for the constructed answer functionality?
Yes, the list of keyboard shortcuts available is detailed in the session CBE (F5-F9) guide.
6. How will students have access to the scratchpad?
The scratchpad is accessible from the Scratchpad button on the top toolbar. It will only be shown if selected by students.

7. How will students know the total number or requirements (and marks available for each?) for the constructed response questions?

The section summary screen confirms how many constructed response questions there are in total (e.g. 2 or 3) and how many marks they are worth. The top of the question stem will indicate how many requirements the scenario/question relates to.

8. In addition to the scratchpad, will students be provided with any additional paper in the exam?

Yes – students will be issued scrap paper which they may use to make notes. As with the scratchpad, anything on these notes will not be marked.

9. Can students bring their own calculator into the exam?

Yes. As with paper exams they are permitted to use their own calculator providing it does not have the facility to store or display text.

10. Will questions and response areas always be shown on a screen split vertically?

Typically they will be split vertically but there may be some occasions where some of the questions are best presented horizontally.

11. Will the timer be available for the whole exam?

The timer will be on screen for the duration of the exam. A timer will be displayed during the instructions screen. Once the time to read the instructions has elapsed or once a student clicks through to the first exam screen, the exam timer will automatically start. The exam timer will be on screen throughout the duration of the exam.

12. Will it be possible to change the screen font size for questions and answers?

There is a special accommodation that can be configured called 'ZoomText' which allows the user to change both the size and contrast of the screen. It will not be generally available to all students. To get this ZoomText accommodation the student must raise a request for additional requirements team (existing additional support process) so that they can add the accommodation to the booking. This type of additional support won't be available during the September and December 2016 sessions but will be available from March 17.

13. What variants of the F6 exam are available to take by CBE?

The F6 (UK) variant is available to take by CBE. All other variants of the F6 exam should be taken by paper-based method.

14. How will the paper-based exams differ from the CBE exams?

The same learning outcomes will be tested to the same standard across both paper and CBE format. Each method will have the same exam format.

The differences are in the way that students will answer the questions. In paper-based exams students will only answer Multiple Choice Questions within the Objective Test section, whereas there are additional question types which can be utilized in the CBE format – such as 'drag and drop' and 'fill in the blank' for example.

Within the constructed response question area, students within the CBE exams will use spreadsheet and word processing functionality to complete their answers. This may on occasions use an element of pre-formatted answer areas.

In September and December 2016 the exact same exam content will be used. From March 2017 the exam content will be different across the two formats, however as before the same learning outcomes will be tested to the same standard.

15. Will I have to teach differently to CBE than I do to paper?

No. The same learning outcomes will be tested to the same standard across both paper and CBE format.

Therefore, during the teaching phase the same tuition can be applied to both paper-based and CBE students. During the revision and question practice stages, we would recommend that students practice on the format of the exam they intend to take.

16. What will happen if there are any technical issues (power failure etc.) which affect the running of the exams?

As with our paper-based exams, there will be contingency and exception policies in place should issues arise which affect the exams. The exam will be a 'offline' exam, so this limits the type of technical error.

17. In objective test 'fill in the blank' question section, what importance will be given to spelling/right use of symbol etc?

As this question is auto-marked the fill in the blank question type will be used for a whole number only, so it would not be required for students to type in a full word.

18. Will students taking CBE exams be issued with a paper copy of the questions too?

No, all questions will be displayed on screen only. However, all students will be issued with scrap paper to make rough workings on paper if they wish. These will not be marked.

19. What type of keyboards will be used?

Standard UK language (QWERTY) keyboards will be used.

20. Will the exam content be the same between paper and session CBE?

In September and December 2016 the session CBE content will mirror that of the paper exam. From March 2017 paper and session CBE students will receive different exam content.

The same learning outcomes will be tested and to the same standard across both exams.

21. How will students enter for session CBEs for December 2016 and beyond?

Exam entry will be open to all students through our new exam entry system, although capacity will be limited. This will be ready ahead of the early entry deadline for the December 2016 exams.

22. Will there be any advice to students and learning providers of what to expect on the exam day?

We will be creating collateral ahead of the exams so that students and learning providers will be aware of how the exam day will run.

23. Why is the exam time between the paper and session CBE different?

We have an extensive exam development process, which ensures our exams are fit for purpose. For session CBEs there are many time saving efficiencies to be made taking

the exam by CBE format. So to ensure equivalence between the paper-based and CBE version of the exam the CBE exam is 3 hours compared to 3 hours and 15 minutes offered for paper.

From March 2017 we will need to introduce some additional features to aid exam security. This will mean students sitting the same subject may receive different questions so that we can keep our exam content secure and ensure reliability of results. To support this process we will be introducing seeded content in 2017. These are questions that do not contribute towards a student's mark, but are used to ensure that results are fair and reliable.

When we introduce seeded content students will be given more time to complete the exams – increasing to 3 hours and 20 minutes to take into account the inclusion of additional seeded content.