

CIPR Specialist Certificate (Internal Communication)

Syllabus

The aim of the CIPR Specialist Certificate (Internal Communication) is to introduce candidates to the key concepts, theories, techniques and skills needed to operate effectively as an internal communicator.

Candidates will learn where internal communication fits into the structure, systems and processes, leadership and culture of an organisation; how to research, create and curate content that works and has impact across a range of available channels; and how internal communicators can support management in the achievement of strategic and transformational objectives.

Learning Objectives

Successful candidates will be able to:

- Explain how internal communication impacts organisational effectiveness;
- Select and apply internal communication and engagement models and concepts to support achievement of objectives;
- Describe how internal communication and engagement can support organisational change;
- Identify the key issues facing internal communicators in strategy setting;
- Carry out research to support development of an internal communication plan;
- Produce an internal communication plan (research, situation analysis, setting measurable objectives, developing tactics, and monitoring and evaluating impact);
- Produce effective written and verbal communications (engagement, tone of voice, storytelling, brand alignment and managing communities);
- Outline how social media can be used effectively in the internal communication mix (range, properties and management of channels, employee preferences, feedback mechanisms, employee voice, and enterprise social networks);
- Describe how the internal communicator can support managers (the role of management in communication and face to face engagement, team briefing, and listening techniques).

The Specialist Certificate (Internal Communications) is delivered by CIPR-accredited teaching centres, via 20 hours of face to face, online or blended learning, and a further 4 - 6 hours of self-directed study per week*, guided reading and research and/ or 'homework' tasks. Each CIPR-accredited teaching centre will establish the detailed content, lesson plans and resources provided to candidates.

*Self-directed study hours are provided for guidance only and will vary from one individual to another.

Assessment: Internal communication plan, content curation and brief for piece of creative work

Aim: To enable candidates to demonstrate competence in developing: an internal communication plan informed by research; content curation; and a brief for written content. The plan will typically be for a relatively small scale activity.

Topic of inquiry: Candidates will be required to apply professional judgement in identifying a suitable topic related to the candidate's own organisation, a client, or another organisation of the candidate's

choice. This will be a current concern or opportunity for a specific organisation and/or sector, and may relate to the candidate's own experience.

Before candidates start work on the assignment, tutors should discuss and agree topics. Some topics may involve matters that are strategically or commercially sensitive for the organisation concerned, in which case it is the responsibility of the candidate to obtain their agreement. It is acceptable to resolve confidentiality issues by using a fictitious name for a genuine organisation, so long as the tutor's approval has been gained before work on the assignments begins.

Submission: The assignment will comprise:

1. Internal communication plan to include:
 - a) 500 word overview (+/- 10%) of secondary research undertaken to inform the internal communication plan
 - b) 1,500 word (+/- 10%) detailed internal communication plan to include important employee groups, objectives, activities, timeframe
2. Content curation report and creative brief based on the internal communication plan:
 - a) 500 word (+/- 10%) content curation report detailing process and tools to be used to curate (identify, evaluate, annotate and re-publish) written and multimedia content relating to the internal communication plan
 - b) 500 word (+/- 10%) brief for a piece of creative work to support activities in the plan.

Example topics:

- A new approach to customer service
- New products or services
- Updates to operational plans
- Updates to organisational values
- Changes to operational processes or systems
- A senior manager roadshow
- A change situation.

Completion of the assignment involves the following activities:

- Fact finding – candidates are required to undertake data collection using secondary research methods (literature, archives, published surveys, reports, etc.) to examine the chosen topic of inquiry.
- Insight – candidates are required to use relevant models and concepts to explore the environment, the organisation and employee groups and to inform media selection and creative output.
- Communication – candidates are required to present an internal communication plan based on the research, together with a content curation report and a creative brief.
- Reflection – candidates are required to identify a relevant topic of inquiry. This will relate to internal communication practice in a specific organisation, and may relate to the candidate's own experience.

Word count

A substantive response to both Components is necessary to meet the requirements for a Pass.

The word count for each task, and the total word count, must be recorded in the appropriate spaces provided on the cover sheet and at the end of the relevant text in the main documents.

Bibliographies and footnotes, if any, are not included in the word count. Footnotes must not contain appendices or be used to include additional text that should have been in the main body of the work.

Candidates are allowed a +/- 10% leeway on the **total** word count for the assignment and must ensure they **DO NOT** exceed the +10% tolerance. Anything above this allowance will result in the indicative mark being reduced by one grade. No grading reduction will be implemented if they are below the -10% word tolerance but remember that it is very likely that the paper will fail because the tasks will not have been adequately addressed.

Referencing

Teaching centres must provide guidance to candidates on appropriate methods of referencing that are suitable for a business document.

Further information

CIPR Course Regulations

CIPR Specialist Qualifications Student Handbook