



## Council

1 October 2024, 12:00-13:00

Meeting held virtually via Microsoft Teams

<b>Attending</b>	Oliver Bettis, Cherry Chan, Akshay Dhand, Matthew Edwards, Colm Fitzgerald, Dermot Grenham, Cathy Lee, Yan Liu, Janet Moss, Mukami Njeru, Matthew Pearlman, Alan Rae, Hilary Salt, David Shaffer, Kalpana Shah, Malcolm Slee, Katie Sokolowski, Paul Sweeting, Kartina Thomson (Chair), Peter Tompkins
<b>Apologies</b>	Simon Jones, Hugh McNeill, Sandy Trust
<b>Guests</b>	David Currie (IFoA Board Chair), Aaron Porter (IFoA Board member), Kudzai Chigiji (IFoA Board member)
<b>Executive</b>	Ben Kemp, Thomas Evans (Corporate secretary), Hannah MacLeod (Corporate secretary), Mike McDougall.

### Special Meeting of Council to receive Board update on Examination Integrity

#### Welcome from Chair

1. The Chair welcomed all to the meeting, thanking Council members for attending at short notice. She also thanked David Currie (DC) and members of the IFoA Board for attending.

#### Update from IFoA Board Chair

2. DC provided an update to Council following a meeting of the IFoA Board on Sunday 29 September, convened to discuss a paper provided by Mike McDougall, Director of Learning, at the behest of Paul Sweeting in his role as Chair of Education Committee.
3. Following reports of cheating in the recent sitting of the CB2 examination, an investigation has begun into those allegations, which will be progressed by the IFoA's disciplinary function, with the Board focussing on the broader view of the examination process.

4. Council was advised that the ongoing nature of the investigation meant that a lack of data is to be expected at this stage, and that future updates will be more specific, including the financial impact of all options.
5. At its meeting on 30 July, IFoA Board agreed to the implementation of a new online proctoring tool, which will enhance the security of the examination process and will be in place for the April 2025 sitting.
6. Furthermore, the Board has agreed two additional measures to be put in place from the April 2025 diet:
  - i) A single exam sitting;
  - ii) Closed-book, closed-web examinations.
7. The Board is of the opinion that these three measures will enhance the security of the examination process, minimise the risk of cheating and provide confidence in the integrity of the IFoA's examinations and qualifications. The topic will be a standing item on future Board agendas.

#### Comments from Council

8. The Chair welcomed comments and questions from Council members. The discussion was focussed on the following themes: i) the investigation and its outcomes; ii) the online proctoring solution; iii) closed book examinations; iv) communications; v) the cancellation of an entire cohort; and vi) examination diets post -April 2025.

#### The investigation and its outcomes

9. Some Council members expressed a lack of confidence in the investigation and noted that they have been raising this issue for a number of years. One member expressed the view that the Board should investigate the failure to introduce an invigilation solution before now, whilst others noted that the focus should be on future solutions.
10. Council discussed possible ways to be more targeted in the investigation of cheating, and whether student members could be encouraged to call out unacceptable examination practices.

#### The online proctoring solution

11. Some members noted that candidates who want to cheat will find a way and that the online proctoring tool, while not perfect, will allow instances of cheating to be more readily identified.
12. One Council member noted their belief that the online proctoring tool is 'inept' and that proceeding in this way will continue to harm the IFoA's reputation.
13. The Director of Learning provided an outline of how the online proctoring will operate, and explained that although there is a range of options, the decision has been to proceed with a pragmatic solution which will be capable of implementation in April 2025. He explained that the solution combines the monitoring of candidate behaviour and mouse/key-stroke/monitor activity, as well as providing assurance that the individual completing the exam is the registered candidate. It was noted that the invigilation aims to monitor eye movement which can be successful in detecting the use of an additional device. It was confirmed that the invigilation would be recorded and that there would be no real-time intervention.
14. Council members noted that they would like to learn more about how the tool works and the Chair agreed that a separate meeting will be arranged to discuss further.

#### Closed Book, single sitting examinations

15. It was queried whether closed book examinations were compatible with online exams, and whether the online proctoring could be effective when candidates might have access to additional devices.
16. One member noted that closed book examinations involved a change in the mode of learning, and were not expected by the students who would be sitting the exams in April 2025.
17. One member queried whether additional papers could be prepared which would allow examinations to be completed more fairly across different time-zones, and the Director of Education confirmed that this would be considered.

#### Communications

18. The Director of Education confirmed that the IFoA would be communicating promptly with its members and stakeholders to acknowledge the cheating rumours; advise of the investigation process; confirm the changes agreed for the next diet;

and confirm that the integrity of examinations is paramount. A communications plan would be agreed by the IFoA Board at its next meeting.

19. Requests were made by members that communications recognised members as intelligent professionals. Furthermore, it was asked that student members be informed in the simplest language possible what is and is not acceptable behaviour when sitting an IFoA examination.

#### The nullification of an entire cohort

20. Council expressed concern that the nullification of the examinations of an entire cohort would punish innocent students and damage the reputation of the IFoA.
21. The Board Chair agreed that this would be a drastic step, only taken if the IFoA was definite that it was the correct action to take in the circumstances.

#### Future examination diets (post-April 2025)

22. Reassurance was given that no long-term decisions have been taken, with further work to be done on identifying a solution that works well for the IFoA and its members. One Council member questioned if the entire exam logistics piece could be outsourced.
23. In closing, Kartina confirmed that what is being proposed is a short-term measure and that a pragmatic, risk-based approach is required. The IFoA needs to take care not to be penalising honest students and must take into account the factors that impact them.
24. Email communication on this matter sent and received prior to the meeting will be shared with IFoA Board and the executive.

End.