

Feedback from the May 2014 Exams

This May we saw a total of 48 candidates over three days of exams, who achieved an overall pass rate of 81.25%. This pass rate is larger than pass rates of the previous two years, which typically hovered between 72% - 78%.

Candidates continue to be from a variety of backgrounds, age groups, and experience levels.

The May exams marked the first time the new Pathway 2.0 syllabus was tested by examinations. The syllabus was refined, intending to simplify the approach whilst maintaining standards. The syllabus has been largely met with a positive reaction, and any voiced concerns have been noted.

There were a number of issues that arose from the candidates over the three days, which have been collated into the following tips:

Formulate clear, concise answers

Unsuccessful candidates in the May exam mostly struggled to give clear, concise answers in the exam format. Sometimes this was because they lacked a broader understanding of the topic, and sometimes their nerves got in the way. Candidates can prepare themselves for the exam by reading [Pathway to Chartership Oral Examination](#). The examiners are looking for strong, clear answers that are explained with relevant examples, and advice to achieve this remains the same – practice, practice, practice.

Discuss your syllabus topics

The examiner feedback repeatedly recommended that candidates discuss the syllabus topics with their mentor, other practitioners, and within study groups. This helps candidates both understand the topics, and encourages candidates to be able to talk with confidence in the exam situation. If you don't have a study group within your area, please turn to [Talking Landscape](#) to see another group that you might be able to join in via Skype, or electronically through.

Use the mock exams, and create your own

Mock exams are an important exercise to help prepare candidates for the exam. The examiners recommended the use of mock exams repeatedly in this year's feedback. It's recommended that a mentor and their candidate carry out a mock exam in realistic exam scenarios, so that a candidate has an idea of the questions, the setting, and the time frame they will have to answer within the exam. Mock exams are a clear way of highlighting inadequate knowledge areas. It is also recommended that

candidates carry out a mock exam with another mentor. This helps candidates to prepare answering questions about the syllabus, to someone other than their mentor.

Areas of weakness

It is important to demonstrate a breadth of knowledge on all syllabus criteria. Although each candidate has different strengths and weaknesses, a few weak areas were identified across multiple candidates:

- Forms of practice
- Methods of calculation & charging / Fee tendering/Expenses / Changes to contracts
- LVIA's/ Environment Agency/ Designations Trees & Woodlands/ Protected species & habitats/ Statutory and non-statutory registers.
- Structure of the Planning system/ Planning policy, procedures

Pathway 2.0 Feedback

As mentioned above, feedback about the Pathway 2.0 syllabus has been largely favourable. Comments indicate that the new syllabus is more structured and logical, bringing together all the topic areas.

The Landscape Institute is also conducting a survey of all examiners, advisors, supervisors and candidates involved in the May 2014 exams. This will help identify any areas of improvement needed within the Pathway syllabus system, and will also help identify further study tools for current P2C candidates.