

November 2025



EXAMINATIONS HANDBOOK

Main Handbook - Information for Candidates

Amendments and date of issue

Amendments to this handbook can be authorised only by the Chair of the Qualifications Board in consultation with that Board and the Examinations Committee.

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Section I: Preface, structure and glossary

ALL CANDIDATES ARE EXPECTED TO HAVE READ THIS EXAMINATIONS HANDBOOK AND RELATED STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES BEFORE THEY ENTER FOR ANY EXAMINATIONS.

CANDIDATES SHOULD NOTE THE STRICT TIME LIMITS IN SOP 06 (MITIGATING CIRCUMSTANCES – WHERE A CANDIDATE'S ABILITY TO PREPARE FOR OR TAKE AN EXAMINATION IS UNEXPECTEDLY DISRUPTED) AND SOP 07 (APPEALS)

Preface

- 1.1 This handbook is issued for the guidance of all those involved in the examinations of the Institute of Tourist Guiding (the Institute) and those preparing or conducting accredited guide training programmes. It has been prepared by and is reviewed by the Institute's Examinations Committee, the Role and Remit of which is published on the Institute's website at www.itg.org.uk
- 1.2 It sets out the Institute's procedures for Blue Badge, Green Badge and White Badge examinations. The first and most important contact for each course will be its Chief Examiner, who will be appointed by the Qualifications Board of the Institute. Any queries concerning the examinations procedures must be addressed in the first instance to the Chief Examiner. Further advice is available from the Examinations Officer of the Institute.
- 1.3 Candidates seeking an Institute qualification must pass all the Institute's examinations for the relevant badge colour to obtain that qualification. All candidates for a Blue or Green Badge must have completed a two-day Communications Seminar as part of an Institute accredited course within the last 5 years.
- 1.4 In the conduct of the examinations system, the Examinations Officer, Chief Examiner, Examiners, Compilers and Moderators will ensure that all judgements made are consistent, fair and applied correctly.
- 1.5 Guides wishing to work in a language other than their first language (or first languages, in the case of bilingual Candidates) must have an Institute recognised qualification to demonstrate their competence in the second and subsequent languages. The language(s) will be included in the Institute's database against the guide's name.
- 1.6 Examinations (including resit examinations) will take place at certain points in the year, as determined by the Institute.
- 1.7 The only form of identification worn by candidates during Institute Examinations should be their Institute student photo card.
- 1.8 It is the policy of the Institute to permit individuals to achieve qualifications for a Blue, Green or White Badge by taking and passing the required examinations.
- 1.9 A register of those who qualify is maintained by the Institute. Membership of the

Institute is offered to those who qualify and pay the respective annual subscription as follows:

- Blue Badge - Full membership.
- Green Badge - Associate membership.
- White Badge - Affiliate membership.

Structure

- 1.10 The Examinations Handbook (this document) sets out the requirements of the Institute's examinations for its Blue Badge, Green Badge and White Badge qualifications, and its language examinations.
- 1.11 This document details all the examinations from the Candidates' point of view. This allows Candidates to follow the whole examination journey in one place.
- 1.12 Further information is available in Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs). These fall into four groups:
 - Administration: detailing all the administrative procedures that allow the examinations to function.
 - Instructions: detailed instructions for people delivering the examinations, including "how to" packs for Examiners, Compilers, and Invigilators.
 - Examination structures: information about how examinations will be structured.
 - Policy: details of specific Institute policies that concern the delivery of examinations.
- 1.13 All Standard Operating Procedures also form part of the Handbook and are publicly available, but for convenience they are indexed separately. There is a full list at the end of this Handbook.
- 1.14 Where there is a discrepancy between the Examinations Handbook and a Standard Operating Procedure, the Handbook will prevail. SOPs may be amended to correct a discrepancy.

Glossary

In this document, references to the titles below have the following meanings:

The Institute of Tourist Guiding (The Institute) is responsible for professional standards in tourist guiding in England, Northern Ireland, and Jersey, which includes the award of one of three qualifications, Blue Badge, Green Badge and White Badge, and in Candidates' second languages.

British Islands are the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the Isle of Man, and the Channel Islands.

Qualifications Board (QB) is the body responsible for the qualifications policy and procedures of the Institute.

Examinations Committee is responsible for the proper conduct of examinations and providing advice to the Qualifications Board on examination policy and procedures.

Language Committee is responsible for the delivery of language examinations and advising on language policy issues such as assessment requirements and bilingualism.

Accreditation Committee is responsible for considering training programmes submitted to the Institute and making recommendation for their accreditation.

Examinations Officer is the Institute member of staff responsible for the administration of examinations.

Operations Manager is the Institute member of staff who manages its office and the Examinations Officer.

Chief Examiner is the person appointed to run the examinations for an Institute accredited course.

Treasurer is the person appointed as the Institute's Treasurer.

Course Director is the person with overall responsibility for the delivery of a specific accredited training programme.

Tutor is a person assisting the Course Director in the delivery of a specific accredited training programme.

Candidates are those individuals who have enrolled for Institute-run examinations.

Tourist Guide or **Guide** is a Candidate who has passed all the relevant examinations. They will usually be called Blue Badge Guide, Green Badge Guide or White Badge Guide, as appropriate.

SOP is the acronym for **S**tandard **O**perating **P**rocedure

Section 2: Information for Candidates, Blue Badge examinations

Examination fees

- 2.1 Candidates will receive invoices from the Examinations Officer at least **NINE** weeks before the first examination.
- 2.2 Examination fees will be paid in full to the Institute at least **SIX** weeks before the date of the examination. Refunds will be given in exceptional circumstances only. Candidates who have not paid the examination fees in full will have their names removed from the examination list and will not be admitted to the examinations. They will be recorded as having failed.

Criteria

- 2.3 There will be at least **EIGHT** examinations of equal weighting. **FOUR** of these are written examinations and **FOUR** are practical examinations. Some regions (for example London) include additional examinations. All examinations must be successfully completed.
- 2.4 The individual examinations are summarised as:
- Examination 1: Written examination Core Knowledge for the whole of the British Islands.
 - Examinations 2 and 3: Written examinations for the region being studied.
 - Examination 4: A written tour planning project.
 - Examinations 5, 6 and 7: Practical examinations in the region being studied covering a minimum of one walking route, one religious building and one museum or gallery. Some of these elements may be combined but there must be a minimum of three examinations.
 - Examination 8: A practical examination on a moving vehicle in the region being studied.
- 2.5 The examinations will not necessarily take place in the order described.

Arrangements

- 2.6 Candidates are required to take all written and practical examinations at the first opportunity offered by the Institute (see Criteria below). Failure to attend any examination offered, including a resit examination, will be recorded as having failed, except in exceptional circumstances. (See [SOP 06](#) Mitigating Circumstances (Special Considerations)).
- 2.7 Once the examinations timetable has been set and circulated, changes to the timetable, examination groups and other matters relating to the conduct of the examinations will only be granted on compassionate grounds, or unforeseen circumstances (see [SOP 06](#) Mitigating Circumstances (Special Considerations)).

- 2.8 Written examinations will be held at one location, apart from the Core Knowledge examination (examination 1) which will be held at one location per course taking the examination. Candidates will be expected to make suitable arrangements to attend examinations on time.
- 2.9 At the start of each written examination the Lead Invigilator will record the names of the Candidates who attend. Candidates will be required to show their Institute student photo card as evidence of their identity. Failure to do so may result in Candidates being excluded from the examination. Mobile phones and electronic devices must be switched off and left outside the examination room or in a location determined by the Lead Invigilator.
- 2.10 Candidates who arrive more than 30 minutes after the start of a written examination will not be admitted to the examination and will be recorded as having failed. Candidates may not leave the examination room during the first 30 minutes and the last 30 minutes of their examination.
- 2.11 At the start of each practical examination, the Examiners will confirm that the Candidates' identity corresponds to the Institute student photo card which they are required to bring with them. Failure to do so may result in Candidates being excluded from the examination. Mobile phones must be switched off.
- 2.12 Candidates arriving after the start of a practical examination will not be admitted to the examination and will be assessed as having failed.
- 2.13 The Institute will make audio recording of all practical Blue Badge examinations. Every Candidate presentation will be recorded by the Chief Examiner (or one Examiners if the Chief Examiner is not present) during the examination. These recordings will on no account be released and are for internal use only, to be used for quality assurance purposes and in case of appeal. (See [SOP 43 Examination Recording](#)).

Written examinations

- 2.14 For written examinations the pass mark will normally be 60% of the total available marks. Where the Marker, Moderator and Chief Examiner decide that some questions should be disregarded, Candidates' percentages will be calculated by dividing the number of marks awarded by the total number of questions available.

EXAMINATION 1:

An unseen written examination taken under test conditions about the whole of the British Islands, called Core Knowledge or CK.

- 2.15 The examination will cover and relate directly to the whole of syllabus (see [SOP 41 Core Knowledge Syllabus](#)) It will consist of 5 sections, one for each of the syllabus topics. These sections will be split into varying numbers of questions that require both short and more extended response answers. All questions will be compulsory (see [SOP 41](#)).

- 2.16 Blue Badge Candidates only need to take and pass this examination **ONCE**. A pass in this examination remains valid throughout an individual's career. Blue Badge Tourist Guides subsequently seeking qualification in another Blue Badge region will not need to take this examination again.
- 2.17 The Core Knowledge examination will take place twice per year, in the spring (March/April) and autumn (October/November).

EXAMINATIONS 2 AND 3:

Two unseen written examinations taken under test conditions about the region being studied.

- 2.18 Examinations 2 and 3 will be sat separately and will **IN TOTAL** comprise:
- A minimum of 200 short questions requiring one-word, short-phrase, or short-sentence answers, worth one mark each.
 - Four long answer questions which should be answered in note form or as bullet points, from a choice of at least eight on a wide range of subjects related to the region of study. Each long answer question will be marked out of a total of 25 marks.
- 2.19 The total time allowed is **TWO** hours per examination.
- 2.20 The two examinations will cover and relate directly to the accredited syllabus for the region. They may be distinguished either by subject matter (for example one on the north of the region, one on the south), or by format (for example one comprising short answer questions and one comprising long answer questions).
- 2.21 The two examinations together must test Candidates' knowledge of:
- region-wide issues relating to the syllabus such as history, landscape and agriculture, literature, historical and contemporary figures, economy, and commerce.
 - specific individual sites from across the whole region such as museums, galleries, churches and other religious sites, towns, villages, and gardens. Long answer topics must, wherever possible, seek to elicit knowledge of areas, sites and locations not covered by the practical examinations.

EXAMINATION 4: A tour planning project.

- 2.22 Candidates will be assessed on their ability to plan a full day's tour within the region under examination, for a group of people of the Candidate's nationality, of mixed ages and including a wheelchair user with a carer. It will comprise three elements: a guided walk, a visit to a site and a coach tour.
- 2.23 Candidates will be given a choice of **THREE** project themes by the Course Director from which they will choose one. Themes will have been agreed with the Chief Examiner in advance.
- 2.24 The guided walk will be in a part of a town, a city, in the countryside or any public area usually where no admission is charged. It will not take place principally at an interior site.

- 2.25 The site visit will include a guided tour of the site. Where, exceptionally, it is not possible to conduct a guided tour throughout the entire visit, the project must:
- Make clear how the guide will prepare the group for that visit, relevant health and safety and comfort aspects, including where a reasonable adaptation has been made in respect of the person with a disability. Candidates can assume that a wheelchair user is able to board a standard coach.
 - Give a comprehensive introduction.
 - Indicate details of the commentary to be given, in areas where it is possible to guide.
 - Advise the arrangements for the end of the tour.
- 2.26 The project must not exceed 3,000 words.
- 2.27 Candidates will be required to submit their projects as a pdf file to the Course Director. This pdf should:
- Be a single pdf document with numbered pages, maximum 10MB
 - Be written using a Sans font, e.g. Calibri, Arial, in size 12.
 - Use bold, italic, bullet points, paragraphing, etc. as appropriate
 - Have a table of content (this is separate from the word count), included in the pdf
 - Have a cover sheet (separate from the word count), included in the pdf
 - Not contain any separate or additional images – all images and maps must be part of the pdf.
- 2.28 The time allowed for completion of the project is **THREE** months from the date of receiving the title options.
- 2.29 Blue Badge Candidates only need to take and pass this project examination **ONCE**. A Pass in this examination remains valid throughout an individual's career. Blue Badge Tourist Guides subsequently seeking qualification in another Blue Badge region or Green Badge area will not need to take this examination again. A Blue Badge project examination pass is valid for a Green Badge area, but a Green Badge project examination pass is not valid for a Blue Badge region.

Practical examinations

EXAMINATION 5: A practical examination on the selected walking route.

EXAMINATION 6: A practical examination in the selected religious building.

EXAMINATION 7: A practical examination in the selected museum or gallery.

For each of these examinations:

- 2.30 Where possible there must be a maximum of **EIGHT** Candidates in each examination group.
- 2.31 There will normally be **TWO** Examiners for each examination, and the Chief Examiner may be present some of the time. With the agreement of the Chief Examiner, a person associated with the site being examined, or a representative of the Institute may be invited to observe the examination. Alternatively, this may be a newly accredited Examiner who wishes to shadow more experienced Examiners.

- 2.32 Candidates will be called at random and initially will make **TWO** presentations in all, each one lasting approximately **FIVE** minutes. Candidates who exceed **Five** minutes and **20** seconds will be asked to stop.
- 2.33 The Examiners may ask Candidates for further presentations.
- 2.34 Candidates are expected to have full knowledge of the items on the syllabus. They will show understanding of all relevant elements. This includes the following:
- Walk. An in-depth knowledge of the route, and the ability to bring this to life for their group (for example historical background, modern development, personalities, flora, fauna, architecture, land use) and be able to explain and interpret what is seen.
 - Religious site. They are expected, through their in-depth knowledge of the building (for example its history, architecture, decoration, monuments, burials, and the religious life today), to bring it to life for their group and be able to explain and interpret what is seen.
 - Museum or gallery. They must have a good knowledge of the history of the building, its architecture, its purpose and how it is funded, and be able to explain and interpret what is seen.
- 2.35 Candidates will be given the opportunity to lead the group from one stop to another to demonstrate, for example, their group positioning and group control, and their awareness of the surroundings.
- 2.36 Candidates must:
- Always stop and face the group when speaking.
 - Demonstrate that they are mindful of the safety of the group and are aware of hazards.
 - Show awareness of other road and pavement or site users.
 - Demonstrate their concern for the comfort of the group.
 - Be audible and show awareness of the need to adjust their volume according to the conditions (for example traffic or road works).
 - Show good group positioning and group control.
 - Be able to handle questions confidently and briefly and always repeat the question for the benefit of the whole group. Candidates are expected to be able to answer the question, which will be restricted to the topics on the syllabus for this stop, or general information relevant to the site.
 - Be aware of any rules of the site and of site facilities and must inform the group when appropriate.
 - Be aware of and be sensitive to staff and other users of the site, especially religious sites where people may be at prayer.
 - Know what to do and where to get help in case of a named emergency or health and safety issue occurring at their location.
- 2.37 The use during an examination of physical or electronic visual aids (for example signs, pictures, photographs, lasers and pointers) is not permitted.

COMBINATIONS FOR EXAMINATIONS 5, 6 AND 7

- 2.38 In London, the **SIX** practical examinations will be:
- An urban walk.

- St. Paul's Cathedral.
 - Westminster Abbey.
 - The Tower of London.
 - The British Museum.
 - A gallery (usually the National Gallery or a Tate Gallery).
- 2.39 In regions excluding London, the **THREE** practical examinations will normally be:
- An urban walk.
 - A religious building.
 - A museum or gallery.
 - In regions excluding London, these combinations may be substituted:
 - A rural walk.
 - An urban walk combined with a religious building.
 - An urban walk combined with a museum or gallery.
 - An urban walk combined with a rural walk.
- 2.40 In all regions there will be a minimum of **THREE** practical examinations **PLUS** a practical examination on a moving vehicle (see below).
- 2.41 The urban and/or rural walk examination and the major religious building examinations are regarded as portable units. Blue Badge Candidates only need to take and pass these examinations **ONCE**. A pass in these examinations remains valid throughout an individual's career (subject to Institute's revalidation policy).
- 2.42 Existing Blue Badge Tourist Guides must pass at **least two** practical examinations to be awarded a Blue Badge in a different region.
- 2.43 The exemption granted to existing Blue Badge Tourist Guides for the major religious building examination only applies to sites where Blue Badge Tourist Guides **DO NOT** have exclusive guiding rights.
- 2.44 If a Green Badge Guide wishes to qualify as a Blue Badge Tourist Guide, then their walk is regarded as a portable unit. Existing Green Badge Guides **DO NOT** need to take and pass this examination again if they wish to qualify as a Blue Badge Tourist Guide. A pass in this examination remains valid throughout an individual's career (subject to Institute's revalidation policy).
- 2.45 The exemption granted to existing Blue Badge Tourist Guides and Green Badge Guides for the walk examination only applies to like for like examinations. (See [SOP 61](#) Policy on Blue Badge Tourist Guide Candidates).

EXAMINATION 8: A practical examination on a moving vehicle in the region being studied.

- 2.46 In **all** moving vehicle examination, the Course Director will agree with the Chief Examiner the moving vehicle route or routes to be covered **SIX** weeks in advance. At this point the route or routes can be disclosed to candidates.
- 2.47 In the case of the London Blue Badge moving vehicle examination, the Course Director will agree with the Chief Examiner sufficient (usually at least 6 routes) from a core

area of Central London plus a selection of peripheral areas. All these routes will be disclosed to candidates **SIX** weeks prior to the exam. The route to be used for each examination will be given to candidates 15 minutes prior to the commencement of the examination. This route may be subject to change during the examination because of traffic or other disruption.

- 2.48 There will normally be **TWO** Examiners for each examination, in addition to the Chief Examiner. With the agreement of the Chief Examiner, a representative from the tourist industry, or a user of guide services, or a representative of the Institute may be invited to observe the examination. Additionally, the Chief Examiner may invite as observers up to **TWO** newly accredited Examiners who wish to shadow more experienced Examiners.
- 2.49 The chosen route will (except in London) include a mix of urban and rural areas.
- 2.50 Candidates will be called at random and will make **THREE** presentations in all, of varying length, for example two minutes, eight minutes, five minutes. The three presentations will total **FIFTEEN** minutes.
- 2.51 The Chief Examiner will arrange for a Co-ordinator who will call up the Candidates at the required times. (This may in some cases be one of the Examiners.) As with examiners, the Candidates should not be known to the Co-ordinator.
- 2.52 Candidates must have a detailed knowledge of the moving vehicle route, showing understanding of all relevant elements, including the important sites, historical background, modern development, personalities involved, flora, fauna, and land use. They must present a coherent and entertaining commentary moving smoothly from Top Visual Priorities (TVP) to non-TVP. Their commentary must be based on accurate knowledge, demonstrating sensible selection of material. Whilst not choosing to mention all sites passed, they must point out the most important. Their voices must be pleasant to listen to over several hours.
- 2.53 Candidates must in addition:
 - Give clear physical indications (pointing) and clear, accurate verbal indications (for example “the house on the left with the green door and the sloping red roof”, not simply “the house on the left”); they must not indicate “in front of the moving vehicle” or “behind us” or “we have just passed”.
 - Time their indication so that passengers can see clearly what is intended.
 - Be able to give concise information on TVPs and show ability to expand their commentaries when necessary, dependent upon traffic conditions.
 - Demonstrate their concern for the comfort of the group.
- 2.54 Policy on wearing of seat belts on moving vehicles during guide training and examining. Candidates must always comply with the legal requirements of working in a moving vehicle. When called to present, Candidates must sit down and fasten their seat belt before starting to address the group.

Results

- 2.55 Candidates are notified of the results by email, normally within **SIX** weeks after the final examination. If sets of examinations are more than six weeks apart, results for

completed examinations may be notified separately.

- 2.56 The results for the project and all written examinations will be expressed as both a pass or fail and a percentage. Marks will be expressed as a “Pass” or “Fail” for all practical examinations.
- 2.57 In certain circumstances, a Candidate may submit an appeal against their result. The grounds for appeal, and the appeals procedure are set out in [SOP 07](#) (Appeals Panel procedures) and the fee appears in [SOP 04](#) (Cost sheet of examinations).

Resit examinations

- 2.58 Candidates are required to complete all examinations successfully within 36 months of the date of their first examination, except in exceptional circumstances at the discretion of the Qualifications Board.
- 2.59 Candidates are entitled to **TWO** opportunities to resit a failed examination except examination 4 (Tour Planning Project) where only **ONE** resit opportunity is allowed.
- 2.60 In the case of the project resit, Candidates may re-submit an improved project with the same title, or they may choose one of the other titles from the list originally given. They have **THREE** months to complete the project from the date that they are informed that they have failed.
- 2.61 Practical resits examinations will take place no earlier than **EIGHT** weeks from the date of notification of the examination results. Written resit examinations will normally take place no earlier than **FIVE** months after notification of results. Second resit examinations will normally take place no earlier than **FOUR** months after the first resit examination.
- 2.62 Resit examinations will take place only at certain times in the year, and only as determined by the Institute. In all examinations including resits, all Candidates will be examined on the current syllabus and stopping points.
- 2.63 Examiners who have failed Candidates at a practical examination will not examine the same Candidates at any resit examination of the same type.
- 2.64 Candidates at all resit examinations, except examination 8 (moving vehicle), will pay the current applicable examination fee.
- 2.65 Candidates for resit examination 8 (moving vehicle) will pay an additional 25% of the main fee for the first resit and will pay an additional 50% of the main fee for the second resit.
- 2.66 Candidates must confirm, in writing to the Examinations Officer no more than **TWO** weeks after the results are published, their wish to retake any examination at the next opportunity as determined by the Institute.
- 2.67 Candidates who have not passed all the examinations within the prescribed number of attempts or time will be deemed to have failed the course.

Section 3: Information for Candidates, Green Badge examinations

Examination fees

- 3.1 Candidates will receive invoices from the Examinations Officer at least **NINE** weeks before the first examination.
- 3.2 Examination fees will be paid in full to the Institute at least **SIX** weeks before the date of the examination. Refunds will be given in exceptional circumstances only. Candidates who have not paid the examination fees in full will have their names removed from the examination list and will not be admitted to the examinations. They will be recorded as having failed.

Criteria

- 3.3 There will be **FOUR** examinations of equal weighting. **TWO** are written examinations and **TWO** are practical examinations. All examinations must be successfully completed.
- 3.4 The individual examinations are summarised as:
- Examination 1: A written examinations for the area being studied.
 - Examination 2: A written tour planning project.
 - Examination 3: A practical examination for the selected examination walking route.
 - Examination 4: A practical examination for the selected examination site.
- 3.5 The examinations will not necessarily take place in the order described.

Arrangements

- 3.6 Candidates are required to take all written and practical examinations at the first opportunity offered by the Institute. Failure to attend any examination offered, including a resit examination, will be recorded as having failed, except in exceptional circumstances. (See [SOP 06](#) Mitigating Circumstances (Special Considerations)).
- 3.7 Once the examinations timetable has been set and circulated, changes to the timetable, examination groups and other matters relating to the conduct of the examinations will only be granted on compassionate grounds, or unforeseen circumstances (see [SOP 06](#) Mitigating Circumstances (Special Considerations)).
- 3.8 Written examinations will be held at one location. Candidates will be expected to make suitable arrangements to attend examinations on time.
- 3.9 At the start of each written examination the Lead Invigilator will record the names of the Candidates who attend. Candidates will be required to show their Institute student photo card as evidence of their identity. Failure to do so may result in Candidates being excluded from the examination. Mobile phones and electronic devices must be

switched off and left outside the examination room or in a location determined by the Lead Invigilator.

- 3.10 Candidates who arrive more than 30 minutes after the start of a written examination will not be admitted to the examination and will be recorded as having failed. Candidates may not leave the examination room during the first 30 minutes and the last 30 minutes of their examination.
- 3.11 At the start of each practical examination, the Examiners will confirm that the Candidates' identity corresponds to the Institute student photo card which they are required to bring with them. Failure to do so may result in Candidates being excluded from the examination. Mobile phones must be switched off.
- 3.12 Candidates arriving after the start of a practical examination will not be admitted to the examination and will be assessed as having failed.
- 3.13 The Institute will make audio recording of all practical Green Badge examinations. Every Candidate presentation will be recorded by the Chief Examiner (or one of Examiners if the Chief Examiner is not present) during the examination. These recordings will on no account be released and are for internal use only, to be used for quality assurance purposes and in case of appeal. (See [SOP 43 Examination Recording](#)).

Written examinations

- 3.14 For written examinations the pass mark will normally be 60% of the total available marks. Where the Marker, Moderator and Chief Examiner decide that some questions should be disregarded, Candidates' percentages will be calculated by dividing the number of marks awarded by the total number of questions available.

EXAMINATION I:

An unseen written examination taken under test conditions about the area being studied.

- 3.15 The examination will consist of:
 - Section A: 100 short questions requiring one-word, short-phrase or short-sentence answers, worth one mark each.
 - Section B: **THREE** long answer questions which must be answered in note form or as bullet points, from a choice of **SIX** on a wide range of subjects related to the area of study. Each long answer question will be marked out of a total of 25 marks.
- 3.16 For the City of London Green Badge, the examination will consist of:
 - Section A: 50 short questions requiring one-word, short-phrase or short sentence answers, worth one mark each.
 - Section B will comprise **FOUR** long answer questions, which should be answered in note form or as bullet points, from a choice of **FOUR** sections each containing **TWO** questions.

The total time allowed is **TWO** hours.

- 3.17 The examination must test Candidates' knowledge of:
- area-wide issues relating to the syllabus such as history, landscape and agriculture, literature, historical and contemporary figures, economy, and commerce.
 - specific individual sites from across the whole area such as museums, galleries, churches and other religious sites, towns, villages, and gardens. Long answer topics must, wherever possible, seek to elicit knowledge of sites and locations not covered by the practical examinations.

EXAMINATION 2: A tour planning project.

- 3.18 Candidates will be assessed on their ability to plan a half-day tour within the area under examination, for a group of people of the Candidate's nationality, of mixed ages and including a wheelchair user with a carer. It will comprise two elements: a guided walk and a visit to a site.
- 3.19 Candidates will be given a choice of **THREE** project themes by the Course Director from which they will choose one. Themes will have been agreed with the Chief Examiner in advance.
- 3.20 The guided walk will be in a part of a town, a city, in the countryside or any public area, usually where no admission is charged. It will not take place principally at an interior site.
- 3.21 The site visit will include a guided tour of the site. Where, exceptionally, it is not possible to conduct a guided tour throughout the entire visit, the project must:
- Make clear how the guide will prepare the group for that visit, relevant health and safety and comfort aspects, including where a reasonable adaptation has been made in respect of the person with a disability. Candidates can assume that a wheelchair user is able to board a standard coach.
 - Give a comprehensive introduction.
 - Indicate details of the commentary to be given, in areas where it is possible to guide.
 - Advise the arrangements for the end of the tour.
- 3.22 The project must not exceed 1,500 words.
- 3.23 Candidates will be required to submit their projects as a pdf file to the Course Director. This pdf should:
- Be a single pdf document with numbered pages, maximum 10MB
 - Be written using a sans font, e.g. Calibri, Arial, in size 12
 - Use bold, italic, bullet points, paragraphing, etc. as appropriate
 - Have a table of content (this is separate from the word count), included in the pdf
 - Have a cover sheet (separate from the word count), included in the pdf
 - Not contain any separate or additional images – all images and maps must be part of the pdf.
- 3.24 The time allowed for completion of the project is **TWO** months from the date of receiving the title options.

- 3.25 Green Badge Candidates only need to take and pass this examination **ONCE**. A Pass in this examination remains valid throughout an individual's career. Green Badge Tourist Guides subsequently seeking qualification in another Green Badge area will not need to take this examination again. A Blue Badge project examination pass is valid for a Green Badge area, but a Green Badge project examination pass is not valid for a Blue Badge region.

Practical examinations

EXAMINATION 3: A practical examination on the selected walking route.

If an existing Blue Badge Tourist Guide or Green Badge Guide wishes to qualify for a new Green Badge location, then their walk is regarded as a portable unit. Existing Blue Badge Tourist Guides and Green Badge Guides **DO NOT** need to take and pass this examination again if they wish to qualify for a new Green Badge location. A pass in this examination remains valid throughout an individual's career (subject to Institute's revalidation policy).

EXAMINATION 4: A practical examination in the site, which may be exterior, interior or a combination of both.

If a Candidate already holds either a Blue Badge or Green Badge for a different area, they must still take and pass the site examination to be awarded their Green Badge in a new location examination (regardless of what type of site it is).

For each of these examinations:

- 3.26 Where possible there must be a maximum of **EIGHT** Candidates in each examination group.
- 3.27 There will normally be **TWO** Examiners for each examination, and the Chief Examiner may be present some of the time. With the agreement of the Chief Examiner, a person associated with the site being examined, or a representative of the Institute may be invited to observe the examination. Alternatively, this may be a newly accredited Examiner who wishes to shadow more experienced Examiners.
- 3.28 Candidates will be called at random and initially will make **TWO** presentations in all, each one lasting approximately **FIVE** minutes. Candidates who exceed **Five** minutes and **20** seconds will be asked to stop.
- 3.29 The Examiners may ask Candidates for further presentations.
- 3.30 Candidates are expected to have full knowledge of the items on the syllabus. They will show understanding of all relevant elements. This includes the following:
 - Walk. An in-depth knowledge of the route, and the ability to bring this to life for their group (for example historical background, modern development, personalities, flora, fauna, architecture, land use) and be able to explain and interpret what is seen.
 - Religious site. They are expected, through their in-depth knowledge of the building (for example its history, architecture, decoration, monuments, burials, and the religious life today), to bring it to life for their group and be able to explain and interpret what is seen.
- 3.31 Museum or gallery. They must have a good knowledge of the history of the building, its architecture, its purpose and how it is funded, and be able to explain and interpret what is seen. Candidates will be given the opportunity to lead the group from one stop to another to demonstrate, for example, their group positioning and group control, and their awareness of the surroundings.

- 3.32 Candidates must:
- Always stop and face the group when speaking.
 - Demonstrate that they are mindful of the safety of the group and are aware of hazards.
 - Show awareness of other road and pavement or site users.
 - Demonstrate their concern for the comfort of the group.
 - Be audible and show awareness of the need to adjust their volume according to the conditions (for example traffic or road works).
 - Show good group positioning and group control.
 - Be able to handle questions confidently and briefly and always repeat the question for the benefit of the whole group. Candidates are expected to be able to answer the question, which will be restricted to the topics on the syllabus for this stop, or general information relevant to the site.
 - Be aware of any rules of the site and of site facilities and must inform the group when appropriate.
 - Be aware of and be sensitive to staff and other users of the site, especially religious sites where people may be at prayer.
 - Know what to do and where to get help in case of a named emergency or health and safety issue occurring at their location.
- 3.33 The use during an examination of physical or electronic visual aids (for example signs, pictures, photographs, lasers and pointers) is not permitted.
- 3.34 If an existing Blue Badge Tourist Guide or Green Badge Guide wishes to qualify for a new Green Badge location, then their walk is regarded as a portable unit. Existing Blue Badge Tourist Guides and Green Badge Guides **DO NOT** need to take and pass this examination again if they wish to qualify for a new Green Badge location. A pass in this examination remains valid throughout an individual's career (subject to Institute's revalidation policy).
- 3.35 If a Candidate already holds either a Blue Badge or Green Badge for a different area, they must still take and pass the site examination to be awarded their Green Badge in a new location (regardless of what type of site it is).

Results

- 3.36 Existing Blue or Green Badge Tourist Guides must pass **at least one** practical examination to be awarded a Green Badge in a new area.
- 3.37 Candidates are notified of the results by email, normally within **SIX** weeks after the final examination. If sets of examinations are more than six weeks apart, results for completed examinations may be notified separately.
- 3.38 The results for the project and all written examinations will be expressed as both a pass or fail and a percentage. Marks will be expressed as a "Pass" or "Fail" for all practical examinations.
- 3.39 In certain circumstances, a Candidate may submit an appeal against their result. The grounds for appeal, and the appeals procedure are set out in [SOP 07](#) (Appeals Panel procedures) and the fee appears in [SOP 04](#) (Cost sheet of examinations).

Resit examinations

- 3.40 Candidates are required to complete all examinations successfully within 36 months of the date of their first examination, except in exceptional circumstances at the discretion of the Qualifications Board.
- 3.41 Candidates are entitled to **ONE** opportunity to resit a failed examination.
- 3.42 In the case of the project resit, Candidates may re-submit an improved project with the same title, or they may choose one of the other titles from the list originally given. They have **TWO** months to complete the project from the date that they are informed that they have failed.
- 3.43 Practical resits examinations will take place no earlier than **EIGHT** weeks from the date of notification of the examination results. Written resit examinations will normally take place no earlier than **FIVE** months after notification of results.
- 3.44 In all examinations including resits, all Candidates will be examined on the current syllabus and stopping points.
- 3.45 Resit examinations will take place only at certain times in the year, and only as determined by the Institute.
- 3.46 Examiners who have failed Candidates at a practical examination will not examine the same Candidates at any resit examination of the same type.
- 3.47 Candidates at all resit examinations will pay the current applicable examination fee.
- 3.48 Candidates must confirm, in writing to the Examinations Officer no more than **TWO** weeks after the results are published, their wish to retake any examination at the next opportunity as determined by the Institute.
- 3.49 Candidates who have not passed all the examinations within the prescribed number of attempts or time will be deemed to have failed the course.

Section 4: Information for Candidates, White Badge examinations

Examination fees

- 4.1 Course Registration and other applicable fees will be paid in full to the Institute by the sponsoring organisation before the start of the course. The Institute will not register White Badge Candidates for examinations if the sponsoring organisation has not paid. Refunds will be given in exceptional circumstances only.

Criteria

- 4.2 There will be **TWO** examinations of equal weighting. Both examinations must be successfully completed.
- 4.3 The individual examinations are summarised as:
- Examination 1: A written examination for the site being studied.
 - Examination 2: A practical examination for the selected examination site, or walking route or, exceptionally, a fixed moving vehicle route within the site.
- 4.4 The examinations will not necessarily take place in the order described.

Arrangements

- 4.5 Candidates are required to take all written and practical examinations at the first opportunity offered by the Institute. Failure to attend any examination offered, including a resit examination, will be recorded as having failed, except in exceptional circumstances. (See [SOP 06](#) Mitigating Circumstances (Special Considerations)).
- 4.6 Once the examinations timetable has been set and circulated, changes to the timetable, examination groups and other matters relating to the conduct of the examinations will only be granted on compassionate grounds, or unforeseen circumstances ([SOP 06](#) Mitigating Circumstances (Special Considerations)).
- 4.7 Written examinations will be held at one location. Candidates will be expected to make suitable arrangements to attend examinations on time.
- 4.8 At the start of the written examination the Lead Invigilator will record the names of the Candidates who attend. Candidates will be required to show any officially issued photo id document. Failure to do so may result in Candidates being excluded from the examination. Mobile phones and electronic devices must be switched off and left outside the examination room or in a location determined by the Lead Invigilator.
- 4.9 Candidates who arrive more than 30 minutes after the start of a written examination will not be admitted to the examination and will be recorded as having failed. Candidates may not leave the examination room until the end of their examination.

- 4.10 At the start of each practical examination, the Examiners will confirm the Candidates' identity. Mobile phones must be switched off.
- 4.11 Candidates arriving after the start of a practical examination will not be admitted to the examination and will be assessed as having failed.

Written examination

An unseen written examination taken under test conditions about the site being studied.

- 4.12 For the written examination the pass mark will normally be 60% of the total available marks. Where the Marker, Moderator and Chief Examiner decide that some questions should be disregarded, Candidates' percentages will be calculated by dividing the number of marks awarded by the total number of questions available.
- 4.13 The examination will consist of between 75 and 100 short questions requiring one-word, short-phrase, or short-sentence answers, worth one mark each.
- 4.14 The total time allowed is **ONE** hour.

Practical examination

A practical examination at the chosen site, or the chosen walking route or, exceptionally, on a fixed moving vehicle route within the site.

- 4.15 Where possible there must be a maximum of **EIGHT** Candidates in each examination group.
- 4.16 There will normally be **TWO** Examiners for each examination, who will normally be the Chief Examiner and a local expert.
- 4.17 Candidates will be called at random and initially will make **TWO** presentations in all, each one lasting approximately **FIVE** minutes. Candidates who exceed **Five minutes and 20 seconds** will be asked to stop.
- 4.18 The Examiners may ask Candidates for further presentations.
- 4.19 Candidates are expected to have full knowledge of the items on the syllabus. They will show understanding of all relevant elements. This includes the following:
- Walk. An in-depth knowledge of the route, and the ability to bring this to life for their group (for example historical background, modern development, personalities, flora, fauna, architecture, land use) and be able to explain and interpret what is seen.
 - Religious site. They are expected, through their in-depth knowledge of the building (for example its history, architecture, decoration, monuments, burials, and the religious life today), to bring it to life for their group and be able to explain and interpret what is seen.
 - Museum or gallery. They must have a good knowledge of the history of the building, its architecture, its purpose and how it is funded, and be able to explain and interpret what is seen.

- 4.20 Candidates will be given the opportunity to lead the group from one stop to another to demonstrate, for example, their group positioning and group control, and their awareness of the surroundings.
- 4.21 Candidates must:
- Always stop and face the group when speaking.
 - Demonstrate that they are mindful of the safety of the group and are aware of hazards.
 - Show awareness of other road and pavement or site users.
 - Demonstrate their concern for the comfort of the group.
 - Be audible and show awareness of the need to adjust their volume according to the conditions (for example traffic or road works).
 - Show good group positioning and group control.
 - Be able to handle questions confidently and briefly and always repeat the question for the benefit of the whole group. Candidates are expected to be able to answer the question, which will be restricted to the topics on the syllabus for this stop, or general information relevant to the site.
 - Be aware of any rules of the site and of site facilities and must inform the group when appropriate.
 - Be aware of and be sensitive to staff and other users of the site, especially religious sites where people may be at prayer.
 - Know what to do and where to get help in case of a named emergency or health and safety issue occurring at their location.
- 4.22 The use during an examination of physical or electronic visual aids (for example signs, pictures, photographs, lasers and pointers) is not permitted.
- 4.23 Where, exceptionally, Candidates are assessed on a fixed moving vehicle route, the arrangements for such examinations are set out under the relevant module in the Blue Badge section.

Results

- 4.24 Candidates are notified of the results by email, normally within **SIX** weeks after the final examination. If sets of examinations are more than six weeks apart, results for completed examinations may be notified separately.
- 4.25 The result for the written examination will be expressed as both a pass or fail and a percentage. The mark for the practical exam will be expressed as a “Pass” or “Fail.”
- 4.26 In certain circumstances, a Candidate may submit an appeal against their result. The grounds for appeal, and the appeals procedure are set out in [SOP 07](#) (Appeals Panel procedures) and the fee appears in [SOP 04](#) (Cost sheet of examinations).

Resit examinations

- 4.27 Candidates are required to complete all examinations successfully within 12 months of the date of their first examination, except in exceptional circumstances at the discretion of the Qualifications Board.
- 4.28 Candidates are entitled to **ONE** opportunity to resit a failed examination.

- 4.29 Practical resits examinations will take place no earlier than **EIGHT** weeks from the date of notification of the examination results. Written resit examinations will normally take place no earlier than **FIVE** months after notification of results.
- 4.30 Resit examinations will take place only as determined by the Institute.
- 4.31 Candidates at all resit examinations will pay a fee determined by the Institute. The fee may be paid by the Candidates themselves or by their sponsoring organisation.

Section 5: Further information

- 5.1 The Institute has policies and procedures on all other aspects of its examinations, which are detailed in the Standard Operating Procedures. These include:
- Equal opportunities and special needs: Arrangements for Candidates who have disabilities or special needs. See [SOP 05](#).
 - Mitigating circumstances: Arrangements for Candidates in the event of illness or accident. See [SOP 06](#).
 - Appeals: A process for Candidates wishing to appeal against their examination results. See [SOP 07](#).
 - Languages: Language examination policies (including indigenous British languages). See [SOP 65](#).
- 5.2 A list of Standard Operating Procedures is given below. Details in these procedures may change from time to time. The latest versions of all these procedures are available from the Institute's office.
- 5.3 Every person who is appointed to manage or deliver any aspect of the Institute's examinations **must** understand that their contracted work is an integral part of the whole examinations process and its quality assurance and **must** be delivered as specified by the Institute's Examinations Handbook and Standard Operating Procedures.

Standard Operating Procedures – Administration

SOP 01	Managing Handbook and SOP updates
SOP 02	Administration of examinations
SOP 03	Code of conduct for examinations
SOP 04	Cost sheet of examinations
SOP 05	Equal opportunities and special needs
SOP 06	Mitigating circumstances (Special considerations)
SOP 07	Appeals

Standard Operating Procedures – Instruction Packs

SOP 21	Chief Examiners' instruction pack
SOP 22	Compilers', Markers' and Moderators' instruction pack
SOP 23	Project Markers' pack
SOP 24	Examiners in practical examinations instruction pack
SOP 25	Invigilators' instruction pack

Standard Operating Procedures – Examination Structures

SOP 41	Core Knowledge Paper: Content and question categories
SOP 42	Chief Examiners' Report Templates
SOP 43	Examination Recording

Standard Operating Procedures – Policies

SOP 61	Policy on Blue Badge Tourist Guide candidates
SOP 62	Policy on tutors taking examinations
SOP 64	Policy on advertising and appointing Chief Examiners, Examiners, Compilers and Moderators
SOP 65	Language Examination Policies

Register of Examinations Handbook amendments

Version	Brief description of Amendment	Amendment	Date approved
2025.1	Candidates to be familiar with the Main Examinations Handbook and SOPs before they enter any examinations	p.3	September 2025
	Candidates should note the strict time limits in SOP 06 and SOP 07	p.3	
	Main Handbook Glossary moved to the end of Section One	p.3	
	Main Handbook register of amendments moved to the end of the Main Handbook	p.29	
	Minimum number of practical examinations for Blue and Green Badge Tourist Guide candidates	2.42, p.12; 3.36, p.20	
	SOP 02 three updates: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Core Knowledge” replaces “Background Knowledge” • Chief Examiner’s report to include summary of candidates’ overall performance, reflection on teaching and suggestions to improve examination process • New deadlines for communication between Course Directors and Chief Examiners 		September 2025
			January 2025
			February 2025
	SOP 06 two updates: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By attending an examination, Candidates are presumed to be “fit to sit”. • Special Consideration applications made after notification of the result to be rejected. 		September 2025
	SOP 21 four updates: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • London Chief Examiner is responsible for Core Knowledge paper. • Deadline for the Chief Examiner to agree stops with the Course Director • Chief Examiner to make contact with the Course Director within two weeks of appointment • Chief Examiner’s report to include summary of candidates’ overall performance, reflection on 		

	teaching and suggestions to improve examination process		
	SOP 22 Core Knowledge syllabus replaces Background Knowledge syllabus		September 2025
	New SOP 41 Core Knowledge Syllabus 2025.I replaces Background Knowledge Syllabus 2020.I		
	SOP 61 two updates: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Core Knowledge syllabus replaces Background Knowledge syllabus Minimum number of practical examinations for Blue and Green Badge Tourist Guide candidates 		
	SOP 64 Core Knowledge syllabus replaces Background Knowledge syllabus		
	Core Knowledge syllabus replaces Background Knowledge syllabus	p.7, p.8, p.9	
2024.I	New SOP 43 Examination Recording		14/05/2024
	SOP 25 Updated to clarify instructions for invigilators		14/05/2024
	SOP 24 Recording of Examinations		14/05/2024
	SOP 23 Two updates: All projects to be submitted electronically. Acknowledgment of the need for risk assessment and safety awareness		05/2024
	SOP 21 Updated London Coach Examination		09/2023
	SOP 21 Chief Examiner to explain the role of the Institute to White Badge candidates		16/01/23
	SOP 21 Updated to reflect the new <i>SOP 43 Recording of examinations</i>		14/05/2024
	SOP 05 Use of Laptop		14/05/24
	SOP 04 updated with new fees		08/2024
	SOP 03 Updated to reflect the new <i>SOP 43 Recording of examinations</i>		14/05/2024
	SOP 02 Course Director receiving the Chief Examiner's Report		04/09/2023
	SOP 02 Direct debit form changed to direct debit link		August 2024
	SOP 02 Chief Examiner to explain the role of the Institute to White Badge candidates		16/01/2023

	Existing Guides to not wear badges during exams	1.7, p.6	14.05.2024
	White Badge Candidates to present at examinations any officially issued photo id document.	4.8, p.22	08/2024
	Projects to be electronically	2.27, p.12; 3.23, p.19	05/2024
	Recording of Examinations	2.13 p.9; 3.13, p.17	09/2023
	London Coach Examination	2.46, p.13;	09/2023
	Coach Examination	2.45 p.13	
	Background Knowledge examination annual frequency – twice a year	2.17 p.9	09/2023
2023	SOP 04 – Fees updated		27/07/23
2022	SOP 42 Chief Examiners' Report Templates updated to include a mark for written exams		27/06/2022
	SOP 23 updated to clarify what is included in the project word count		01/12/2022
	SOP 62 updated enabling tutors and course directors at White Badge to sit exams/gain badge		01/12/2022
	SOP 5 updated to widen the scope of special arrangements and to give a clear timeline for the application process for special arrangements.		01/12/2022
	SOP 64 updated to only allow ITG application form to be used for examiner roles, not CVs.		01/12/2022
	SOP 64 updated to remove rule that examiners must have examined within the last five years.		01/03/2022
	SOP 02 and SOP 64 updated to allow for use of interview panel in appointing a Chief Examiner		04/01/2022
	SOP 23 updated: project marks will be expressed as both a 'Pass' or 'Fail' and a percentage		27/06/2022
	Candidates receive a mark for written exams	2.14, p.9; 2.55, p.14; 3.37, p.20; 4.25, p.24;	27/06/2022
2020.2.1	SOP 04 updated with new fees		17/03/2022
	Practical Examination Observer	2.31, p.11; 2.47 p.13; 3.27, p.19	29/11/2021
	London Coach Examination	2.46, p.13	

	Presentation length	2.32, p.11; 3.28, p.19; 4.17, p.23	
	Only one syllabus in use at any one time	2.61, p.15; 3.43, p.21	
	Walk and religious building as portable units	Walk and religious building as portable units	
	Five-year limit for the Communication Seminar for existing guides	1.3, p.6	
2020.1.1	SOP 04 updated with new fees		16/09/2021
2020.1	New handbook		23/11/2020