

## CIPR Specialist Diploma (Internal Communication)

### Syllabus

The aim of the CIPR Specialist Diploma (Internal Communication) is to enable candidates to develop specialist knowledge and expertise in the contexts, concepts and practical tools of internal communication. It is designed for both generalist public relations practitioners wishing to enhance their understanding of best practice in internal communication and also for those looking to specialise in internal communication as a career.

The CIPR Specialist Diploma (Internal Communication) will be of interest to practitioners who have experience of internal communication activities, in consultancy or in-house, or in a related discipline such as human resources management. This qualification will equip the candidate with the knowledge and tools to apply this experience in the context of the function of internal communication in organisations, how it contributes to organisational engagement and commitment, and to organisational change, and what is expected of an ethical practitioner in the digital age.

Candidates will research and develop ethical internal communication strategies and plans that assist organisations to stimulate employee engagement, change attitudes and influence behaviours.

Candidates would be awarded the CIPR Specialist Diploma (Internal Communication) on successful completion of the assessment.

### Syllabus

The CIPR Specialist Diploma (Internal Communication) positions internal communication in the organisational context in which it functions and investigates how it adds value. It considers practical challenges and conceptual underpinnings relating to internal communication planning within a framework of organisational strategy, vision and goals. It develops research, planning, execution and evaluation skills. An analytical perspective is applied to encourage candidates to take a reflective approach in examining their own experience alongside case studies of organisations and scenarios.

The Specialist Diploma (Internal Communications) is delivered by CIPR-accredited teaching centres, via 20 hours of face to face, online or blended learning, and a further 10 - 12 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.

### Qualification objectives:

Successful candidates will be able to:

- 1 Apply key concepts in internal communication:
  - The evolution of internal communication as a strategic management function;
  - Organisational structures, leadership and management;
  - Organisational culture and its impact on internal communication practice;
  - The role of internal communication in major change management programmes;

- How change can be accelerated by using effective approaches to communication and engagement.
- 2 Define internal communication and engagement models and concepts:
- Keeping employees informed and the employee voice;
  - Work engagement (how employees become engaged);
  - Internal communication and organisational engagement;
  - The psychology of communication and engagement;
  - Listening, authenticity and dialogue.
- 3 Critically evaluate and implement internal communication planning, including:
- Audit and research methodologies; assessing levels of communication and organisational engagement;
  - The internal communication planning process and its strategic management; audiences, messaging, project management;
  - Advanced channel management, content creation and curation;
  - Measurement and evaluation of outputs and outcomes;
  - Applying principles of ethical and professional practice;
  - Production of management reports outlining recommendations for organisational and internal communication performance improvement.

**Assessment:** Management proposal outlining recommendations for developing strategy and performance improvement

**Aim:** To enable candidates to demonstrate competence in evaluating the effectiveness of internal communication practice.

**Topic of inquiry:** Candidates will be required to evidence professional judgement in identifying a suitable internal communication activity. This could be based on the candidate's own organisation, a client, or another organisation of the candidate's choice.

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. A 3,000-word (+/- 10%) management proposal including:
  - a) Identification and justification of the chosen topic of inquiry;
  - b) Critical evaluation of the activity with reference to its management and measurement;
  - c) Recommendations for improvement drawing on data analysis and performance indicators.
2. Supporting 2,000-word (+/- 10%) review of proposal for change including:

- Overview of secondary research undertaken;
- Relevant research methodology;
- Frameworks and models relevant to internal communication used to inform recommendations;
- Discussion of ethical challenges encountered in the process.

**Example topics:**

- The impact of digital media on internal communication
- The role of senior teams in internal communication
- Internal communication with remote teams
- Communicating change in a complex public sector or global organisation

**Completion of the assignment** involves the following activities:

- Reflection – candidates are required to identify a relevant topic of inquiry. This will be a recent campaign, communication activity or other aspect of internal communication practice for a specific organisation and/or sector, and may relate to the candidate’s own experience.
- Fact finding – candidates are required to undertake secondary research (using literature, archives, published surveys, reports, etc.) to inform recommendations.
- Insight – candidates are required to determine recommendations for performance improvements.
- Communication – candidates are required to present performance improvement recommendations in the form of a professional management proposal with supporting evidence.

**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