

# Frequently Asked Questions

Advanced Diploma in Research Theory  
and Practice in English –  
Business Management or Engineering

**International Pre-Master's  
Programme (IPM) 2021-22**

University of Cambridge  
Institute of Continuing Education

[www.ice.cam.ac.uk/ipm](http://www.ice.cam.ac.uk/ipm)

[ipm@ice.cam.ac.uk](mailto:ipm@ice.cam.ac.uk)

## General Questions

### Does the IPM guarantee admittance to a Cambridge University Master's programme?

The IPM is designed to prepare students for Master's level study at Cambridge and other leading universities. Whilst every effort is made to support students in securing a place on a Master's programme, the IPM does not guarantee entry to a postgraduate programme at the University of Cambridge or any other institution. Candidates will need to satisfy the entry requirements of postgraduate courses as outlined in the admissions policy for each course.

### Will I be a member of the University of Cambridge?

Students on the IPM will become fully matriculated, lifelong members of the University of Cambridge.

### What are the academic entry requirements?

Applicants for this course will normally have achieved a UK 2.1 honours degree or overseas equivalent from a recognised higher education institution, in a related field (Business Management or Engineering). Candidates with an unrelated undergraduate qualification (to Business Management or Engineering) must contact the IPM team to discuss their qualifications before submitting an application.

### When can I apply?

Applications open on 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2020 with a deadline of 31 March 2021. You will have an opportunity to engage with the IPM team in advance of your application via our virtual open day 21<sup>st</sup> October 2020, webchats, webinars and application workshops. Information about these events will be on our website.

### Can you give me some guidance on topics for my Research Proposal?

Please review the document 'Writing a Research Proposal for the IPM' which you can download from our website. You should in addition schedule an appointment to discuss your Proposal with one of the Academic Teaching Staff listed on the course page before submitting your application (click on their name for contact details). Applicants are invited to attend an online Research Proposal Workshop in Applications submitted without prior discussion of your Research Proposal may result in being asked to apply the following year.

### What is the rule of progression to get this Advanced Diploma?

The academic year is divided into three terms and students will need to pass all of their end-of-term coursework assignments in order to receive the award.

### Are the English Language requirements flexible?

It is not possible to make any exceptions to the language requirements. Applicants should note that a valid language test score certificate taken within the last two years **must** be submitted as part of the application process. We accept IELTS, TOEFL, Cambridge Advanced and Cambridge Proficiency language certificates. ***We do not issue language certificate waivers for this course.***

### How many students will there be on the course?

It is anticipated that between 20 and 35 students will join the course in 2021-20.

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**What is the average class size?**

There will be no fewer than five and no more than 50 students in any taught class.

**How many hours will I study per week?**

The first two units of the IPM course attract 30 credits each, equating to 300 hours of learning (one credit notionally represents 10 hours of learning). The third unit attracts 60 credits and equates to 600 hours of learning. In addition, a minimum of 12 hours of independent study are expected per week for Units 1 and 2, and considerably more for Unit 3.

**How will the classes be taught?**

Teaching will be delivered via a combination of workshops, discipline-specific research seminars and small group supervisions.

**I am graduating this year. I do not have my Bachelor's degree certificate yet. Should I apply?**

We will make conditional offers of a place on the IPM course to qualified applicants, subject to timely submission of your official degree result. Current transcripts should be submitted with your application and must indicate that you are on average gaining marks consistent with a 2.1 final result. Applicants will be expected to have met all conditions by the end of June in the year of entry, in order to allow enough time for visa application and processing before the start of the course. If you would like to discuss your individual circumstances, please email the team on [ipm@ice.cam.ac.uk](mailto:ipm@ice.cam.ac.uk)



## Admissions

### **I hold an undergraduate degree but it is a 2.2 or lower. Can I still apply?**

Applicants are expected to have completed an undergraduate degree recognised by the University of Cambridge as equivalent to an upper second class (2.1) degree or higher. An equivalent standard qualification from an overseas university will be accepted. Applicants can confirm whether the equivalent qualification is accepted by visiting [www.graduate.study.cam.ac.uk/international-qualifications](http://www.graduate.study.cam.ac.uk/international-qualifications). We regret that ***applicants with a lower result will not be considered.***

### **Can I still apply if I do not have a relevant degree?**

Please contact the academic team on [ipm@ice.cam.ac.uk](mailto:ipm@ice.cam.ac.uk) to discuss your individual circumstances. In some cases, it may be possible to apply for the IPM with a good honours degree or the equivalent in a related subject. Your application as a whole should contain evidence of your potential and you must submit a compelling Research Proposal on a Business Management or Engineering topic.

### **Can I apply for this course if I already have a Master's degree?**

The IPM is aimed at candidates who have completed their undergraduate studies and are looking to continue into postgraduate level study. We will consider applications on a case by case basis but ask that you carefully review the requirements and aims of the IPM course, and consider whether it fits your qualifications and what you hope to gain from it. The IPM team are happy to discuss your individual circumstances. Please email [ipm@ice.cam.ac.uk](mailto:ipm@ice.cam.ac.uk) in the first instance. You may also wish to review our other postgraduate offerings at [www.ice.cam.ac.uk](http://www.ice.cam.ac.uk)

### **Do my references need to be academic references?**

You will need a total of two references. Both references can be academic references; or one can be academic and the other an employment reference, which must be from an individual holding a senior or managerial position. We will not accept two employment references. Please review the document 'Supporting documents required for application' on our website.

### **What is the admission decision based on?**

We will take into account your application submissions (transcripts, English language test, research proposal, CV or resume, references, personal statement and proof of funds), online interview, English assessment administered by the Language Centre and College review. Applicants will also need to fulfil student immigration visa requirements (see [www.internationalstudents.cam.ac.uk/immigration](http://www.internationalstudents.cam.ac.uk/immigration)).

### **When can I expect a decision?**

The shortlisting process will commence shortly after the application deadlines. Shortlisted applicants will be invited to schedule an online interview. Selected candidates will then be required to complete an additional English test administered by the University of Cambridge Language Centre and their applications will be reviewed by one of the Colleges before a final

decision is made. The process should have completed by May 2021 for places commencing in October 2021. Unsuccessful candidates will be notified within six weeks of the relevant deadline (excluding holidays and term closures).

**What should I expect in an interview?**

Candidates should be prepared to discuss in great detail their research proposal, academic experience and academic goals for the future.

**Can I expect feedback if my application is unsuccessful?**

We regret that we are unable to offer feedback, due to the high volume of applications received.

**When will I receive my official offer?**

Decisions will be made by the end of the February (early admissions) and May (standard admissions) preceding the October of the year of entry, and will be communicated to successful applicants shortly thereafter.

**I have received my offer. How do I accept it?**

You will receive a formal offer of admission by email from the Admissions Office. You will be able to print a summary certificate of your offer of admission, and view your offer conditions via an online self-service account. Once you have met all of your offer conditions, your admission will be confirmed and you will see this reflected in your self-service account. You will be able to accept or decline your offer via your account. Further details will be provided along with your offer.

**Can I defer my offer?**

If you wish to be considered for the next academic year, you will be required to make a fresh application. It is not possible to resubmit your existing application for a start date in a subsequent academic year. See [www.graduate.study.cam.ac.uk/deferring-application](http://www.graduate.study.cam.ac.uk/deferring-application)

**What are my College options?\***

Students on the programme will have the option to choose membership to one of the following Colleges:

Girton College  
Lucy Cavendish College  
Wolfson College

**Do I need to make accommodation arrangements? What are the options?\***

As part of the application process, you will be asked to indicate which college you wish to be a member of. Girton College members will be offered accommodation at Swirles Court (managed by Girton College) and Lucy Cavendish College members will be offered

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\* Please note that we cannot guarantee acceptance to your preferred College or accommodation facility.

accommodation at Mount Pleasant Halls (managed by Lucy Cavendish College). Students who wish to be a member of Wolfson College have the option to choose from these two accommodation options. There is no option to reside at one of the Wolfson College sites at this time. Accommodation costs are not included in the tuition fees and will need to be paid separately.

**Can I visit prior to the beginning of the programme?**

We would be happy to welcome visitors to the Institute of Continuing Education at Madingley Hall, provided the appropriate immigration visa is in place. You should arrange your visit in advance by contacting [ipm@ice.cam.ac.uk](mailto:ipm@ice.cam.ac.uk) so that we can establish whether a suitable member of staff is available to meet with you. Please be advised that we are unable to provide a tour of other University of Cambridge departments or the Colleges. Students will not be given the opportunity to visit the accommodation facilities at Swirles Court and Mount Pleasant Halls prior to arrival, since current students will be in residence throughout the year.



## English Language Requirements

### What are the English language requirements?

Applicants must attain and provide evidence of their result in one of the following:

- IELTS 6.5 or higher overall. Each individual element must in addition be no lower than 6.0; applications with any element below 6.0 will not be considered
- TOEFL iBT 90, with no element lower than 22 other than speaking, which can be no lower than 20
- Cambridge Advanced: overall 176, with no less than 169 in any paper
- Cambridge Proficiency: overall 176, with no less than 169 in any paper

Applicants with a score lower than the above requirements will not be considered. Please be advised to complete your language test as early as possible to allow time for retaking the test, if this should be necessary.

### Can the English language requirements be waived if I have been studying in an English-speaking university for three or more years?

For some courses at the University of Cambridge, there is an exemption from the language requirement if a student has previously studied in an English-speaking university for three or more years. **However, for the IPM, the language requirement cannot be waived under any circumstance.**

### Do I need to take a specific English language test?

Only IELTS, TOEFL or Cambridge Assessment tests are accepted.

### I have an IELTS overall score of 6.0. Can I upload an improved IELTS score later?

Your application will not be considered unless you are able to meet the entry requirements. You should only submit your application once you have met the requirements and not before.

### One of the elements in my IELTS score is 5.5 although my overall score is 6.5. Does this meet the entry requirements?

No, this does not meet our entry requirements. No single element of your IELTS score should be lower than 6.0. We would encourage you to reconsider submitting your application until you attain the required language score.

### Will I have to take a further language test if I want to progress to a Master's course?

As a requirement for the IPM you will need to produce a valid English language certificate at the level indicated. However, your language test for the IPM may not be at the correct level for a Master's degree at Cambridge, which is set at a higher level. Please refer to the application requirements for the specific course you wish to study, either at Cambridge or elsewhere.





## Finance

### How much is the tuition fee?

The tuition fee is £17,500 for non-UK students and £13,875 for UK students. Accommodation and maintenance costs are not included in the tuition fee. You can view information about the IPM fees at [www.ice.cam.ac.uk/ipm](http://www.ice.cam.ac.uk/ipm) ('Fees & Funding') and in the document 'Supporting Documents Required for Application' which you can download from this location.

### What is a 'maintenance cost'?

This is an estimate of the minimum cost of living you should expect during your time as a student. Students must be prepared to show evidence of funds held in a bank account, if requested. More information can be found at [www.ice.cam.ac.uk/ipm](http://www.ice.cam.ac.uk/ipm) ('Fees & Funding').

You will also need sufficient funds for visa purposes and should ensure your financial evidence meets the specific visa application requirements.

### When do I need to pay my fees?

A payment plan will be provided with your offer letter. You should expect to pay a stated amount to secure your accommodation in the Summer before you arrive.

### Can I extend my tuition fee payment deadline?

Deadlines for the payment of fees are final and cannot be moved.

### Can I extend my accommodation payment deadline?

The accommodation payment secures your room. It will not be possible to extend the deadline for payment of accommodation costs.

### What happens if I experience financial difficulties during the programme?

We strongly advise that you review the financial commitment in relation to this programme. While financial help is offered for some courses, this provision is not available for the IPM. Students are encouraged to inform the programme team of any significant changes in their personal circumstances that may affect their ability to meet costs.

### How much money do I need to have in my account at application?

You are required to show evidence of the minimum financial commitment when you submit your application. Please see the table example provided in the document 'Supporting Documents Required for Application' which can be downloaded from the IPM website.

### Can I apply for a scholarship or bursary to assist with financial costs?

Students hoping to study on the IPM will not be eligible for financial assistance from the University. Students will be required to demonstrate that they are able to meet the full financial commitment at the point of application.

### Is a deposit required?

We do not ask for a tuition fee deposit. Students will be asked to pay an early instalment for accommodation in order to secure their room.



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**If I successfully apply for a Cambridge Master's programme while I am a student on the IPM, will I have to pay another fee?**

Fees for any further course of study will need to be paid in respect of that particular course, and are not considered to have been paid in full or in part after successful completion of the IPM.

**What is the refund policy?**

The IPM follows the University's policy refund policy. The IPM tuition and accommodation refund policy will be provided to successful applicants at the offer stage along with the course terms and conditions.



## Immigration Visas

### Will I need a visa?

If you are a non-UK or Irish national and you do not already hold immigration permission that would allow you to study in the UK, you will need to apply for a student visa.

The University of Cambridge International Student Office will assist offer holders in all immigration matters once offers have been made.

Please visit the University's International Student' webpages for further information at [www.internationalstudents.cam.ac.uk/immigration](http://www.internationalstudents.cam.ac.uk/immigration)

### When should I apply for a visa?

The International Student Office will issue you with a Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies (CAS) from July and once all the conditions of your offer has been met. All candidates who require a student visa should start the visa application process only after receiving their CAS. The International Student Office will also host a mandatory webinar for all offer holders over summer. An email will be sent to notify candidates of the date of the webinar.

### What are the responsibilities of my visa?

You will need to ensure you comply with the conditions attached to your visa and co-operate with the University in fulfilling its sponsor duties. Guidance about the responsibilities on a student visa is provided at [www.internationalstudents.cam.ac.uk/student-visa-responsibilities](http://www.internationalstudents.cam.ac.uk/student-visa-responsibilities).

### Can I work part-time while I am studying?

Students are expected not to work during term-time. We advise students to focus on their studies while on the programme. If you need to work part-time while a student on the IPM course, you will need to consult first with the IPM programme team. Students on a student visa will also need to refer to the visa restrictions and consult with the International Student Office.

### Who can I contact for visa help at the University?

In the first instance all questions should be directed to the IPM programme team who will consult or put you in touch with the International Student Office.



## Whom should I contact...

### ...if I need help with my application?

Please address all admissions enquiries to [ipms.admissions@ice.cam.ac.uk](mailto:ipms.admissions@ice.cam.ac.uk) or call +44 (0)1223 746262. For general enquiries about the IPM course, you can email the team on [ipm@ice.cam.ac.uk](mailto:ipm@ice.cam.ac.uk)

### ...if I need to know more about the IPM curriculum?

General enquiries about the IPM curriculum can be addressed to [ipm@ice.cam.ac.uk](mailto:ipm@ice.cam.ac.uk)

### ...if I wish to discuss my Research Proposal?

You should schedule an appointment to discuss your Research Proposal with one of the Academic Teaching Staff listed on the course page at [www.ice.cam.ac.uk/ipm](http://www.ice.cam.ac.uk/ipm) (click on names for contact details). Please note that applications submitted without prior discussion of your Research Proposal may result in being asked to apply the following year.

### ...if I need assistance with my visa application?

All enquiries should be directed to the IPM admissions team in the first instance on [ipms.admissions@ice.cam.ac.uk](mailto:ipms.admissions@ice.cam.ac.uk) or +44 (0)1223 746262. The University of Cambridge International Student Office will assist offer holders in immigration matters only once offers have been made.

