

ICMAP Pathway Exam (IPE) June 2026 Examiner's report

The examining team share their observations from the marking process to highlight strengths and weaknesses in candidates' performance, and to offer constructive advice for those sitting the exam in the future.

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General comments

In this report, the examining team share observations from the marking process, highlighting the strengths and weaknesses of candidates who attempted the questions in the June 2026 ICMAP Pathway Exam. All candidates can use this examiner's report as part of their preparation towards future exam attempts, alongside attempting question practice from the specimen questions provided.

Format of the exam

The examination consisted of a 4-hour exam with a single compulsory section comprising of two questions, each consisting of a variety of main tasks.

Question 1 consisted of a 50-mark case study focused on AirPure Systems (APS), a manufacturer of solar-powered air-cleaning units. The organisation is looking to expand its operations. The candidate's role was as an external business adviser, working for the chief executive officer. Candidates were required to assess matters relating to the expansion and ethical/behavioural issues as well.

Question 2 consisted of a 50-mark case study focused on MedTri Systems (MTS), a healthcare technology company considering international expansion. The candidate's role was as the strategy and governance manager. Candidates were asked for assistance on several issues relating to the potential expansion.

The marking scheme included 80 technical marks for the correct use and application of technical knowledge. For every element of technical content, answers needed to be applied to the case; repetition of rote learned knowledge attracted minimal marks.

In addition, the marking scheme included 20 marks for Professional skills and competencies. The skill being examined in the requirement should have been evident in how candidates answered the task, although candidates may have drawn on other skills as well when answering. When awarding Professional skills marks, the marker looked primarily at the professional skill being tested in the task requirement but also looked at the general professionalism that candidates demonstrated (which includes consideration of logical, well-presented answers, which avoid unnecessary repetition and answer the question set). The marker also looked for answers to be presented in an appropriate tone for the recipient.

Exam performance

Overall, the standard of candidates' answers was satisfactory and an improvement on past sessions. However, there were some requirements where candidates appeared to struggle with both technical knowledge and the application of their knowledge to the case studies.

Performance was good on question 1 of the examination, however many candidates appeared to struggle with question 2. Overall, there did appear to be evidence that candidates struggled to complete the exam within the given time with some question parts left unanswered or only a short answer being submitted. It is vital that candidates prepare for the exam by completing timed exam practice using the past exams and specimen exam.

In previous sittings of the examination, the main reason that unsuccessful candidates did not pass was predominantly linked to a lack of application in their answers and this continued to be the case in this exam sitting too.

In relation to exam technique, candidates should refrain from starting their answer by repeating the question, copying lengthy content from the scenario or writing a long introduction to their answer. This does not score marks. Candidates are advised to directly answer the question as detailed in the requirement, making specific reference to the company and scenario presented. Application is an important part of the answer. Understanding and referencing elements from the scenario to support the points made in your answer will help generate marks. Candidates should also consult the mark allocation to help them consider how many points will be required to secure a passing mark. In this exam sitting, many answers were too brief to score sufficient marks.

In previous sittings, the two main recommendations from the examining team have been:

1. Spending more time on the practice questions provided, both those within the learning materials and past examination resources available online, with particular focus on attempting these under exam conditions.
2. Accessing and utilising the available tuition where possible.

Whilst these remain as key recommendations, the examining team also stress the importance of individuals preparing to sit the ICMAP Pathway Exam dedicating sufficient time to fully cover and become comfortable with the technical topics across the whole syllabus, as well as the application of these to real business scenarios. The IPE examination sits at a postgraduate level and the available past exams, examiner's reports and debriefs should provide a clear guide as to the level of answer required to successfully pass the exam.

Please refer to the published solutions to understand the best way to approach the questions from this examination. The examining team has made the following comments on each of the requirements from this examination:

- **Requirements 1a, b and c** were all generally satisfactorily answered by candidates. Where marks were not obtained on 1b, this was often due to answers not being focused on costing and process measurement as stated in the requirement. It was pleasing to see the level of detail that candidates were able to produce for their well-structured answers for these parts, with the better answers giving appropriate justifications for their recommendations and also making recommendations that were practicable.
- **Requirement 1d** attracted a mixed level of response, with some very good answers and many candidates scored well in this requirement. However, some answers focused on commercial implications rather than the ethical and behavioural issues as set out in the requirement. Some of the suggested recommended actions lacked practicality, which also affected the professional skills marks awarded for this part.
- **Requirement 2a** required candidates to assess whether international expansion would be appropriate.

Generally answers to this part were satisfactory, with better answers making use of the structure of the Suitability – Acceptability – Feasibility framework. This helped to ensure a good range of points was covered, enabling candidates to present their answers with the number of points and the level of depth required to obtain good marks.

- **Requirement 2b** asked candidates to evaluate the effectiveness of leadership and governance systems and to recommend improvements appropriate for a regulated expansion.

Candidates were generally able to provide some critique of the company, but many of these points were not leadership and governance related, and did not adequately link to the regulated nature of the proposed expansion.

- **Requirement 2c** required candidates to assess how the company worked with key clinical stakeholders by analysing each of their roles, claims and interests, and recommend actions to improve trust, communication and cooperation during expansion.

Many answers failed to focus on clinical stakeholders, instead discussing investors, shareholders and other non-clinical stakeholders at length. These answers missed out on valuable marks. Candidates also often failed to adequately explain stakeholders' claims and interests – the use of Mendelow's matrix is a very commonly examined area and better candidates made use of this to communicate the points in their answer.

- **Requirement 2d** asked candidates to assess whether a draft briefing pack provided useful financial and business information for external users, applying the qualitative characteristics of useful financial information including disclosure, and recommend improvements.

Answers to this part were less well done. Some candidates inaccurately referred to either the wrong qualitative characteristic or to other characteristics instead. Other answers merely listed out or described the qualitative characteristics, without application to the specifics in the scenario.