

Preparing for and sitting the APEAS Part 3 Practice Paper

Introduction

Key features of the APEAS Practice Paper are:

- The Scenario to the Practice Paper will be published on the APEAS website a week before the publication date of the first part of the Practice Paper.
- The Practice Paper will be published on the APEAS website in two equal parts over two days. Each part will be published at 9.00am on the designated day and answers must be submitted no later than 7.30pm on that same day. There will be a day between the publication of each of the two parts of the Practice Paper.
- The Practice Paper will normally be sat in the candidate's office.
- The Practice Paper is an open-book examination in which candidates can consult appointment documents, contracts, codes, textbooks and any other documents that candidates consider appropriate.
- Candidates are allowed to seek information and advice from construction professionals within and outside their office, but not from their fellow candidates.

The Scenario

The Scenario to the Practice Paper (plus a Guidance Note and Declaration) is published a week before the Practice Paper. The Scenario provides contextual information about a hypothetical architectural practice GFY Architects, on which the questions included in the Practice Paper are based. The information relates to the practice's finances, staffing and resources, together with details about projects currently in hand. The Scenario also includes background/contextual information specific to individual questions such as RIBA stage, appointment, fee, contract, project value etc. Making this information available in advance of the Practice Paper provides candidates with an opportunity to identify and collate relevant documentation specific to questions, plus other documents candidates think may help them to answer questions. It is important that candidates make full and productive use of the time between the publication of the Scenario and the Practice Paper and take the necessary time during that week to study the Scenario carefully and gather all the documents that they believe may be needed for reference purposes.

How to approach the Practice Paper

Many of the following points may appear obvious, but they are nevertheless worth stating.

- Well in advance of the examination days, make sure that your physical environment will be conducive to you sitting the examination. Your office should be supportive.
- Ensure that your IT resources are secure and reliable.
- Make sure that you have easy access to all of the reference resources that you think that you will need to sit the examination – including access to colleagues and construction professionals (but not other candidates).
- Each part of the Practice Paper is published at 9.00am and answers have to be submitted by 7.30pm on the same day. That is a total of 10 ½ hours to answer

each part. However, there is no expectation that you will, or that you will need to, spend all of that 10 ½ hours formulating your answers. You must schedule appropriate breaks and you should ensure that you have ready access to food and drink.

- The time available to you includes time to read through the Practice Paper before beginning to formulate your answers and to read through/final check your completed answers before submission. In presentational terms, the latter should be a straightforward exercise - none of the questions in the Practice Paper will require you to produce complicated layouts/tables or any other diagrams.
- The sequence in which you tackle questions is up to you. However, your answers must be submitted in the order that the questions appear in the Practice Paper.
- Once you have read through all four questions in either the first or second part of the Practice Paper you may find it helpful to allocate an indicative time for completion of each question. Doing that may help you manage your time throughout the day. Bear in mind that the first question in each of the two parts is explicitly a short-form question that has been designed to ease you into the Practice Paper.
- Make sure that the form of your answer corresponds precisely with the requirements of the question e.g., if the question asks you to write to a client make sure that you provide a formal letter.
- Make your answers as concise as possible. Practice Examiners look for quality of responses, not quantity. Remember to provide references if you are including material from other sources. Obviously, you need to avoid the appearance of plagiarism.
- Some questions (or parts thereof) may be able to be answered in a number of different ways – state clearly any assumptions that you have made in answering questions.
- The Oral Examination presents an opportunity for Practice Examiners to assess your full understanding of a question and for you to explain and elaborate on your answers as required.

Submitting your answers to the Practice Paper and afterwards

You must submit your answers to the Practice Paper in accordance with APEAS requirements, which will be sent to you directly. Your answers will provide the basis for at least some of the discussion with your Practice Examiners, so it is absolutely crucial that you thoroughly and critically review your submission prior to your Oral Examination.