



IST HIGHER DIPLOMA

The IST's Higher Diploma is for the specialist technician working in specific science areas. There are no specific entry requirements but candidates will usually have achieved a general qualification in laboratory practice and have some years' experience of laboratory work.

The Institute recognises the Higher Diploma as evidence of appropriate qualification and expertise for full corporate membership.

The following subjects are currently offered for the Higher Diploma:

- Analytical chemical laboratory techniques
- Biochemical laboratory techniques
- Microbiological laboratory techniques

Other subjects may become available; please contact the IST Office to enquire.

The aim of the Higher Diploma is to show that a candidate has:

- acquired specialist knowledge in the theory and practical applications of the chosen subject
- developed a sound working knowledge of the more important techniques through practical usage
- gained an awareness of relative merits of the techniques to enable a reasoned choice of the preferred technique/s in a given situation

The syllabus for each subject has been designed to enhance technical skills with a content that is focused on the in-depth knowledge of the technique and its application. The IST believes that the technical content is at a similar level to that of a first degree in British Universities and, post experience, it has been accepted as an entry-level qualification for Masters Degrees.

Assessment

Generally, candidates are responsible for their own learning unless they are enrolled on a local taught course for the Higher Diploma.

In order to demonstrate that a satisfactory standard of knowledge and expertise has been reached, the candidate is required to sit two written examination papers, each of 3 hours' duration. There is also a practical component based on a project carried out at the candidate's place of work, under the supervision of a person notified to and approved by the IST. The report of the project is assessed by the IST's examiner.

Registration

An application form is available for download from the website or can be requested from the IST's office. The completed form should be submitted to the Registered Office, with the appropriate fee, Purchase Order or debit/credit card mandate. Following receipt of course fees the candidate will receive a copy of the relevant syllabus, guidance and specimen exam papers. The candidate's nominated supervisor will also receive details of the IST's requirements for conduct of the examinations and the practical project.



Registration Fees & Conditions

All candidates for the Higher Diploma Examinations must be members of the IST. Non-members will be granted Associate membership of the Institute for one year, on registration, and they must remain members throughout their studies.

The examination fees are:

IST members:

- resident in European Union £145
- resident outside European Union £160
- Re-sits (per paper) £ 60

Non-members:

- resident in European Union £180
- resident outside European Union £195
- Re-sits (per paper) £ 95

Examination Timetable & Procedures

1. A summary of the proposed project should be sent to the IST's Registered Office by 30th May in the year of the written examination. This will be assessed for suitability and candidate informed of the outcome.
2. The two written papers (Paper I and Paper II) for each examination will be sent to the candidate's named supervisor in his/her place of employment in September in the year of the examination.
3. Candidates will sit the written papers (Paper I and Paper II) in November, under examination conditions as specified by the IST. There should be a period of not more than ONE WEEK between the candidate sitting Paper I and sitting Paper II.
4. All completed examination papers (Papers I and II and the Project Report) must be received by the Institute's Registered Office by 31st December in the year of the examinations.
5. Papers I and II each contribute 30% of the overall grade and Paper III (project) contributes 40% to the overall grade
6. Examination results will normally be announced within three months of receipt of all three papers.
7. Grades will be awarded as follows:
 - Pass: =>50% overall (with minimum 40% on all papers)
 - Merit: =>65% overall (with minimum 40% on all papers)
 - Distinction: =>80% overall (with minimum 40% on all papers)
8. A candidate who fails one of the written papers may re-sit that paper within one year of the date that the candidate's result was recorded, on payment of the re-sit fee. A candidate who fails the project component may resubmit the project with additional work, at the discretion of the examiner, within one year from the date that the candidate's result was recorded, on payment of the re-sit fee. In the event that a candidate fails all 3 components of the examination, re-sit is allowed within one year from the date that the candidate's result was recorded, on payment of the full re-sit fee for each paper.



Appeals Procedure

Any candidate who feels that s/he has not received the correct result can lodge an appeal with the IST. The grounds for appeal should be submitted, in writing, to the IST's Registered Office.

If the appeal concerns the administration of the examination, the IST's Education Officer will investigate and report back to the candidate within one calendar month of the date on which the written appeal was received.

If the appeal concerns the marking of any of the papers or the project, a second examiner will be asked to mark the appropriate paper/s. The second examiner's mark will be binding. There will be a fee of £40.00 per paper, payable before the paper/s can be remarked.