Calculator guidance for CIMA exams

Overview

This guidance applies to all CIMA exams, both objective tests and case study exams where the use of a calculator is applicable. Students are allowed to take non-programmable calculators from a pre-approved list into exams at Pearson VUE test centres.

Personal calculators must be presented to the exam administrator before the exam. Our pre-approved list provides guidance on types of acceptable calculators, but we can’t provide an exhaustive list of calculator models, as new models become available all the time.

Health warning

It is your responsibility to check the functionality of your calculator before you use it in our exams.

Please note:

☐ Calculators will be reset by the invigilator before the exam and you should make sure you know how to reset your functions to your preferred settings quickly so as not to lose time.

☐ If you decide to bring a calculator to the exam, the exam administrator will check that it matches a model from the pre-approved list.

☐ You cannot bring this guidance into the exam room with you.

Types of acceptable calculators

- scientific calculators, including those with basic programming functions
- calculators with standard memory functions
- solar-powered calculators.

Unacceptable calculators

Unacceptable calculators include models or equipment that contain:

- alphanumeric keyboards (an alphanumeric display of stored data – including text – equations or alphabetic formulae)
- personal organisers
- checklists and memo pads
- capability for external programming (whether by detachable modules or the insertion of cards, tape, barcodes or cassettes, or any other means)
- graphical displays (which can often be identified by model types that end in the letter ‘G’); they also typically have large screens
- symbolic algebraic capability
- calculators which do not have their own internal power supply

Our invigilators or test administrators will caution any candidate using these types of calculators in our exams.

Pre-approved list of calculators

The following scientific calculators are permitted:

- All Casio FX models
- Sharp EL-531X
- Texas Instruments TI-30X
- Hewlett Packard HP 10S or HP 300S+

The following financial calculators are permitted:

- Hewlett Packard – HP 10bII
- Texas Instruments – TI BA II Plus
- Sharp – Sharp EL733A
- Casio – Casio FC 100V
You should refer to your calculator manufacturer’s handbook for full details on the functionality of your calculator.

**Updating the pre-approved list of calculators**

CIMA reserve the right to review and update the list of permitted calculators twice a year. Students and tuition providers are welcome to submit approval requests for calculator models not currently on the pre-approved list above. However, such requests will be logged and only considered during the bi-annual reviews in June and December.

**How do I submit a calculator approval request?**

Please submit your request in writing to cima.contact@cimaglobal.com. Make sure you include the full name of the calculator model and model number.

You will receive an acknowledgement email from our Customer Contract support team. However, please note your request will only be considered in the next bi-annual review in June or December.

**Exam software calculators**

You do not have to bring a calculator to the exam. A computer-based (on-screen scientific) calculator will be available as part of your exam.

These calculators are not programmable and therefore do not allow the possibility of an unfair advantage in the exam.

The exam will start with a 15 minute tutorial where you will receive advice on using the calculator and you will have an opportunity to practise using it.

You can practice using the computer based calculator by downloading the exam tutorial (installable MSI version) from Pearson VUE.

**I have more questions about my CIMA exams?**

Please contact our CIMA Customer Contact support team cima.contact@cimaglobal.com