

CIPM: The Complete Guide

What if I told you that you can become a certified human resource professional after obtaining your senior secondary school certificate without having to wait until you have graduated from the university?

Learn how you can become a certified human resource professional even with only a senior secondary school leaving certificate in this guide about the Chartered Institute of Personnel Management of Nigeria [CIPM].

The purpose of this guide is to provide you with information about CIPM if you want to pursue a career in Human Resources.

You will learn what CIPM is, who it is for, how to become a member and why you should be one if you want to pursue a career in Human Resources in Nigeria, what stage you will be starting from, how to register with CIPM, how the examinations work, how to prepare for them, what the fees are, and what to expect from your HR career.

To make this a 'complete guide,' you will find the following sections organized:

- CIPM: what is it and who is it for?
- Joining the Association
- How Membership by Examination Works
- Getting registered
- The fees
- The Exam Preparation Process
- Sitting for the exams
- The induction
- What's next?

I recommend reading this guide from beginning to end if you're completely new to CIPM. You can use the links to jump directly to the sections you are interested in if you are already familiar with CIPM but need details on specific aspects. Here we go.

CIPM: what is it and who is it for?

CIPM is the Chartered Institute of Personnel Management of Nigeria; In Nigeria, CIPM is the professional association that licences human resources professionals.

This needs some explanation, so let's get started.

In Nigeria, you would typically need to attend medical school for six to seven years to become a doctor. As soon as you have completed your medical programme, you will be given a licence to practice medicine by the Nigerian Medical Association (NMA).

Similarly, if you wish to become a lawyer, you must first study at a university and then attend the Nigerian Law School for about a year. Upon completing these two requirements, the Nigerian Bar Association [NBA] would licence you to practice law.

No doctor or lawyer can work in Nigeria who isn't licensed by the Nigerian Medical Association or Bar Association. Professional licensing means that a professional organisation has approved you.

The CIPM fits this category but operates differently from other professional bodies. An individual who presents themselves as a medical doctor without a licence from the Nigerian Medical Association could end up in jail, whereas an individual who practices as a human resources professional does not necessarily need to hold a licence from the CIPM.

Despite this, most employers in Nigeria expect CIPM certification from their human resources staff.

A career in HR could begin without CIPM certification, and you could learn what you need to know on the job in your first few years, but your employer would expect you to get the licence at some point. In the absence of this, your HR career would be limited, since there are a lot of things you wouldn't be able to do.

CIPM is more similar to the Institute of Chartered Accountants of Nigeria [ICAN] than to the NMA or NBA. A certification such as CIPM or ICAN allows you to work while you gain your licence, whereas NMA and NBA control entry into their professions directly.

This is like the way KPMG hires young graduates with no audit experience and trains them, but they must acquire their ICAN certification within three years. In your early career, your employer will expect you to receive CIPM certification if you intend to work in human resources in Nigeria.

Our study centre has taught CIPM courses for years, and many students are sponsored by their employers.

A brief summary of this section is that CIPM is the Chartered Institute of Personnel Management of Nigeria. It is mandatory to get a CIPM licence if you want to practice HR in Nigeria.

Joining the Association

CIPM offers six paths to becoming a member and obtaining an HR Practitioner's Licence:

1. Membership by Examination Route
2. Membership through Practitioners' Route
3. Membership through Executive Route
4. Membership through the Academic Route
5. Membership through the Military & Paramilitary Route
6. Corporate Membership

Membership through the HR practitioners' route requires a Bachelor's Degree or its equivalent, and a minimum of seven years post-graduation experience in Human Resource/Administrative practice at an advisory/management level in a structured and recognized organisation. [Click here](#) to learn more

Membership through the executive route requires a Bachelor's Degree or its equivalent, at least six years of core HR/Administrative experience (five of which must be at senior management/executive level), plus experience in a cross-functional management role. [Click here](#) to learn more

Membership through the Academic Route is specifically designed for Lecturers, Vice-Chancellors, Professors, Readers, Researchers, and Heads of departments who lecture on Human Resources/Industrial Relations/Employee Relations and other related fields. [Click here](#) to learn more

Membership through the Military & Paramilitary Route is specifically designed for officers who have demonstrable cognate experience and competence in the core areas of Human Resource Management or Administrative responsibilities in the Military and Paramilitary career field. [Click here](#) to learn more

Corporate Membership is mainly for organisations and firms. requirements to qualify to include the Company's Certificate of Incorporation, Current Annual Report & Financial

Statement (If applicable), and Reference from a Professional Member of the Institute (Full Member or Fellow), among others. [Click here](#) to learn more.

Unless you're an experienced HR professional already, a firm, a lecturer or a paramilitary/military officer, your chances of qualifying for all these routes are slim. As a result, you'll have to pass an examination to earn the HR Practitioner's Licence from CIPM.

The following information will help you understand membership via examination.

How Membership by Examination Works

Most people who pursue CIPM membership through examination are students or recent graduates, although there are many people who already work in other fields who sit for the exam to transition to HR.

CIPM examinations are in six stages. The stage you start from will be determined by your qualifications and/or what you studied in school.

Listed below are the stages.

1. Foundation I
2. Foundation II
3. Intermediate I
4. Intermediate II
5. Professional I, and
6. Professional II.

It is rare for a person to start from **Foundation I** (first stage). The majority of those who do typically only have an SSCE qualification (i.e. they have only been to secondary school). This means they'll take many introductory courses.

Others have higher education, but it was in a pure science discipline (for example, Physics at university). Since they do not have a degree in a social sciences discipline, they typically start with **Intermediate I** (second stage)

Intermediate II is by far the most common entry point. People entering at this level usually have a bachelor's degree in social sciences, management sciences, or humanities.

Economics, Sociology, Psychology, and Political Science are examples of social sciences.

Management sciences include Business Administration, Industrial Relations and Personnel Management (IRPM), Insurance, and Accounting.

A few examples of humanities are philosophy, international relations, and history.

Here are just some examples, not a complete list.

If you are starting from **Intermediate II** (fourth stage), you will take three levels of the exam: Intermediate II, Professional I, and Professional II before you get certified as a member of the Chartered Institute of Personnel Management of Nigeria.

The last group consists of those who start from **Professional I** (the fifth stage) since they have a degree in the management sciences. For instance, someone with a Master's in Industrial Relations, or a Master's in Business Administration.

People usually start from Intermediate II, so we don't see many of these people.

If you are unsure about which stage your degree qualifies you for, please feel free to [contact us](#).

The qualifications required for each stage of examination are shown below in Table 1

Examination Stage	Qualification
Foundation I	WASSCE/NECO/GCE and OND in other disciplines
Foundation II	WASSCE/NECO/GCE (for applicants above 30 years), OND in Social Sciences, Humanities and Management disciplines, NCE or its equivalent
Intermediate I	First Degree/HND in other disciplines
Intermediate II	First Degree/HND in Management/Social Science/Arts/Humanities. Master's Degree in other disciplines

Professional I	Master's Degree in Management/Social Sciences/Arts/Humanities. Associate certificate by examination of other relevant and recognized institutions, transcript will be required from the institute.
Professional II	Final stage of CIPM professional examinations

Table 1: Qualification at each stage of the examination

At each stage of the examination, you will take the following courses:

Foundation I

- ★ Introduction to Management
- ★ Writing and Communication Skills
- ★ Introduction to Economics
- ★ Introduction to Accounting
- ★ Fundamentals of Psychology and Sociology

Foundation II

- ★ Introduction to Human Resource Management
- ★ Nigerian Business Environment
- ★ Business Law
- ★ Computer Application and Management Information System
- ★ Elements of Politics and the Nigeria Legal System

Intermediate I

- Business Administration
- Advanced Economics
- Accounting and Finance for Managers
- Business Statistics and Social Research Methods

Intermediate II

- Learning and Development
- Public Administration
- Workforce Planning and Strategies
- Comparative Management & Administration

Professional I

- ❖ Operations Research
- ❖ Organisational Behaviour and Performance
- ❖ Insurance and Pensions Management
- ❖ Advanced Human Resource Management I
- ❖ Presentation Skills

Professional II

- ❖ Nigerian Labour Law
- ❖ Advanced Employment Relations
- ❖ Advanced Human Resources Management II
- ❖ Labour Market Analysis

Getting registered

It is crucial that you register with CIPM before you begin studying for the exams.

Registering informs the Institute that you intend to take the examination to become a member.

To register, you will need to provide the institute with your biodata as well as relevant qualifications (your degree, for instance).

As a result, the Institute will determine where you can begin your exams.

The Institute will notify you that you have been enrolled for membership by examination if your registration is successful.

It is not necessary to pay for the examinations as soon as you register. Most people complete their registration first and then pay for their exams later. CIPM charges a registration fee of N3, 000; three thousand Naira. You can [register here](#).

Fees

A different fee structure and payment structure applies to each stage of CIPM. A new student must pay an application fee, an acceptance fee, and an exemption fee.

As soon as you register to pursue membership by examination, you will pay the application fee, and once you receive your acceptance letter from the Institute, you will pay the acceptance and exemption fees.

When you advance to higher stages, these fees no longer apply to you since you will only pay them as a new student. However, you will have to pay examination fees, annual dues, and study packs every time you sit for an exam.

The study pack fee is only applicable if you would like to purchase them in paperback.

Exam and exemption fees are currently at this price.

Payment Fees

Stages	Examination	Exemption
FOUNDATION I	N 26,800.00	-
FOUNDATION II	N 30,800.00	N 12,200.00
INTERMEDIATE I	N 34,800.00	N 13,500.00
INTERMEDIATE II	N 38,800.00	N 14,900.00
PROFESSIONAL I	N 42,700.00	N 16,200.00
PROFESSIONAL II	N 46,700.00	-

The Exam Preparation Process

As soon as you have completed your registration, you should begin preparing for the exams.

There are two common strategies people follow.

The first strategy is to study on your own for the exams. It is possible to access the study packs for free on CIPM's website.

On the CIPM website, you can also download past question booklets from previous exams to supplement your study.

Creating a study plan and adhering to it can help you achieve success with this strategy.

As a second strategy, you can attend a study centre to support your own independent study.

In some study centres, lectures are held both on Saturdays and Sundays, in others, they are held on Saturdays alone, and in some even on weekday evenings.

Choose one that meets your needs.

[Centre for Law and Business](#) is one of the CIPM-accredited study centres. You can see a list of all CIPM-accredited study centres [here](#).

Several e-study centres have been available since May 2020 because of the Coronavirus pandemic in 2020.

As a result of Corona, CIPM specifically directed study centres to go virtual, so most study centres have moved their operations to the Internet.

CIPM has accredited Centre for Law and Business as both a physical and an e-study centre. Therefore, we offer both onsite and online tutorials.

[CLB](#) has been accredited since 2016.

We help you prepare for your exams effectively; we teach you for three hours every evening during the week. All lectures are direct and to the point.

If you want tutorials for a specific diet, you can choose what mode of learning you prefer. As an example, we will only be providing an online tutorial for our upcoming 2023 March Diet.

[Contact us](#) to learn more.

In the months following the exams, examination results are released.

A large number of results are released at first, and then they are released to each student's profile on the CIPM website.

Sitting for the exams

Each year, CIPM holds four (4) online examinations - March, June, September, and December.

The candidate must have been admitted as a student member at least one month before the examination.

[Click here](#) for CIPM examination guidelines.

The average exam lasts three hours. There are two sections in each exam.

The first section consists of 20 multiple-choice questions with options lettered A to D, and each question carries one mark.

The second section contains 7 essays, each worth 20 marks. All the multiple-choice questions and four out of seven essay questions need to be answered. For each exam, the total marks are 100 (100%).

If an individual fails one course, they must repeat it on a subsequent Diet. Even though they would be able to continue to higher stages, they would have to rewrite the courses they failed.

For instance, a student in Intermediate II may fail Workforce Planning and Strategies but pass the other courses. That person will proceed to Professional I but will have to re-write Workforce Planning.

If an individual fails two or more courses, they will need to retake the failed courses and pass them before proceeding to the next stage.

Consider for a moment that this person failed Comparative Management and Administration in addition to Workforce Planning and Strategies. Then they would be

unable to proceed to the Professional I stage; they must retake both Workforce Planning and Comparative Management and pass both.

Is that clear?

The induction

When you have successfully completed all stages of the examinations, you will participate in the induction ceremony held twice a year (in May and November) in which CIPM will induct you as an Associate of the Institute (ACIPM).

You should expect to spend about two years from your first examination to induction if you start with Intermediate II and don't have any resits.

The following will automatically be yours as an Associate Member upon induction:

1. Associate Membership Certificate
2. Professional Diploma in Human Resources
3. Human Resources Practitioners' Licence (HRPL)
4. ACIPM designation

What's next?

This guide aims to teach you everything you need to know about the Nigerian professional body for human resources professionals, the Chartered Institute of Personnel Management (CIPM).

Hopefully, we achieved that goal.

Contact us now if you have any questions we haven't answered in this guide. We are always happy to assist you.

Get started on your journey to CIPM Certification now by clicking [here](#)

CIPM is your gateway to a career as an HR professional. Start today! Don't wait!