

A CBAP™ Story From the IIBA UK Chapter President

I attended my first IIBA UK Chapter event in February 2007 at the Reuben's Hotel in London. During which time I learned more about the IIBA and the CBAP professional certification.

With great interest and enthusiasm I joined the IIBA in March and subsequently downloaded the CBAP Professional Handbook and application forms.

Over a weekend at the beginning of April, with my finest pen and being mindful of small printing, I got to work on the paper based application. After compiling the minimum 5yr Business Analysis experience over the last 10yrs, demonstrating my experience in the required knowledge areas, and confirming my education and professional development compliance, I then proceeded to obtain my references.

My references were very supportive and encouraging, one which was my line manager and the second was a work colleague. Although having my referees sign their name across the envelope seal resulted in a few somewhat puzzled looks in terms of what I was signing up for, but overall it was a simple task to complete.

I continued on with unwavering determination, obtaining the international money order from my bank for both the application and exam fee in USD funds and posted off the application by special delivery to Toronto, Canada. I was somewhat relieved that this part of the process was over.

Like clockwork, by the end of April the IIBA confirmed my eligibility to sit the CBAP exam, taking only a couple weeks to process the application.

It then became apparent early into May that the planned Business Analysis Symposium, where the first CBAP exam sitting in the UK was going to be held, was not going to happen in June and was likely now to be held in August. Not a big deal at the time as it would give me a bit more study time.

August soon came and went, no symposium and no CBAP exam. It was then becoming increasingly apparent that a date could not be confirmed in the UK at all and suggestions were made to perhaps select another country (if convenient).

It was important for me to sit the exam in the UK, not only from a personal perspective, but there would be very little value in me having a professional certification which is not known or recognised in this country. Things were now quickly going from bad to worse.

My next concern was the 1 year eligibility requirement to sit the CBAP exam once approved to do so by the IIBA. Clearly this was undoubtedly going to be breached. It was agreed with the IIBA in November that my eligibility period would be extended until December 2008 in hopes that surely there would be an exam for me to sit by then.

IIBA™ United Kingdom Chapter

After further persistence for UK exam dates I finally received confirmation from the IIBA in March 2008 that a date in the UK was being finalised for June. This would now be the new Computer Based Testing (CBT), rather than the paper based version.

I was quick to reply and relieved that after almost a year I would be able to sit the exam. I was told by the IIBA that I would receive a scheduling confirmation email from Castle Worldwide, which I received in May and finally booked the exam date for the 13th of June.

Due to work commitments, studying had to be done on weekends and I spread my study plan over 3 months. To assist in my studying I had purchased the IIBA CBAP Exam Prep Study Guide from B2T Training, an Endorsed Education Provider of the IIBA. The study guide consisted of practice questions for all six knowledge areas and also provided an overview of the structure of the exam. *(Please note: Similar study guides and CBAP related courses are available from numerous IIBA Endorsed Education Providers).*

I did not realise when booking the exam that it was actually Friday the 13th, perhaps not the luckiest day to sit an exam. Nonetheless, I was relieved on the day that I was finally sitting the exam. The exam proctor was Kua Lanmark Ltd at the St Albans facility. The staff was warm and welcoming and I quickly put any nerves I may have had on the day to rest.

Being the only one sitting the exam, I logged into the test on the computer and commenced the 3.5 hour 150 multiple choice question exam. The 3.5 hours was more than enough time and after completing all the questions I began my review. With well over an hour on the clock to go I was in great shape! Until the unthinkable happened! The computer locked up and fears of having to start all over again began to fill my mind. The staff was exceptionally calm and knowledgeable and quickly brought out the technical support manual prepared by Castle Worldwide for just these situations.

To my surprise the procedure was to shut down the exam and for me to log in again and then everything should be okay! The staff reassured me that all my answers were saved as I proceeded through the test. Putting the theory to the test I logged back into the test and to my relief all of my 150 answers were there. After one further review of my answers I then submitted my exam for evaluation.

I now wait patiently with mixed emotions over the next four weeks to know the results.

Martyn Wilson
IIBA UK Chapter President
martyn_wilson@uk.theiiba.org