

CMI Awarding Body

Qualification Assessment Policy and
Guidelines - V7

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Qualification Assessment Policy and Guidelines

AB/POL/0019 - January 2026- V7

History

| Date | Amendments Made |
|---------------------|--|
| January 2026 / V7 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Incorporate into the new policy template• Amend SQA Accreditation to Qualifications Scotland Accreditation• Change in heading from Qualification Assessment Guidance Policy to Assessment Policy and Guidelines. |
| September 2024 / V6 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Complete revision of the document |
| November 2019 / V5 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Complete revision of the policy to add clarity• Updated word count guidance with regard to the new CMI management and leadership suite at L3, 5, 6 and 7 |

Intended Audience

- CMI Quality Managers
- CMI Markers and Moderators
- CMI Partner Relationship Managers
- CMI Partner Engagement Managers
- CMI Awarding Body Support Team
- CMI Centres

All of CMI's policies are published on the [CMI Policies Webpage](#)

Purpose

This document establishes the guidelines and procedures necessary to ensure CMI assessments are structured and completed with the highest degree of professionalism. Designed to be used with the qualification syllabus, it provides a robust framework for consistency, fairness, and rigour. This policy serves Learners, Assessors, and Internal Quality Assurers (IQAs) by defining the requirements that maintain the integrity of CMI qualifications.

Scope

This policy applies to all CMI Awarding Body staff (including contractors), CMI Centres and CMI-registered Learners.

Regulatory Requirements

This policy meets the regulatory requirements set out by our regulators: Ofqual, CCEA Regulation, Qualifications Wales, and Qualifications Scotland Accreditation.

[Ofqual - General Conditions of Recognition](#)

[Qualifications Wales - Standard Conditions of Recognition](#)

[CCEA Regulation - General Conditions of Recognition](#)

[Qualifications Scotland Accreditation - Regulatory Principles \(2021\)](#)

| Regulator or Relevant Regulatory Body | Reference Details | Legislation/Regulatory Reference |
|---------------------------------------|------------------------------------|--|
| Ofqual | General Conditions of Recognition | Condition No: D7 - Making available information to meet Teachers' needs |
| Qualifications Wales | Standard Conditions of Recognition | Condition No: D7 - Making available information to meet Teachers' needs |
| CCEA Regulation | General Conditions of Recognition | Condition No: D7 - Making available information to meet Teachers' needs |
| Qualifications Scotland Accreditation | Regulatory Principles 2021 | Principle 14. The awarding body and its providers must ensure that its qualifications and their delivery and assessment are fair, inclusive and accessible to learners |

Preparation for the assessment

Understand the Requirements

CMI Centres and Assessors must ensure all Learners are directed to thoroughly read the unit specifications in the qualification syllabus before beginning any CMI assessment. Only content directly related to the achievement of the Assessment Criteria (AC) is to be assessed.

Centres must instruct Learners to address the AC directly in their responses, prioritising the AC over the general assessment task guidance provided in the assessment or assessment brief.

Learners achieve a Pass for a CMI assessment only when all specified AC have been fully met. Centres must ensure this requirement is clearly communicated.

Research the Topic/Resources

CMI Centres should encourage Learners to research topics using the suggested reading lists within the Unit Specifications and resources provided by the Centre. Staff should advise Learners on accessing comprehensive online resources available from CMI. Completing the assessment

Understand the Assessment Criteria

Centres must instruct Learners that the Assessment Criteria (AC) should be used as the primary reference point to structure and present assessment work. Learner responses must be organised clearly and logically for the marker to easily identify how each criterion has been addressed. The use of AC headings within submissions is strongly suggested.

Command Verbs

CMI assessments use command verbs (for example, *Analyse*, *Discuss*, *Explain*) at the start of each assessment criteria to direct your answer. These verbs signal the specific type of response and depth expected. Ensure your answers are structured to directly address the instruction given by the command verb. Please refer to Command Verb Definitions, which can be accessed on [CMI Policies Page](#). It is suggested to use the assessment criteria as a title within your assessment to ensure that you focus on the assessment criteria and the associated command verb.

Tailor the Language and Layout

Language and Layout

Use clear, professional language that directly addresses the assessment criteria, avoiding unnecessary jargon. Structure your report logically with headings and subheadings to ensure readability. As mentioned above, it is best practice to use the assessment criteria themselves as headings.

Using Grammar Checkers

If you use spelling or grammar checkers, always retain your original draft. This allows you to compare versions, learn from your mistakes, and enables your Centre and CMI to track your writing progress and verify any disputes regarding automated suggestions. Please also refer to [The Use of Artificial Intelligence \(AI\) - CMI Assessments](#) section.

Structure of the Assessment

A well-defined structure is essential for a cohesive and professional assessment. While the following framework is a recommended guide, always consult your tutor or assessor for specific Centre requirements.

Suggested Structure

- Title page
- Contents Page (including any appendices)

- Glossary of Terms and Abbreviations
- Main body of the assessment (Included in word count)
- Appendices
- Bibliography

Formatting

- **Headers:** Include your name and unit title on every page. Add your Learner number if required by your Centre.
- **Footers:** Number pages consecutively in the bottom right-hand corner.

Note: Only the main body of the assessment is included in the overall word count. All other sections listed above are excluded. Please refer to the [Word Count](#) section for further information on word counts.

Writing Style

Write with your reader in mind. Adopt a formal, professional tone suitable for a broad audience.

- **Perspective:** Generally, use the third person (“the organisation”), rather than the first person (“I think...”), to present arguments objectively. Use the first person only when reflecting on personal experiences or opinions. The choice between the two should depend on the context, purpose, and level of involvement you wish to convey in your writing.
- **Proofreading:** Check your spelling, punctuation, and grammar. It is important not to rely solely on automatic spell-checkers. These can often use American English spelling variations. Ask a colleague to review your work in terms of grammar and punctuation errors before submission. (**Note:** Assessments are not returned for poor spelling or grammar).
- **Clarity:** Avoid the use of clichés, unexplained jargon and statements in quotation marks, unless these are quotations which are attributed. You can use occupational jargon and terminology, provided it is either explained in the main text or is shown in the Glossary of Terms and Abbreviations.
- **Abbreviations:** Where abbreviations are used, the full term must be written in full first, followed by the abbreviation in brackets. The abbreviation may then be used throughout the remainder of the text (for example, Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)).

Present Information Clearly

Clarity and precision are essential. Communicate your points using concise and straightforward language, avoiding unnecessary complexity.

Your assessment must demonstrate:

- **Accuracy:** Ensure all information is accurate, current and authentic
- **Relevance:** Cover the topic/assessment criteria with appropriate depth and breadth
- **Understanding:** Show a strong command of key concepts
- **Application:** Connect theory to practice and apply it to your workplace or scenario.
- **Communication:** Write clearly and professionally at the level expected for the qualification

Use Correct Referencing

Always adhere to the appropriate referencing style specified by your course or institution when using external sources. Accurate referencing builds credibility and acknowledges the work of others. Please refer to the [Referencing](#) section below for further guidance.

Follow CMI Assessment Guidelines and Requirements

Always refer to the CMI assessment guidelines and requirements provided by your CMI Centre. Following these guidelines is essential for demonstrating your competence and meeting the assessment criteria.

Edit and Revise

Before submitting your assessment, conduct a thorough final review of your submission for spelling, grammar and coherence, and refine the overall structure of the assessment/report. Verify that all references in your bibliography or list of references are accurate and that all website links are functional and accessible.

Constructing written assessments/reports and evidence for CMI assessments requires careful consideration of the assessment criteria, the intended audience, language, layout, and adherence to CMI assessment guidelines. By keeping these tips in mind and tailoring your approach accordingly, you can create assessments that are informative, well-structured, and meet the specific requirements of your audience and the institute.

Attachments and Appendices

Learners should minimise the use of attachments or appendices unless specifically allowed for in the assessment brief. Any information essential for meeting the learning outcomes and assessment criteria must be included in the main body of the assessment. This applies to all assessments, whether marked internally by the CMI Centre or externally assessed by CMI.

Where work is externally assessed by CMI, appendices will **NOT** be marked. When marked work is submitted to CMI for moderation sampling, appendices will **NOT** be moderated or marked, unless it forms part of the work-based evidence requirements laid out within the assessment criteria

Word Count

Learners must comply with the required total word count as stated on the assessment brief, within a margin of +/- 10%. This applies to all work, whether it is assessed by the Centre or externally assessed by CMI.

Exceeding the word count in the assessment is not grounds for a referral. However, CMI reserves the right to return work to the Centre for editing and resubmission by the Learner if the word count is excessive. CMI has the right to apply individual word count concessions when an assessment has been referred, for example, if the CMI marker or moderator requires additional elaboration to meet the assessment criteria, the original word count may be exceeded.

It is good practice for Learners to state the total word count at the front of their assessment.

In some cases, Learners may require reasonable adjustments to the assessment, including approval for an increased word count. Where this applies, Learners must clearly signpost within their assessment, demonstrating where the assessment criteria have been met. All applications for Reasonable Adjustments must be approved by CMI in advance of the learner undertaking any revised assessment. Applications for Reasonable Adjustments can be made through CMI Partner Connect using the **Reasonable Adjustment, Special Consideration, Extensions Application CMI Reasonable Adjustments Procedure.**

Tables, Graphs, Diagrams, Bullet Points

All use of tables, graphs, diagrams, Gantt charts and flowcharts should be incorporated into the main text of the assessment, but **not included** in the word count. Any published secondary information, such as annual reports and company literature, should be referenced in the main text of the assessment but not included. Embedded documents within the main text do not count as part of the word count.

Excessive use of tables, excessive use of embedded pictures or excessive use of words in tables in the main text may be returned for editing.

The excessive use of bullet points should be deterred; if using bullet points, then there should be a sufficient narrative around the bullet points to convey context and application of knowledge.

Confidentiality and Commercially Sensitive Evidence

Learners must be fully able to articulate their answers/responses when responding to assessment requirements. Often, CMI Learners work in environments or organisations that require a certain amount of commercial confidentiality and/or deal with classified information or security matters, so this may often inhibit or show “vagueness” in the response to an assessment.

Dealing with commercial confidentiality or security issues of presenting work-based evidence should lie with the Learner and Centre in the first instance; however, CMI has a responsibility to maintain the confidentiality of sensitive information that is presented for marking or moderation purposes.

To reduce the risk of disclosure of confidential or sensitive information, Centres and Learners should, where possible, apply the following rules:

- Redesign the assessment so there is no breach or disclosure of confidential or sensitive information. (This option is only available to fully approved CMI Centres and must be approved by CMI before use.)
- Where it is not possible to redesign the assessment, or if the Centre is a registered Centre, and if the Learner wishes to include confidential or sensitive information, then it should be sufficiently redacted. If the redacted information is pertinent to the evidence being put forward (for example, it provides evidence towards a competency), then a contextual statement detailing how the evidence meets the competency is acceptable. This contextual statement should be completed by the Learner and underpinned by a confirmation statement from the Employer or Centre.
- Witness testimony in support of the redacted evidence will also be accepted from peers, line managers and supervising clients.
- Centres may wish to contact CMI and discuss the possibility of a non-disclosure agreement (NDA); however, please note this will have to be explored by CMI's legal team.
- Clearly mark assessment materials which have been determined to be confidential or sensitive and inform CMI before submission for marking or moderation purposes.
- Restrict access to confidential material to people who need it.
- Offer training for Centre Staff with access to confidential or sensitive assessment material on how to maintain confidentiality.
- Monitor the content of the assessment to ensure that confidential or sensitive information shared during the assessment is not further disclosed.

CMI does not require specific client/organisation names. Client/organisation names CAN be anonymised, replacing them with 'Client A', 'Client B', etc.

We can assure you that any confidential or commercially sensitive information that is shared with the CMI will remain secure within our systems for the purposes of assessment and quality assurance.

Referencing

In the context of CMI qualification assessments, reading and research will help the learner to learn and add credibility to their work. The higher the level of qualification they undertake, the more expectation there is that Learners will read, research and then reference their sources. In addition, referencing plays a pivotal role in acknowledging the invaluable contributions of other writers and researchers to the learner's CMI assessment. Beyond mere recognition, referencing is a key method of attributing credit to the authors whose words and ideas you have used in your assessment. References should always be accurate, allowing the marker/assessor/reader to trace the sources of information you have used. The best way to make sure the learner is referencing accurately is to keep a record of all the sources they have used when reading and researching for a CMI assessment.

Please ensure that Learners answer the assessment criteria in their own words and only underpin what they have said with a reference if necessary or appropriate. Learners should be aware of the overuse of referencing theories in their work and should balance their responses, theories and contextualisation to their own roles and experiences

The primary aim and objective of referencing and the use of citations are to provide sufficient bibliographic details to empower the marker/assessor/reader to accurately identify and, when needed, retrieve the original source. The completeness, accuracy, and uniformity of citations assume paramount significance. Your assessment may encompass a diverse array of resources, ranging from websites, printed books and electronic journal articles to checklists and online sources.

By incorporating citations and references, you explicitly acknowledge the contributions of others and underscore how their concepts may have enriched your own research and submission.

While the terms "reference list" and "bibliography" are frequently interchanged, it is worth noting that a bibliography signifies the entirety of your undertaken reading for the assessment, encompassing not only the sources directly cited in your composition. Similarly, "reference" and "citation" are often used interchangeably; however, a citation typically alludes to the segment within your assessment to which you attribute the source, whereas a reference commonly pertains to the comprehensive list of all sources that have been cited within your work. This distinction underscores the importance of accuracy and

thoroughness in the writing, ensuring that all referenced materials are properly credited and accessible to the reader for further investigation.

A professional approach to work is expected, and therefore Learners must clearly identify and acknowledge the use of all secondary sources, for example, quotations, models, theories and so forth from books, websites or any other source, including work-based products, in accordance with the **CMI Plagiarism, Collusion and Artificial Intelligence (AI) Statement** which can be accessed on the [CMI Policies Page](#).

There are many forms and styles of referencing available to Learners; CMI does not require any one specific style of referencing, but Learners are free to use any recognised system and style they wish, as long as the referencing style chosen is clear and consistent.

The use of Harvard referencing is not prescribed, but Learners should use an appropriate referencing system that ensures the original source(s) can be tracked. Referencing must be made directly under, or next to, the source within the body of the work. A bibliography cannot be relied on as showing that the Learner has adequately referenced a source.

When you quote from, or refer to, another source of information in your assessment, you must provide a citation to it, which then leads to a reference giving the full details of the resource. You will end up with:

- a citation within the text, often known as in-text referencing.
- a reference in the bibliography or reference list at or near the end of the assessment.

There are two main systems used in the United Kingdom: the Harvard system (sometimes referred to as the Author-Date system) and the British Standard (Numeric) system. Descriptions of these systems are provided below, together with examples of their use.

For example:

- Harvard system: (Smith, 2019) or Smith (2019) argued that...
- British Standard (Numeric) system: [1] or Reference [1] discussed...

There are two main rules for quotations, whichever system you use.

- If you are quoting something that is up to three lines in length, then you can generally incorporate this directly into the body of your text; anything longer should be indented in its own paragraph.

- If you need to include any words of your own to help make sense of the quotation, make sure they appear in square brackets to make it clear that these are not part of the quote itself. For example:
- "That [moving] line established the efficiency of the method, and we now use it everywhere."

File Format for Assessment Submissions to CMI

Centres should ensure that any Learner submissions follow the requirements in the qualification syllabus and/or assessment brief. Learners must use either Microsoft Word (.docx), Google Docs (.docs), OpenDocument Text (.odt) or Rich Text Format (.rtf) in the completion and submission of their assessments. Centres should submit assessments to CMI's Marking or Moderation systems using these formats only. There is no requirement for Centres to convert any Microsoft Word, Google Docs, OpenDocument Text or Rich Text Format documents to PDF before submission; they can be left in their original file format.

Where it is not possible to submit the learner's work in these formats, then only in exceptional cases can a PDF or other file format be submitted. Centres should contact their CMI Quality Manager before submission. Where a PDF document submission has been authorised by CMI for submission, then any comments/feedback that has been added by the Centre on these documents must be clearly visible in the document, and the word count must be clearly labelled on each page.

CMI may request that the Centre upload PDFs without prior authorisation, to convert them to (.docx), (.docs), (.odt) or (.rtf) format so they can be accessed.

Other forms of assessment submissions are permitted if a prior agreement with CMI has been authorised, for example, an agreed Centre devised assessment in the form of a presentation, or audio & video files.

Learner Collusion and Plagiarism

Plagiarism and collusion are very serious offences, and any Learner found to be copying another Learner's work or quoting work from another source without recognising and disclosing that source will be penalised.

Definitions

'**Plagiarism**' means presenting work, excerpts, ideas or passages of another author without acknowledging appropriate referencing and attribution.

'Collusion' occurs when two or more Learners submit work which is so alike in ideas, content, wording and/or structure that the similarity goes beyond what might have been mere coincidence. It must be made clear to all Learners and Staff that whilst the discussion of ideas, working in groups (as directed by the CMI Approved Centre), and other forms of verbal discussion are acceptable, the sharing of a Learner's written response to an assessment is NOT acceptable. To do so, even with the best intentions, leaves the Learner open to their work being used without their knowledge and could lead to allegations of collusion. Learners MUST NOT share, in any format, written thoughts, ideas or assessments which are being used for CMI qualifications

The Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) - CMI Assessments

When is the use of AI permitted by CMI?

AI is only permitted in assessments that explicitly allow the use of chatbots or similar AI composition software, as specified in the relevant assessment brief. Currently, there are no CMI assessments that allow the use of chatbots or similar AI compositions.

However, CMI recognises AI as a valuable learning tool that can be used in the following ways:

- To assist with grammar and spelling when writing.
- As a search tool to research assessment topics by mining publications in the area.
- To help structure an assessment.

It is important to note that the use of AI should always be in accordance with the CMI assessment brief and should not be used to replace critical thinking or independent learning.

When is AI not permitted by CMI?

At CMI, we expect our Learners to produce original content that is attributed to their authorship in all assessments. While AI composition software can be a useful tool for tasks such as grammar and spelling checks or conducting research on assessment topics, it should not be used to generate original content. This includes CMI assessments that require reflection, analysis, evaluation, work-based projects, and presentations, and includes all Centre-devised assessments. Assessments conducted by a professional discussion either in person or virtually, do not allow the use of AI by the Learner. At CMI, we encourage our Learners to develop their own thinking and demonstrate their knowledge and skills through their own work by evidencing their own experience and relating theory to experience when required. This is an important aspect of the learning process.

Learner Guidelines for the use of AI software

One of the fundamental principles of assessment integrity is appropriate acknowledgement and referencing. Learners must be aware of the importance of referencing the sources they have used when producing work for a CMI assessment, and they must know how to do this accurately and consistently. This is essential for maintaining the integrity of CMI assessments and avoiding plagiarism.

Learners should not use an AI tool to generate content for a CMI assessment; however, where a learner has used sources to explore theories and/or quotes and then used these within an assessment, they must be **rewritten** or directly quoted within the assessment. If the AI tool provides details of the sources used, these must be checked and verified by the Learner, and then referenced in the normal way, in line with CMI's Assessment Guidance Policy. If the AI tool does not provide such details, the Learner must ensure that they independently verify the AI-generated content, and then reference the sources they have used in the normal way.

Learners should be aware that failure to reference sources properly can have serious consequences, including accusations of plagiarism. Therefore, it is essential that CMI Learners take the time to learn and apply appropriate referencing conventions, and that they seek help and guidance if they are unsure from the CMI Centre.

When Learners use AI tools as a source of information for an assessment, it is important that they acknowledge and reference the AI source appropriately. The acknowledgement/referencing should indicate the name of the AI source used and the date the content was generated. For example, if a learner uses ChatGPT 4 to explore theories and/or quotes for a CMI assessment, they should acknowledge and reference the source as follows: ChatGPT 4 (<https://chat.openai.com/>), accessed on 26/08/2024.

Important - The Learner must retain a copy of the question(s) that they have input into the AI software/website and the response that the AI system has produced for reference and authentication purposes. This should be inserted into the bibliography at the end of the assessment submission and should be in a non-editable format (such as a screenshot).

This must be submitted with the work so the Centre/CMI can review the work, the AI-generated content and how it has been used. Where this is not submitted and/or AI has not been referenced within the assessment, and the Centre/CMI suspects that the learner has used AI software, then the Centre will need to refer to its own malpractice policy for the appropriate next steps.

CMI encourages Learners to seek guidance and support on appropriate referencing conventions, both when using AI tools and when conducting independent research. This can help them to develop their skills and knowledge in this area and enhance their assessment submission. For example, it would be

unacceptable to simply reference 'AI' or 'ChatGPT' without providing additional details. Similarly, when referencing web sources, Learners should provide specific details of the website and webpages consulted, rather than simply stating 'Google'.

You should ensure that you are accountable for the output of your assessment and how it was produced. This means that you should be able to distinguish which ideas are your own and which are derived from other sources, such as ChatGPT, and that you are not attempting to gain an unfair advantage by presenting AI-generated content as your own. When you submit assessments you will be asked to sign an authenticity form or click a button in your Learner Management System to say that the work is your own. For CMI Registered Centres using the CMI Marking Service, it is mandatory to declare that the work submitted on behalf of the Learner has been completed by the Learner and can be verified as such. Ultimately, you are responsible for the content of your assessment and how it was constructed, so it is crucial that you can confidently answer yes to these questions.

Warnings of issues when using AI

When using AI tools, it is important to be aware of their limitations. AI systems can sometimes generate false, misleading, or fabricated information, also known as “hallucinations”. This may include inaccurate data, incorrect claims, or nonexistent references. For this reason, information produced by AI should not be relied upon without verification. Users should always cross-check outputs against reputable and authoritative sources.

Using AI to support writing also requires active engagement beyond content generation. While AI can assist with drafting and idea development, minimal effort can result in low quality or unreliable output. Users must critically review, refine, and fact check AI generated content and ensure that all references and citations are accurate and legitimate. This careful approach supports higher quality work and helps maintain academic integrity in line with the standards set by CMI.

Assessment Referrals by CMI and Centres

CMI allows Learners to submit the **original and two further submissions** should they receive a refer grade (in other words, a total of 3 submissions is permitted).

If a Learner is required to resubmit an assessment, they should only amend those assessment criteria that have been referred. Under no circumstances should a Learner amend the answer to an assessment criteria that has been passed, as this may affect the original grade awarded.

If a Learner is resubmitting a referred assessment, then the word count guidance in this policy still applies.

It is acknowledged that if a Learner is asked to enhance an answer, this may result in some increase in word count. CMI and Approved Centre Assessors will make a professional judgement as to whether the increase in word count is reasonable, and therefore, Learners are encouraged to be concise in their response. As a guide, it is expected that an enhanced answer would not increase the word count of the original answer for that assessment criteria by more than 50%. Where Learners enhance an answer, they should use a different colour font to indicate this enhancement.

If a Learner wishes to rewrite the entire answer, then the original answer should be retained within the assessment but crossed through using either a highlighting tool or the track changes facility. The new answer must adhere to the word count stated in the assessment brief and must be produced using a different colour font, **BLUE** for the first resubmission and **RED** for the second and final resubmission.

Any resubmitted work where the Learner has not used a different colour font or exceeds the word count may be returned for editing.

A 4th submission is permitted only in exceptional circumstances. Normally, if an assessment has been referred 3 times, the Learner is considered to have failed the unit, and there is no opportunity to retake it. For guidance, please refer to the allocated CMI Quality Manager.

Please ensure that internal planning and learner tracking systems at the Centre allow for the possibility of referrals (for example, where work is sent back for correction and needs to be resubmitted)

- There is a colour-coded system of feedback which is used by CMI markers. The same system is encouraged for use in all Centres that undertake their own marking to adopt:
 - The **First** submission Learner submission is in **BLACK** – CMI feedback is in **BLACK**.
 - The **Second** submission is in **BLUE** – CMI feedback is in **BLUE**.
 - The **Third** submission is in **RED** – CMI feedback is in **RED**.
- Learners are required to submit entire assessments, not just the bits they have altered. Partial submissions will be returned if submitted to CMI for remarking.
- Please ensure the work submitted is within the CMI word count guidelines. Check the word count before you mark the work. Work that is over the word count should be returned for editing to the Learner.
- If Centres identify any quality issues or suspect malpractice of any kind, contact the Centres Programme Director and the allocated CMI Quality Manager immediately to discuss.

Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed in line with CMI's Document Control Policy.