

CMI ASSESSMENT GUIDANCE POLICY

Ref: AB/POL/0019/Nov19/V05

Word Count Guidance

Assignment briefs requiring a written response should have a word count between 1500 – 4500 words depending on level (see below). Learners must comply with the required total word count as stated on the assignment brief, within a margin of +/- 10%. This applies to all work whether it is assessed by the Centre or externally assessed by CMI.

The following are excluded from inclusion in word count if used and not required by the assignment brief:

- - Introduction. For example Learners could use an introduction to outline their job role and introduce the organisation and/or department that they will be using to answer the assignment
- - Index
- - Contents Page
- - Headings
- - Diagrams, Charts and Graphs
- - Information contained within references
- - Bibliographies
- - Reflective statement to draw together learning from undertaking the assignment and how this has impacted the learners work

The above are optional elements and do not form part of the Learners answers to the assessment criteria and will not be marked. These optional elements are used to enhance learning, help scene set and provide evidence of further research/investigation but will not be marked.

When an assessment task requires Learners to produce presentation slides with supporting notes, the word count applies to the supporting notes only.

Tables that are used to present statistical or complex data/information to support an answer are excluded from word count; however inappropriate and excessive use of tables may result in the work being returned for editing. Learners should limit the word count used within tables.

The excessive use of word count in assignments is not grounds for referral. However CMI reserves the right to return work to the Centre for editing and resubmission by the Learner. This applies to all work whether it is assessed by the Centre or externally assessed by CMI.

There may be instances where Learners require reasonable adjustments for assessment that includes approval of increased word count. In this instance, Learners should signpost their assessment to highlight where assessment criteria has been met. All applications for Reasonable Adjustment must be approved in advance. For further information, please refer to the CMI Reasonable Adjustments Procedure.

It is good practice for Learners to state the total word count on the front of their assessment. Learners should also endeavour, where possible, to use Microsoft Word or Rich Text Format for their assessments as this enables Learners to utilise word count tools.

Guidance on use of word count for referrals is given below (See Referrals Guidance)

CMI guidance on word counts at each level, with a margin of +/- 10% is as follows. This applies to all work whether it is assessed by the Centre or externally assessed by CMI.

Assessment Guidance Policy

- Level 2 = 1500 - 2000
- Level 3 = 2000 - 2500
- Level 4 = 2500 - 3000
- Level 5 = 2500 - 3000

NB for the L5 Award/Certificate/Diploma/Extended Diploma in Management and Leadership (5A30, 5C30, 5D30, 5XD30), word counts vary from 2500-3000 to 4500-5000 depending on unit. Please refer to the syllabus, page 15.

- Level 6 = 2500 - 3000

NB for the L6 Award/Certificate/Diploma in Professional Management and Leadership Practice (6A30, 6C30, 6D30), word counts vary from 2500-3000 to 3500-4000 depending on unit. Please refer to the syllabus, page 14.

- Level 7 = 3000 - 3500

NB for the L7 Award/Certificate/Diploma in Strategic Management and Leadership Practice (7A30, 7C30, 7D30), word counts vary from 3000-3500 to 4000-4500 depending on unit. Please refer to the syllabus, page 13.

- Level 8 = 4000 - 4500

Appendices Guidance

Information and evidence that is used to demonstrate that the Learner has met the Assessment Criteria should be included within the main body of the written report. This applies to all work whether it is assessed by the Centre or externally assessed by CMI.

Appendices will not be marked and evidence within appendices will not be considered as evidence used to demonstrate that the learner has met the assessment criteria. Therefore Learners should aim to minimise the amount of unnecessary attachments or appendices.

Appendices should only be used to provide supporting data or evidence that underpins the written answer within the main body of the report.

An example of an appendix may be where a Learner has been asked to evaluate the outcome of a 360 degree appraisal. The Learner's written evaluation should be in the main body of the report and will be marked and considered as part of the word count. However the Learner may append the actual 360 degree appraisal as evidence that this has been undertaken or the appendix may contain a summary of a diagnostic tool that a Learner has used to provide the justification for an evaluation. The content of the diagnostic tool will not be marked as it is the evaluation or justification within the main body of the report that would address the assessment criteria.

Any published secondary information such as annual reports and company literature, should be referenced in the main text of the assignment but not included.

Referencing Guidance

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 etc. from books, websites or any other source including work-based products in accordance with the CMI Plagiarism and Collusion Statement.

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 the Learner has adequately referenced a source.

Plagiarism and Collusion Guidance

Learners should refer to the CMI Plagiarism and Collusion Statement for full guidance and Approved Centres are required to ensure this statement is made available to Learners.

Plagiarism means presenting work, excerpts, ideas or passages of another author or person without appropriate referencing and attribution to the original person or author. Therefore plagiarism includes the use of 'cut-and-paste' and also includes the taking of another's ideas and passing them off as ones own.

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. Whilst it is recognised that Learners may work in study groups to undertake research or study required for an assignment, the actual assignment must be written by the Learner and contain the Learner's individual answer to the assessment criteria.

Learners who work within the same organisation must take additional care to ensure that whilst their answers may reference the same company policies, procedures etc. their evidence should also contain their individual work to meet the assessment criteria.

All Learners are required to sign a Statement of Authenticity declaring that the work submitted is their own; this statement may be either submitted to CMI or retained by the CMI Approved Centre.

Both plagiarism and collusion are considered by CMI to be a serious matter, and will be dealt with in accordance with CMI's Malpractice and Maladministration Policy and Procedure.

Bibliography Guidance

CMI does not require Learners to include a bibliography with their assignments; however this is seen as good practice, particularly for higher level qualifications.

All sources/methodology/applications should be acknowledged in accordance in the CMI Plagiarism and Collusion Statement. The Learner must use an appropriate referencing system to achieve this.

Referral/Resubmission Guidance

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 assignment, 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 assignment 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 assignment but crossed-through using either a highlighting tool or track changes facility within Microsoft Word – the new answer must adhere to the word-count stated in the assignment 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 word-count may be returned for editing.

NB a 4th submission is permitted only in exceptional circumstances. Normally, if an assignment 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.

Structuring Written Assignments Guidance

Learners are expected to produce assessments to a professional standard. Therefore written assignments should use clear headings and paragraphs. It is recommended that learners use the CMI assessment criteria as sub-headings within their written work.

Grammar and use of English should be of a professional standard. CMI reserves the right to return any assignment where the evidence of each assessment criteria cannot be easily located and where the Assessor has been unable award a pass without making assumptions to determine the meaning or intent of the answer.

Learners are therefore advised to ensure their answers are clear and concise. It is recommended that the assignment is proof-read to ensure clarity of meaning prior to submission for marking.
Assessment Guidance Policy

Learner work should contain the following key components:

- A front cover page - that contains as a minimum the following information:
 - The Learners full name as given when at point of registration with CMI
 - Learner's CMI registration number
 - Unit title and CMI Unit Number
 - Total word-count. (recommended)
- A contents page
- A footer note on each page that contains the following information:
 - Page number
 - Date
 - Unit Title and CMI Unit Number
 - Learner Name and CMI Learner number.