



P1 Professional Skills

*Supplementary Guidance on
the Grade Requirements*

P1 Professional Skills – Supplementary Guidance on the Grade Requirements

This module requires candidates to develop a **business report** underpinned by **independent research** and tailored to **align with and promote the strategic aims of their legal practice or organisation**.

This guidance has been developed to support training providers and candidates in how best to meet the grade requirements of the module.

How to use this guidance

This document is intended to be an additional resource to support candidates as they progress through the module. This guidance does not replace the P1 Professional Skills - Guidance for Training Providers/Trainees (the “P1 Guidance”) available in the Education Partners Hub and myCILEX. The P1 Guidance provides clear instructions and support for trainees (candidates) on how to complete the assessment successfully. Training providers and candidates are encouraged to read the P1 Guidance before considering the “tips for success and mistakes to avoid” set out below.

This supplementary guidance should be read alongside the marking criteria included within the P1 Guidance. The marking criteria comprises of six grade requirements, of which each has three grade descriptors: fail, pass and distinction, and clarifies how each submitted report will be assessed.

Grade Requirement 1	Introduction – Project Objectives <i>Clarity, completeness and relevance of introduction and objectives</i>
Tips for success	Discuss with colleagues/a supervisor to identify a project that is relevant to your organisation’s current performance/strategic objectives. Keep in mind that the objective is to produce a report that is valuable to a business, it is not to produce a report solely on an area of law. If a development in law is relevant to your project’s context, then include it but it should not form the bulk of the report. Consider the potential research areas in the P1 Guidance if you are struggling for inspiration or are not currently employed in a legal role. Spend plenty of time considering whether your project proposal will enable you to meet all the grade requirements to a pass standard e.g. conduct an initial review of available literature on your chosen topic – if there is very little, consider if your chosen topic will allow you to meet Grade Requirement 3. Read the section titled “Planning” in the P1 Guidance.

Mistakes to avoid	Undertaking research and producing a report solely on an area of law e.g. <i>“The Impact of the Economic Crime (Transparency and Enforcement) Act 2022 on Corporate Ownership Transparency in the UK.”</i> Picking a vague or generic project that lacks effective focus e.g. <i>“The use of Artificial Intelligence in the legal sector.”</i> Choosing a topic that does not provide meaningful value to your organisation or the sector. Not taking advantage of seeking and actioning feedback from your employer and training provider on your project objective. Departing from your project proposal without considering the impact on your ability to achieve all the grade requirements e.g. not carrying out an internal survey as indicated on your Project Proposal Form.
Grade Requirement 2	Introduction - Research Methodology <i>Evidence of and understanding of research methods</i>
Tips for success	Explain your research process and justify your choices. Introduce your research design: Justify your chosen method by reference to relevant research methodology; Explain how data will be collected/analysed; Address limitations; Explain your selection criteria. Consider using the CMI Resources (details in the P1 Guidance) or other resources (such as University websites) to improve your understanding of research methods and how to conduct your research.
Mistakes to avoid	Having an insufficient understanding of research methods (e.g. not distinguishing between primary/secondary sources or qualitative/quantitative or not understanding that interviews and surveys are separate methods). Omitting a section in your report on research methodology.
Grade Requirement 3	Conducting Research <i>Explanation of and quality of data collection</i>
Tips for success	Undertake primary research e.g. conduct your own survey, interviews, focus groups. Consult reliable and trustworthy literature which is relevant to your research. Do not rely on Wikipedia or other user-generated content websites.
Mistakes to avoid	Not including evidence of the data you collected in your research. Collecting data that is limited and basic and does not address your project objective.

	Not including relevant literature. Including literature which is outdated/no longer current to your objective. Using unreliable sources (check author, publisher, purpose and scope).
Grade Requirement 4	Analysis and Discussion <i>Evidence of critical analysis and discussion of findings</i>
Tips for success	Base your analysis and discussion on your findings. Explain any limitations in your data collection or analysis. Do not just analyse your findings — discuss what your findings mean in practice and explain the impact of your results on the project objective (e.g. “<i>The results indicate a 50% improvement in employee satisfaction within the practice, accompanied by increased productivity and corresponding rise in revenue</i>”. This then leads to your recommendations (see Grade Requirement 5) - address what the organisation should do. Link your findings with any theories you have found in your literature (e.g. “<i>This 50% increase fits in with x’s analysis in x article</i>”).
Mistakes to avoid	Simply restating the results of your research without interpretation or assessment of the reasons for the findings. Including excessive personal opinions rather than relying on objective analysis. Not considering the strengths and weaknesses of the research/findings. Including sweeping generalisations/claims unsupported by the evidence.
Grade Requirement 5	Conclusions and Recommendations <i>Evidence of conclusions and identification of recommendations</i>
Tips for success	When providing your conclusions and recommendations, link them back to the objective(s) you stated in your introduction. Include a concise summary of your findings. Base your recommendations directly on your findings and conclusions. Include specific recommendations that are actionable, realistic and relevant to the project objective i.e. they can guide future action and provide strategies to address the business problem/opportunity. Apply the recommendations specifically to the business/legal sector.

Mistakes to avoid	Bringing new information into the conclusion. Including general or uncritical conclusions which do not flow from the research evidence. Omitting recommendations altogether. Basing recommendations on your own personal opinions. Not including suggestions for further research and its benefits (where relevant).
Grade Requirement 6	Clarity and Presentation <i>Clarity of the report, presentation and referencing</i>
Tips for success	Present your report professionally - read the section "Presentation Standards" in the P1 Guidance. Adopt the expected structure and content of the report in the P1 Guidance – read the section "Report Structure and Guidance". Proofread your report thoroughly before submission. Do not rely solely on grammar/spell check. Use charts to graphically illustrate your data - remember this is a business report not an academic essay or legal dissertation. Ask yourself "Would a reader with no background of the topic understand my report?" Include accurate citations and references. Use Harvard referencing.
Mistakes to avoid	Forgetting that this is a business report and instead producing an academic essay or a legal dissertation. Not taking advantage of the 7,000 word-count and/or the use of appendices (if your report is significantly less than 7,000 words you risk submitting insufficient content to meet the grade requirements). If the submission substantially exceeds the 7,000-word limit, any content beyond this threshold may not be assessed. Plagiarising e.g. not attributing content in your report to its source with citations. Including no, limited or incomplete citations and references.

	Submitting a report which is disorganised, hard to follow, and/or has an inappropriate structure e.g. introducing findings in the conclusion. Using overly technical language without ensuring reader accessibility. Not checking for repetition of content.
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In addition to the P1 Guidance and this guidance, candidates are encouraged to take advantage of seeking support from their training provider by asking for feedback on their project proposal and subsequent draft report.