

# Appendix 1 - Guidance for Assessors (Assignments)

## General Guidance

This guidance should be read in conjunction with specific guidance in each assignment.

Assessors are strongly advised to check and familiarise themselves with the requirements and feasibility of each assignment before it is issued to learners.

As a minimum Tutors should deliver the full breadth of the units and not limit teaching to the assessment tasks contained in this assessment pack. Lesson plans and learner work, may be sampled by CILEx to evidence the full delivery of the units.

The assignments are set by CILEx and are administered by the centre when the learner is ready.

Assessments can be completed in any order. Centres will be expected to organise the assessments in a logical order according to the requirements of the learners and the course (eg. with regard to work experience placements, visits, etc).

A submission schedule should be worked out by the centre, governed by the overall assessment plan for the course, to be negotiated between tutor/assessor and learner. The relationship between course delivery, the handing out of assignments, and the deadlines for their return are matters for agreement between the tutors and the learners locally.

Each assignment will provide opportunities for learners to be assessed on a sample range of the content required for the unit as specified in the Legal Secretaries Qualification Handbook. Assignments consist of several tasks.

Each assignment contains:

- assessor instructions
- learner instructions
- marking and grading criteria

Each assignment will detail the equipment and resources required to complete the particular assignment. Please note for Legal Text and Audio Processing assignment, centres will require access to Audio facilities. Audio files are provided by CILEx on **MP3 and WAV formats**.

## Introducing the tasks to learners

The assessor should introduce each task, making sure that the learners understand what is required of them. It will be beneficial to take the learners through what is required and the way in which each task will be graded as learners need to know what is expected of them to get each grade.

## Completion of assignments

Assessors will decide when each learner should complete an assignment and will be expected to organise the assignments according to the requirements of the learners and the course. Tasks should be completed under supervision. An example witness statement form (Appendix 8) should be used to testify that learners who are on distance learning programmes/employer based have completed the assignment in the time recommended.

Assessors are required to administer and mark assignments to the criteria set. Centre staff should guide learners to ensure excessive evidence gathering is avoided. Marking criteria should **not** be shown to learners until grading is complete. The marking criteria should **not** be given to learners under any circumstances.

Learners can expect a reasonable amount of guidance on how to organise themselves in order to:

- accomplish tasks
- check that the evidence of the required underpinning knowledge has been produced.

A learner may be given clarification if they are having trouble understanding what they are being asked to do in the assessment, but they must carry out the task themselves. Learners should be made aware that if they refer to their tutors for guidance on understanding the task, the amount of guidance and support they are given may be reflected in their grade – where this is the case it will be reflected in the grading criteria, all pass criteria need to be based on the learner's own work and therefore met without support.

Appendix 11 is an example of a document that assessors may use to record the assignments the learner has completed. This is an example only and you may wish to alter it to suit your existing documentation. It can also be used as a tracking document regarding internal verification/quality assurance checking. The IV/QAC can initial and date next to those learners he/she has sampled in red.

You may also consider developing a similar document to track all units on one form. Whatever method you use to ensure quality checks are taking place, please send a copy of your proposed system to CILEx.

## Time allowance for assignments

The assignments do not need to be taken under timed, controlled conditions, however, it is anticipated that the assignment should take learners no longer than 3 to 5 hours (excluding research time), to complete.

The following assignments will need to be taken under timed, controlled exam conditions and should **not** be shown to candidates prior to the assessment session:

- Legal Text Processing (Unit 320)
- Legal Audio Processing (Unit 321)
- Legal Spreadsheet Processing (Unit 324)
- Legal Database Processing (Unit 325)
- Legal Presentation Techniques (Unit 326)

Legal Text Processing assignments for unit 320 have been allocated time allowances for each assignment, and form part of the marking criteria. Working/Business Skills in the Legal Environment assignments are expected to take **5 hours** (Unit 322).

Centres finding that assignments are taking longer, should contact CILEx for guidance.

## Knowledge and understanding tasks

A knowledge and understanding task should only be provided to the learners once it is evident that they are ready to undertake the summative assessment. A realistic timeframe should be set for completion of the task.

Learners should be able to negotiate deadlines where they have a good reason for the request, but reliability and punctuality are watchwords of employment and centres will refer to their own centre policy when dealing with late submissions where no good reason is provided.

The tasks learners have been set for this qualification should not prevent access unfairly. If a task is thought to prevent unfair access due to the type of evidence required, advice should be sought from CILEx on providing the evidence in a different format. For example, if a task requires the learner to provide information as a poster, then unless the design of the poster is being assessed, an alternative format such as an information sheet or report may be acceptable. Note however, that the requirements of the task must still be met in full and the marking/grading criteria applied without change.

In some cases, these can be completed away from the centre in the learners' own time. This is only appropriate when:

- original thought on the part of the learner is required, and marking criteria require demonstration of understanding, interpretation or evaluation of information. Here it can be expected that each learner's evidence will be in their own words, and therefore identifiable as their own work, ie **not** straight recall of facts.
- where the assessor is confident that they will be able to accurately authenticate the learners' evidence as their own, and detect any plagiarism.

Methods to support authentication of learner work may include:

- final write-ups to take place under controlled or test conditions (**always** required where the evidence is straight recall of facts)

For evidence produced outside controlled conditions:

- requiring learners to sign a declaration that the work is their own
- requiring the learners to reference all sources
- supplementary (oral) questioning to gauge familiarity with the topic
- looking out for any changes to the learners usual writing style, unusual sources/examples or the use of eg US spellings or phrases that might indicate cutting and pasting from the internet.
- requiring access to evidence of steps in the process eg drafts, notes, planning etc

For further information on authenticating learner work, see: [www.ofqual.gov.uk/plagiarism-teachers](http://www.ofqual.gov.uk/plagiarism-teachers)

## Marking and Grading

The assignments are marked and/or graded internally, using the to the criteria set and the outcomes recorded on the documents provided by CILEx (see Appendix 11). Each assignment is graded as either Re-sit, Refer, Pass, Merit, Distinction in accordance with the grading criteria for the assignment. In general, a Pass is 50%, Merit is 65% and Distinction is 80%, although this may vary slightly depending on the assignment.

Specific marking and grading criteria is provided in each Working/Business Skills in the Legal Environment assignment. Generic marking and grading criteria is provided for Legal Text and Audio Processing assignments in Appendices 12 and 13. Generic marking and grading criteria is provided for Legal Information processing assignments in Appendices 14 and 15.

For Level 3 Award in Legal Information Processing, the assessment is graded re-sit, refer, pass, merit or distinction. The overall certificate will not show the grade, candidates will receive a Certificate of Unit Credit (CUC) detailing the grade.

These grades are then combined according to the rules for combining unit grades in Appendix 6 to give an overall grade for the qualification being claimed where applicable.

Assessments are subject to internal and external verification. Evidence generated should be available to EQA for scrutiny, as per the normal visit or when requested. You may also consider developing a similar document to track all units on one form. Whatever method you use to ensure quality checks are taking place, please send a copy of your proposed system to your EQA.

## Feedback

A feedback sheet has been provided in Appendix 9. Although some feedback may be given verbally, this is often forgotten by the learner after the assessment, and so, assessors should complete the feedback sheet for each learner, showing the key information given to the learner. This will also serve as an action plan for learners who are unsuccessful in a task and need to do further work before taking the task again.

## Re-sits and Retakes

### **Retakes**

The tasks are summative assessments and, other than to gain a Pass, learners may not retake tasks to improve grades. It is therefore essential that the tasks are not used for formative purposes and the learners only attempt them when they are judged to be fully ready. If a learner fails only one task within an assignment they may retake the whole task, however they will only be able to achieve a Pass overall for the whole assignment.

It is at the centre's discretion whether to allow a learner to retake a task, unless otherwise specified. A reasonable time should be allocated by the assessor for a learner to repeat a task; this must be indicated on the assessment record. A learner should not be allowed to retake until it is evident that they are ready to undertake the task.

Learners can reuse any research that they have previously carried out and supplement their evidence when retaking a task.

### **Re-sits**

If a learner fails more than one task they **must** take a re-sit assignment – an alternative version. It is at the centre's discretion as to whether they allow a learner to take more than one re-sit assignment, taking into account the individual's circumstances, centre resources, time available etc.

Assessors should ensure that the learner receives appropriate support before the learner is allowed to re-sit the assignment. It is recommended that assessors should allow a minimum of seven days or alternative sufficient period of time.

Should tutors/assessors wish to prepare learners for the assessments, they may use the sample assignment available on the [CILEx website](#) and/or devise their own material internally and provide feedback on these.

## Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)

Recognition of prior learning means using a person's previous experience or qualifications which have already been achieved to contribute to a new qualification. RPL is **not** allowed for these qualifications.

## Health and safety / Codes of practice

The importance of safe working practices, the demands of the Health and Safety at Work Act and the Codes of Practice associated with the industry **must** always be adhered to.

The requirement to follow safe working practices is an integral part of all CILEx qualifications and assessments, and it is the responsibility of centres to ensure that all relevant health and safety requirements are in place before learners start practical assessments.

Learners have responsibilities for the safety of others as well as themselves. Anyone behaving in an unsafe manner must be stopped and suitable warnings given. A learner should not be allowed to continue working on an assignment if they have contravened these requirements.

## Verification of assessments

Centres must use the provided documentation, unless otherwise agreed, to ensure that CILEx can check that evidence for an assessment is complete and ensure that the assessment decision is fair and beyond dispute. Centres may devise additional documentation/forms to support those provided by CILEx.

If a learner's work is selected for verification, samples of work must be made available to CILEx who will check that:

- the quality assurance co-ordinator is undertaking his/her responsibilities
- the quality assurance co-ordinator is given prompt, accurate and constructive feedback on centre operations
- CILEx is provided with a written report on centre activities.

CILEx will visit the centre/learning provider to:

- ensure that quality assurance co-ordinators are undertaking their duties satisfactorily
- monitor internal quality assurance systems and sampling assessment activities, methods and records
- act as a source of advice and support
- promote best practice
- provide prompt, accurate and constructive feedback to all relevant parties on the operation of centre's/learning provider's assessment systems.

## Data protection, security

The centre should have available a copy of the Data Protection Act and bring its contents to the attention of learners.

Centres should themselves ensure that all evidence produced by learners is kept secure and that assignments are kept locked safely away until their use. It is the responsibility of the centre/assessor to be sure of a learner's identity before allowing the learner to take the assessment

## Retention of evidence

In order to fully support learners and to be compliant with the verification process, centres are required to retain learners' evidence and learner assessment **records** (see the CILEx Accreditation Handbook for details) must be retained for **three years** after certification.

## Types of evidence

Assignments are written in a way to encourage learners to produce different types of evidence eg briefing notes, letters, and memos.

It is important that learners ensure their name and enrolment number is on all items of evidence handed in.

## Authenticity

Centres are reminded to check for authenticity of work where learners may be using texts and the internet to complete tasks.

## Quality assurance of assignments

These qualifications are Vocationally Related Qualifications (VRQs) and do not imply occupational competence. Centres are required to establish a system of internal verification/scheme co-ordination to monitor assessors' decisions. This means that the work of assessors involved in the qualification(s) must be monitored by a quality assurance co-ordinator, to ensure that assessors are applying the standards consistently throughout assessment activities. Quality assurance co-ordinators/programme co-ordinators and CILEx will sample learners' work to ascertain whether the evidence for an assignment is complete, and to ensure that the allocation of grades by assessors has been fair and beyond dispute. It is for this reason that the signature of both the assessor and the learner is required on the assignment mark sheet.

Assessors must ensure that learners understand why a particular assessment decision has been reached. Where learners do not feel that the assessment decision has been fair, they should have the opportunity to access the normal appeals/complaints procedure of the centre/learning provider in the first instance, and if this does not resolve the situation, they can refer their appeal to CILEx.

The use of grading for the assessment of practical work makes it possible for verifiers to use a system of sampling, but when doing so they have to be sure that the evidence is complete and that the allocation of marks and grades has been fair and beyond dispute. It is for this reason that both the assessor's signature and that of the learner is required on the final mark sheet. Quality assurance co-ordinators need to be sure learners understand why the relevant grade has been allocated for the qualification.

Learners' work may also be subject to external verification, which may be by a visit or by post. There will normally be one external verification activity per centre, per year.

## Guidance on qualifications/experience for trainers/learning providers

All new teachers delivering publicly funded qualifications in the learning and skills sector (all post 16 education – including FE, adult and community learning, work-based learning, offender education) in England are now required to take qualifications which form part of the Qualified Teacher – Learning and Skills (QTLS) framework.

Centre staff may undertake more than one role eg tutor and assessor or internal verifier, but must **never** internally verify their own assessments.

### **Trainers/tutors must**

- be technically competent in the area(s) for which they are delivering training. This knowledge must be above the level of the training being delivered.
- Have credible experience of providing training.

## Assessors and internal verifiers

Assessors should have recent relevant experience in the specific area they will be assessing. Assessors need to have a greater level of experience and understanding than those they are assessing.

In addition, assessors must demonstrate the ability to mark assignments using externally set criteria. While the Assessor/Verifier (A/V) units are valued as qualifications for centre staff, they are not currently a requirement for the qualifications.

## Continuing professional development (CPD)

Centres are expected to support their staff in ensuring that their knowledge of the occupational area and of best practice in delivery, mentoring, training, assessment and verification remains current, and takes account of any national or legislative developments.

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