Guide to Assessing ILM VRQs

V6 January 2024

Contents

Document Change History

Changes to specific sections of the document are listed below:

Section: Principles of Assessing Units

Page No	Change
8	Section on 'Using Marks in Assessment' updated regarding use of marks optional

Section: Preparing Learners for Assessment

Page No	Change
14	Section on malpractice policy and link has been updated.

Section: Making an Overall Assessment Decision

Page No	Change
15	'Judging Sufficiency in Assessment' heading replaced with new heading, 'Making an Overall Assessment Decision'.

Section: Frequently Asked Questions

Page No	Change
22	Section on appeals policy and link has been updated**.**
23	Section on access policy and link has been updated.

Section: Appendixes 5 and 7

Page No	Change
36 and 40	The relevant forms have been updated. Note that Appendix 7 has been updated with examples to illustrate how the verbs are used.

Section: Throughout the document

Page No	Change
Various	Clarification on use of numerical marks in marking as optional for centres.

Section: Appendix 5

Page No	Change
35	Section on 'change of assessment' form has been updated.

The Structure of Units

Each unit contains information that is important for the design and delivery of a programme as well as its assessment. All units include:

Level

The level of the unit indicates the level of complexity, autonomy and/or range of achievement expressed within the unit. This is very pertinent to assessment and the standard of work expected. Ofqual has defined 9 levels: entry level plus Levels 1 up to Level 8, with Level 3 being comparable to 'A' level standard while Level 7 is comparable to a Master's degree. Our qualifications allow programmes to include some units from different levels, provided the guidelines are followed.

Learning Outcomes

Each unit is divided into learning outcomes (see appendix 1). Learning outcomes describe what a learner should know, understand and/or be able to do at the end of a programme. Learning outcomes are a regulated component of a unit and therefore may not be amended.

Assessment Criteria

Each learning outcome is articulated by its assessment criteria, which are descriptions of what the learner is expected to do (see Appendix 1) to demonstrate that that learning outcome has been achieved. Assessment criteria are pivotal to assessment and are the most commonly used component when marking. In essence, assessment is a judgement on whether a learner has satisfied the relevant criteria.

It is a regulatory requirement that EVERY unit in a learner journey must be assessed and the assessment overall must address EVERY learning outcome and assessment criterion from those units. In order to achieve a unit, the learner must satisfy EVERY assessment criterion. The ONLY acceptable reason for referring a learner is their failure to satisfy one or more assessment criteria.

Every assessment criterion contains a verb that states specifically what the learner must do to satisfy the assessment criterion and links to the complexity and autonomy of the qualification level. In order to meet each assessment criterion, it is crucial that the requirement of its verb is understood and addressed. For example, if the criterion required a learner to 'describe' something it would be insufficient to merely 'identify' it. The assessment criterion would not be satisfied, and the unit would not be passed. Assessment criteria are a regulated component of units and, as such, they must be used exactly as written by ILM. They **MUST NOT** be altered, nor can any assessment criteria be omitted.

Depth (also referred to as indicative content)

The depth or indicative content of the unit (see Appendix 1) identifies the range of topics, theories and models that ILM believes should be covered by a learner journey and lesson plan to enable the learner to achieve the unit. Indicative content can be useful for an assessor when judging the relevance, appropriateness, or correctness of a learner's piece of work.

Programme Design and Delivery

We do not specify how learning and development should be achieved. However, a learner journey and lesson plan must be designed to position learners to successfully undertake the relevant ILM assessments. Therefore, for a learner to develop the necessary knowledge and skills to satisfy the assessment criteria, these need to form an integral part of programme objectives and lesson planning. This does not prevent a Centre from contextualising their training or tailoring a programme to a particular need.

A learner should be exposed to the full range of learning experiences in their training and their assessment within an overall learner journey. Indeed, each unit should ideally aim to lead learners through a range of different learning experiences to ensure that they have the opportunity to reflect on what they have learned and plan how they might use it in their own workplaces.

This means that assessment methods such as knowledge tests, Structured Answer Questions, and multiple choice questions (which mainly test knowledge acquisition and, to an extent, can test understanding), must be used sparingly and must be balanced with more work-based assessments that encourage reflection and application.

Diagram courtesy: Kolb, D. (1984) Experiential Learning: Experience as the Source of Learning and Development. Prentice-Hall.

Concrete experience
(doing / having and experience)

Active experimentation
(planning / trying out what you have learned)

Reflective observation
(reviewing / reflecting on the experience)

Abstract conceptualisation
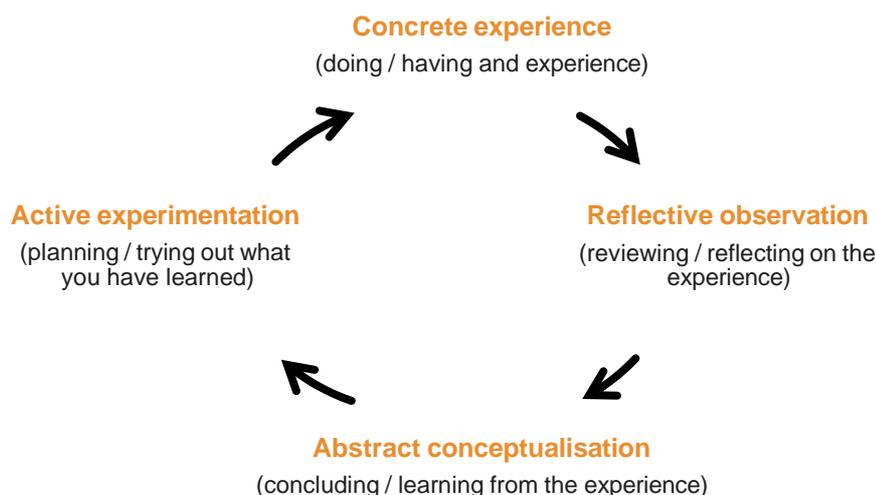(concluding / learning from the experience)

Diagram courtesy: Kolb, D. (1984) Experiential Learning: Experience As The Source Of Learning And Development. Prentice-Hall.

Figure 1: Kolb's Experiential Learning Model

Principles of Assessing Units

Assessment Principles

Assessment is an essential part of any qualification programme and serves to:

1. **reinforce learning** by requiring the learner to engage with their training
2. encourage learners to **apply their learning,** and improve their performance in the process, to the benefit of both the learner and his/her employer
3. demonstrate that learners can **perform to the specified standard** to enable units and credit to be awarded. More traditional forms of assessment (exams, essays, etc) also serve this third purpose but do little to reinforce learning (especially exams, which often encourage short term memorisation rather than deeper learning), and certainly do not promote application.

Assessment should stimulate reflection, planning and application and thus help learners to fit new learning into their existing knowledge, understanding, practices and behaviours. The human brain is constantly changing, as new linkages between synapses (which are the building blocks of memory) are created, existing ones strengthened, and old ones broken. This benefit is more likely if learning is designed to build on what is already there, as existing structures can be added to and strengthened more readily than creating new ones. Assessment can contribute very significantly to this.

By working through Kolb's experiential learning cycle, learners relate ideas to existing knowledge and behaviour, plan how to use it, use it and reflect on the experience. Assessment tasks can enable and stimulate this to happen, with an emphasis on one or more of the stages in the cycle (e.g. on reflection or active experimentation) as appropriate.

We are convinced that 'learning by doing' is the most effective approach for most people, above all, through application to their organisation and/or in their workplace. Consequently, application is commonly required in assessments, as the name assessment **task** suggests, so the learner has to engage with what they have learned, reflect on it and put it to good use in his/her workplace. In the process, they not only generate most of the evidence needed to pass their assessment, they also internalise that learning and maximise its transference into the employing organisation. This reflects our ethos: work-based, relevant learning, underpinned by theory but not excessively academic, that is applied in the job to the immediate and long-term benefit of both the learner and their employer.

We certainly do not expect theory, principles, or models to be ignored. What we do expect is that they will be **used** to explain behaviour or activities. For example, a learner who is developing his/her coaching ability may well explain how the development of particular behaviours was based on the principles of transactional analysis or Natural Language Processing (NLP).

When a learner is assessed, a judgement is being made as to the extent to which knowledge and/or understanding and/or skill have been acquired as articulated by the learning outcomes and assessment criteria. In order to satisfy an assessment criterion, the learner must demonstrate that he/she has completed the activities as stipulated (e.g. apply a simple decision-making technique to evaluate options to arrive at the best solution). Crucially, assessment is conducted with reference to the relevant

assessment criterion: is this learner evidence suitable, correct, and sufficient to satisfy that assessment criterion? No other consideration can be applied.

Using Marks in Assessment

The use of numerical marks when marking ILM assignments is **optional**. However, numerical marks perform **two** functions:

i. to convey the relative effort likely to be required to satisfy a criterion; and
ii. to quantify the extent to which a learner has over-achieved against the minimum required standard or, if the learner has failed to satisfy a criterion, how big the gap is in this area of evidence.

The degree to which each assessment criterion has been satisfied can be reflected in the mark given. Furthermore, this can lead to a quantification of the assessment in the form of an overall percentage result, even though the eventual outcome is pass/referral. Our qualifications do not offer 'Merit' or 'Distinction' grades.

The quantification of the assessment judgement, as represented by the mark, enables centres, learners, and their employers to gauge how well a learner has performed.

Our pass mark is 50%, which represents the minimum acceptable standard. If this standard is not achieved, the learner must be referred. The only acceptable reason for a referral is a failure to meet **one** or more assessment criteria.

Although there can be grounds for being unable to mark an assessment, learners cannot be referred purely because of poor literacy, presentation or missing a deadline – the reason must relate to the requirements of the assessment as articulated by the criteria. This principle applies to all our qualifications and every unit.

Assessment Methods

It is important first to distinguish between an assessment per se and its assessment method. The assessment is the set of learning outcomes and assessment criteria specified in the unit (see Appendix 1). These cannot be modified by centres. In contrast, the assessment methods (e.g. assignment) can be modified by centres subject to approval by their ILM Quality team by completing **Appendix 5 Change to ILM assessment method.**

Assessment Tasks

ILM provide an assessment task (previously called assignment tasks) for each unit (see appendix 2) which centres are recommended to use. For a few qualifications, there is the alternative of using Structured Answer Questions (SAQs – see Appendix 3). When completed, these should generate the evidence the assessor needs, using the result sheet (previously known as mark sheet), to make a judgement on whether the learner has passed the unit.

A key benefit to using assessment tasks is the ability to contextualise them to the learn context. When the assessment is contextualised to the organisation and applied in the workplace, this maximises the relevance both to the learner and their employer. The assessment can be used as a valuable briefing or discussion paper by the learner's organisation. Furthermore, in carrying out a workplace task for her/his assessment, at its best, the learner can be undertaking a task that was needed anyway and is of use to their employer over and above the ILM programme. Used creatively in this work-based tailored way, assessment can be immediately relevant and of benefit to all concerned.

Centre-Chosen Assessment Methods

Centres are free to design alternative assessment methods for ILM qualifications. However, before doing so, they must first gain approval from their Quality Team. The ILM 'Change to ILM assessment method (assessment task)' form (see Appendix 5) must be completed for this. Typical reasons for a centre to design their own method are to contextualise it to an organisation and/or tailor it to particular learners. When doing this, many Centres start with ILM's assessment task and adapt it to their needs, which is perfectly acceptable.

Choosing an Assessment Method

Centres must ensure the validity of their method as a suitable way of assessing the unit, so that it tests what it is supposed to test. The assessment verb can be significant here because some criteria and some verbs lend themselves to being assessed in certain ways, while being unsuitable for other assessment methods. Also, it is imperative that all of the assessment criteria for the unit are included and that they are exactly as written in the unit without being changed. This is why the assessment method (with the ILM 'Change of assessment method form') is completed and agreed prior to use.

There is a wide range of assessment methods available. These include (in alphabetical order):

- Case studies
- Critical incident reviews

- Knowledge tests
- Observation
- Oral questions and answers
- Oral presentations
- Professional discussion
- Projects
- Reflective logs or diaries
- Reflective reviews
- Investigations
- Management reports
- Role plays
- Structured Answer Questions
- Work-based assignments.

Depending on the circumstance, what is to be assessed and the particular needs of the learners, any of these can be used by our centres. However, there are restrictions. In the bigger qualifications, a range of different assessments methods should be used that tap into the learning cycle (as described above). Also, instead of just testing knowledge and regurgitating abstract facts, assessment methods should as far as possible be organisationally relevant, work-related and/or reflective and should preferably be applied actually in the workplace. In short, as well as leading to individual development, assessment should ideally aim to provide organisational benefits.

Designing Integrated Assessments

Units can be assessed either one by one or combined into clusters. In the latter approach, when two or more units are assessed with one method, this is called an integrated assessment.

When integrating, **it is crucial that every criterion from the units that make up the integrated assessment is included**. Even if two criteria from different units are similar, they must both be included. However, one piece of evidence from a learner may satisfy both criteria so word count guidance for the integrated assessment may well be able to be reduced.

Advantages and disadvantages of integrating assessments

Integration can offer lots of benefits, so we do advocate it. However, it is not straightforward and there may be disadvantages as well as advantages. It should therefore be carefully considered.

A notable advantage is that integration certainly produces fewer assessments. Also, if astutely integrated, it can reduce the overall amount of assessment. Especially on the bigger qualifications, this is a major consideration. Furthermore, real life is integrated: management does not happen in discrete 'boxes' called units so an integrated assessment is more representative in giving a more 'joined up' experience.

A significant disadvantage is that integration produces a bigger assessment, which can be intimidating. This means that, especially when a big integrated assessment is to be used, assessment strategy becomes important, above all with inexperienced learners or those lacking in confidence. Consequently, ILM suggests that a learner journey should start with small, single unit assessment and any larger, integrated assessments should be phased in later.

Choosing which units to combine

Where appropriate, we encourage centres to integrate assessments. However only some combinations of units are appropriate because integration needs to be more than merely 'bolting together' units. Integration is likely to be optimised by using units of up to 5 credits in size. To be suitable, some kind of relationship between units is necessary in order to give a logically 'joined up' experience for the learner. There are three sound rationales for integration:

i. Logical sequencing. Many units logically follow another one and build upon it. For example, induction naturally follows recruitment and selection so the assessments of these units would be ideal for integrating. With the one unit following the other, it produces a natural flow and progression.

ii. Overlap between units. Some units cover some of the same ground so this can be exploited in an integrated assessment. For example, SWOT analyses and SMART objectives appear in the assessment criteria of several units which, if integrated, can be assessed only once rather than several times. This is where the overall amount of assessment can be reduced.

iii. Link between units. In some cases, the integrated assessment links units. For example, learners may complete a presentation of a project they have completed thus giving the opportunity to meet the criteria for two units.

iv. All the criteria from all the units need to be included in the assessment exactly as worded in the unit. However, to save the learner from having to do much the same thing repeatedly, one piece of work by the learner may well simultaneously satisfy two or more similar criteria. In this way, the assessments for the three units 'Understanding quality management in the workplace,' 'Solving problems and making decisions'; and 'Planning change in the workplace' could be successfully integrated.

The assessment task and result sheets

An integrated assessment is, in effect, a new assessment, and will require a new assessment task to be created that matches exactly the grouping and sequencing of the integrated assessment criteria.

The assessment task and the new integrated assessment must be approved by us, using **Appendix 5 Change to ILM assessment method**. Only then can it be provided to learners.

There is no need to devise a new, single, result sheet for the integrated assessment; We recommend that each unit used in the integrated assessment keeps its own separate result sheet as this avoids complexity in allocating marks for two or more units on a single result sheet and better facilitates unit achievement.

Also, the ILM Assessment Service has always used separate result sheets to ensure consistency and standardisation and the ILM Assessment Service Portal does not fully support integrated result sheets

Preparing Learners for Assessment

Deliverers, tutors, and assessors need a common and thorough understanding of the requirements of the assessment task and the assessment criteria so that learners are provided with clear and consistent guidance throughout the learning and assessment process. The internal verifier's role is vital in achieving this at the early stages of any new programme.

If learners are to be successful in completing assessment tasks they should be briefed in detail on the meaning and significance of the assessment criteria of the units, they are completing. This is of particular significance when **all assessment criteria must be passed** as there is a potential for a submission that is very good overall to still be referred because an assessment criterion has been ignored.

The importance of tutorial support

Tutorial support is crucial in the preparation for successful assessment. Tutorial support is a requirement for our centre approval, is an ongoing mandatory obligation and has been shown to be key to good results. The expectation is that the majority of pieces of work from most learners will be scrutinised and critiqued by the centre prior to being submitted for assessment. Certainly, learners should not be routinely submitting their assessments without these having been reviewed by a tutor. This also applies for assessment submitted to the ILM Assessment Service for marking.

It can happen that a piece of work ends up being referred that, from the employing organisation's point of view, is of a high standard and organisational value. This can cause confusion and conflict. The issue is that something that was excellent for one purpose is not necessarily adequate for another purpose, which can happen if assessment criteria have not been satisfied.

The need to declare authenticity

It is a regulatory requirement that every learner must formally declare the authenticity of their work for each submission for assessment. This is a prerequisite for an assessment to be assessed because no investigation for plagiarism can be carried out without this confirmation. As part of their briefing on plagiarism and cheating (typically in the programme induction and the centre's handbook), this requirement must be made explicitly clear to learners. Declarations must be in an auditable form because ILM External Quality Assurers cannot ratify any assessments where the learner has not specifically confirmed it is their own work.

We provide a Submission Cover Sheet for this purpose (see appendix 7) that centres are strongly recommended to use. Not having a declaration for authenticity by learners submitting assessments would be considered as malpractice.

For further information, please refer to the assessment malpractice documents and appendices here.

https://www.cityandguilds.com/delivering-our-qualifications/centre-development/centre-document-library#assessment-malpractice

Word count

We provide a recommended word count for each of our assessment tasks (see appendix 2). These are for guidance only and indicate the average length of

assessment that achieves the minimum standard. If a learner is to gain over 50%, it is likely that a longer assessment would be needed.

Word counts are not prescriptive. They cannot be used as a basis for referring an assessment because they are not an assessment criterion requirement. However, as the word count is based on the length required to gain a bare pass, an assessment containing less than this would be unlikely to pass. Equally, a lengthy assessment is no guarantee of a pass, let alone a high mark, because it is about quality rather than quantity.

Very long assessments can be a problem for Centres because they take much longer to mark and, of course, this has commercial implications. Centres have the right not to accept over-long assessments for marking. As long as the acceptable limit is made known to learners from the outset, for example in the induction, then an excessive assessment can be returned for re-working to an acceptable length. This is also the benefit of having good tutorial support.

Literacy and presentation

An assessment cannot be referred solely on the grounds of poor literacy or presentation. With very few exceptions, these are not required by assessment criteria. Therefore, aspects like spelling, punctuation, grammar, layout, and organisation of the information in the assessment are not to be judged as part of the assessment and must not affect the marks given.

However, if an assessor is unable to make enough sense of an assessment, it will be impossible to mark it properly. This is why the minimum literacy requirement is for a learner to be able to be able to express themselves well enough to be clearly understood.

When the learner has not used the recommended headings for the assessment, the assessor is obliged to look for relevant evidence even if it has been 'scattered' through the submission.

However poor presentation or structure can significantly extend the time taken to assess which, as above, has commercial implications. Consequently, although poor writing cannot be a reason to refer an assessment, an assessor can reject it for marking and return it to the learner for re-writing. We strongly recommend that the learner should be provided with tutorial support and assessments checked before submission. This also applies for assessment submitted to the ILM Assessment Service for marking.

Making an overall Assessment Decision

Judging whether a learner has met the requirements of the unit is a key aspect of assessment. The test of whether it is of sufficient quantity and quality is very much informed by the verb used in the relevant assessment criterion which, in turn, is substantially determined by the level of the unit.

A word count and a suggested time period are indicated for preparing and completing the assessment for each unit. These are not prescriptive and are merely guidance on the typical amount of work needed to gain the minimum 50%.

A decision to pass or refer a learner must be based on the achievement of the assessment criteria and not based on presentation skills, literacy, or numeracy. However, especially at the higher qualification levels, centres are expected to emphasise the need to present and write to a standard consistent with the level of the qualification and the management role. Furthermore, the more demanding verbs prevalent at higher levels are more demanding, which necessitates better literacy skills.

The importance of assessment verbs in assessment criteria

Each assessment criterion contains a verb such as 'identify,' 'explain' or 'assess' (see appendix 1). Between them, these verbs define the nature of the task for the assessment. Refer to Appendix 7 for definitions of verbs commonly used in our assessment criteria. These are not drawn from a dictionary but are working definitions used by our unit writers, with each verb illustrated with an example of how they are used.

Assessment verbs state specifically what the learner must do to satisfy the criterion. At level 2, simple verbs like 'identify', 'list' and 'outline' are common. In contrast, a Level 5 learner is often given more demanding tasks such as 'analyse', 'assess' or 'evaluate'. Units in the higher levels tend to use assessment verbs that expect a fuller learner response with greater breadth and depth.

In the case of 'identify' the learner is simply expected to select suitable subject matter relevant to the context. However, when required to 'assess,' the learner can start by identifying but must progress to a much more detailed examination of the subject material based on standard criteria and leading to a judgement. In this case, to simply 'describe' would be insufficient to satisfy the assessment criterion.

Other key words in assessment criteria

The other important type of word in assessment criteria is those that specify the quantity and/or quality required (e.g. 'list **an** example' or 'describe **in detail')** and thus indicate the assessment sufficiency.

The requirement to list an example can be problematic to an assessor. If the learner does not give an example, then the only response can be to award zero marks. However, the dilemma is created when the learner offers more than the one example required. Our guidance, in the situation where a learner gives more than one example, is that the assessor should examine the various examples offered and mark only **one**. That example can be the one that best satisfies the criterion.

Because of these marking dilemmas, for our VRQ units, we have opted to not specify a number (e.g. describe **three** examples) in the assessment criteria. Simple plurals (e.g. give examples) are used, which always mean a minimum of **two** is needed. This allows the learner to exceed the minimum requirement, as is encouraged, safe in the knowledge that this can produce higher marks without any risk of penalty.

'Range' is a related key word that is sometimes used in assessment criteria, as in 'give a range of examples.' This requires at least three examples but, furthermore, the examples are required to be diverse. To satisfy the criterion, a spread is needed, such as high, medium, low; or best, middle, worst.

There are other key words to indicate the quality of work required. Although less specific, terms like 'in detail,' 'thorough' and 'comprehensive' all give an indication that extra is needed for sufficiency.

In general, assessment criteria must be read with care because any or all the words can have significance. For example, there is more than meets the eye to the criterion 'assess own organisation's ability to efficiently and effectively delegate responsibilities for the achievement of targets and objectives'. The learner must develop a judgement on both the organisation's efficiency **AND** its effectiveness in delegating responsibilities – one or the other will not suffice. Equally, consideration of both the achievement of targets AND of objectives is essential. So, in addition to the key verb, the assessment criterion contains more than one element that must be addressed.

Assessing VRQ units

Using ILM result sheets when assessing

ILM provides a result sheet (previously called a mark sheet) for most VRQ units, which centre assessors could use. It is not compulsory to use the ILM result sheets (see appendix 4), and centres are free to design their own assessment methods and, especially in the case of an integrated assessment, they are free also to design their own result sheets or adapt the ILM ones. Nevertheless, the ILM result sheets offer a model of good practice.

If centres wish to use the ILM Assessment Service they must use the ILM result sheets for all their submissions, including integrated assessments.

In most of the units, but not all, and their recommended ILM mark/result sheets, there are weighted marks available to each assessment criterion. As the pass mark is 50%, learners must gain at least half the marks available (e.g. 6/12) for every assessment criterion. If any criteria are not satisfied, and are awarded less than half-marks, this produces an automatic referral. Consequently, it is possible to gain over 50% overall and still not pass because an assessment criterion has not been satisfied.

Marks should be awarded according to the degree to which the learner's evidence is judged to satisfy each assessment criterion. For example, if an assessment criterion carries a maximum of 8 marks, then the following shows the marks that should be given for the various standards of learner work:

0 marks = this part of the assessment is incorrect, or no evidence is found relevant to the criterion
1-3 marks = some evidence but partly incorrect and/or less than sufficient
4 marks = just sufficient to meet criterion: no more, no less
5-6 marks = exceeds bare sufficiency qualitatively and/or quantitatively
7-8 marks = comprehensive, very thorough, and close to a definitive answer

When the learner has not used the recommended headings for the assessment, the assessor is obliged to look for relevant evidence even if it has been 'scattered' through the submission.

Centres now have the opportunity to opt out of using marks. This option was newly introduced for the VRQ units because there is a view that this approach to assessing is simpler and quicker, although it has to be said there is a body of thought with the opposite viewpoint.

If a centre chooses not to use marks, a judgement must be still made whether each assessment criterion has been met. However, instead of awarding numerical marks, a pass/refer is recorded. As usual if any criterion receives a 'refer' then the entire submission must be referred.

Using ILM sufficiency descriptors when assessing

In order to enhance consistency and improve standardisation in assessment, ILM provide sufficiency descriptors for each assessment criterion (see appendix 4). These clarify the assessment requirement by differentiating between different standards of learner work. Sufficiency descriptors specify the quantity and quality that barely meets

the ILM standard for the particular criterion and typical ways in which the standard can be exceeded and attract higher marks. They also describe common errors or omissions that lead to that criterion not being satisfied.

	Referral [ca. 6/24]	Pass [12/24]	Good Pass [ca. 18/24]
AC 3.1 Apply a simple decision-making technique to evaluate options to arrive at the best solution	The best solution is isolated but is not one of the options or a combination of them. A solution is given but is merely stated with no evidence of evaluation by using a decision-making technique; and/or no consideration of resource implications in either the option summaries or the decision-making technique.	A simple decision-making technique has been used to evaluate options individually or together; and the decision-making criteria are identified although they may be limited; and the simple decision-making technique is correctly used to isolate the best solution with some reference to facts to support the decision; and although it may be limited, resource implications are briefly considered in either the option summaries or the decision-making technique.	A decision-making technique has been used to thoroughly evaluate options, individually or together, with the decision-making criteria described Options are weighted and ranked to arrive at the best solution with facts to fully support the decision-making, the weightings, and rankings. Resource implications are detailed in both the option summaries and the decision-making technique.

To clarify the assessment requirement and guide marking, sufficiency descriptors are provided on result sheets. Three are given for each assessment criterion, labelled as: referral, pass, and good pass. These illustrate the different standards that approximate to one-quarter marks (e.g. about 5/20), half marks (the minimum standard required) and around three-quarter marks for that assessment criterion.

Assessment must always be carried out with reference to the assessment criteria. By clarifying the assessment criteria, sufficiency descriptors are merely guides for marking.

Sufficiency descriptors can be invaluable even when a centre opts out of using numerical marks. However, in that case, the 'good pass' descriptor in the last column cannot be used.

The final decision for every criterion is still a pass or referral, and therefore only the 'pass' and 'referral' descriptors are used to make this judgement. The 'good pass' descriptors are there to describe performance that exceeds the required standard, but this is not formally acknowledged on the centre certificates.

These descriptors are intended primarily for centre staff. However, they could usefully be given to learners, and this is recommended, but they would probably need some explanation. Consequently, sufficiency descriptors should probably form part of the assessment briefing and can be invaluable for tutorial support.

Providing feedback to learners when assessing

Result sheets of some type must be used when marking in order to give feedback to the learner and to provide an audit trail. As mentioned above, the ILM result sheets (see Appendix 4) are recommended but not mandatory. Whatever result sheet is used, the assessor must provide comments and feedback to learners. Although it can be useful to do so as an interim measure while marking, on their own it is not acceptable to simply tick or circle the 'referral'/ 'pass'/ 'good pass' boxes on the sufficiency descriptor. As a minimum, *assessment* feedback is required, i.e. the rationale behind the marks awarded for every criterion and the assessment decision taken.

ILM advocates extending the result sheet comments to include *improvement* feedback. Based on the learner's work in the assessment, this means suggesting how the learner could improve and, even if the learner passed, how the submission could have been better. If the assessor does not know the learner then this is the limit to the feedback that can be given. However, it is possible for result sheet comments to go as far as full *developmental* feedback, which is most commonly given in the context of an employer-centre.

An expandable box is provided on ILM result sheets to the right of every assessment criterion. This is where the assessor is required to insert his/her comments. This is the minimum required (see below).

LO 1 Description of the problem AC 1.1 The problem, its nature, scope, and impact are described	Strengths The nature of problem is clearly described. There is a brief description of the scope and impact of the problem. Areas for improvement It would have been beneficial to include statistics to support both the scope and impact of the problem.

In case the assessor wants to provide more overall comments, there is also an optional box at the end of each section. Unlike previously, the comments boxes on the VRQ result sheets are no longer divided into 'strengths' and 'weaknesses'/'areas for improvement' because some assessors found this to be an impediment. For those who preferred that approach, headings can easily be inserted into the single box to segregate 'strengths' (or whatever term is favoured) and 'areas for improvement' feedback.

Good result sheet feedback should be based on the assessor's judgement on the extent to which the learner has satisfied the assessment criteria. It is recommended that comments draw on the wording of the assessment criteria and of the sufficiency descriptors when highlighting the strengths and, especially in the case of a referral outcome, areas where further development is required.

Assessors may also be inclined to encourage and motivate learners by providing comments of the 'good effort type' such as 'this assessment shows you have taken the time to conduct a wide range of research around your topic' or 'guidance for the future' suggestions such as 'your assessment would have been improved by the use of headings.' This type of feedback can be valuable but needs to be *as well as* assessment feedback that is a direct reflection of the assessment criteria. Centres may decide that in addition to the ILM result sheet they wish to add an additional 'comments' box to reflect a wider range of individualised feedback designed to aid further learning and to motivate.

Assessors are expected to give feedback to learners at both the formative stage

through face-to-face or telephone/on-line tutorial support and summative feedback in the form of result sheet comment.

Frequently Asked Questions

Why are results limited to Pass or Referral?

ILM has decided not to grade its VRQ units and qualifications. Although there are attractions to grading to recognise outstanding achievement, this would have implications for quality assurance, certification, and appeals. All of this would have cost and price implications.

What will appear on the certificates?

Certificates will not make any reference to marks or 'good passes' and we are not planning to introduce Merit or Distinction grades. However, there is nothing to stop centres from referring to marks or good passes in any documentation they issue to learners. You can also have a 'learner of the year' or similar awards.

If the centre chooses to use marks when marking,
a) **If a learner meets the assessment criteria, why don't they get full marks? In other words, if they have met the requirements do they lose marks?**

ILM's pass mark is 50%. Therefore, for each assessment criterion, if a submission only just meets the standard, then half of the marks available to that criterion (e.g. 6/12) should be awarded. In order to gain more than 50%, the submission has to contain more than this basic minimum, showing greater depth or breadth. ILM wishes to encourage learners to strive to do better than the minimum standard. By setting the pass mark at 50%, this leaves ample scope for learners to excel and have this recognised by higher marks.

b) **If a learner who meets the criteria gets only half marks, what is needed to get a higher mark?**

As clarified above, *merely satisfying* an assessment criterion attracts half-marks. Therefore, when a submission *exceeds* the requirements of an assessment criterion, this produces more than half the marks available. This is typically achieved with greater depth and/or breadth, extra detail, more explanation, etc. Similarly, when a learner is required to describe something, if he/she describes it very thoroughly and in detail, this should be recognised with more than half-marks.

Is each assessment criterion of equal importance?

No. The recommended ILM result sheets give a numerical mark for each criterion. The mark is weighted to reflect its importance and/or its demand on the learner. This acts as a guide to the learner on how much is expected and to what standard.

The learner gained over 50% but was still referred – why was that?

In such a case, despite gaining what is usually a pass mark overall, the learner must have failed to satisfy one or more assessment criteria.

How can a submission receive a referral result if it has proven itself in the 'real world' by being well received as a management report?

Just because a piece of work is suitable for one application, does not make it fit for purpose for another. Assessments need to be designed specifically to satisfy the assessment criteria, which is unlikely with something like a workplace report.

If a learner receives a referral result, how many times can he/she reattempt? Is there any limit on resubmissions? How many referrals are acceptable and reasonable?

ILM does not set a limit on the number of resubmissions within the three-year registration period. Centres have the discretion to set their own policy on referrals and resubmissions with their clients as a way of managing the costs of assessment. As long as it is made clear to all learners at the outset, a cap can be set on the number of re-assessments that a centre is prepared to undertake for the price paid. However, at least one resubmission should be allowed.

If I feel my assessment was harshly marked can I appeal?

Yes.

For centre-assessed units and qualifications, every centre must have an appeals procedure and learners must follow this in the first instance. If a learner has exhausted the centre appeal's procedure and is still unsatisfied with the outcome, they may escalate the matter to ILM.

For assessments marked by the ILM Assessment Service, centres can submit an enquiry. ILM would then, independently of the original assessment, have the assessment re-assessed.

For further information please refer to the enquiries and appeals process and documents here:

https://www.cityandguilds.com/delivering-our-qualifications/centre-development/centre-document-library#appeals

What if an assessment criterion says 'assess examples' and the learner assesses only one in the submission? Is that an automatic referral?

Yes. 'Examples' is plural so at least two are required and anything less is insufficient.

If an assessment criterion says 'list examples' and the learner gives four, how should that be marked?

'Examples' is plural so two would suffice, as long as they are appropriate.

If an assessment criterion asks for an example and the learner gives four, how should that be marked?

The criterion asks specifically for only one example so the assessor cannot give marks for all four given. The assessor must look through the examples given and award a mark for the one that best meet the criterion.

Can marking schemes be modified to suit clients' cohorts?

Neither learning outcomes nor assessment criteria can be changed. However, the assessment method and result sheets can be changed by the centre as long as they first get it approved. Centres should contact their allocated Quality Delivery team. Crucially, under no circumstances must any modifications undermine or lower the assessment standard.

Is it mandatory to use marks?

No, it is **not** mandatory. Centres can choose to indicate pass/refer for each assessment criterion with no overall percentage.

Does the assessment need to be written, or could it be provided as an audio file?

Most ILM assessment tasks lend themselves to a written response. However, this is not essential, and many are suitable for being assessed through an oral presentation. Furthermore, in certain circumstances, typically to do with access arrangements for people with disability, audio files are permissible. However, ILM must first give approval for this.

Please refer to the access arrangements policy here.

https://www.cityandguilds.com/delivering-our-qualifications/centre-development/centre-document-library#access-arrangements

Must I be employed in a specific work role, such as a manager, in order to undertake an ILM assessment task?

No. Assessments rarely require you to be in a particular job or role. All that is usually needed is access to situations where the required knowledge and skills can be applied. You do not need to be a coach in order to coach someone but you do need to be able to undertake workplace coaching. At the higher levels when the focus is on strategic management, it may be necessary to undertake coaching away from the workplace or outside of work time. This will provide access to the necessary situations and/or information to be able to deal with the assessment requirements.

Can I base my assessment on a previous employment/job role?

It is highly recommended that assessments are based on your current job and organisation. This is the only way that your learning can be quickly of benefit to you, your job, and your employer – the ideal reaction is: 'I can use that in the morning!' This is the principle on which ILM's ethos is founded.

However, ILM qualifications are open to learners who are not in employment. In such cases, as the qualification specifications make clear, learners are guided to base their assessment on relevant experience elsewhere, including a previous job. However, this need not be paid work and so could include, for example, working in a voluntary capacity as a School Governor, youth group leader or in a community activity.

Is the word count indicated on assessment briefs mandatory?

No. This is only provided as a guide.

If a learner's submission is less than the suggested word count range should it be referred? How strict do centres have to be on word count?

No, because none of the criteria are to do with word count. However, it is true that a submission with less than the recommended word count is unlikely to have sufficient evidence to pass. However, the learner would be referred on the basis of the evidence provided – or not provided – as opposed to falling short of the word count.
The word count is for guidance only so centres do not need to be strict with this. Most centres find word counts useful, but you can remove word count information from the assessment if you prefer. The VRQ units also provide guidance on how long the assessment should take on average. Some centres might find this a more useful indicator.

Similarly, can an assessment be referred because the submission is excessively large?

No, because none of the criteria are to do with word count. In fact, a large assessment is more likely to exceed the assessment criteria requirements and thus attract higher marks. However, large assessments have implications for marking time and therefore for costs. Consequently, centres have the discretion to set their own policy on word count as a way of managing the costs of assessment. Thus, they can refuse to accept excessively large assessments, as long as they have communicated this restriction to learners, for example in the Programme Induction.

Some assessments are very badly written, with poor spelling, punctuation, grammar, etc. Especially in management & leadership qualifications, surely this is grounds for referral?

No, it is not grounds for an automatic referral because none of the criteria are to do with literacy or presentation. Although there are increased expectations at higher levels, and it is anticipated that presentation and literacy will reflect the management level, the basic requirement is merely for learners to adequately communicate their evidence. If an assessment was incomprehensible or unreadable, then the appropriate action would be to not accept it for marking, as opposed to referring it.

In the 'real world,' aspects like literacy, presentation and report writing are crucial skills in any manager. How can we pass any assessment, especially when it is in the form of a report that does not display these attributes?

Even if badly written and/or poorly presented, if the learner has expressed themselves well enough to be understood and the assessment satisfies the assessment criteria, then it cannot be referred. Where relevant, a few assessments do specifically require adequate presentation and report writing but most do not. As described above, the basic requirement is for learners to be able to communicate in writing and, because of the greater complexity and extra breadth and depth needed, this requirement increases at the higher levels.

The assessment tasks say: 'Please use the headings shown below when writing up your Assessment'. What if a learner does not do this?

This is not an assessment criterion so no marks can be deducted because of this and it is certainly not a reason for a referral.

However, if the assessment is badly structured it can make it difficult for the assessor to locate the required evidence, leading to marks not being awarded. Consequently, learners are strongly recommended to arrange their work into sections using the

headings. This should make the assessment easier to write and easier for the assessor to mark.

Some submissions are badly arranged and have no logical flow. This means that evidence can be 'scattered' throughout the script. To what extent is the assessor expected to 'go looking' for evidence that has been badly presented by the candidate? Can the submission be referred on this basis?

No, this is not grounds for a referral unless presentation and organisation of material was an assessment criterion requirement. Within reason, an assessor is obliged to find evidence even when badly written and poorly arranged.

Similarly, what if, in the 'wrong' section, the assessor finds evidence that would have been relevant to another section? Should an assessor ignore candidate evidence that has been written in the wrong place?

No. This is certainly not a case for an assessor to reject/ignore this evidence. Within reason, an assessor must take account of all relevant evidence found and award marks accordingly. However, it would be understandable if an assessor failed to spot an item in an unexpected or illogical place in the assessment so learners should be advised that poor organisation and layout risks marks being 'lost.'

Are there any differences in assessing qualifications at different levels?

The principles of assessing are the same at every level. However, because of the kind of assessment verbs used, the test of sufficiency is usually greater at higher levels. In short, evidence that would be adequate at Level 3 is likely to be well short at Level 5. This higher standard usually takes the form of greater depth, breadth and detail being required.

How does ILM assessment of VRQs differ from the assessment of competence, as in NVQs?

VRQs assess capability – the capability to perform to the standard required. Competence assessment requires learners to demonstrate that they do regularly perform in the workplace to the standard required, by using real workplace evidence. This often lacks the developmental nature of the ILM 'can be' approach, which is designed to support and guide development, encourage application of learning, and assess how well the learner has met the standard and do so to the benefit of the learner and his/her organisation.

Why is there so much assessment?

It was a regulatory requirement that every unit in a qualification must be assessed. In order to maximise choice, flexibility, and adaptability, ILM has opted for small, 'slim' units. However, this does mean that there are more units and therefore more assessments. This does not mean that there is a greater overall quantity of assessment because smaller units have smaller assessments.

Furthermore, by integrating assessments using methods detailed in this guide, both the number of assessments and the amount of assessment can be reduced.

If my assessment is selected for External Quality Assurance by the EQA, could a pass be revoked if the EQA considered the Centre to have marked too leniently?

Possibly. Unless a centre has Direct Claims Status, centre results are ratified only when confirmed by the EQA.

What does ILM suggest I do if I judge that, because they are communicating in English as a second language, learners will have difficulty in completing the assessment tasks?

Welsh and Irish speakers can complete their assessments in these languages. Apart from these languages, if a difficulty is limited to the writing of English, then many units are suitable to be assessed by methods such as oral presentation or professional discussion. As usual with a change to assessment, approval must be obtained before the learner starts by completing **Appendix 5 Change to ILM assessment method.**

Appendix 1 – An example of an ILM unit

Title:	Solving problems by making effective decisions in the workplace
Level:	4
Credit value:	3
Unit guided learning hours	14

Learning outcomes (the learner will)		Assessment criteria (the learner can)	
1	Be able to analyse a complex problem in the context of the workplace	1.1	Define a complex problem in the workplace including its scope and impact
		1.2	Analyse information on the identified problem, to help inform the decision-making process
2	Be able to apply decision making techniques when assessing possible solutions	2.1	Propose a range of alternative solutions to the problem
		2.2	Using a decision-making technique, evaluate a range of solutions to identify the most appropriate option
3	Be able to plan how you will implement the solution	3.1	Develop a detailed plan for implementing the solution
		3.2	Communicate the plan to relevant stakeholders
		3.3	Assess appropriate monitoring and review techniques to ensure successful implementation of solution
Additional information about the unit			

Unit purpose and aim(s)	To enable candidates to make effective decisions to solve complex problems in the workplace.
Details of the relationship between the unit and relevant national occupational standards or professional standards or curricula (if appropriate)	Links to Management & Leadership 2004 NOS: C2, C5, C6, F6
Assessment requirements or guidance specified by a sector or regulatory body (if appropriate)	
Support for the unit from a sector skills council or other appropriate body (if required)	Council for Administration (CfA)
Equivalencies agreed for the unit (if required)	M4.08 solving problems by making effective decisions
Location of the unit within the subject/sector classification system	15.3 Business Management

Additional Guidance about the Unit

Indicative Content:

1	
	• Complex problems with multiple possible solutions as a challenge and an opportunity for improvement • Ways to recognise, investigate, and analyse complex problems such as Root Cause Analysis (RCA), Cause and Effect, Ishikawa, Why-Why, and brainstorming and a range of other creative thinking techniques • Framing and scoping problems with a 'Problem Definition' • Setting objectives in relation to problems • Collecting primary and secondary data for decision making • **Data analysis techniques for quantitative and qualitative data** • Differences between 'data' and 'information'

2	
	• Conditions under which decisions are made (certainty, uncertainty) • Creative and rational decision-making • Techniques for generating creative solutions and rational solutions in decision-making • Establishing criteria for decision-making • Setting priorities • Evaluating options • Rational decision-making models and techniques such as grid analysis, paired comparison analysis, decision trees, 'pros and cons' • Creative decision-making using brainstorming and a range of other creative thinking techniques • Types of decisions (routine, adaptive, innovative etc) • Decision making in relation to goals which specify the quality or quantity of the desired results

3	
	- Implementation planning (for example – human resources, finance, marketing, operations, health and safety) - Resource allocation (money, people, facilities, equipment etc) - Implementation planning tools and techniques such as GANTT charts, PDCA Cycle (plan-do-check-act), PDSA (plan-do-study-act) - SMART objectives - Communication plans - Monitoring and review techniques such as Critical Path Analysis (CPA), Programme Evaluation and Review (PERT)

Appendix 2 – An example of an ILM assessment task

Assessment Task for Unit: Solving problems and making decisions

Centre Number:	Centre Name:
Learner Registration No:	Learner Name:

TASK

Identify a workplace problem facing you or your team (or a team within another organisation if you are currently unemployed) and examine ways to resolve it.

For the purposes of this assignment, 'problem' may be interpreted as 'a deviation from the norm' OR 'an improvement opportunity' OR 'a potential or anticipated problem'.

NOTE:
You should plan to spend approximately 10 hours researching your workplace context, preparing for, and writing or presenting the outcomes of this assignment for assessment. The 'nominal' word count for this assignment is 1200 words; the suggested range is between 1000 and 2000 words.

Please use the sub-headings shown below	Assessment Criteria
Background Briefly describe your organisation, what it does, and your role within it.	• This aspect is not assessed, but is designed to help the assessor understand the context of the information you provide throughout the remainder of this assignment
Present situation (Analysis of the problem) Describe: • What the problem is and what may have caused it. • Its scope (e.g. how widespread, how often, how much etc). • Who, how and what it affects in the workplace/team? • What you are trying to achieve by solving the problem. • What the result would be if no action is taken.	• Describe a problem, its nature scope and impact *(12 marks)*
Investigation and identification of possible solutions to problem Briefly describe possible solutions to the problem. To do this you must gather and interpret information to identify possible solutions. The evidence you gather should be <u>fact</u> supported by evidence and not just your opinion.	• Gather and interpret information to identify possible solutions to a problem *(24 marks)* • Prepare a summary of the options providing facts and evidence *(16 marks)*
Evaluation of possible solutions Evaluate the possible solutions using a simple decision-making technique to arrive at the best solution. Your evaluation should include human, material, and financial resources. State your chosen solution clearly and concisely.	• Apply a simple decision-making technique to evaluate options to arrive at the best solution *(24 marks)*
Recommend implementation plan to solve the problem Provide an action plan for the implementation and communication of the solution. Your action plan should include actions, timescales and required resources including people. Briefly describe the monitoring and review techniques you could use to evaluate the effectiveness of your chosen solution.	• Plan the implementation and communication of the decision *(16 marks)* • Describe which monitoring and review techniques could be used to evaluate outcomes *(8 marks)*
By submitting I confirm that this assessment is my own work	

Appendix 3 – Example of ILM Structured Answer Questions (SAQs)

Solving problems and making decisions

> Note: **The 'lines/box' below a question is for guidance purposes only. Marks are not deducted for writing more. It is perfectly acceptable for all answers to be continued on additional forms provided they are attached to the assessment when making a submission. The availability of the form electronically allows learners to expand the 'lines/box' as required.**

KNOW HOW TO DESCRIBE A PROBLEM, ITS NATURE, SCOPE, AND IMPACT

1.1 Describe a problem, its nature scope and impact. *(12 marks)*

KNOW HOW TO GATHER AND INTERPRET INFORMATION TO SOLVE A PROBLEM

2.1 Gather and interpret information to identify possible solutions to a problem. **(Present the information gathered and your analysis. It is recommended that you attach this as a separate document).** *(24 marks)*

2.2 Prepare a summary of the options providing facts and evidence. **(Present the summary. It is recommended that you attach this as a separate document).** *(16 marks)*

KNOW HOW TO EVALUATE OPTIONS TO MAKE A DECISION

3.1 Apply a simple decision-making technique to evaluate options to arrive at the best solution. **(Your use of a decision-making model must be set out. It is recommended that you attach this as a separate document). (**24 marks*)*

KNOW HOW TO PLAN, MONITOR AND REVIEW THE IMPLEMENTATION AND COMMUNICATION OF DECISIONS

4.1 Plan the implementation and communication of the decision. **(Illustrate your answer by presenting a plan setting out objectives, actions required, timescales and responsibilities for the implementation of this change. It is recommended that you attach this as a separate document).** *(16 marks)*

4.2 Describe which monitoring and review techniques could be used to evaluate outcomes. *(8 marks)*

Appendix 4 – An Example of an ILM result sheet

RESULT SHEET – Solving problems and making decisions

Centre Number :		Centre Name :	
Learner Registration No:		Learner Name:	

INSTRUCTIONS FOR ASSESSMENT AND USE OF RESULT SHEET

Assessment must be conducted with reference to the assessment criteria (AC). In order to pass the unit, every AC must be met.

Assessors will normally award marks for every AC and then total them into a percentage. However, for greater simplicity, there is the option to not use marks at all and merely indicate with a 'Pass' or 'Referral' in the box (below right). In order to pass the unit every AC must receive a 'Pass.'

Where marks are awarded according to the degree to which the learner's evidence in the submission meets each AC, every AC must be met, i.e. receive at least half marks (e.g. min 10/20). Any AC awarded less than the minimum produces an automatic referral for the submission (regardless of the overall mark achieved).

Sufficiency descriptors are provided as guidance. If 20 marks are available for an AC and the evidence in the submission approximates to the 'pass' descriptor, that indicates it should attract 10 marks out of 20, if a 'good pass' then ca. 15 out of 20. The descriptors are not comprehensive, and cannot be, as there are many ways in which a submission can exceed or fall short of the requirements.

1. **Learner named above confirms authenticity of submission.**
2. **ILM uses learners' submissions – on an anonymous basis – for assessment standardisation. By submitting, I agree that ILM may use this script on condition that all information which may identify me is removed.**

However, if you are unwilling to allow ILM use your script, please refuse by ticking the box:
☐

Learning Outcome / Section 1: Know how to describe a problem, its nature, scope and impact					
Assessment Criteria (AC)	**Sufficiency Descriptors** *[Typical standard that, if replicated across the whole submission, would produce a referral, borderline pass, or good pass result]*			**Assessor feedback on AC**	
AC 1.1 Describe a problem, its nature scope and impact	**Referral [ca. 3/12]**	**Pass [6/12]**	**Good Pass [ca. 9/12]**		
	• The problem or improvement opportunity is ill-defined and so is vague or unclear • There is limited or no consideration of the problem's scope or impact	• The problem or improvement opportunity is described, including both scope (how widespread, how often, etc.) and impact (who, how and/or what it affects) although the description may be limited	• The problem or improvement opportunity is well defined and described in detail and both scope and impact are thoroughly described and, if appropriate, quantified	/ 12 (min. of 6)	Pass or Referral
Section comments (optional):		**Verification comments** (optional):			

Learning Outcome / Section 2: Know how to gather and interpret information to solve a problem					
Assessment Criteria (AC)	**Sufficiency Descriptors** *[Typical standard that, if replicated across the whole submission, would produce a referral, borderline pass or good pass result]*			**Assessor feedback on AC**	
AC 2.1 Gather and interpret information to identify possible solutions to a problem	**Referral [ca. 6/24]**	**Pass [12/24]**	**Good Pass [ca. 18/24]**		
	• Little or no evidence of oral or written information having been gathered • Reference is made to gathering information, but that information is not given in the submission • Information has been gathered and is provided but is not relevant to identifying possible solutions; or merely further describes the problem instead of helping to identify possible solutions; or there is no interpretation to identify possible solutions	• Evidence is provided in the submission that oral and/or written information has been gathered to identify possible solutions, and, although the interpretation may be limited, the information is effectively interpreted to identify at least two possible solutions (not including 'doing nothing")	• Evidence is provided that substantial oral and/or written information has been collected from a variety of sources in order to effectively identify possible solutions • The gathered information is presented in detail and thoroughly interpreted to clearly identify several possible solutions	/ 24 (min. of 12)	Pass or Referral

AC 2.2 Prepare a summary of the options providing facts and evidence	Referral [ca. 4/16]	Pass [8/16]	Good Pass [ca. 12/16]	Assessor feedback on AC
	• No options are given • Options are merely listed as opposed to summarised • Option summaries are minimal and/or too subjective and not based on facts and/or evidence	• At least two options (not including the option of 'doing nothing') are summarised, and not merely listed, with the options based on facts and evidence	• A range of varied options are thoroughly summarised or described • The options are clearly based on facts and evidence explicitly arising out of the interpretation of the problem	
				/ 16 (min. of 8) Pass or Referral

Section comments (optional):   **Verification comments** (optional):

Learning Outcome / Section 3: Know how to evaluate options to make a decision

Assessment Criteria (AC)	Sufficiency Descriptors *[Typical standard that, if replicated across the whole submission, would produce a referral, borderline pass, or good pass result]*			Assessor feedback on AC
	Referral [ca. 6/24]	Pass [12/24]	Good Pass [ca. 18/24]	
AC 3.1 Apply a simple decision-making technique to evaluate options to arrive at the best solution	• The best solution is isolated **but** is not one of the options or a combination of them • A solution is given **but** is merely stated with no evidence of evaluation by using a decision-making technique; and/or no consideration of resource implications in either the option summaries or the decision-making technique	• A simple decision-making technique has been used to evaluate options individually or together; **and** • the decision-making criteria are identified although they may be limited; **and** • the simple decision-making technique is correctly used to isolate the best solution with some reference to facts to support the decision; **and** • although it may be limited, resource implications are briefly considered in either the option summaries or the decision-making technique	• A decision-making technique has been used to thoroughly evaluate options, individually or together, with the decision-making criteria described • Options are weighted and ranked to arrive at the best solution with facts to fully support the decision-making, the weightings and rankings • Resource implications are detailed in both the option summaries and the decision-making technique	
				/ 24 (min. of 12) Pass or Referral

Section comments (optional):   **Verification comments** (optional):

Learning Outcome / Section 4: Know how to plan, monitor and review the implementation and communication of decisions

Assessment Criteria (AC)	Sufficiency Descriptors *[Typical standard that, if replicated across the whole submission, would produce a referral, borderline pass, or good pass result]*			Assessor feedback on AC
	Referral [ca. 4/16]	Pass [8/16]	Good Pass [ca. 12/16]	
AC 4.1 Plan the implementation and communication of the decision	• Little or no planning is provided • The implementation and communication of the decision are merely described as opposed to actually planned • A plan is given **but** contains no timescales and/or no resources required to implement • Implementation is planned or communication is planned **but** not both	• An action plan is provided that plans both the implementation and communication of the decision, although one or other may be limited; and • the plan includes time scales and responsibilities and some consideration of the resources required (including people and finance) although this may be limited	• A detailed and SMART action plan(s) is provided that fully plans both the implementation and communication of the decision, thoroughly describes responsibilities and details resource requirements	
				/ 16 (min. of 8) Pass or Referral

	Referral [ca. 2/8]	Pass [4/8]	Good Pass [ca. 6/8]	Assessor feedback on AC	
			(including people and finance)		
AC 4.2 Describe which monitoring and review techniques could be used to evaluate outcomes	• Less than two monitoring and review techniques are provided • At least two monitoring and review techniques are given **but** are merely identified, as opposed to described, and/or are inappropriate or minimal	• A description, as opposed to a mere identification, is given of at least two monitoring and review techniques that could be used to evaluate outcome, although the description may be limited	• Several appropriate monitoring and review techniques are thoroughly described • Clear measures of the effectiveness of the outcome are provided, such as milestones	/ 8 (min. of 4)	Pass or Referral

Section comments (optional):	Verification comments (optional):

	/ 100　TOTAL MARKS

Assessor's Decision		Quality Assurance Use	
Outcome: **PASS / REFERRAL**	Signature of Assessor: Date:	Outcome **PASS / REFERRAL**	Signature of QA: Date of QA check:

Appendix 5 - Application to change an ILM assessment method (2024)

Please complete section 1 below, save in Word and email to quality@cityandguilds.com with an email subject header 'ILM Change of Assessment Request (your centre no)'.

Please attach your proposed Assessment Task briefing document.

Proposed change to ILM assessment method

Section 1 - To be completed by the centre			
Date submitted via email to the City & Guilds quality team: quality@cityandguilds.com, subject header 'ILM Change of Assessment Request (your centre no)'			
Centre Number:		**Centre Name:**	
Request submitted by (name)			
Contact tel. no:		**Contact email:**	
Qualification Number:			
Title of Qualification:			
Unit reference number and title: *(please note that a separate proposal must be completed for each unit)*			
Centre assessed: *(Do you assess your own ILM assessments?)*	Y/N	**ILMA assessed:** *(Do you outsource your assessment marking to ILMA?)*	Y/N
Rationale behind the request to change the assessment method: *(Include how you want to assess)*			

Section 2 (for City & Guilds use only) - To be completed by the TEQA / ILMA Lead Assessor		
Guidance to TEQA / ILMA Lead Assessor Please check:		
(1)	that the proposed assessment method is valid for the nature of the unit and the relevant assessment criteria the proposed change relates to (e.g. on its own, a knowledge test would be unsuitable to assess all aspects of a presentation skills unit)	
(2)	that the Centre's assessment instrument explicitly covers the relevant assessment criteria of the unit involved, and that it allows a clear indication of whether each separate assessment criterion is met or not	
(3)	that, if this is a qualification using criterion assessment, the centre understands this requirement and the assessment instrument allows for marking of the relevant assessment criterion	
(4)	that the proposed assessment does not place undue bias on certain learning outcomes or assessment criteria (use the weighting of marks in the ILM unit as a guide)	
(5)	once completed, please respond to the original email from Quality Delivery and include this completed form as an attachment. The form will be stored within the Assessment Hub and retained for audit purposes.	
	Quality Delivery will contact the centre with the outcome and will inform their allocated EQA.	
Approved? *(delete as applicable)*	Yes / No	
Reason if not approved:		
Name:		
Signed:	Date:	

TEQA / ILMA Lead Assessor, please email the completed form to the Quality team by attaching it to their original request.

Appendix 6 – Learner Statement of Authenticity

Instructions to the learner

- Please complete, sign and date the statement below and submit to your centre with the first submission for each unit or a set of integrated units. It is valid for all further re-submissions for the same unit or a set of integrated units.
- To show your understanding it is best to use your own words and images. If you use someone else's words in your work, please remember that you need to reference their work, including text, images, and diagrams. Use other's work sparingly and only when you feel the author has expressed something so well and so concisely that the words cannot be improved
- Do not copy and paste information from any source (including the internet) in your submission without referencing it. This is considered plagiarism
- When referencing a source, you must provide the name of the author, the date of their work that you have referred to and the page number where you got the quotation from immediately after the quotation (e.g. Hill, 2004, p. 42) and also provide full details of the reference in the reference list at the end
- You must also provide a full reference list - a list of books, articles, internet pages and any other sources you have quoted - at the end of your assessment

Learner name	
Learner registration number	
Unit(s) covered	
Date	
Learner signature	

Learner confirmation:

I declare that this assessment is all my own work and that:

- The work has not, in whole or in part, been knowingly submitted elsewhere for assessment
- Where any submission for this unit (s) includes work from a previous assessment this has been identified
- Where materials have been used from other sources it has been properly acknowledged
- If this statement is untrue, I acknowledge that an assessment offence has been committed

Centre confirmation:

The Centre declares that this learner:

- Has received adequate guidance on what plagiarism is and how to reference work
- To the best of my knowledge, is the sole author of the submitted assessment

Permission for ILM to use this submission

ILM uses learners' submissions – on an anonymous basis – for assessment standardisation.

If you are willing to allow ILM to use this script on condition that identifying information is removed, please tick the box: ☐

Submitting an alternate formal declaration of authenticity

Note for centres: If an alternate formal declaration of authenticity is completed by a learner this must as a minimum include the following:

Learner confirmation of authenticity:

By the act of making a submission/re-submission I am declaring that this is all my own work and that:

- The work has not, in whole or in part, been knowingly submitted elsewhere for assessment
- Where any submission for this unit (s) includes work from a previous assessment this has been identified
- Where materials have been used from other sources it has been properly acknowledged
- If this statement is untrue, I acknowledge that an assessment offence has been committed

Centres

Centre confirmation:

The Centre declares that this learner:

- Has received adequate guidance on what plagiarism is and how to reference work that is not theirs
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If applicable details of where further information can be found i.e. external sources.

If applicable glossary of terms used.

Appendix 7 – Definition of ILM's Assessment Verbs

The following terms are working definitions of the more common verbs used in ILM assessments. They are illustrated with an example of how they can be applied. The examples are for guidance as some verbs can be used in different, but equally valid, contexts e.g. you can 'establish' (set up) a company or you can 'establish' (verify) the truth of a situation.

Verb	Definition	Example
Analyse What makes this work the way it does?	To examine something in detail to discover or determine the meaning or essential features and draw conclusions. To break something down into components or essential features, to identify possible causation and/or draw conclusions. Analysis is not solely confined to data, but will often involve some manipulation of data to identify patterns, etc. The more complex the topic being analysed, the higher the level, but analysis will rarely be a low-level activity.	A review of staff data confirms that 80% of the workforce is male. It is important to analyse the reasons for this gender imbalance and prepare a report for senior management. The analysis could consist of collecting both qualitative and quantitate data and include each stage of the recruitment process. Where and how does the company advertise? What is the gender breakdown of applicants? Is it greater or less that 3:1? What selection methods are used? Are these appropriate and relevant? Is there any unconscious bias? Talk to current employees about their experience as another source for analysis. Data on retention of staff – is there any significant gender difference? Is the M/F retention the same at all levels. Gather the data, identify any patterns e.g. are females applying or not? Are they not getting through the selection process? Analyse both the statistical data and the 'soft' information and draw valid conclusions.
Appraise Does this seem to work to the required standard?	Less detailed but broader and more comprehensive than an assessment, looking at the whole and making judgements. Appraisal in its broader sense requires a judgement about the subject, identifying its strengths and weaknesses and/or how well something or someone performs in a particular context. Appraisal is more subjective than an evaluation, although it will refer to appropriate criteria.	In this first example, the word 'appraise' is used as a noun - a formal assessment of employee performance. 'In many organisations staff are appraised on an annual basis. This takes a holistic view of an employee and makes a judgement as to their effectiveness in their job role. For example: The employee is *always here on time, never leaves early and embodies the company's values.* They *build good relationships, and this is reflected by how highly their team speaks of. them. However, they sometimes lack problem-solving skills and often go to other Managers to find solutions.'* In this second example, 'appraise' is used as a verb e.g. the act of assessing something

		'Appraising the company's staff development policy will illustrate its strengths and weaknesses and overall effectiveness. A strength might be effective internal trainers, but a weakness could be a lack of externally recognised qualifications. However, if the findings meet the needs of the company then the overall judgement may be that it is working well enough.'
Assess Is this to the required standard?	Examining a topic and making a judgement, based on standard criteria. An assessment will judge each element individually. An assessment does not consider any causal factors but focuses primarily on impact or outcomes.	At the end of a probationary period new employees may be assessed against a set of criteria that are an essential part of their job role. The assessment can be used as evidence that the employee should become permanent. The employee has proved their competence in providing direction, instructions, and guidance to team members, resulting in projects being achieved on time and budget. The monitoring of resources and has not always followed company procedure. However, with experience, improvements in these areas should be rapid. The overall assessment is that the employee is offered a permanent contract.
Compare How does this relate to that?	Used with two or more examples, requires a description of their relative features, effectiveness, or outcomes. Context and variation determine the level of cognition involved.	Compare the roles of a senior and junior manager in an organisation. Senior managers assume a supervisory role over a group of employees in an organisation to meet agreed and defined organisational goals. A junior manager is usually the lowest level of manager in an organisation, typically having supervisory rather than full managerial responsibility. A senior manager may have much of the same supervisory responsibilities but wider and on a more strategic level, for instance responsibilities may include hiring and budgeting.
Compare and contrast To what extent are they alike and to what extent are they different?	Provide an account of the characteristics of two or more entities that enable judgements to be made as to how they are similar and how they are different.	Compare and contrast coaching and mentoring. Both can be used as a method of staff development. Both require the effective use of active listening by the coach/mentor. A variety of questioning techniques are used to move the coachee/mentee forward. Rapport is essential for either to be effective. However, coaching is seen as a short-term intervention whilst mentoring can be long term. Coaching is about improving work performance; mentoring is more holistic. Mentoring is usually undertaken by a more experienced and knowledgeable person whilst a coach does not have to be a subject expert. Coaches encourage the coachee to find their own solutions whilst mentors offer advice guidance and support.
Contrast	Used with two or more examples, makes some	Contrast Maslow's and Hertzberg's theories of motivation.

How good is this compared to that?	assessment of their relative features, effectiveness, or outcomes. By definition, this is more demanding than to compare, and the factors which determine the level for compare also apply.	Maslow envisages a 'motivational pyramid' that moves vertically from one stage to another with the need for food, drink, and sleep at the bottom to self- actualisation at the top of the pyramid. Self- actualisation he envisaged as being a challenging job, sense of achievement and the opportunity for creativity. In contrast Hertzberg devised a 'Two factor theory.' He described both motivating factors e.g., personal growth, recognition enjoyment of the job but also 'Hygiene factors. These are the factors that, if absent, cause dissatisfaction but if present do not motivate. For example, of the office is cold staff will be unhappy and possibly become less productive, but if it is of an acceptable temperature, they will not see this as a motivator but something that they expect. Whilst Hertzberg's 'motivational factors' have similarities to Maslow's their theories contrast in that he places more emphasis on the practical aspect of work and the importance of 'job design' in improving the quality of work life. This theory may be more applicable to current day working practices with the increased emphasis on work/life balance.
Conclude Why is this my decision?	Decide by reasoning.	When deciding on a suitable method of staff development, a manager could examine the examples of coaching v mentoring given in the 'Compare and contrast' example above. They might look at overall aim - is it short term or long term, the budget, in-house expertise, number of staff involved. By applying these factors to the work situation, they may reach a conclusion as to the most effective method for the organisation.
Critical How valid and relevant are the ideas and information I am using?	To be critical means that you are required to make judgements about the validity or relevance of the ideas and information you are using; to explore their meaning, and to demonstrate understanding of the topic from different perspectives and theoretical frameworks.	Designing an employee incentive scheme for a company from scratch will involve in depth research, validation of the information collected and requires underpinning with relevant management theory. Sources could include: • General internet research • Academic documents • Competitors • Staff survey/interviews • Motivational theories • Past company history However not all of these sources will carry the same weight of authenticity and relevance and therefore a critical judgment must be made about the validity of each. For example, general unattributed research will not be as reliable as information from university research. Are staff going to be honest in interviews or on surveys?

		Do the findings make sense in terms of recognised motivational theory? It is important to look critically at the ideas and information gathered in order to make a sound judgement.
Critically analyse What makes this work the way it does, and why?	Implies careful, exact, in-depth, or detailed analysis. Tends to focus more on the components and to comment on their significance, causal relationships or impact on the whole. Requires informed judgement with reference to some conceptual theory, idea, practice or experience so will always be fairly high level of cognitive skill.	Critically analyse the leadership styles prevalent within an organisation and form a judgement as to how effective these are. In order to analyse effectively, an understanding of leadership theory is required e.g. Hersey Blanchard, Goleman, Tannenbaum Schmitt. This knowledge can then be applied to the performance of senior managers in order to critically analyse what styles are used and how effective these are e.g. are KPI's being met, are staff fully involved and consulted or is this irrelevant?. The information should be used to produce a detailed, evidence-based analysis of the leadership styles within the organisation and then critique how effective each style is.
Critique What are the reasons for my views and conclusions on this?	To critique is to analyse something in detail in order to draw conclusions and provide reasons for your opinion as to its worth or value.	'Provide an analysis of Maslow's hierarchy of needs and its relevance in the 21st century.' This is asking for a critique of the strength and weaknesses of the theory and an analysis of its value to the changing workplace. Whatever views and conclusions are drawn must be validated with sound reasoning.
Define What, exactly, does it mean?	To state precisely the meaning of.	Define the meaning of a 'Full and Fair' recruitment policy. To be considered 'fair', a policy must fully meet relevant legislation e.g. Equality and Diversity. It must be transparent, so everyone knows exactly what is required e.g. the application process is the same for everyone. There must be a clear and objective job description and person specification that applies equally to all. Employers must ensure that criteria and conditions are all relevant to, and necessary for the job role so as not to result in indirect discrimination.
Describe What does it look like?	An account of the principal features of the topic. Involves some element of selection of the more important features. Again, context and possible variation is significant, as is the degree of detail required in the description.	Describe the organisational structure within a company/department. The information could be presented in a matrix structure.
Detail What are the important features?	To detail is to include all the important elements or features.	What are the important elements to bear in mind when planning a training session? • Logistics – time place venue, length of session • Number of learners • Motivation – why are they there? • Experience or knowledge of the subject – is it a mixed group or all at the same level?

		Looking at all the detail will enable a session to be planned that meets its aims and engages the learners.
Differentiate How is this different?	Distinguish one thing from another.	How does a public sector organisation differentiate itself from a private one? Consideration may be given to any of the following - • Shareholders • Funding, • Profit/surplus • governance • government influence, public accountability. • pay and rewards
Determine What is the scope? What have I found out?	To fix in scope To conclude after observation or consideration	When looking at problem solving it is important to identify it full scope e.g. How long as it been going on? Who is involved? Where does responsibility lie? What is the long- and short-term impact of the problem? It is then a case of collecting facts and evidence e.g. by observation or reviewing data. Once all the information has been analysed then the best course of action can be determined.
Establish How permanent is this? How true is this?	Create or set up on a permanent basis To prove correct, to confirm, to ratify, to validate, etc.	Establishing a grievance and disciplinary policy for a company involves reviewing the legislation and current processes and creating a new policy that will be adopted by the organisation. When following up an allegation of misconduct it is important to establish the facts e.g. what actually happened, who was involved, has the disciplinary procedure been followed accurately? Failure to do this could result in a claim for unfair dismissal.
Evaluate How well does each part of this work, and what needs to be done to make it work better?	An evaluation is an examination of complex issues, requiring higher level cognitive skills, that is more focussed (narrower area, but in more detail) than a review. An evaluation is normally detailed and provides a solution or conclusion and/or recommendation (perhaps for further exploration). An evaluation could include a comparative element and will ascertain the usefulness or contribution of each part to the whole.	Effective evaluation is a skill that can be used in many aspects of management. A manager can look back on a project and evaluate how effective it was against the success criteria. They could also use it in problem solving. Most problems will have more than one solution and so leaders need to evaluate the alternatives and decide which is best. For example, a cost benefit analysis may look at either buying a new state of the art piece of equipment or re-organising a workflow. Re-organising the workflow may be marginally less effective but cost a lot less. Managers evaluate both options and reach a decision that is best for the organisation.
Examine What can you find out about it?	Examine is about exploring a topic in some detail (identifying positive and negative features of the topic) without necessarily drawing	A manager is asked to look into expanding their company's presence on social media. They need to explore different sites, costs, coverage, relation to own market segment etc. Their examination can then be used to plan and develop a social media strategy.

	conclusions and making judgements. An examination could be used to inform decision making; in itself it will probably not be conclusive.	
Explain How does it work?	Involves some description of a topic with an account of the practices or uses associated with the topic, or characteristics of the topic. It may also imply some reasons for those practices, depending on context. Again, the level of cognitive skill involved will depend on the complexity of the subject matter.	Following on from the manager's examination above, they may be asked to explain social media and how it works to the senior leadership team. Their explanation could include listing websites or Twitter with a rationale of potential benefits to the company.
Identify What are they?	Involves some selection of subject matter from a larger set or context. Requires ability to recognise - the level of cognitive skill required depends on the context. And the degree of variation in the set from which the identified elements are being drawn.	Identify the stakeholders in a business e.g. the people involved and their influence on the organisation. This could be • Board of Directors • Shareholders • Senior management • Colleagues • Customers • Suppliers • Wider community
Justify Why do it?	Present an argument for a particular action or choice. Will usually imply some form of assessment or analysis and may be linked with one or other action.	The company Christmas party is cancelled, and the staff are obviously unhappy 'As you are aware, trading conditions have been very difficult over the last 12 months and we have not achieved our projected income. As a result, all non - essential spending is being cutback. Because of this we will not need to make anyone redundant and all jobs are safe for the foreseeable future'. This argument justifies the cancellation and will, hopefully, appease the employees.
List What exists?	Presentation of specific, required information in a structured format. Essentially a recall of learnt information; although this may be quite complex information, listing does not imply significant cognitive skills.	List the 5 reasons why dismissal may be deemed to be fair. 1. Conduct – when the employee has done something that is not appropriate or acceptable 2. Capability – when the employee is not able to do the job or does not have the required qualifications 3. Redundancy – when the job is no longer needed 4. Legal reasons –for example, a bus driver who is banned from driving 5. Some other substantial reason' – a term used for a wide variety of other situations
Outline	To give general idea and overview without going into detail.	Outline the main features of Honey and Mumford's theory of learning styles:

What are the main features?		Honey and Mumford identified 4 learning styles that people will fall into. Pragmatist, Activist, Reflector and Theorist. They then give examples of how each category learns best and this can be used when planning teaching or training sessions.
Reflect What have I learnt from this experience?	A process or model of learning from an experience in order to give consideration to what might be an improvement or be done differently next time.	At the end of a training course it is good practice to reflect on what you have learned eg: • Were your expectations met? • How useful was the training? • How can I apply it in my work role? • What can I move onto next? By questioning/reflecting on your experience, you can learn from it and move forward. **Theory example** In 1984 David Kolb published his 4 stage Experiential Learning theory that shows how learning depends on reflection. In summary: **Stage 1** is when we encounter a new experience or situation. **Stage 2** is when we reflect on the experience - what went well, what could have gone better? Did we achieve the right outcomes? **Stage 3** The reflection is turned into new ideas and improvements **Stage 4** completes the circle with the application of the new ideas/processes. The success of this learning circle depends on the ability to reflect objectively on what has happened and apply the lessons learned to future actions.
Research What can you find out about it?	Identifying and collecting data or information about a subject and presenting it in a codified or structured form. Research does not imply any analysis of the data collected, although that may be implied by the context. Research does not imply any judgement about the data collected but may well be combined with related verbs (analyse, evaluate) to ensure that these actions take place.	A company is expanding, and a manager is asked by the CEO to identify potential sites for larger premises. They need to research alternatives, collect relevant data e.g. size and location of sites, potential building costs, rent, rates. The research can then be presented in a factual report to the board for a final decision to be made.
Review Overall, how well does this work, and what may need to be done about it?	Making a judgement about a topic which relies upon a combination of evidence and some kind of theoretical model(s), construct, or practice. A review is a 'snapshot' of an activity that has breadth and will focus more on the whole. A review may well lead onto detailed further exploration and/or	As organisations move more towards virtual meetings, it is important to review these to see how effective they are and if changes need to be made e.g. Do they meet their intended aims? Is the IT working efficiently? Are contributors engaging with the new format? In this instance it may be useful to draw up a SWOT – strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats of the new system as a framework for the review.

	recommendations for further actions.	
Select Which are the most important?	Choose in preference to others	In the workplace a number of ways to communicate are available to select. An employee may choose an e mail to inform a large number of staff. A personal presentation may be more appropriate for a board of directors whilst a poster might be the best way of reinforcing a Health and Safety message. It is important to select the most effective in each circumstance.
Specify What, exactly, is it?	Precise and exact; the particular qualities or characteristics of something	When drawing up a contract it is vital to be specific and accurate about the content. This ensures that clients will get precisely what they expect and require. For example, if a Facilities Manager is negotiating a contract for building work, they will need to be exact about the design, materials, costs, and timescale so that they are fully protected by the contract should anything go wrong.
Summarise What are the main points?	A brief account giving the main points.	A brief summary of the main points in **Tuckman's theory of team development** is: **Forming** – team are new and may be reserved and sounding out each other. **Storming** –Staff are vying for their place in the team **Norming** – Things settle down as team get to know each other better. **Performing** – Team are experienced and working well together.
Verify How have I checked this to ensure it is correct?	To verify is to confirm by investigation.	A manager is told by a team leader that one of their staff is consistently late for work and disciplinary action needs to be taken. Before doing so, the manager should check with HR and/or time sheets to verify the information is correct. They then have the valid data needed to take appropriate action.

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