



Candidate Assignment Submission Guidelines

Assessment sessions 2021-2022

Submission Guidelines for all assignment-based modules

This applies to all assignments on Levels 3, 4, 6 and 7 (except the Marketing Leadership Programme)

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Assignment information

1. General Principles

Candidates must have registered for CIM membership and the relevant assessment/session before assignments are submitted.

Tutors may give general feedback on **ONE draft** of an assignment but are not able to answer specific comments/questions on how a candidate may achieve a higher grade. Tutors are advised by CIM not to express an opinion on the assignment or information about the possible grade that could be achieved. Candidates must declare that the assignment they are submitting is entirely their own work.

Referencing and professionalism

A professional approach is expected. Candidates must:

- identify and acknowledge **ALL** sources/methodologies/applications used
- use the Harvard referencing system (notes on Harvard referencing are on MyCIM)
- express work in plain business English. Marks are not awarded for use of English, but a good standard of English will help candidates to express their understanding more effectively
- produce a full bibliography using the Harvard referencing system.

All work that candidates submit as part of the CIM requirements must be expressed in their own words and incorporate their own judgements. Direct quotations from the published or unpublished work of others, including that of tutors or employers, must be appropriately referenced. Authors of images used in reports and audio-visual presentations must be acknowledged.

Plagiarism and collusion

Academic offences, including plagiarism and collusion, are treated seriously. Plagiarism involves presenting work, excerpts, ideas or passages of another author without appropriate referencing and attribution. Collusion occurs when two or more candidates submit work which is so alike in ideas, content, wording and/or structure that the similarity goes beyond what might have been mere coincidence.

It is a candidate's responsibility to understand what constitutes an academic offence, and, in particular, what plagiarism and collusion are and how to avoid them. Useful guidance materials and CIM policies are available on MyCIM for candidates.

When submitting each assignment, the candidate needs to complete the CIM declaration statement. In doing this, the candidate is confirming that all the work submitted is their own and does not contravene CIM policies.

For all modules submitted directly by the candidate, the CIM Declaration Statement is part of the submission process online and does not need to be added to the beginning of the electronic documents.

Plagiarism and collusion are serious offences and any candidates found to be sharing their own work, copying another candidate's work, quoting work from another source without recognising and disclosing that source, or using agencies that provide assessment writing services will be reviewed by the Reasonable Adjustment, Malpractice and Irregularities Committee (RAMIC) and may result in the assignment submission being declared null and void.

Where a candidate is found to have breached CIM regulations, the candidate and the Accredited Study Centre (ASC) will be informed of the outcome of the review at the time of the release of the results.

2. Maximum Word Count Policy

The CIM Maximum Word Count Policy relates to all assignment modules within the following CIM qualifications:

- Level 3 Foundation Certificate in Professional Marketing
- Level 3 Foundation Certificate in Professional Digital Marketing
- Level 4 Certificate in Professional Marketing
- Level 4 Certificate in Professional Digital Marketing
- Level 6 Diploma in Professional Marketing
- Level 6 Diploma in Professional Digital Marketing
- Level 7 Postgraduate Diploma in Professional Marketing

Guidance on word count

- Areas **included** in the maximum word count are as follows:
 - **All** materials **after** any Title Page and/or Table of Contents and **before** Reference list and/or Bibliography and/or Appendices. (*All materials including the words in candidate generated content such as: infographics, tables, graphs, charts, diagrams, illustrations*).
 - In-text citations, paraphrasing, and direct quotations are all **included** in the maximum word count.
 - **Numbers** are included in the word count. For example, "2020" would count as one word.
- Areas **excluded** from the maximum word count are as follows:
 - *diagrams of academic models, screenshots of third-party material (e.g., websites and Google analytics) and images (including captions)*.
 - Title Page, Table of Contents, Reference list, Bibliography and Appendices.
- Candidates must indicate the total number of words (those included in the maximum word count limit) used for the whole submission and for each individual task on the front cover of the assignment.
- For some tasks, e.g., presentations, a maximum number of slides is given along with a maximum word count for the speaker notes.
- Where page counts apply, e.g., organisation summary, a page is a single side of A4 paper.
- Please note all maximum word counts **must** be adhered to, as there is **not** a +/- 10% allowance on word count.
- Please ensure that you have a clear understanding of the word count allocation for each task/sub-task and if unsure discuss this with your tutor.

Exceeding the maximum word count

Examiners **will** stop marking a task when the maximum word count for that task has been reached. Therefore, marks will **not** be awarded for any work beyond the maximum word count. Please ensure that the word count shown is accurate and is the actual word count of the submission.

3. Good Practice Guidelines for Assessment Production

Maximum word count

The maximum word count is intended to assist candidates in producing a professional document of an appropriate length that can be used in the workplace. The submission should be written in a professional tone (unless otherwise instructed) and should only contain relevant material that directly contributes towards answering the task.

Page numbers

Candidates **must** number each page for ease of reference. Each task must be started on a new page.

Presentations/slides

Candidates should remember that the content of the slides should simply summarise the points that they make in the accompanying speaker notes. This could be achieved, for example, by using bullet points or visuals that illustrate the contents of the speaker notes.

The slide must be a half a page of A4 paper. The allocation of words available for the speaker notes, as stated in the assignment brief, should be determined on a slide by slide basis by candidates.

Tables and diagrams

Candidates may use legible tables and diagrams to support and/or illustrate the text. Unless tables and diagrams are specified as a requirement of a task, they can be included in either the appendix or the main body of the text. If tables are included as appendices, the findings must be summarised or referenced within the main body of the text for marks to be awarded.

Appendices

Appendices should only be included where necessary and should be used to accommodate tables and diagrams to support/illustrate the main body of the text. Marks **are not** awarded for work included in the appendices, and these should not be used as alternative locations for work that should appear in the main text. Appendices **should not** include published secondary information, such as annual reports or company literature.

Typographic guidance for all CIM assignments

- **Body text**
 - Font: Arial, Times New Roman or Calibri
 - Font Size: 11 point minimum
 - Text Style: Normal

- **Headings**
 - Font: Arial, Times New Roman or Calibri
 - Font size: 11 point minimum

- Text style: Bold
- **Page setup**
 - Top: 2.54 cm
 - Bottom: 2.54 cm
 - Left: 2.54 cm
 - Right: 2.54 cm
 - Header: 1.25 cm
 - Footer: 1.25 cm
 - Single line spacing
- **Tables**
 - Font and font size: Arial, Times New Roman or Calibri 9 point minimum.
 - Tables, diagrams and charts must not be further compressed.
- **Header:** Candidates **MUST** insert the module name, the theme that they have selected to use (when applicable), and their CIM Membership Number, 9pt
- **Footer:** Insert page numbers, 9pt.
- **Font Colour:** CIM do not specify what colour font is best to use in your assessments. All work should be produced and presented in a professional manner according to the work and subject matter being produced.

4. Formatting of assignments

Candidates are advised that there is not a prescriptive approach to producing documents for assessment. The content and structure of the document depends upon the audience addressed and the subject matter.

Candidates can undertake research on different types of documents by looking at what is available on the internet. For example, putting in the words 'discussion papers for conferences' brings up a wide variety of discussion papers for a conference audience.

The following examples are intended as illustrative examples that could be adopted by candidates when presenting their work. It is not meant to be a prescriptive guide that must always be followed, and it is not guaranteed to gain a candidate full marks – it is, as stated, a guide only of a possible design structure.

Reports

When producing the report, candidates should adopt a formal style by writing in the third person. The document needs to be well structured, accurate, concise and clear. The following format provides one suggested approach for compiling the report, although an alternative approach is acceptable if it results in a systematic, well organised document.

- **Title page:** the title of the report, who the report is written for, who it is written by in terms of job role e.g., Marketing Executive and the date
- **Terms of reference:** the purpose of the report
- **Procedure:** the process followed
- **Executive summary:** the main points of an in-depth report enabling the reader to understand the report without the need to read it in full

- **Findings:** main findings of research. This section needs to be clearly structured and should show evidence of presentation of facts, not opinions. There also needs to be evidence of analysis and application of the research findings. Charts and diagrams should be included in the appendix and referred to in the findings. It is important that conclusions and recommendations are separated out and not included in this section
- **Conclusion:** summary of findings and the implications of these findings to the organisation(s). It is important that new information is not introduced in this section. The emphasis should be on drawing together what was presented under findings in a well-structured summary
- **Recommendations:** provide informed recommendations based on findings.

Discussion papers

A discussion paper is a document created as a basis for discussion rather than as an authoritative statement or report. It can take different forms. However, the following examples illustrate possible approaches:

Example One

- Clear, succinct title
- Author job role e.g., Marketing Executive and date
- Terms of reference
- Abstract (short explanation on motive, method, key results, conclusions)
- Introduction (motive of undertaking the research)
- Introduction including suggested approach
- Statement of main findings
- Explanation/implications of the findings
- Alternative approaches
- Implications of alternative approaches
- Summary
- Recommendations
- Bibliography
- References.

Example Two

- Clear, succinct title
- Author job role e.g., Marketing Executive and date
- Abstract
- Method (outline what was done, what theories were used)
- Results (outline of results)
- Discussion of conclusions from research results
- Conclusions (draw together most important research results and their consequences)
- Bibliography
- References.

Example Three

- Date
- Author job role e.g., Marketing Executive
- The audience
- The purpose
- Executive summary
- Background information (how does the problem/issue arise)
- The main points of discussion, the contentious points/pros and cons, opportunities and threats

- Summary
- Next steps
- References
- Bibliography.

Briefing paper

A briefing paper includes relevant information about and analysis of a particular subject. The following examples are possible formats:

- Example One
 - Clear, succinct title
 - Author job role e.g., Marketing Executive and date
 - Subject matter
 - Background information
 - Analysis
 - Summary
 - Recommendations
 - Bibliography
 - References.
- Example Two
 - Clear, succinct title
 - Author job role e.g., Marketing Executive and date
 - Subject matter
 - Abstract
 - Rationale
 - Evidence
 - Research findings
 - Conclusions
 - Bibliography
 - References.

White papers

A white paper is a referenced document that explores research, arguments or schools of thought on a specific issue. The white paper usually identifies the problem, proposes solutions and looks at the benefits. It should also include a plan of action. A useful reference source is Michael Stelzner, *How to Write a White Paper – A White Paper on White Paper*.

The following example illustrates one possible approach to producing a white paper:

- Clear, succinct title
- Author job role e.g., Marketing Executive and date
- Subject matter
- Outline of problem/issue/area for investigation
- Evaluate the context/background to the problem
- Propose solutions to resolve the problem including the benefits derived
- Propose a course of action
- Bibliography
- References

Articles

Articles are designed to appeal to a wider audience and therefore a balance needs to be achieved in producing a document that is both interesting to the reader as well as being academically robust and appropriately referenced.

The following example illustrates one approach to writing an article:

- Title
- Summary
- Introduction
- Body with supporting facts
- Ending/closing.

When writing online bullet points, numbered lists and subheadings should be used to break up text.

5. Assignment Submission to CIM via the online submission website - Calibrand

Deadline dates for submission of assignments

All dates are published on MyCIM, under Dashboard > Studying > Important dates and are also available through your Accredited Study Centre (ASC).

CIM reserves the right not to accept late submissions from your ASC.

CIM **will not** accept or mark any assignments that are not approved by an ASC.

Candidates must submit an **electronic copy** of their assignment to the Calibrand platform by the ASC deadline in the Important Dates document. It is the candidate's responsibility to check that the work they submit electronically is a valid file type and can be opened on the platform. Candidates must also provide a copy of their assignment to their ASC for review and to ensure that they can provide a backup in the case of corrupted / problematic files.

- **Electronic submission of modules to CIM - Calibrand**

The candidate is responsible for ensuring the submission through Calibrand of all assignments to CIM by the published ASC submission deadline date. For more guidance on how to upload your work please go to the Guide to Candidate Submissions to Calibrand.

CIM will update the system regularly to ensure all valid bookings are reflected on the Calibrand system so you can make your submissions. If any are not being shown or you do not have access to the platform the please contact the Customer Experience team on qualifications@cim.co.uk or telephone +44 (0)1628 427120.

6. Guidance for Electronic Files for all modules

Audio/Video files

- All tasks that require an audio/video format **must** be uploaded separately and not embedded or linked within another file.

- If a file has been created on an external website this should be downloaded and submitted directly to the platform. Web links contained within documents will not be accessed or marked.
- Where audio/video files are submitted, candidates need to be aware of the file size and quality they are submitting. Full HD/4k video file types are not needed, and candidates must try to limit the file size as much as possible. As a guide these should be no more than 40mb.

Written tasks

- Candidates should, where possible, submit their digital versions of the written tasks for each module as one file and in a word-processed format. Combining all written tasks into one file means the candidate is less likely to lose or forget to upload tasks - missing work cannot be submitted after the CIM assignment deadline. If the candidate misses this deadline they should discuss this with their ASC.
- Where different versions of software are used (e.g. PowerPoint, Word, etc.) these must be converted to PDF and combined where possible into one file. When a file is converted to PDF it retains the file information and prevents format change.
- Where appendices relate to the actual task these should be incorporated within the task document itself.
- The maximum number of files that a candidate submit is restricted to **ONE**, multiple files cannot be accepted by your ASC. Should a candidate need to submit more than one file they will have to combine them into one PDF for the purposes of the submission.

(NB: For PowerPoint files you will need to include the speaker notes to ensure these are marked and if converted to PDF ensure that these can be seen)

Submissions size limit

- Candidates must be made aware that the overall size of their submission must not exceed **50mb in total**.
- Candidates should make every effort to reduce the size of the files submitted to CIM through the online submission platform.

Naming of files

- All electronic submissions should be labelled clearly with the module name, CIM Membership Number, session date e.g.

| |
|---|
| Digital Fundamentals – 12345678 – July 2020 |
|---|

- The candidate's name must **NOT** appear anywhere on the electronic submission or file name.

7. Grading

All assignments will be graded according to the overall mark achieved. The grading criteria are as follows:

Level 3, 4, 6, 7 grading

- | | |
|-----------|-------------------|
| • 70-100% | Distinction |
| • 60-69% | Merit |
| • 50-59% | Pass |
| • 1-49% | Fail |
| • 0 | N (Null and Void) |

8. Results

Results will be emailed to candidates by the deadline for the release of results and will be available to view online on the day of release. Details are on MyCIM.

Note: Any assessment work produced for and held by CIM are expressly exempt from the normal data subject access rules set by the Data Protection Act 2018. It is CIM's policy not to return either original scripts or copies to either Accredited Study Centres or candidates, following submission to CIM for marking.

If a candidate does not pass and wishes to retake this module, they must produce the assignment to a **NEW theme** (where themes are used). However, for some modules there is the option to resubmit the assignment to the next session, please see Resubmission Guidelines on MyCIM for more details.