

Coursework assessment FAQs

Senior management and supervision unit AF6

FAQs

1. What does coursework involve?

With coursework assessment, rather than sit a traditional examination, you complete three written assignments. These are each between 2,000–3,000 words in length and all three must be successfully completed (with you scoring a minimum of 50% in each) to achieve a pass in the unit.

Upon successful completion a record of achievement is issued and a ‘pass’ in the unit is added to your CII examination record, together with 30 Advanced Diploma-level credits.

Coursework assignments vary in their requirements. Typically, each assignment is focused on one of the learning outcomes in the syllabus.

2. Why is the CII introducing coursework for Advanced Diploma unit (AF6) Senior management and supervision?

The CII is committed to ensuring that its qualifications are at the forefront of best practice. We strive to help you to get the maximum out of your studies, ensuring that the process is as relevant as possible and supports retention and subsequent application of knowledge. This includes all aspects of our qualifications, from subject choice to learning support to assessment.

Use of coursework assessment has become an increasingly popular option among higher education and professional bodies. They appreciate the flexibility it offers as a means of assessing candidates studying subjects which involve the application of sophisticated knowledge and skills in complex scenarios, and which typically require candidates to develop a broader understanding and appreciation of a subject (and, crucially, to draw upon their work experience).

The Advanced Diploma involves degree-level learning. Unit AF6 requires you to evaluate the issues of complex organisations and recommend appropriate solutions based upon detailed understanding and analysis of regulation and governance.

In addition to its role in supporting the development and subsequent application of knowledge, coursework assessment offers the potential for greater flexibility in the provision of the Advanced Diploma itself. You are no longer restricted to two examination dates per year (April and October), instead being able to enrol for coursework assessment throughout the year and study at your own pace. Furthermore, re-submissions are possible on receipt of results rather than with exams, where you need to wait for the next exam session.

3. How does coursework work in practice?

All three assignments must be successfully completed to achieve a pass in a unit.

A minimum of 50 marks (50%) must be obtained for each assignment. Results will take the form of either ‘Pass’ or ‘Fail’.

Notification of your result in each assignment will be mailed within 40 working days from the date of submission.

In the event that you fail an assignment two options exist:

1. Submit a reworked assignment. During 2016 an additional fee of £126 member/£172 non-member is payable. A 40 working-day marking period will apply to re-submissions. Two re-submissions per assignment may be made. All re-submissions must be completed and submitted within 12 months of enrolment.
2. Request a review of the marking of your assignment. Each assignment is restricted to one review. For 2016 an additional fee of £83 and a 35 day review period applies. Details are available at www.cii.co.uk/courseworkpolicies

You can access your assignments together with additional study support services at www.revisionmate.com Full login details are sent after enrolment.

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4. What are the timescales and deadlines involved?

Your enrolment lasts for 12 months and all assignments should be submitted (including any re-submissions necessary) within that time.

There are also assignment deadlines to meet as set out below:

- **Assignment 1** – this needs to be submitted within 6 months of your enrolment
- **Assignment 2** – this needs to be submitted within 9 months of your enrolment
- **Assignment 3** – this needs to be submitted (including any re-submissions) within 12 months of your enrolment.

The above are **final** deadlines and we would encourage you to submit well before each deadline to ensure you complete the course in time.

If you miss the deadlines for assignments 1 or 2 your assignment will not be marked and you will automatically receive a ‘timed out’ notification. You will need to purchase a re-submission to continue with the course. If you fail to complete and pass all three assignments (including any re-submissions necessary) within 12 months of enrolment, your enrolment will end, and your CII exam record will be updated to include either a ‘Fail’ or ‘Timed out’ for the unit.

5. Do I have to submit the assignments in order?

Yes, you should submit assignments in sequential order, in advance of the deadlines set out in question 4.

6. Do I need to wait for the result of an assignment before submitting the next?

You may submit assignments as soon as these are completed. However, we recommend that you await the result of assignment 1 before submitting assignment 2 as the result of the former is a good indicator of whether you are taking the right approach. This will enable you, where necessary, to amend your approach and potentially avoid additional work and the cost of a re-submission. Please remember, however, that you will need to ensure that you leave yourself enough time to submit assignment 2 before 9 months of enrolment have elapsed, and that assignment 3 (and any re-submissions) will need to be submitted within 12 months of enrolment.

7. How does the CII ensure that the coursework assessment methodology is as robust as examinations?

Use of coursework assessment has become an increasingly popular option among higher education and professional bodies.

While it does not make the same demands in terms of knowledge recall and time constraints as examinations, it brings its own distinct challenges, requiring candidates to explore work-based questions in a detailed and analytical manner. The process requires you to conduct extensive reading and research that must be correctly referenced at all times.

In addition, to eliminate plagiarism and collaborative working, all submissions are run through plagiarism software. Transgression of the rules will result in penalties being applied. These can range from being excluded from the qualification unit in question, to being excluded from all CII assessments. The exact penalty will depend upon the precise nature of the transgression. Names of those found guilty will also be published. Details of the CII’s standard policy on these matters can be found at www.cii.co.uk/courseworkpolicies

You are also required to achieve a minimum of 50% in each of the three assignments (as opposed to achieving an overall pass-mark in the exam). This is to compensate for the difference between an exam (closed-book, time-bound and in controlled conditions) as opposed to coursework assessment (open-book, non time-bound and not conducted in controlled conditions).

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8. Are entrants able to work collaboratively on their answers?

We acknowledge that you may undertake a formal study programme with colleagues. However, working with another person to write assignments is not acceptable.

Your answers must be your own work. As you prepare your answers, you can draw upon available learning and use reference material. However, the work submitted must be your own. Work may not be copied from other sources and, where you draw on other work, it must be fully referenced.

Under no circumstances should you allow another individual access to any of your assignment answers.

Failure to comply with these requirements will result in sanctions being applied. These can include being excluded from the qualification unit in question and excluded from all CII assessments. Details of the CII's standard policy on these matters can be found at www.cii.co.uk/courseworkpolicies

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9. What happens if I do not successfully complete all three assignments by the end of my 12 month enrolment?

All assignments, plus re-submissions must be completed and submitted within 12 months of your enrolment date.

If you fail to complete the course within this time, you will need to re-enrol and complete a new set of assignments.

10. How long will I have to wait to be notified of the results of my submission?

Assignments will be marked by an assessor and the CII will mail the results within 40 working days of submission. You do not have to wait for the result of one assignment before submitting the next.

11. How long should each assignment be?

The word count for each assignment is typically in the region of 2,000–3,000 words. Each assignment will state its own particular maximum word count. This is to guide students as to the depth and breadth of the answer sought for each assignment. If a maximum word count of 3,000 is stated, then we would typically expect the word count to be within 2,800–3,200 words. The word count does not include diagrams (which you are free to use in your answer); however, it does include text contained within any tables you choose to use. The reference list is not included in the word count.

12. How are marks allocated?

Marks are allocated for each assignment based on the following four components:

- **30% of the mark is allocated for knowledge and understanding.** This component forms the factual foundation of the assignment. The essential facts should be accurate and broad enough in their scope to allow further application.
- **50% of the mark is allocated for application and analysis.** This is the largest component of the mark which is awarded for the way in which you analyse/examine the factual information and how you interpret this information to add value to your answer (this could be in the form of conclusions, solutions, recommendations, etc). It is also important to remember that the assessor must logically be able to follow the information in assignment submissions.
- **15% of the mark is allocated for coherent structure.** Submissions should have a clear start and a clear end. Information within submissions should also be logical and well grouped.
- **5% of the mark is allocated for evidence of further reading and the use of relevant workplace examples.** Suggestions for further reading are contained within the study text and shown on the unit syllabus. These reading lists are not exhaustive and candidates are encouraged to read further.

Note: Feedback on the basis of the marking grid will be given to all candidates.

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13. Is it important to submit assignments quickly?

Yes, it is important that you do not delay the submission of the assignments. If you delay the submission of assignments this may result in insufficient time to complete within the 6, 9 and 12 month deadlines set out (see question 4), and to complete any re-submissions if required.

14. How many times can an assignment be re-submitted?

Assignments can only be re-submitted twice and all re-submission should be completed before the end of the 12 month enrolment. You should, however, remember that each re-submission bears a cost and that it will take the CII approximately 40 working days to process each submission/re-submission.

15. I'm currently enrolled for AF6, assessed by written exam. Can I switch to coursework assessment?

Yes, it is possible. The most common routes being:

1. Where you have a current study text but have not yet booked an exam entry, you can simply purchase an upgrade to coursework assessment.
2. Where you have a current study text enrolment and have booked (but not yet sat) the exam, you will first need to obtain a refund on your exam before then upgrading to coursework assessment.
3. Where you have an entry for the exam only, you need to obtain a refund for this before enrolling onto coursework assessment.

Note: This only applies if you contact us before the closing date at normal fee for the exam.

To switch your enrolment please contact Customer Service by phoning +44 (0)20 8989 8464 or emailing customer.serv@cii.co.uk to arrange the transfer. If you upgrade, you'll receive a full 12 month enrolment.

16. I haven't written an essay since leaving school/sixth form/university and I'm nervous I won't be able to produce answers to a sufficient standard. What support will be available to help me with essay writing and structuring?

As with all of its different assessment methodologies, the CII will be providing candidates with comprehensive support to give the best chance of successfully completing this first time. An example of completed coursework will be provided on enrolment which will show you the type of questions that will be asked and the level and complexity of answers required. Coursework is not about writing theoretical essays, but about the application of knowledge. Therefore it is about applying the learning outcomes to typical scenarios that you would encounter in the workplace.