

Purpose:

The purpose of this policy is to outline the accredited programme assessment requirements, for learners to achieve a successful assessment outcome.

Scope:

These guidelines are **only** applicable for learners undertaking our accredited programmes which include a requirement to assess learner practice. They also apply to CIPD Learning staff involved in the assessment process such as assessors, and verifiers.

CIPD Learning encourages learners to manage their own learning journey as this will enable you to continue to develop your practice as well as to undertake further continuous professional development (CPD). Throughout your chosen accredited programme, assessments will take place and will provide an opportunity for you to assess your progress against the programme requirements, to reflect on this, and then adapt your practice where necessary.

All the accredited programmes are modular, self-directed online learning programmes for practitioners in an area of people practice. This means that learners can take the initiative in their learning goals and strategies, focusing on what is to be learned, how it is to be learned and in evaluating their progress.

CIPD Learning will ensure that all learner work is assessed fairly and accurately by our professional team of assessors and that consistency is applied across **all** accredited programme assessment. Learners will receive digital certification when both the programme content and the assessment have been successfully completed and achieved. Learners will also have access to an ongoing community of practice and here they will be able to share any passions or concerns to improve understanding and practice.

Principles of Assessment

All CIPD Learning assessment follows these core principles;

Valid: Assessments are directly related to the accredited programme practice focus areas

Authentic: Assessments are the result of the learner's own work. Learners will be asked to sign a declaration on the Learning Hub to this effect with every assessment submission.

Current: Assessments are in line with current CIPD standards and legislation to enable learners to demonstrate competence at the time of assessment

Sufficient: Assessments allow learners the opportunity to cover all the assessment requirements to enable a reliable judgement on achievement

Reliable: The assessment results should be consistent across levels and provision and need to be capable of achieving the same results with similar groups of learners. Our Quality Assurance Team will monitor this through learner tracking, verification, and standardisation events.

Fair & inclusive: Assessment processes are open and transparent, appropriate to all learners on all accredited programmes and include differentiation for any needs.

CIPD Learning complies with latest legislation and equalities policies to provide learners with an equal chance of receiving accurate assessment. All assessment evidence complies with these principles of assessment.

For a positive assessment outcome, we encourage learners to:

- become familiar with the CIPD Learning accredited programme you have purchased, and the guidelines and requirements around the assessment process.
- take ownership and self-direction for your own learning, to become 'active' learners and to follow the requirements of the CIPD Learner Charter [Learner Charter](#)
- submit assessments and evidence to meet your required programme timelines.
- use the CIPD Learning Good Reference Guide to understand how you can avoid plagiarism by writing all work in your own words, and using quotation marks with the source stated for anything taken word for word
- let CIPD Learning know of any extenuating circumstances (defined later in this document) and any special requirements that may affect your progress

CIPD Learning will:

- provide access to your accredited programme with quality, evidence-based content via our digital learning platform
- information on how learners will have an equal opportunity for their achievement to be assessed
- reasonable adjustments for specific learner needs
- guidance for learners on the assessment requirements, choices regarding assessment and the learning practice focus areas before the assessment is undertaken
- clear assessment guidance approved by CIPD Learning Quality Assurance Team
- opportunities for learners to engage with fellow learners via discussion forums, learning communities, and access to a community of practice throughout the duration of the programme and after
- developmental feedback on your accredited programme assessment within four weeks of the submission deadline
- opportunities to express views on the quality of learning products/programmes and or pathways, through all learner feedback surveys
- robust quality assurance processes to ensure consistency, reliability, and sufficiency across all accredited programmes. This will also include programme content checks and sampling of both learner work and assessor feedback.

Assessment

Initial / Diagnostic: Learners are required to complete a self-reflective pre-assessment of competency as part of the sign up onto an accredited programme. This assessment is used by CIPD Learning to:

- gain knowledge about the learner
- determine learners have the capability to complete an accredited programme
- confirm an International English Language Testing System (IELTS) minimum score of 6.5 (or equivalent) as required for CIPD Learning programmes where English is not the first language.

Module check ins are developmental assessments and are ongoing throughout the programme. The module check in requirements allow learners to complete a short assessment for each module of their chosen accredited programme which is not graded.

Learners will select their modules in their chosen order to complete and will then submit a text response answer (for each module) to the Learning Hub. This will automatically release an expert answer for you to self-rate yourself against. You will need to do this for each module check in and before any programme assessment can be unlocked.

Programme assessment is at the end of the accredited programme to measure how much learning has taken place and a final assessment decision is provided to the learner. It is a judgement on whether you have achieved all or some of the associated practice focus areas. This assessment will be graded as either 'Met' or 'Not Met'.

Assessment format and word count requirements:

When you are ready to start the programme assessment you will need to download the Accredited Programme Assessment Template from the Learning Hub. The focus of the assessment is for learners to write a report as an evaluative review on an aspect of their chosen accredited programme. You will need to demonstrate your learning from the programme and specifically address the practice focus areas from half of the programme assessment module options.

Once you have done this, you will then be able to upload your work as one document directly onto the CIPD Learning Hub to submit your programme assessment. The reason for this is so that your work can be read by Turnitin similarity checking software. This is covered further in the section of this document called Preventing and dealing with unprofessional behaviour.

We encourage all learners to use Turnitin as a development tool on the Learning Hub. This allows an opportunity for you to practice using Turnitin without penalty. You are then able to reflect, improve where needed and finally upload your assessments to the main submission area for marking.

If your assessor deems that an assessment has an unacceptable Turnitin score, they will return it to you unmarked, to be amended and re-uploaded to the Learning Hub within three working days. If the work is not amended and uploaded within three working days learners will receive a 'Not Met' standard for late/non-submission.

Over reliance on external sources

Learners are expected to correctly reference their written work. If the work is correctly referenced but over-reliant on external sources so that a learner's own input and understanding cannot be assessed, work will be returned unmarked - learners will be given three days to make necessary adjustments.

Learners are advised that if they are using their own material which they have previously used on a different assessment or course, they must cite themselves. They should treat the text the same as they would if someone else had written it. Using material, you have used before is self-plagiarism and is not acceptable. Please see our information on *How to avoid unprofessional behaviour* further in this document.

Meeting word count requirements – Final assessment only

The expected word count for an accredited programme assessment is a total between 2500-3000 words. Learners are advised that if their submitted work is over the word count then they will **only** be assessed to that point and any additional words will not be taken into consideration by their assessor.

Learners are expected to work to these requirements. If a learner submits work that is under the word count requirement, it will still be accepted for marking but need to be aware that a shorter assessment submission is unlikely to fully address the assessment requirements. We encourage learners to use the full word count allowance available to them.

It is important that learners **check their final word count** falls within the stated word count requirement and that they **include with their submission how many words they have used**.

What is and is not included in word count

Included	Not Included
Anything that attracts marks e.g. the main body of your answer and:	Title page
Headings – All headings including main and sub-headings	Contents Page and Appendices – These should be kept to a minimum and only contain reference materials illustrating and supporting arguments fully made in the body of work. Any other materials included in appendices, except where specifically requested will not be marked.
Lists	Equations
Quotes - repetition or recreation of something someone has said or written	Footnotes – used for referencing only; those containing large amounts of text will be treated as if they were part of the main body of work.
Tables, graphs, and diagrams – if student’s own work	Tables, graphs and diagrams – imported from other sources to support an answer but not the student’s own work
	Bibliography and Reference List

Programme assessment submission:

The accredited programme assessment submission must be completed 10-months post purchase. This is to allow time for your assessment to be marked and to give learners who have received a ‘not met’ grade the time to purchase and complete a re-sit. This will be clearly communicated to all learners via the Learning Hub and upon sign up to an accredited programme. Learners can of course choose to work on and upload their completed assessment earlier if they wish. You are also encouraged to keep pace with the assessment activities, and this includes both the Module Check-ins at the end of each module throughout the programme and the final assessment. Where a learner misses the 10-month assessment deadline there may be no further opportunity to complete the assessment and CIPD Learning may withdraw the learner from the programme.

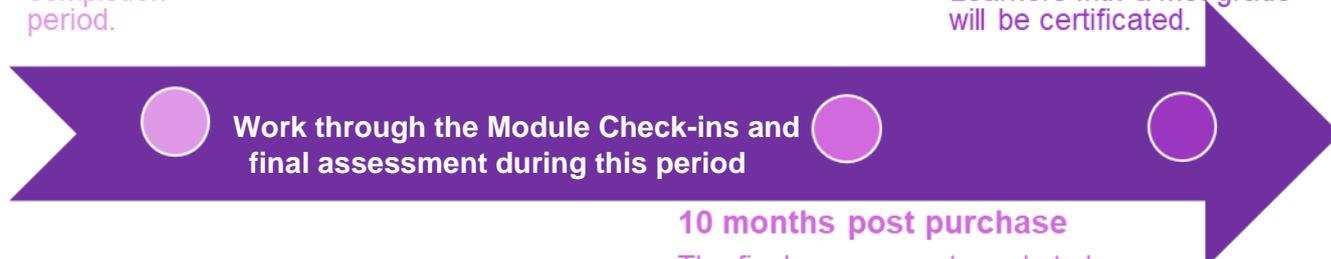
Accredited Programme (AP) completion timeline

Start

Purchase of the AP and the beginning of the 12 month completion period.

Finish

12 months post purchase, all learners should have completed all modules and the final assessment. Learners with a met grade will be certificated.



The final assessment needs to be submitted 10 months post purchase to ensure all learners complete the AP within 12 months including the 1st and 2nd final assessment attempts.

Learner Assessment Declaration

By submitting your Accredited Programme Assessment onto the CIPD Learning Hub you are agreeing to the following statements:

- I confirm that the work/evidence presented for assessment is my own unaided work.
- I confirm that I have read the Accredited Programme Assessment Requirements and Guidelines which includes guidance on plagiarism. I understand that if I am found to have 'copied' from published work without acknowledgement, or from other learner work, this may be regarded as plagiarism and may lead to failure of the assessment, further investigation or could lead to removal from the Accredited Programme.
- I agree to this work being subjected to scrutiny by textual analysis software if required.
- I understand that my work may be used for future quality assurance purposes in accordance with the provisions of the Data Protection Act 2018.
- I understand that the work submitted for my assessment may not be returned to me and that I have retained a copy for my records

You must ensure you are ready to submit your work for grading as once submitted you will not be able to make any more changes.

Feedback and assessment results

Feedback and assessment results will be available to learners within four weeks from the assessment submission / or second attempt deadline. The exception to this is where an assessment has been returned to a learner unmarked for amendment and given 3 days to put this right. Once this has been actioned by the learner, results will be available as above.

All accredited programme assessments will be marked with a 'Not Met' or 'Met' standard. Following the recording of a 'Not Met' standard, learners will have four weeks to re-submit their second attempt.

Our assessors will provide assessment judgements once the work has been submitted for final marking. Learners must submit the whole assessment again with amendments to demonstrate understanding of the practice focus areas in the context of the whole assessment. It is not enough to pass assessment practice focus areas in isolation. Even if most of the assessment criteria has met the standard, the learner's response must be integrated into the rest of the assessment.

Although rare, if a learner is unable to make expected progress and has received a 'Not Met' standard the accredited programme assessor will seek to understand the reason(s) by initiating a discussion with the learner and depending on the circumstances, may:

- suggest an alternative product or programme
- recommend withdrawal from the programme

CIPD Learning may take the decision, and reserves the right, to withdraw a learner from an accredited programme where the expected progress is not being made.

Where the costs of the accredited programme are being met by the learner's employer, CIPD Learning will also inform that employer that the learner has been withdrawn.

As part of the CIPD Learning quality assurance process, a proportion of learner work and assessor feedback will be sampled by the quality assurance team.

Second and final submission

Learners may be eligible to purchase a second and final submission which will then give them two more opportunities at the assessment. To be eligible for this, learners must have recently received a 'Not Met' standard in both submissions in the first attempt. Learners will need to purchase a second and final submission which will allow them a further 2 attempts at the assessment. They will then have a further 8 weeks to complete this assessment.

If learners can answer yes to the above, they can then purchase a second and final attempt with a further two opportunities at the assessment.

The second and final submission will include:

- a new assessment
- assessment and feedback
- up to 2 more assessment attempts
- learners may purchase only 1 opportunity for a second and final submission for an accredited Programme
- the first assessment attempt will be due 4 weeks after commencement and if needed the second and final assessment attempt will be due in another 4 weeks

To be eligible for this, learners must have submitted work at both attempts in the first submission. Learners who have not submitted any work previously or have only submitted at one attempt will not be eligible to apply for this second and final submission.

An additional fee is required for this second and final submission and learners will need to contact Customer Services on +44 (0)20 8612 6202 to arrange payment before commencing this. Once payment has been received, the system will then allow learners a further 2 attempts. This must then be completed within 8 weeks of purchase.

Learners wishing to purchase a second and final submission should do so as soon as you have been notified of a second 'Not Met' grade as this will provide continuity in your learning and allow you to complete the programme within the required timeframe of 12 months.

Learners who are unsuccessful following the second and final submission 2 attempts will not have any further opportunity to purchase anymore assessment attempts.

Extenuating circumstances

If extenuating circumstances are likely to have affected a learner's ability to submit their assessments on time, the learner should contact the Learner Support team via learnersupport@cipd.co.uk who will then confirm if they can go ahead and submit their assessment or not depending upon the circumstances.

What are extenuating circumstances:

CIPD Learning defines extenuating circumstances: *'as serious, unanticipated difficulty which adversely affects the learner's ability to complete a piece of assessment or programme of study within the stated timeframes. Ordinarily, these circumstances could not have been foreseen or avoided, are outside of the learner's control and are likely to be an unexpected change in circumstances since commencement of the programme such as serious or critical illness supported by a medical certificate, exceptional personal circumstances, and bereavement of a family member or close friend'*. Heavy workload and holidays are not

considered to be an extenuating circumstance.

Assessment Records:

Learners will receive confirmation of the outcome of their programme assessment via feedback from their allocated assessor with either a 'Met' or 'Not Met' grade being awarded. We keep records of all assessment outcomes on all learners, and these are available to you on the Learning Hub throughout the duration of your accredited programme.

Recording Assessment is important for the following reasons:

- demonstrate and evaluate learner progress towards achievement of the learning practice focus areas and as evidence of achievement.
- assessment records map evidence of progress through the accredited programme. Your allocated assessor is responsible for recording assessed achievement and to track this against the learning practice focus areas. You will be advised and aware of any assessment requirements, including the number of opportunities to submit and the appeals procedure.

Retention of assessment records:

Your assigned assessor will confirm the outcome of your assessment and send you a record of this within 4 weeks of submission. Please note that you will only have access to your chosen Accredited Programme for one year.

CIPD Learning data retention rules are as follows:

1. For CIPD Members: All learning data for members will be retained whilst in membership
2. For CIPD Ex Members: All learning data will be retained for 15 years
3. For CIPD Non-members: All learning data will be retained for 2 years

CIPD Learning need to comply with GDPR and must ensure that all learner data is not retained any longer than the periods specified above.

Please refer to our Privacy Policy for more information on how we process and store your personal data to comply with the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR).

Storage of personal data

CIPD Learning will ensure assessed work containing personal data and /or commercially sensitive information relating to named organisations is processed in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulations. Data will be stored securely with access limited to relevant authorised personnel. Here is the link to the GDPR policy: [GDPR](#)

Exemplar assessments:

CIPD Learning does not offer exemplar assessments. Learners are expected to work through their accredited programme content and activities themselves via the Learning Hub and submit their assessment as their own original work.

Non-submission of assessments

Learners who do not submit the required programme assessment will only be able to login to the shop front and download evidence of the modules they have completed for their records.

How to avoid unprofessional behaviour

Unprofessional behaviour by learners could compromise the assessment process, the integrity of the Accredited Programmes, the validity of results and certification and, ultimately CIPD Learning professional recognition of learners. We will support our learners on how to avoid this from happening wherever possible and in situations where this is not possible to prevent, any cases whether suspected or proven will be dealt with quickly, thoroughly, and efficiently.

We encourage our learners to ensure they understand the different types of unprofessional behaviour, how to prevent it, and the steps and actions CIPD Learning will take if it is discovered. It

usually occurs when a learner attempts to gain unfair advantage via collusion, cheating, copying, impersonation, and plagiarism.

Plagiarism – is a form of unprofessional behaviour and happens when a learner presents someone else’s work, ideas, opinions, or discoveries, whether published or not, as their own. This may be intentional or unintentional and can occur as follows:

- when work is copied
- when quotes from published or unpublished work of others is used without crediting the source using the correct referencing conventions
- when work is not written in the learner’s own words
- use of essay writing websites or companies to assist with assignment writing
- sharing of assignments
- asking someone else to amend your work when English is not your first language.

Learners are expected to consult a variety of sources during their studies to gain a full understanding of their subject, whilst adhering to standard referencing conventions.

Where learners have used another individual’s work or ideas, whether published or unpublished, it is essential the source is acknowledged and cited within the text as well as contained within the full reference list. Except for short, fully referenced material, learners must not reproduce passages, diagrams, drawings, tables of photographs borrowed wholesale from books, internet or other sources written by a person or persons other than the learner. Similarly, learners must not summarise an author’s ideas or arguments without providing a full reference otherwise they are indicating that they have thought of these points themselves. The best way for learners to avoid plagiarism is to ensure;

- all their ideas and thoughts are attributed to them through appropriate referencing. Details of how to reference work correctly can be found in the FAQ/Help area of the CIPD Learning Hub
- assessment material being used is re-written in their own words
- anything taken word for word is put in quotation marks with the source stated

Preventing and dealing with unprofessional behaviour

Wherever possible CIPD Learning will take reasonable steps to prevent unprofessional behaviour by ensuring learners;

- are aware of where all relevant policies are located on the CIPD Learning Hub
- are fully briefed on the Accredited programme assessment requirements
- authenticate work and evidence submitted for every assessment
- take all reasonable steps to prevent unprofessional behaviour
- use Turnitin®* originality checking software on all assessment submissions

CIPD Learning will:

- ensure that CIPD Learning staff, associates and learners understand unprofessional behaviour
- carry out investigations, maintain systems for recording suspected instances of unprofessional behaviour and implement any actions following investigations
- use Turnitin®* originality checking software on all assessment submissions
- take action to prevent the recurrence of unprofessional behaviour

***Turnitin®**

We have already noted earlier in this document that CIPD Learning uses Turnitin originality checking software to check every submitted assessment. The software searches the World Wide

Web and extensive databases of reference material as well as content submitted by learners to other institutions signed up to Turnitin.

Learners are also able to use Turnitin as a developmental tool before submitting work for assessment. This allows you an opportunity to practice using Turnitin without penalty. You are then able to reflect, improve where needed and finally upload your assessments to the main submission area for marking. Once work is uploaded to the CIPD Learning Hub for marking, Turnitin will automatically begin the checking process. Turnitin makes no decisions on whether plagiarism has occurred, nor is there a threshold score of which to be aware since further analysis is always required. It simply highlights sections of text matching other sources which may need further investigation. It then produces a report which includes a percentage score for text matches. There is no threshold score which is used as a guide as low scores can be just as problematic as high scores. It is not so much the percentage score that is important as the nature of the matches. Turnitin cannot tell whether plagiarism has occurred, it just flags all text matches for further investigation by CIPD Learning assessors.

Where unprofessional behaviour is suspected, CIPD Learning will follow the procedure below:

- Incidents will be reported to CIPD Learning Quality Assurance Team at CIPDLQA@cipd.co.uk.
- The Quality Assurance Coordinator will carry out an investigation to ascertain what has happened
- The Quality Assurance Coordinator will arrange a mutually convenient time for a discussion to take place with the Quality Assurance Manager.
- If it is clear cheating or plagiarism has not occurred, no further action will be taken
- If there is evidence of cheating or plagiarism, a formal investigation will be conducted
- An action plan, for the avoidance of future malpractice will be provided
- Records of occurrences and outcomes will be retained in line with the General Data Protection Regulations.

These may include statements of facts and circumstances, investigations, written statements from individuals interviewed as part of the investigation, relevant learner work, assessment evidence, internal quality assurance records, claims for certification, remedial action taken by CIPD Learning to ensure the integrity of the accredited programme, written decisions communicated to learners and any mitigating factors for consideration.

Where the investigation concludes that;

1. A deliberate act of unprofessional behaviour has taken place, the Quality Assurance Team will consider the evidence on a case by case basis and where appropriate, will consult with personnel to implement a suitable remedy
2. The unprofessional behaviour occurred because of negligence, the Quality Assurance Team will consider the evidence on a case by case basis and introduce, establish, or reinforce appropriate practice and procedures to reduce the possibility of this nature occurring in the future
3. The unprofessional behaviour occurred because of genuine oversight, act, omission, ignorance, or system fault; specific reference should be made in the report's action plan to ensure it does not recur.
4. Proven cases of cheating and plagiarism will be pursued as unprofessional practice on the part of the learner. Depending on the severity, learners may face one or more of the following sanctions/actions;
 - a warning
 - loss of marks for an assessment
 - disqualification from an accredited Programme
 - revocation of CIPD Learning certificate
 - a complaint under the CIPD Code of Professional Conduct where appropriate

- resubmission of evidence or new evidence for existing assessment
- an overall 'Not Met' standard being given for the assessed work in question

All assessment comments will clearly state the course of action to be taken along with the rationale for that decision. If a learner disagrees with an assessment decision and is unable to reach agreement on discussion with the assessor, learners have recourse to CIPD Learning Appeals Procedure. Grounds for appeal must be submitted clearly in writing.

Work which is over reliant on external sources

Allocated assessors will be assessing whether assessment submissions are over reliant on the internet, textbooks, or other external sources. If the use of external sources is so substantial that a learner's own input and responses are not sufficient to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the subject, work will be returned to the learner, unmarked for amendment within three days. If amended work is not submitted within three days, learners will receive a 'Not Met' standard for late or non-submission.

Working with colleagues from the same organisation

In some cases, learners will work with colleagues from the same organisation who have taken or are taking the same or similar assessment. In these instances, whilst learners may discuss their area of study with each other, it is important they do not collaborate with each other when preparing their assignments. Learners must not share their work (whether it has been submitted for assessment or not) or use any part of their colleague'(s') work. Reading work which has been written by a fellow colleague will undoubtedly influence the way learners present their assessments. Learners who allow their work to be used by others is a form of unprofessional behaviour. It is important that learners do not jeopardise the grade and integrity of their own work or that of their colleagues. Learners needing further guidance on avoiding plagiarism should contact their assessor.

Assessment appeals:

All learners have the right to appeal against their assessment decisions and in this instance will need to familiarise themselves with CIPD Learning accredited programmes, policy for appealing an assessment decision which can be found in the FAQs and Help section on the Learning Hub. This details what you will need to do next in this situation and you will need to ensure that your original assessed materials accompany any appeals to CIPD Learning Quality Assurance Team to support a claim for a review of results.