



ICA Assessment handbook

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Welcome

Welcome to your course and thank you for choosing to study with ICA.

This assessment handbook has been designed for you to use during your course. It outlines the ICA's policy relating to the different elements of assessment required during your course and explains the results you will receive.

It is important that you carefully read this document and use the information and guidance it provides. If you require further clarification, you can ask your tutor for advice, check the [Help/Support Area](#), or contact us. Our contact details are at the end of this document.

If you have completed qualifications with ICA previously, you need to be aware that some aspects of policy, procedure and deadlines relating to assessment matters may have changed. Please do not assume that arrangements which have applied to your previous study automatically continue. You must ensure that you adhere to the information included in this handbook.

As you may know, all students studying towards an ICA qualification are also members of the ICA.

If you have not already accessed the ICA Learning Hub, please do so to become familiar with its content, most notably the CPD area that offers over 7000 pieces of learning designed to support your training and professional development.

All assignment and examination results are collected from the member's area of the ICA website, so if your membership application has not yet been completed, please contact us to ensure there are no delays in collecting your results.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Pekka Dare', is positioned above the printed name and title.

Pekka Dare

President of ICA

Introduction

ICA utilises a range of assessment methods designed to test learners' knowledge, understanding, skills and behaviours, as part of an overall assessment methodology.

For your qualification's assessment methods please see your Diploma or Advanced Certificate course briefing sheets on the learning platform.

This Assessment Handbook deals with general areas of assessment delivery such as what to look out for, policies and procedures and your conduct in completing the assessments.

The Assessment Handbook is supported by a range of other resources that can be found on the learning platform, as well as the Assessment Preparation sessions offered prior to assessment for each qualification.

1. Part One – Assessment Overview

1.1 Assessment methods

The assessment methods for an ICA qualification are dependent upon the level and format of the programme studied. The methods of assessment are designed to offer learners the broadest possible opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of the topics studied, as well as developing skills of analysis and application.

1.2 Assessment Overview

1.2.1 Advanced Certificate Qualifications

Advanced Certificate Qualifications are assessed by timed online Scenario Based Questions and one written assessment.

1.2.2 Diploma Qualifications

Diploma programmes are assessed by three end of module Multiple Choice assessments and two written assessments.

Details for of the assessment methods for each qualification can be found in the qualification syllabus on the ICA website and in qualification briefing sheets on the learning platform.

2. Part Two – Completing your assessments

2.1 Examinations and Tests

Examinations and tests used by the ICA vary in composition and delivery according to the level of the qualification. The details of assessed examinations and tests can be found in the qualification fact sheets on the learning platform for your qualification and cohort.

2.2 Assignments

2.2.1 Assignment questions

All ICA qualifications at Advanced Certificate level and above require some form of written assignment, prepared in a learner's own time and submitted by a deadline date on the Learning Platform.

Assignment questions are available to download from the Learning Platform.

The following guidance and general notes about the preparation, writing and submission of assignments applies to Advanced Certificate and Diploma Qualifications.

2.2.2 Setting out your Assignment

These are the key points you should note when preparing and writing your assignments

1. Assignments must be submitted in Microsoft Word or a compatible format.
Assignments submitted in other formats (e.g., PDF submissions) will not be marked.
2. You should not include the question with your assignment answer
3. All pages should be numbered.
4. You must use a cover page that includes your Candidate ID number, submission date, the course title and the sector and jurisdiction in which you work.
5. Do not include your name anywhere within your assignment.
6. You should include your user ID number and jurisdiction in the header of your assignment.
7. You must ensure that your assignment is properly referenced using footnotes see guidance further along in this handbook.
8. Quoted material must be fully referenced and placed in quotation marks.

9. Ensure you read the rules on reusing your own work that has been submitted to ICA or another organisation

We recommend:

- font size 11 or 12 in a clear typeface such as Calibri, Arial, Times New Roman
- 1.5–2 line spacing
- use sub-headings to clearly identify what you are discussing. Your assignment must be a single document.

Please save your assignment as your candidate ID number, e.g., CON-000123456.

2.2.3 Word count

The maximum word count for assignments is as follows:

Advanced Certificate	2,500 words
Diploma	3,500 words

Penalties will be applied for excessive word count as follows:

	Penalty to be applied (deduction)
Up to 10% over the specified word limit	10 marks
11% – 25% over the specified word limit	20 marks
26% – 50% over the specified word limit	30 marks
More than 50% over the specified word limit	The work will be given a zero mark

The word count includes:

- the assignment text
- words contained within any charts, tables, or diagrams
- in-text references

It excludes:

- footnote references
- contents page(s)
- title page
- headers and footers

Example of application of a word count penalty

An assignment is submitted for an Advanced Certificate with a total word count of 2875 words. Since the maximum word count is 2500 words this means that the submitted work is 375 words or 15% over the prescribed word limit. The work is marked and a mark of 60% is given – the mark is then reduced by 20 percentage points (the penalty for 11-25% word overrun) and final mark of 40% is recorded.

Please note whilst there is no minimum word count, failure to utilise all available words can result in you not scoring as highly.

3. Part Three - Referencing and citation

As you write your assignment you will utilise many different sources. It is important that you acknowledge all your sources. Accurate referencing in your assignment is required to identify each source, whether paraphrased or quoted verbatim.

ICA use footnote-style referencing, and you should follow this system.

Footnotes are notes (or a reference to a source of information) which appear at the foot (bottom) of a page.

Footnotes should only be used to provide the source of material that you cited in your work. **Any narrative text or additional content included in footnotes will be included within your word count.**

Keep a careful record of wider reading, quotations and ideas as you are researching and writing your assignment so that you can provide accurate references for your work.

We recommend that you reference your work as you write the assignment – do not leave it until the end as you may miss sections or forget to include a reference.

The video 'How to...Reference an assignment' in the learning portal shows you how to apply footnotes in Microsoft Word. It can be found in the Assessment section under 'Resources'.

Footnote example

Example

It is the view of Graham, Bell, and Elliott that “the financial system has become the lifeblood of crime.”¹

1. Toby Graham et al. Money Laundering (Saffron Walden: Elsevier Science, 2013), p.74.

3.1 Why cite?

A citation is a reference to a source that you have used in your work to show where you have obtained the information that you are presenting.

Citation is an important skill that will help you to make sense of, and contribute to, your field of work or discipline. You should cite for the following reasons:

It allows the reader to distinguish between your views and those of others in the field.

In well-cited work, it is much easier for the marker to identify and give credit for your own thinking, as distinct from that already published.

It helps the reader to quickly find your sources.

One of the things a marker will want to know is whether you have read and understood the key ideas and contexts for your assignment.

It lends credibility and authority to your arguments.

When it comes to presenting your work in the form of a publication or presentation, citation demonstrates that you have done your research and that you know what you are writing/talking about; it signals to your audience that they should listen to you.

It gives credit to the sources that you consult.

It is standard academic and professional practice to acknowledge the work of others where it has assisted you.

It avoids accusations of plagiarism.

Correctly cited assignments clearly distinguish between your own work and that of others so that there should be no doubt as to the origin of your research.

Note: Don't overuse citations or quotations.

Citations or quotations should be used judiciously and in support of, rather than in place of, your own views and wording. You should avoid quoting large passages of text and whole paragraphs

The overuse of quotations might suggest the inability to convey a true understanding of the topic(s) raised and may leave the impression that you are simply cutting and pasting the words and opinions of other people into your assignment rather than expressing your own ideas. Instead of using quotations you can paraphrase (express in your own words). By expressing in your own words, the examiner will be able to acknowledge and determine your true level and depth of understanding.

Therefore, material copied verbatim from external sources that exceeds 15% of your overall assignment word count may impact your mark even if correctly referenced.

3.2 What should you cite?

What you cite is just as important as how and when to cite. You should make a judgement on the reputability and quality of the sources that you consult before deciding to use them in your research.

Sources that are regularly used and cited include:

- scholarly or peer-reviewed books and articles
- websites
- media
- textbooks or reference materials
- internal documents from your place of work
- ICA Course Manual(s).

Be careful to use reputable sources, from known organisations or publications. Also be aware that some newspapers, websites, and publications present opinions that may be biased, so consider balancing your sources with others that present an alternative view.

You may cite from sources that are in a language other than English, but you must present the information in your assignment in English.

3.3 When should you cite?

- Whenever you use someone else's work or ideas
- Every source that you consult, paraphrase, quote, summarise or otherwise refer to or draw upon must be cited

You do not need to reference things that are common knowledge. For example, implicit factual claims like 'The US President Joe Biden' or 'The Governor of the Bank of England Andrew Bailey' count as common knowledge.

When you wish to cite from a source, such as a book or a website, you will have to consider how to include the source material within your text. There are three main cases to consider:

- direct quotation where you repeat material from your source word for word
- indirect quotation where you refer to a concept or paraphrase an idea
- secondary citation where you quote or refer to material from one source that is reproduced in another.

3.4 How should you cite?

In a footnote referencing system, you indicate a reference by

- putting a small number above the line of type directly following the source material (this number is called a note identifier. It sits slightly above the line of text)
- putting the same number, followed by a citation of your source, at the bottom of the page (footnoting should be numerical and chronological: the first reference is 1, the second is 2, and so on)
- note identifiers should come at the end of a sentence after punctuation
- Footnotes should appear on the same page as the content they are referencing.

Below are some examples and guidance on how you should present references in your assignment

Direct quotes

Direct quotations must be enclosed in quotation marks (") within the main body of the text and should include page numbers.

Example

It is the view of Graham, Bell, and Elliott that "the financial system has become the lifeblood of crime."¹

1. Toby Graham et al. Money Laundering (Saffron Walden: Elsevier Science, 2013), p.74.

Paraphrasing

If you paraphrase you do not need inverted commas or page numbers.

Example

Muller implicitly ties the introduction of US legislation brought in as a response to the terrorist event on 11 September 2001 with the arrival of a determination to clean up the financial world and with the formalisation of financial services information exchanges with national and international institutions (particularly FIUs)².

2. W.H. Muller, "Anti Money Laundering: A Short History," in Anti Money Laundering Law and International Practice, eds. Wouter Muller et al. (Chichester: Wiley, 2007).

Although there is no direct quotation, the full publication details must appear in the citation

Secondary citations

Example

In 2006 the National Farmers' Union claimed that "there is no need for additional legislation in this area".³

3. NFU, 'Withdrawal of Soil Framework Directives' (2006), quoted in George Monbiot, *How Did We Get Into This Mess?* (London: Verso, 2016), p. 128.

Books

"...financial institutions are the source of information with regard to unusual or suspicious financial transactions."⁴

4. W. H. Muller, 'Anti Money Laundering: A Short History,' in *Anti-Money Laundering Law and International Practice*, eds. Wouter Muller, Christian Kälin and John Goldsworth (Chichester: Wiley, 2007), p.16.

Journal articles

Van Reenen argues that the long-run effects of Brexit on the UK economy will be more severe than Treasury reports have allowed for.⁵

5. John Van Reenen, 'Brexit's Long-Run Effects on the U.K. Economy', *Brookings Papers on Economic Activity* Fall (2016) p.368.

TV shows

The Chancellor of the Exchequer was once a high-profile role, but as Phillip Hammond's interview on Sunday showed, this august office has been eclipsed by that of the Foreign Secretary.⁶

6. Andrew Marr Show, BBC One Television, April 8, 2018.

Radio broadcasts

Jeremy Corbyn's performance on The Today Programme failed to instil confidence in his party's economic competence.⁷

7. Today Programme, BBC Radio 4, June 17, 2017.

Websites

Kollewe reported that London house prices were falling at an alarming rate.⁸

8. Julia Kollewe, 'London house prices falling at fastest rate in nine years, says Halifax', Guardian, April 12, 2018. Accessed April 12, 2018.

<https://www.theguardian.com/business/2018/apr/12/london-house-prices-falling-fastest-rate-nine-years-halifax>

Repeated citations

The first citation of a source should be a full footnote, thereafter it can be shortened either in a footnote or in brackets in the text.

Ibid. (In the Same Place)

Learners can make use of 'ibid' for references to a quoted work which has been mentioned in a previous reference). For example:

1. W.H. Muller, "Anti Money Laundering: A Short History," in Anti Money Laundering Law and International Practice, eds. Wouter Muller et al. (Chichester: Wiley, 2007). p. 23.
2. Ibid., p.45.

op.cit. (In the work cited).

op.cit. is used together with the author's name and page number when the full reference has already been cited. For example:

3. W.H. Muller, "Anti Money Laundering: A Short History," in Anti Money Laundering Law and International Practice, eds. Wouter Muller et al. (Chichester: Wiley, 2007). p. 126
4. John Van Reenen, 'Brexit's Long-Run Effects on the U.K. Economy,' Brookings Papers on Economic Activity Fall 2016 p. 234
5. W.H. Muller, op. cit., p.157

3.5 Appendices

Appendices should not be included in assignments. Appendices are not considered appropriate in assignments of 2500 or 3500 words. Appendices are not excluded from the word count and any information that is relevant to assignments should be included in the body of the work.

If appendices are included, they will **not be marked**.

4. Part Four – Academic Malpractice

ICA regards plagiarism and other forms of academic malpractice, such as collusion and fabrication or falsification of results, as serious academic offences.

These guidelines have been produced to help clarify for you what will be considered as constituting the range of offences and to indicate the nature of the penalties that may be imposed where they occur.

All students have a responsibility to be aware of the policy and procedures contained herein, to understand the seriousness of academic malpractice and to take every reasonable step to ensure that academic malpractice does not occur.

This section should be read in conjunction with the ICA guide to handling academic malpractice (<https://www.int-comp.org/help-and-support/assessment-guidance/>).

4.1 Academic Malpractice and Plagiarism Checkers

The ICA regards plagiarism and other forms of academic malpractice, such as collusion and fabrication or falsification of results, as very serious academic offences and learners' risk being given mark penalty or a mark of zero for assignments when this is identified.

Our plagiarism detection software is extremely effective at identifying plagiarism.

All assignments are checked using Plagiarism detection software that checks for text found in the ICA Course materials and elsewhere across billions of sources including Internet pages and student assignments.

4.2 Definitions of academic malpractice

4.2.1 Plagiarism

Plagiarism, or academic malpractice, is presenting the ideas, work, or words of other people without proper, clear, and unambiguous acknowledgement. It also includes '**self- plagiarism**' (which occurs where, for example, you submit work that you have presented for assessment on a previous occasion), and the submission of material from 'essay banks' (even if the authors of such material appear to be giving you permission to use it in this way). Obviously, the most blatant example of plagiarism would be to copy another learner's work. Hence, it is essential to make clear in your assignments the distinction between:

- the ideas and work of other people that you may have quite legitimately exploited and developed, and
- the ideas or material that you have personally contributed.

To assist you, here are a few important 'do's and do not's:

- Do get lots of background information on the subjects you are writing about to help you form your own view of the subject. The information could be from electronic journals, technical reports, unpublished dissertations, etc. Make a note of the source of every piece of information at the time you record it, even if it is just one sentence.
- Do **not** construct a piece of work by cutting and pasting or copying material written by other people, or by you for any other purpose, into something you are submitting as your own work. Remember, we cannot mark other people's work while marking yours. Sometimes you may need to quote someone else's exact form of words in order to analyse or criticise them, in which case the quotation must be enclosed in quotation marks to show that it is a direct quote, and it must have the source properly acknowledged at that point. Any omissions from a quotation must be indicated by an ellipsis (...) and any additions for clarity must be enclosed in square brackets, e.g. '[These] results suggest... that the hypothesis is correct.'
- Do attribute all ideas to their original authors. Written 'ideas' are the product that authors produce. You would not appreciate it if other people passed off your ideas as their own, and that is what plagiarism rules are intended to prevent. A good rule of thumb is that each idea or statement that you write should be attributed to a source unless it is your personal idea or it is common knowledge (If you are unsure if something is common knowledge, ask other learner's: if they do not know what you are talking about, then it is not common knowledge!).
- Do **not** submit work that you have presented for assessment as part of an earlier assignment or an assignment for a previous course unless you have clearly referenced its source.

Other points to note:

- It may also be appropriate to reproduce a diagram from someone else's work, but again the source must be explicitly and fully acknowledged in your assignment. Nonetheless, constructing large chunks of documents from a string of quotes, even if they are acknowledged, is another form of plagiarism.
- Resist the temptation to 'borrow' assignments from previous ICA learners. All assignments are checked using our plagiarism software against previously submitted assignments and if you are found to have copied from another learner's assignment a severe mark penalty will be applied.

As you can see, it is most important that you understand what is expected of you when you prepare and produce assignments and that you always observe proper academic

conventions for referencing and acknowledgement. This should ensure that you do not inadvertently lay yourself open to a charge of plagiarism through ignorance of what is expected.

It is also important to remember that you do not absolve yourself from a charge of plagiarism simply by including a reference to a source in a bibliography that you have included with your assignment; you should always be scrupulous about indicating precisely where and to what extent you have made use of such a source.

Plagiarism also includes a close paraphrase of someone else's words, diagram, graph, illustration and so on taken from a variety of sources without proper acknowledgement. These could be workshop notes, printed material, the Internet, or other electronic/AV sources.

4.2.2 Collusion

Throughout your programme we encourage you to co-operate and to work with your fellow learners.

Working collaboratively, learners can help each other to understand the material for their course and to work effectively preparing for workshops. Such activities should be mutually beneficial, so that each learner gains from these informal interactions and one learner does not 'free ride' on the efforts of others.

Nonetheless, it is important to distinguish between co-operation and collusion on assessment work (assignments), where collusion constitutes working with, or for, others in a way that is inappropriate to the requirements of the assignment.

Collusion is when a learner or learners collaborate with another learner or learners, as an individual or group to gain a mark or grade to which they are not entitled.

Avoiding Collusion on Individual Assignments

You are expected to complete an assignment on an individual basis. It is very important to avoid collusion with your fellow learners and you should be careful about when and how you work with others.

Some general guidelines are provided below. If you have any questions about what levels of co-operation might be acceptable for a particular piece of assessed work, you should consult the ICA Assessment Team.

It is **not** acceptable to:

- share spreadsheets, calculations, workings, graphs or diagrams with another student or ask for a copy of these from a fellow learner. Where such work is required, you should complete it independently

- produce an assignment structure with another learner for work that is submitted individually
- ask another learner to edit your work
- rewrite any part of other learner's assignments for them
- show another learner your essay before the assignment is due
- check someone else's work for accuracy, proofing, addressing practicalities in a response or for academic rigour.

It is normally acceptable to:

- share resources or sources of core information
- help a fellow learner to understand something covered in a workshop or the course manual
- discuss assignment questions (this does not imply giving the answers)
- compare assignments and feedback after the assignment has been marked
- work together as a study group that can help formulate a range of appropriate responses
- co-operate on finding information. If there are lots of potential sources of information to be investigated, you can divide these between a small number of learners and then share the information you have found. This may be an effective way to identify useful sources and to organise sharing access to books and articles. However, you must read the sources yourself and should not share any notes that you have made.
- Provide a fellow learner with assistance in understanding some general principle that underlies the assignment. For example, on assignment questions, you should not give a copy of your answer to a fellow learner who is experiencing difficulties, but it may be acceptable to work through an example provided in a resource, workshop, or course manual, which would allow them to gain a better understanding of the task they have been set and enable them to complete that task on their own.

If other learners ask for your help, you should ensure that you do not provide them with any assistance that might be interpreted as possible collusion.

If you allow another learner access to your work and it is then plagiarised (by them or by anyone else) then you are a party to that plagiarism, whether you knew about it or not, and you risk being penalised. So, do not pass your work on to others, under any circumstances. If you are asked by another learner for help that you do not think you should provide, please suggest that they consult the ICA Assessment Team.

When collusion occurs, it is relatively straightforward to detect with our plagiarism software. It is clear that when two or more learners submit work that is substantially the same, even if some attempts have been made to disguise this fact, an unacceptable level of collaboration has occurred that is considered evidence of collusion.

4.2.3 Fabrication and falsification

Fabrication of results occurs when a learner falsely claims to have, for example, carried out tests, research or observations as part of his/her assessed work, or presents fabricated results arising from the same with the object of gaining an advantage.

Fabrication may also include, for example, reporting/presentation of artificial references or other source material purporting to demonstrate a depth of reading/knowledge beyond that undertaken, or to deflect the reader from plagiarised material, e.g., embellishment of the bibliography.

Falsification also includes making false statements or falsifying evidence in support of applications, for example for mitigating circumstances or academic appeals. Where evidence is related to disability and reasonable adjustments, the ICA reserves the right to seek a second opinion and/or further information if there is a substantial concern about the level, or standard, of evidence.

4.2.4 Impersonation

Impersonation is the assumption by one person of the identity of another with intent to deceive in the assessment process and constitutes malpractice.

4.2.5 Producing inappropriate or offensive material

The following would be regarded as malpractice:

- obscenities, offensive comments
- racist remarks, lewd comments, and drawings
- material which may cause offence to ICA markers or ICA members of staff.

4.2.6 Examinations

Malpractice in Advanced Certificate and Diploma examinations include:

- Communicating with or copying from any other learner during an examination.
- Communicating during an examination with any person* other than the invigilator.

- Communicating with or copying from any other learner during an examination.
- Introducing any written, printed or electronically stored information into an examination room.
- Gaining access to any unauthorised material relating to an examination during or before the specified time.
- Making use of electronic devices or applications to view materials or communicate with anyone other than ICA staff during the examination*
- Impersonating another learner or procuring an impersonator.

* In some cases, these may be permitted by ICA to provide a reason adjustment for a learner. Where this is the case, the reasonable adjustment must be approved in advance of the examination.

4.2.7 Use of Chatbots

ICA supports the use of tools that can assist learning and AI chatbots are no exception. What must be understood however, is that it is the way that chatbots are used that is important.

If used as a research tool to generate ideas, ICA views this as a legitimate way to aid learning. But, if a chatbot is used to assist assignment writing, learners must cite the chatbot as a source of reference. If direct quotations are used from the text generated by a chatbot, these must also follow referencing conventions i.e. be placed in quotation marks, and the source properly acknowledged (normally by using footnotes).

Under no circumstances is it acceptable to copy large amounts of text verbatim, even if correctly referenced. This will invite penalties since learners are required to present their own original work, which ICA considers an essential part of learner development.

Learners using a chatbot as a tool to help them should also remember that chatbots can present inaccurate information and may generate biased, and at times, quite irrational, responses. They are not reliable and should be used with considerable caution.

Therefore, learners should keep their assignment writing separated from any research generated by a chatbot. Where information generated by a chatbot is used, they should check for accuracy carefully, and ensure what they submit for assessment is their own original work and is always appropriately referenced.

Our plagiarism detector can and will pick up the use of Chatbots and learners found to have used Chatbots and not referenced correctly will be heavily penalised.

4.3 Consequences of non-compliance

At ICA, our focus is to support our members and learners to be the best they can be. Ethical excellence is integral to this approach.

Consequences of non-compliance could include, but are not limited to:

- a deduction of marks
- annulment of marks requiring the examination or assignment to be taken again.
- disqualification from the qualification
- the loss of professional membership.

5. Part Five – Submitting your Assignments

5.1 How to submit your assignment

You submit your assignment via the Learning Platform.

Your assignment should be a word document and **not** in PDF format.

Go to the 'submission portal' link - this will take you through to the submission page where you will need to accept the Turnitin User Agreement.

Click on 'Submit Paper' (cloud icon next to it) to open the Submit Paper page.

You should enter your candidate ID Number (e.g., CON-000123456) for the submission title and upload your assignment either via the Add icon or drag and drop to add the file.

Please submit one document only.

Tick the box for the declaration and click 'add submission.'

Please note that the maximum file size is 5MB and any assignments over and above this limit will not load.

5.2 Problems submitting assignments

In the unlikely event that IT issues prevent you from submitting online, please first check the [Help/Support Area](#) on the website to see if they provide a solution.

If you still cannot submit your assignment, please use the contact us page on the website <https://www.int-comp.org/help-and-support/contact-us/> this will then generate an email to you with a case number to which you can respond to with your assignment for submission. Please ensure you add an explanation of the problem.

5.3 Non-submission of assignments

Non-submission of an assignment without an acceptable reason will result in a mark of zero for that assessment.

You may be offered one opportunity to re-submit a different assignment at a later date; however, this will be treated as a resit and the maximum mark you can receive for this will be capped at 50%

5.4 Late submission

Unexcused late submission of assessed work will be penalised to prevent learners from benefiting from an unfair advantage.

Penalties for any piece of assessed coursework submitted after the designated deadline are as follows:

	Penalty to be applied (marks deducted)
Up to 24 hours late	10 marks
Over 24 and up to 48 hours late	20 marks
Over 48 and up to 72 hours late	30 marks
Over 72 and up to 96 hours late	40 marks
Over 96 and up to 120 hours late	50 marks
Over 120 and up to 144 hours late	60 marks
Over 144 and up to 168 hours late	70 marks
Over 168 and up to 192 hours late	80 marks
Over 192 and up to 216 hours late	90 marks
Over 216 hours late	100 marks – assignment marked zero

Example of the application of a late submission penalty:

An assignment is submitted 30 hours after the deadline. The work is marked and a mark of 60% is awarded. The late penalty will then reduce the mark by 20 percentage points resulting in a final mark of 40%.

5.5 Assessment extensions and deferrals

An application for mitigating circumstances to be taken into account may result in an extension of an assessment deadline. The maximum extension usually granted is two weeks. Once an extension has been provided, failure to submit an assignment by the extended deadline will result in a mark of zero. You will then be required to take an alternative assignment at a later date as a resit, and your mark will be capped at 50%.

Extensions

The maximum extension that can be granted is two weeks. Once an extension has been provided, failure to submit an assignment by the extended deadline will result in a mark of zero. **Please note: Late submissions are not allowed on extension deadlines or resit dates. Assessments submitted late will be marked as zero.**

Deferrals

A deferral may be permitted in special circumstances. A deferral of assessment is the postponement of the date you are due to submit an assessment until the next opportunity and without penalty. In the case of a deferral, you will usually take the assessment with the next cohort of learners for your qualification.

There is no charge for an extension, however we do charge an administration fee for a deferral.

Requests for extensions and deferrals should be made in advance of the deadline unless there are exceptional circumstances to justify a request on or after the deadline, please contact us via our website <https://www.int-comp.org/help-and-support/contact-us/>.

5.6 Mitigating circumstances

5.6.1 What are mitigating circumstances?

During your studies, you may suffer from an illness or misfortune that adversely affects your ability to complete an assessment or that impacts on your results. If this is the case, you might be able to request mitigation.

ICA defines mitigating circumstances as unforeseeable or unpreventable circumstances that could have, or did have, a significant adverse effect on the academic performance of a learner.

If you require further information or wish to apply to have a mitigation circumstance considered, please see the Mitigating Circumstances Policy on our website for further information or contact us via our website <https://www.int-comp.org/help-and-support/contact-us/>.

5.7 Reasonable Adjustments

5.7.1 What is a reasonable adjustment?

In the UK, the Equality Act 2010 (previously the Disability Discrimination Act 1995) aims to end the discrimination that many disabled people face, and it is now unlawful for UK educational institutions to discriminate against disabled people. ICA applies this across all its programmes, activities and jurisdictions.

ICA is committed to ensuring that all training does not discriminate against learners with a disability, and assessments are a fair test of an individual's knowledge and proficiency. If someone has a disability or learning difficulty, the usual format of training delivery or

assessments may not be suitable and in certain circumstances adjustments may need to be made for them. This approach is intended to allow an individual to show their ability and knowledge without being disadvantaged by the training delivery method or the assessment format itself.

If you require further information or wish to apply for a reason adjustment, please see the Reasonable Adjustments Policy on our website for further information or contact us via our website <https://www.int-comp.org/help-and-support/contact-us/>.

6. Part Six – Marking

6.1 The marking process

All Multiple-choice questions are marked automatically in the Learning Platform.

Marks for assignments broadly follow benchmarks from the Alliance Manchester Business School (AMBS), Diploma¹ programmes are mapped to the requirements for a level 6 qualification and Advanced Certificate programmes are mapped to the requirements for a level 4 qualification.²

All assignments are marked anonymously by experienced markers and a sample reviewed by the Principal Examiner designated for each programme. This ensures that there is continuity, accuracy, and no systematic biases.

Please see the appendices for the Advanced Certificate and Diploma Marking Grade Descriptors.

Final assessment grades are awarded by the ICA Assessment Board.

6.1.1 Anonymous marking

The ICA anonymously marks all assignments meaning that the marker is unaware of the identity of the author of the assignment. To ensure your anonymity, only your Candidate ID number (beginning CON-000) should appear on your assessment. Your ID number should be on all pages of your coursework. **Please do not include** your name on any part of the assignment or cover sheet.

6.2 Grading

For Diplomas and Advanced Certificates, the grading below is applicable

Final Mark	Level of Achievement
70+	Distinction
60–69	Merit
50–59	Pass
49 or below	Fail

1. ICA Diploma programmes are at an equivalent level to the final year of undergraduate programmes

2. Levels of qualification relate to common standards specified by the UK Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ)

7. Part Seven- Return of Results

7.1 Assessment results

7.1.1 Advanced Certificate

For Advanced Certificate assessments one and two, ICA operates an approximately ten-week marking timeframe (following the final assessment). The results will be available by the end of the tenth week after the final assessment submission date.

7.1.2 Diploma

For Diplomas, feedback is provided immediately after each post-module multiple-choice test. This is to allow learners to revisit the module that has been tested to address any gaps in knowledge and understanding. Actual marks are provided with your final results and qualification grades.

For Diploma assessment two, (written assignment), ICA operates an approximately seven-week marking timeframe for assessment results. The results will normally be available by the end of the seventh week after the submission date.

For Diploma assessment three, (written assignment), ICA operates an approximately ten-week marking timeframe. Results will normally be available by the end of the tenth week after the submission date.

7.2 Accessing your results

Learners are notified by email when their assessment marks and feedback are available in the ICA learning Hub. Results are never released over the telephone.

The schedule for your results release is also available in the learning platform.

7.3 Final results and qualification grades

Results and qualification grades are normally released by the end of the tenth week after the date of the final assessment once the final results have been signed off by the Assessment Board.

Learners are notified by email when the results and final grades are available in the ICA learning hub. ICA memberships also need to be in-date to allow you to access the portal.

7.4 Feedback

For each assignment ICA will provide a generic report which provides an overall summary of some of the key points and identifies what candidates could have included in their assignment.

Learners will also receive individual feedback that you should be read in conjunction with the generic feedback. The feedback will cover both the content and presentation of your assignment.

7.5 Certificates

Your digital certificates will be issued to you separately in the two weeks following your results.

The certificate will be available for you to download and share with your network.

8. Part Eight – Post results

8.1 Retaking examinations and assignments

If you fail to pass the overall qualification or achieve the required mark in any examination or assignments, you will need to retake that element.

You will be notified if you are entitled to resit when you receive your final results following the Assessment Board meeting. The notes accompanying your final result will detail the elements that you need to retake and the submission date for the new assessment(s).

8.1.1 Scenario based and Multiple Choice Questions

If you have to resit a Scenario Based or Multiple Choice Examination, a fee plus VAT or any applicable taxes will be charged, payable in advance. Please see our website for our fees or contact the learning support team.

8.1.2 Written Assignments

If you need to resit a written assignment, then a fee plus VAT or any applicable taxes will be charged, payable in advance. Please see our website for our fees or contact the learning support team.

8.1.3 Overall failure

In order to pass your Advance Certificate and Diploma qualification, your overall mark must be 50% or more in each assessment.

If you fail to achieve 50% or more, you will be required to resit the assessment and your mark on the resat assessment will be capped at 50%

8.1.4 Number of resits

Candidates who fail an assessment or overall qualification are entitled to one resit per element (examination or assignment).

In exceptional circumstances the Assessment Board may grant a second resit, however these are usually limited to those with proven mitigating circumstances and rarely permitted.

Candidates who have passed an assessment and/or qualification cannot retake an assessment to score a higher mark or grade.

8.1.5 Resit and resubmission results

Marks for resubmissions are capped at 50

8.1.6 Not entitled to resubmit

If in the opinion of the Assessment Board you have exhausted all opportunities to pass the award, you may be offered a lower-level award, subject to having achieved minimum pass level marks in each element, i.e., between 40%–50% achieved in each assessment but not enough to pass overall. If you have failed to meet the criteria for a lower-level award you can still request a Certificate of Attendance from ICA or your training provider.

8.2 Appeals

As a part of our commitment to ensuring the standard and quality of its assessments, ICA has a procedure for handling appeals concerning assessments, awarding of qualifications and certification.

We treat all appeals seriously and will deal with them without recrimination. Where, however, an appeal is shown to be frivolous, vexatious, or motivated by malice, the appeal will be rejected.

Appeals may not be submitted following individual assignments or examinations and will only be permitted after the Assessment Board has issued final grades, and these have been communicated to learners.

Appeals will only be accepted if they are received within 20 working days of the receipt of final grades from the Assessment Board.

You may not appeal if you are dissatisfied with the outcome of your assessment or other decision concerning their academic position or progress unless you have eligible grounds for doing so.

For further information on appeals, including eligible grounds and how to make an appeal please see our Appeals Policy <https://www.int-comp.org/help-and-support/assessment-guidance/>.

9. Part Nine - Contacting us

Before contacting us please first look at our *Help/Support area* on our website to see if you can find the answer to your question.

9.1 Student queries

If you have any queries around areas of this policy including mitigating circumstances, deferrals, general questions or technical issues please contact the learner support team via the contact us page on our website <https://www.int-comp.org/help-and-support/contact-us/>

Telephone: 0121 362 7533

9.2 Assessment Issues

If you have any queries about the contents of the policy or have an assessment query or question, please contact the assessment team via the contact us page on our website <https://www.int-comp.org/help-and-support/contact-us/>

Telephone: 0121 362 7657

9.3 Reasonable Adjustments and Mitigating Circumstances

If you wish to make an application for a reasonable adjustment or mitigating circumstances, please see our Reasonable Adjustment and Mitigating Circumstances Policies on our website or contact our learning support team via the contact us page on our website <https://www.int-comp.org/help-and-support/contact-us/>

9.4 Appeals

If you wish to appeal your qualification result, please see our Appeals Policy. <https://www.int-comp.org/help-and-support/assessment-guidance/>

9.5 Complaints

If you wish to make a complaint, please see our Complaints Policy. <https://www.int-comp.org/help-and-support/assessment-guidance/>

10. Part Ten – Appendices

10.1 ICA Advanced Certificate Assignments - Grade Descriptors

Grade	Descriptor (which reflects the highest possible mark attainable)	Mark
Distinction	<p>The work is exceptional and of sufficient quality to be awarded an upper-range Distinction.</p> <p>Typical characteristics of learners in this band include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • learning outcomes are attained to the highest level • literature is clearly understood and deployed effectively to support sophisticated argument • material used is current and at the forefront of the discipline • a wide range of sources are used efficiently and effectively to support premises • an advanced critical view is presented and supported • presentation is impeccable • referencing and citation are faultless. 	90 - 100
	<p>The learner's work is outstanding and of sufficient quality to be awarded a mid-range Distinction mark.</p> <p>Typical characteristics of learners in this band include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • outstanding attainment of all learning outcomes • demonstrates outstanding knowledge and understanding • demonstrates strong engagement with literature and uses this effectively in the work • a well-informed critical analysis is presented and developed • high degree of accuracy and relevance • presentation is excellent, writing quality is of a very high standard – there are no errors • referencing and citations are correct and complete. 	80 - 89

Distinction	<p>The learner's work is excellent and of sufficient quality to be awarded a lower-range Distinction mark.</p> <p>Typical characteristics of learners in this band include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • excellent attainment of learning outcomes • evidence of solid understanding and knowledge of relevant material • the question is answered fully and with an appropriate level of emphasis • the work is well organised and structured • strong arguments are presented and addressed critically • clear evidence of in-depth analysis and evaluation of arguments • clearly structured, well organised and professional presentation • referencing and citation conventions are fully observed. 	70 - 79
Merit	<p>The learner's work is very good and of sufficient quality to be awarded a merit mark.</p> <p>Typical characteristics of learners in this band include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • good attainment of learning outcomes • demonstrates good knowledge and understanding of key concepts • clear argument argument/discussion is presented • generally well-structured and coherent • evidence of a critical approach addressing the key issues is emerging • demonstrates clear ability to analyse and evaluate arguments • presentation is very good and overall the work is well organised and structured • referencing and citation is complete and has a good degree of accuracy. 	60 – 69

Pass	<p>The learner's work is good and of sufficient quality to be awarded a pass mark.</p> <p>Typical characteristics of learners in this band include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • adequate attainment of all learning outcomes, with some met to a good standard • there is generally a reasonable level of accuracy and relevance • the structure is discernible and understandable • knowledge and understanding are evident through a sufficient consideration of relevant literature • analysis and application of the concepts and ideas is evident but perhaps not complete or at an appropriate level of depth • presentation is of a generally good standard but with room for improvement • referencing and citation is present and attempt to correctly acknowledge is clear but with some inaccuracies. 	50 – 59
Fail	<p>The learner's work shows some knowledge and use of appropriate resources together with reasonable quality of presentation, but this is marginally insufficient to warrant a pass. However, there is evidence of an understanding of the topic which can be improved.</p> <p>Typical characteristics of learners in this band include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • some attainment of learning outcomes but these remain undeveloped • some evidence of use effective of literature but some inaccuracies or irrelevant materials used • lacks clarity of argument and in general some elements of the work are difficult to understand • standard of writing is acceptable • the presentation and structure are reasonable, but there are errors or omissions • referencing and citation is present but can be inaccurate and not always complete. 	40 - 49

Fail	The learner's work demonstrates insufficient knowledge and skills in the specific topic area and does not merit a pass mark. Their work demonstrates some awareness of the topic, although it is a frequently incoherent, or partial, response.	30 - 39
	The learner's work is inadequate and does not merit a pass mark. Some attempt has been made to provide a response, but the work is confused and shows lack of understanding of the subject matter.	20 - 29
	The learner's work is severely inadequate and does not merit a pass mark. They demonstrated a very deficient understanding of the topic, and the question was not answered in a coherent way. The work may be well below the word count.	0 - 19

10.2 ICA Diploma Assignments - Grade Descriptors

Grade	Descriptor (which reflects the highest possible mark attainable)	Mark
Distinction	<p>The work is exceptional and of sufficient quality to be awarded an upper-range Distinction.</p> <p>Typical characteristics of learners in this band include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • clearly meets all expected learning outcomes to an exceptional standard • demonstrates an advanced, in-depth, authoritative, full understanding of the key issues • very advanced ability to integrate the full range of principles theories, evidence and techniques • thorough exploration of the literature uses a wide range of sources selectively to effectively support argument/discussion • shows strong evidence of critical approach to key issues and ability to evaluate arguments • presents an outstanding argument with an original premise • shows an innovative approach in the analysis and interpretation of material • presentation is faultless • referencing and citation is faultless. 	90 - 100
	<p>The learner's work is outstanding and of sufficient quality to be awarded a mid-range Distinction mark.</p> <p>Typical characteristics of learners in this band include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • outstanding attainment of all learning outcomes • demonstrates outstanding knowledge and understanding • demonstrates strong engagement with literature and uses this effectively in the work • a well-informed critical analysis is presented and developed • high degree of accuracy and relevance • presentation is excellent, writing quality is of a very high standard – there are no errors • referencing and citations are correct and complete. 	80 - 89

Distinction	<p>The learner's work is excellent and of sufficient quality to be awarded a lower-range Distinction mark.</p> <p>Typical characteristics of learners in this band include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • excellent attainment of all learning outcomes • a detailed level of understanding of the topic • meets all of the requirements for the question • distinctive or powerful insight into the material and its significance • evidence of critical approach to key issues • clear and confident focus and shows a fine grasp of issues and their nuances • ability to evaluate arguments and shows clarity and originality of thought • assignment is well structured • Coherent work that is logically presented • professional presentation of work that meets the brief • Referencing is accurate and correct 	70 - 79
Merit	<p>The learner's work is very good and of sufficient quality to be awarded a merit mark.</p> <p>Typical characteristics of learners in this band include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear evidence that learning outcomes are attained • clear understanding of the key issues with some evidence of ability to reflect critically • a range of relevant sources used to support the argument/ discussion • demonstration of the ability to analyse and evaluate arguments • evidence of thoughtful work displaying knowledge and understanding in most areas • the work is well structured and presentation of a good standard • referencing and citation is complete and with a good level of accuracy. 	60 – 69

Pass	<p>The learner's work is good and of sufficient quality to be awarded a pass mark.</p> <p>Typical characteristics of learners in this band include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • learning outcomes are attained to a sufficient level • the learner's work is detailed and coherent • there is an understanding of the issues relating to the question • presents a good quantity of accurate information • argues in an orderly way, with limited development of ideas • displays competent understanding of the material and its significance • displays a general grasp of appropriate principles of documentation and presentation • there is evidence of referencing and citation to ensure all sources are acknowledged but some inaccuracies may exist. 	50 – 59
Fail	<p>The learner's work has marginally insufficient knowledge, use of appropriate resources and quality of presentation to warrant a pass. The learner demonstrated a marginally inadequate understanding of the topic.</p> <p>Typical characteristics of learners in this band include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • learning outcomes are addressed to some degree but need to be further developed • some accurate material is used but the amount of inaccurate or inappropriate material clearly demonstrates a knowledge gap • arguments are presented but not well defined or developed • presentation is of a reasonable standard but refinement and improvement is possible • referencing and citation are present but may be incomplete and/or inaccurate. 	40 - 49

Fail	<p>The learner's work demonstrates insufficient knowledge and skills in the specific topic area and does not merit a pass mark. Their work demonstrates some awareness of the topic, although it is a frequently incoherent, or partial, response.</p> <p>Typical characteristics of learners in this band include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • struggles to address the learning outcomes • limited understanding of subject specific material evident, but with little analysis of concepts • significant inaccuracies in the material presented • presentation meets the minimum standard although inaccuracies are evident and there is considerable room for improvement • an attempt at referencing and citation is evident but this is often incomplete and/or inaccurate. 	30 - 39
	<p>The learner's work is inadequate and does not merit a pass mark. Some attempt has been made to provide a response, but the work is confused and shows lack of understanding of the subject matter.</p>	20 - 29
	<p>The learner's work is severely inadequate and does not merit a pass mark. They have demonstrated a very deficient understanding of the topic.</p>	0 - 19



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