

A Guide to Assessment Methods and Volume

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Contents

Contents	2
Introduction	3
Setting an Alternative Assessment Method	4
Assessment Weighting	5
Reasonable Adjustments.....	5
Assessment Methods for Three Credit Units:	6
Assessment Methods for Six Credit Units:	7

Introduction

This guide is intended for Tutors, Assessors, Internal Quality Assurers, Centre Quality Managers and other staff within Gateway Qualifications recognised centres.

It sets out what is required to create a diploma assessment strategy that will enable learners to demonstrate the skills, knowledge and understanding necessary for the rigors of higher education.

This guide should be read in conjunction with the Gateway Qualifications Provider Handbook and other publications available on the website which contain further guidance on assessment practice.

Setting an Alternative Assessment Method

The recommended assessment methods for each unit within a diploma are identified in the rules of combination in the diploma specification. To provide greater flexibility for Centres to develop an assessment strategy that meets the needs of their individual students, Centres can select an alternative assessment method for the units(s) within the diploma rules of combination using the equivalence tables (pages 6 and 7) and the guidance below.

The equivalence tables identify the expected assessment volume for different assessment methods and should enable Centres to choose alternatives whilst ensuring that the same rigor of assessment is maintained in comparison to any other three or six credit unit.

Recommended Assessment Method from the diploma specification, rules of combination.

Unit Code	Unit Title	Level	Credit	Assessment Methods	Assessment Volume
QU034590	E-Commerce	3	3	Report	1500 words

Example of selecting an Alternative Assessment Method:

Unit Code	Unit Title	Level	Credit	Assessment Methods	Assessment Volume
QU034590	E-Commerce	3	3	Essay	1500 words

When deciding upon alternative assessment methods, Centres must ensure that there is at least one exam used within each diploma, where appropriate.

Excessive and unnecessary assessment should be avoided. The equivalence tables outline the alternative assessments that could be used and provides comparative methods to assess students whilst maintaining the integrity of the diploma.

If you choose to use alternative assessment methods within a diploma to those recommended in the rules of combination, contact the Access to HE team who will be happy to talk you through the process.

Assessment Weighting

If choosing more than one method of assessment, the volume of assessment needs to be adjusted according to the number of Learning Outcomes and Assessment Criteria. Learners should not be expected to complete work equivalent to more than 1500 words for three credit units and 3000 words for six credit units. The examples below should help to provide guidance on how volume is adjusted according to the number of learning outcomes and requirements from the unit.

Recommended Assessment Method from the diploma specification, rules of combination.

Unit Code	Unit Title	Level	Credit	Assessment Methods	Assessment Volume
QU034590	E-Commerce	3	3	Report LO 1, 2, 3	1500 words

Example of selecting an Alternative Assessment Method:

Unit Code	Unit Title	Level	Credit	Assessment Methods	Assessment Volume
QU034590	E-Commerce	3	3	Report LO 1 Case study LO 2, 3	500 words 1000 words

Example of selecting an Alternative Assessment Method:

Unit Code	Unit Title	Level	Credit	Assessment Methods	Assessment Volume
QU034590	E-Commerce	3	3	Report LO 1 Case study LO 2 Structured questions LO 3	500 words 500 words 500 words

Reasonable Adjustments

All learners are required to complete the chosen assessment method, as outlined in the rules of combination, and/or assessment grid where alternatives have been chosen. There may be instances where a reasonable adjustment maybe needed to support an individual learner's needs. In this case an alternative assessment may be used for that learner, using the equivalence table to ensure that the same standard is adhered to.

Centres must keep a record of where learners have been given an alternative method and these must be made clear to the Access to HE moderator. This will ensure that learners are not given an unfair advantage or disadvantage in the assessment method used.

Assessment Methods for Three Credit Units:

Choose ONE from:		or Choose TWO from:		or Choose Three from:	
Assessment Method	Assessment Volume	Assessment Method	Assessment Volume	Assessment Method	Assessment Volume
Open book exam	1.5 hours	Open book exam	45 minutes	Open book exam	30 minutes
Poster/written account/leaflet + Q&A	1500 words	Poster/written account/leaflet + Q&A	750 words	Poster/written account/leaflet + Q&A	500 words
Report	1500 words	Report	750 words	Report	500 words
Essay	1500 words	Essay	750 words	Essay	500 words
Closed book exam	2 hours	Closed book exam	1 hour	Closed book exam	40 minutes
Literature review / critique / reflective diary	1500 words	Literature review / critique / reflective diary	750 words	Literature review / critique / reflective diary	500 words
Case study	1500 words	Case study	750 words	Case study	500 words
Structured questions	1500 words	Structured questions	750 words	Structured questions	500 words
Portfolio of evidence /scrapbook e.g. IT, art and creative related subjects	Artefact(s) and supporting annotation 750 words	Portfolio of evidence /scrapbook e.g. IT, art and creative related subjects	Artefact(s) and supporting annotation 300 words	N/A	
Scientific practical(s) and accompanying report	750 words	Scientific practical(s) and accompanying report	500 words	Scientific practical and accompanying report	300 words
Presentation and supporting evidence	20 minutes inc. Q&A and witness statement	Presentation and supporting evidence	10 minutes inc. Q&A and witness statement	Presentation and supporting evidence	5 minutes inc. Q&A and witness statement
Controlled assessment – closed book	2 hours	Controlled assessment – closed book	1 hour	Controlled assessment – closed book	40 minutes
Controlled assessment – open book	1.5 hours	Controlled assessment – open book	45 minutes	Controlled assessment – open book	30 minutes
VIVA	20 minutes inc. Q&A and witness statement	VIVA	10 minutes inc. Q&A and witness statement	VIVA	5 minutes inc. Q&A and witness statement
Article	1500 words	Article	750 word	Article	500 words
Production of a detailed artefact e.g. Video, sculpture, drawing, garment		Production of an artefact e.g. Video, sculpture, drawing, garment		Production of a basic artefact e.g. Video, sculpture, drawing, garment	
Performance / exhibition	15 minutes inc. Q&A and witness statement	Performance / exhibition	10 minutes inc. Q&A and witness statement	Performance / exhibition	5 minutes inc. Q&A and witness statement

Assessment Methods for Six Credit Units:

Choose ONE from:		or Choose TWO from:		or Choose Three from:	
Assessment Method	Assessment Volume	Assessment Method	Assessment Volume	Assessment Method	Assessment Volume
N/A		Open book exam	1.5 hours	Open book exam	45 minutes
N/A		Poster/written account/leaflet + Q&A	1500 words	Poster/written account/leaflet + Q&A	750 words
Report	3000 words	Report	1500 words	Report	750 words
Essay	3000 words	Essay	1500 words	Essay	750 words
N/A		Closed book exam	2 hours	Closed book exam	1 hour
Literature review / critique / reflective diary	3000 words	Literature review / critique / reflective diary	1500 words	Literature review / critique / reflective diary	750 words
Case study	3000 words	Case study	1500 words	Case study	750 words
Structured questions	3000 words	Structured questions	1500 words	Structured questions	750 words
Portfolio of evidence /scrapbook e.g. IT, art and creative related subjects	Artefact/s and supporting annotation 1250 words	Portfolio of evidence /scrapbook e.g. IT, art and creative related subjects	Artefact/s and supporting annotation 750 words	Portfolio of evidence /scrapbook e.g. IT, art and creative related subjects	Artefact/s and supporting annotation 500 words
Scientific practical(s) and accompanying report	1500 words	Scientific practical(s) and accompanying report	750 words	Scientific practical(s) and accompanying report	500 words
Presentation and supporting evidence	30 minutes inc. Q&A and witness statement	Presentation and supporting evidence	20 minutes inc. Q&A and witness statement	Presentation and supporting evidence	10 minutes inc. Q&A and witness statement
N/A		Controlled assessment – closed book	2 hours	Controlled assessment – closed book	1 hour
N/A		Controlled assessment – open book	1.5 hours	Controlled assessment – open book	45 minutes
N/A		VIVA	20 minutes inc. Q&A and witness statement	VIVA	10 minutes inc. Q&A and witness statement
Article	3000 words	Article	1500 words	Article	750 word
Production of a detailed artefact e.g. Video, sculpture, drawing, garment		Production of a detailed artefact e.g. Video, sculpture, drawing, garment		Production of an artefact e.g. Video, sculpture, drawing, garment	
Performance / exhibition	30 minutes inc. Q&A and witness statement	Performance / exhibition	15 minutes inc. Q&A and witness statement	Performance / exhibition	10 minutes inc. Q&A and witness statement