



The HFMA Awarding Organisation Candidate handbook

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Foreword

As the Head of The HFMA Awarding Organisation I am delighted to welcome you to the HFMA Qualifications.

This Candidate handbook is intended to give you a clear understanding of what to expect from The HFMA Awarding organisation and its staff and to outline what we expect of you as a candidate. Perhaps the most important point is that we recognise you are independent, adult learners with professional work roles and we respect that you will wish to make your own decisions about how and when you study.

Our central administration and technical support teams are also available to help you when necessary.

Good luck with your studies.

Emily Osgood

Head of Awarding Organisation

Contents page

HFMA qualifications	1
Module specifications	4
HFMA Awarding organisation fees for candidates	10
The assessment process	12
1 Introduction	12
2 The assessment	12
3 Submitting your work	12
4 Guidance for responding to the assessment questions	13
5 Using referencing in your submission - avoiding plagiarism	14
6 Formatting and presentation	15
Assessment extensions and re-sits	20
HFMA Awarding organisation qualification policies	21
Appendices	23

HFMA qualifications

Introduction

The HFMA has developed a set of qualifications specifically focussed on business and finance in healthcare, providing a unique opportunity to explore and examine how finance works in the NHS at both a local and national level. These qualifications are aimed at a wide range of learners including finance staff, healthcare professionals, general managers, clinicians, GPs, practice managers and non-executive directors. They are also relevant to individuals working outside the NHS.

The HFMA qualifications have been designed to:

- (a) align to HFMA's vision, mission and strategic objectives;
- (b) be in line with the HFMA's qualifications development manual following its processes for ensuring qualification validity, reliability, comparability, manageability and minimising bias;
- (c) provide a learning opportunity which will give all learners a fair and reasonable chance of achieving the academic standards required for successful completion;
- (d) ensure that the final programme content and assessment methods are inclusive and are in line with the HFMA equality and diversity policy and are accessible to learners with protected characteristics (Equality Act 2010)
- (e) take into account feedback from key stakeholders such as learners, qualifications experts NHS professionals and professional and statutory bodies

These qualifications are designed to meet requirements at a post-graduate level (level 7), although candidates do not have to be graduates to embark at any stage.

As of October 2017, HFMA Awarding organisation has one delivery centre which delivers content for the qualifications. Further details on the delivery methods and dates for programme start dates are available at from the HFMA Academy details on the HFMA website.

HFMA Level 7 qualifications structure

Qualifications	Credits	Entry Requirements	
<p>HFMA Certificate in Healthcare business and finance Candidates can complete a maximum of two individual certificates and must successfully complete the core module before they can study for any other individual module/certificate</p>	20 each	<p>Certificate 1 must be core module</p>	<p>Demonstration of ability to work at masters-level (through application form)</p>
		<p>Certificate 2 can be optional module</p>	<p>Successful completion of core module</p>
<p>HFMA Diploma in Healthcare business and finance Candidates must successfully complete three x 20 credit modules. Any of the modules can be selected but one of these must be the core module.</p>	60	<p>Successful completion of core module or at least 2 years' experience in healthcare or a related field</p>	
<p>HFMA Higher diploma in Healthcare business and finance Candidates must successfully complete a further three x 20 credit modules in addition to the three modules that they completed at the diploma stage (six x 20 credit modules in total)</p>	120 (cumulative)	<p>Successful completion of HFMA Diploma (60 credits) or CCAB or CIMA qualified accountants with at least two years recent post-qualification experience in healthcare or a related field will automatically be awarded a 60 credit transfer and will therefore be eligible to gain direct entry to the Higher Diploma. Candidates in this category can choose to study three modules from the optional modules available (currently O1-5). However, they cannot choose the core module.</p>	

Eligibility for credit transfer

Professionally qualified accountants* with at least two years recent post-qualification experience in healthcare or a related field may be eligible to be awarded a 60 credit transfer and gain direct entry to the Higher Diploma. Candidates in this category can choose to study three modules from the optional modules available (currently O1-5). However, they cannot choose module C1.

*Professionally qualified accountants must be fully qualified members of any of the following professional accounting bodies:

- CIMA
- CIPFA
- ACCA
- ICEAW, ICAS

Compulsory and optional modules

Modules		Credits
CORE	C1: How finance works in the NHS	20
OPTIONAL	O1: Managing the healthcare business	20
	O2: Personal effectiveness and leadership	20
	O3: Tools to support decision making	20
	O4: Creating and delivering value in healthcare	20
	O5: Comparative healthcare systems	20

Module specifications

The following pages outline the content, the learning outcomes and the assessment activity required for each of the HFMA modules in Healthcare business and finance. Each of the modules is offered at Level 7, each has 20 credits attached to it, and the total qualification time for each module is 200 hours.

Module C1: How finance works in the NHS

In a rapidly changing NHS, this module is about the context for understanding healthcare business and finance. This is key to recognising how finances and financial pressures can affect patients. The NHS must do things differently – this means working increasingly closely with social care, finding new ways of delivering care and, in England, the urgent implementation of the Five Year Forward View. This module relates to who does what and why in the NHS and how the money flows from HM Treasury to NHS organisations as well as what needs to change and the barriers to making that happen.

This module requires candidates to:

1. Critically analyse and evaluate the ways in which healthcare in the UK is structured and funded
2. Critically appraise how the English system compares with that of other Home Nations
3. Evaluate the approach taken by the NHS to revenue and capital allocation
4. Research, assess and critique the strengths and weaknesses of funding flows within a local health economy
5. Critique how finance works within the NHS in the UK and recommend improvements to the current system.

Assessment process:

Candidates will complete an assignment with a total word count of 4000 words based on a local health economy within the UK.

Module O1: Managing the healthcare business

In the NHS today there is increasing demand and greater expectations, but this usually comes at a higher financial cost. Indeed, many healthcare providers are running significant deficits. However, the public sector cannot continue to spend more money than it has available without significant system-wide consequences. When having to 'do more' with no additional resources, managing the money that is available efficiently and effectively is vital in demonstrating that public money has been used wisely and well, for its intended purpose. All public sector organisations have a duty to plan how their resources will be used to meet their objectives and an accountability to report what actually happens to the Government and the public.

This module requires candidates to:

1. Critically evaluate the strategic and operational financial planning and budget management within a healthcare organisation in the UK
2. Critically analyse the effectiveness of financial management in healthcare organisations across the UK
3. Critically compare the annual report and financial accounts of healthcare organisations across the UK
4. Evaluate the effectiveness of governance policy, structure and processes in a healthcare organisation in the UK
5. Evaluate risk management techniques and develop risk management strategies, including recommending how risks can be identified and managed more effectively.

Assessment process:

Candidates will complete a 4,000-word portfolio based assessment.

Module O2: Personal effectiveness and leadership

Leaders and aspiring leaders in today's NHS face immense challenges that require particular personal and professional characteristics. As part of the management structure, faced by multiple and competing demands and priorities and as pressure on public finances increases, innovative approaches, drive and the ability to make things happen are paramount.

In a world of media, regulator and public scrutiny, this module relates to self-awareness, an understanding of approaches to personal effectiveness and leadership in order to support the overriding objective of the NHS to deliver high quality care for all.

Candidates will be required to:

1. Assess, critically evaluate and reflect on how the performance and delivery of services by an organisation can be affected by:
 - a. The influence and role of leaders and individuals
 - b. Leadership styles, competencies and behaviours
 - c. Approaches to communication
 - d. Strategies to engage, motivate and performance manage teams and individuals
 - e. Sources of conflict and resolution techniques.
2. Critically evaluate and reflect on their leadership style, personal effectiveness and leadership skills

Assessment process:

Each candidate is required to complete an assessment based on his/her personal effectiveness and/or leadership in a current/ recent work context. This will require creation of a personal development plan (not submitted) on which the candidate must draw in writing the assessment.

Module O3: Tools to support decision-making in healthcare

Better data and better use of that data are vital in a complex healthcare system needing to deliver more for less year on year. Data is used to improve services, better understand patient needs, support new payment approaches and to plan, monitor and manage performance. To determine the best course of action and what is best for the patient, both for individual and organisational decisions, high quality data is needed and needs to be used. All decisions should be well-informed, for example, at what point should a service be 'switched off'? Is a service or an organisation operationally and financially sustainable? Which pathway of care is best for this person?

Candidates will be required to:

1. Critically analyse the information systems and information available within a local health/ health and social care economy
2. Evaluate the effectiveness of information systems in supporting decision-making in healthcare
3. Compare alternative approaches to presenting information to management groups within a local health/ health and social care economy
4. Critically analyse the use of performance indicators and benchmarking approaches and their effectiveness in improving organisation performance, providing assurance and managing risk
5. Assess the effectiveness of governance methods in supporting investments and disinvestments
6. Evaluate the importance of risk and uncertainty in decision-making and their use in improving healthcare/ health and social care decisions.

Assessment process:

Candidates will complete a 4,000-word portfolio based assessment centred on a case study.

Module O4: Creating and delivering value in UK healthcare

Improving value is a high priority in the NHS. This module relates to important issues affecting contemporary healthcare systems in relation to value. These include variation in access to services and the associated quality, cost and outcomes; overuse which results in waste i.e. anything that does not add value to the outcome for patients; and underuse, especially on harnessing the potential of technology. The important role of the board in driving this change and in balancing competing priorities and seeking better value in healthcare will be explored.

Candidates will be required to:

1. Propose and defend the concept of value in contemporary UK healthcare and evaluate opportunities for the NHS to increase value
2. Assess and evaluate different approaches to allocating scarce resources in the UK nations and the ways that providers are reimbursed for delivering healthcare services
3. Evaluate the effectiveness of cost reduction methods and service transformation activities within a local health economy in the UK nations
4. Evaluate the current NHS approach to costing and recommend ways to make the NHS costing process more efficient and effective
5. Appraise the Service Line Management (SLM)/ Service Line Reporting (SLR) approach adopted by many providers in England
6. Critique the available outcome measures and propose how these may be used to influence payment arrangements to improve service delivery
7. Assess the role of the NHS board in balancing priorities and performance objectives.

Assessment process:

Candidates will complete a 4,000-word portfolio based assessment, including a case study and essay questions.

Module O5: Comparative healthcare systems

A healthcare system is a 'dynamic network of agents acting in parallel, constantly reacting to what the other agents are doing, which in turn influences behaviour and the network as a whole'.

Across the world healthcare systems are faced with tackling how to meet increasing healthcare needs with limited resources in a way that is both qualitatively and financially sustainable. Sustainability needs to be addressed in terms of individual organisations, local geographical areas and for the healthcare system overall. This module relates to how this issue is tackled in the United Kingdom and elsewhere in the world, identifying both success and failure and contemplating where the NHS goes next when it is clear that it cannot provide everything for everyone for ever.

Candidates will be required to:

1. Critically analyse and evaluate a range of global health systems (of high, middle and low income countries) and their financing arrangements with respect to:
 - a) global health expenditure and the impact of demography and recession and growth
 - b) healthcare issues facing emerging countries
 - c) global trends in healthcare.
2. Critically appraise the financial sustainability of healthcare systems and the likely impact of lifestyle, aging and technology.

Assessment process:

Candidates will complete a 4,000-word portfolio based assessment, including a case study and essay questions.

HFMA Awarding organisation fees for candidates

HFMA qualifications fee list

HFMA Diploma in Healthcare business and finance (60 credits):

Total cost: £1,650 + VAT. This includes:

- HFMA Registration fee: £400 (*payable as a deposit after application has been approved*)
- Assessment and certification: £1,250

HFMA Higher diploma in Healthcare and business finance (60 credits):

Total cost: £1,650 + VAT. This includes:

- HFMA Registration fee: £400 (*payable as a deposit after application has been approved*)
- Assessment and certification: £1,250

HFMA Certificate (20 credits):

Total cost: £675 + VAT. This includes:

- HFMA Registration fee: £150 (*payable as a deposit after application has been approved*)
- Assessment and certification: £525

NOTE: Currently (October 2017) training for HFMA qualifications is only available through the HFMA Academy. Details of fees for access to their supported online training programme are available on the HFMA website.

Fees and invoicing

Full payment is required before the start of your course. Each candidate is charged a registration fee at the time of registration for each qualification.

Registration fees are set by the Awarding organisation (HFMA Awarding organisation) and may change from time to time. The registration fee covers registration, enrolment and assessment for the specific qualification for which the learner is enrolled.

Fees are subject to annual review.

Candidate responsibility for fees

When a candidate registers and is accepted on an HFMA Qualification they assume responsibility for the payment the above fees.

A candidate must therefore have sufficient financial resources available to meet the fees, maintenance and other expenses that may be incurred throughout their programme of study.



Further details regarding fees and responsibilities are provided in the copy of terms and conditions sent to you following your application to undertake an HFMA qualification.

The assessment process

1 Introduction

This guidance gives useful information to candidates for all HFMA qualifications.

2 The assessment

HFMA qualifications are assessed via an assignment. The assessment can take a range of forms either singly or in combination:

- Case study: You will be given a scenario and supporting information which you use to respond to the question asked.
- Essay: You will respond directly to a question set by HFMA. You will provide an essay which has an introduction, main section and conclusion.
- Work-related written document: You will respond directly to a question set by HFMA. Unlike an essay, some questions may ask you to provide a report, action plan or other work-related written document.

3 Submitting your work

HFMA qualification assessments will be submitted via the online environment and will be put through plagiarism software to identify any matches with other sources.

When submitting your completed assessment, you will be required to agree to the following declaration:

“I certify that this is all my own work and that use of material from any other source has been properly and fully acknowledged in the text. I have read the HFMA plagiarism policy and the HFMA Academy’s advice on good academic practice. I understand that the consequence of committing plagiarism, if proven and in the absence of mitigating circumstances, may include failure in the assessment and/or removal from the HFMA qualification programme. I also certify that neither this piece of work, nor any part of it, has been submitted in connection with another assessment via HFMA or any other course provider.”

When submitting your work through Turnitin, you should also keep your own copy of the assessment submitted.

3.1 Anonymity

All assessments are marked using your candidate number. Name and other identifying features other than your candidate number should not appear on submitted work. If referring to your own work context within your assessment, the organisation and any people referred to should be anonymized.

3.2 Submission dates

The required submission dates for each assessment are included on the assessment documents themselves.

3.3 Requests for extensions

In the unlikely event that an extension is sought, requests should be made by email to qualifications@hfma.org.uk at least 5 working days before the assessment submission date giving reasons for your request. Your request will be acknowledged and responded to within 2 working days of receipt of the request. In the meantime, make sure you continue to work on your assessment as you may not be granted an extension. Please note extensions will not normally be granted for more than one week. Evidence may be required to support your request for extension.

3.4 Late submission of assessments

Where assessments are submitted after the due date and an extension has not been granted, this will result in the reduction of the grade available for your assessment submission. No submissions will be accepted once 10 working days after the submission date has been exceeded – these assignments will automatically be graded as Unsuccessful.

3.5 Non-submission of assessments

Non-submission of assessments will result in an Unsuccessful grading – the failure of an assessment.

3.6 Getting your assessment results

Your assessment results will be returned to you by email within 20 working days of the advertised original submission date.

3.7 Resubmitting your work

Should your assessment submission unfortunately not reach the required pass grade, there may be the opportunity to resubmit a reworked assignment for marking. Details will be provided on timescales and processes along with your provisional assessment grading should this be applicable.

4 Guidance for responding to the assessment questions

Make sure that you show thorough exploration of the question you have been asked. If the question and *all* of its implications are not understood, you will possibly not undertake sufficient and appropriate research. The result is an assessment that, at best, *partially* addresses the question. So:

- a) Spend time thinking about the question — what it asks you to address, and if there are any implicit arguments.
- b) The module you are completing is vocationally based, the quality of the work you submit should be as expected in the workplace. If it is a Board report, the content and quality should be as would be expected in your workplace; if it is a letter in response to an external stakeholder, the language used should be appropriate for that audience; if the requirement is a Communications plan, you should consider the needs of all stakeholders in developing the plan.
- c) Consider the learning outcomes for the Module you are studying (found as the Module Specification in the HFMA Academy Online Learning Environment) which

highlight the skills you should be exhibiting in your response (such as critical analysis or evaluation).

- d) Fully understand the question. Make sure you frequently refer back to the question to help guide further research and the structure of your response. In some assessment submissions submitted, candidates have not been able to achieve the marks they would have hoped (or even worse, have been unsuccessful in the assessment) because they have not addressed the specific requirements of the assessment. As an example, if the assignment asks you to “critically appraise” an approach to system planning or to “evaluate” why something happened, but the response given is a description of the approach, the grading of the answer will, at best, only be at Pass level.
- e) Review the grading criteria given on the back two pages of this document – these will guide on the approaches used in your answer that make the difference between submitting an answer which is Unsuccessful, to one which receives a Distinction grading. For example, in the Argument section b:

An Unsuccessful grading would consist of (b) “An argument with sustained weaknesses, significant gaps and/or is unconvincing. May include evidence of information gathered but this is not sufficient to sustain the argument and may even indicate a distinct lack of awareness”

A Distinction grading would consist of (b) “Strong and consistent argument that convincingly addresses issues, including uncertainties and conflicts, with evidence of originality. Comprehensive use of information gathered to support and further the argument”

- f) Compile a reference list of available material.
- g) Make a plan starting with the main points required to address the question. Thereafter, flesh these headings out to provide greater guidance to your argument. It is essential that these headings flow in a logical manner — if not, the assignment will not have a logical structure.
- h) Begin writing. It is important that your introduction and conclusion directly address the question’s content. The introduction should be used to introduce the argument and its scope: it should tell the reader what they are about to read. The conclusion must round off the assignment, often in a summative manner. You should not use the conclusion to address or present any argument essential to the question that has not been addressed in the body of the assignment.
- i) You should use quotes and/or references to illustrate and substantiate your points, and underwrite the validity of your argument.

5 Using referencing in your submission - avoiding plagiarism

Failing to reference the sources of information used in your assessment, may result in your failing to achieve the grade you worked for. Accurate referencing is required, and failing to do this may result in receipt of a lower grade and/or in investigations that plagiarism may be the reason.

Reports of plagiarism are taken extremely seriously and we will investigate any reports received from candidates, tutors or assessors of suspected plagiarism. Additionally, all work submitted for assessment will be scrutinized by plagiarism detection software to identify potential cases for further investigation.

Further investigation may result in:

- you being required to resubmit the assessment,
- in the grading for the assessment being lowered, or
- in the rejection of the assessment and receipt of an Unsuccessful grade.

Plagiarism can be defined as:

- stealing and passing off (the ideas or words of another) as one's own
- using (another's production) without acknowledging the source
- committing literary theft
- presenting as new and original an idea or product derived from an existing source

Examples of plagiarism can be:

- submitting someone else's work as your own
- copying words or ideas from someone else, including from the internet, without giving credit
- failing to put a quotation in quotation marks
- giving incorrect information about the source of a quotation
- changing words but copying the sentence structure of a source without giving credit
- copying so many words or ideas from a source that it makes up the majority of your work, whether you give credit or not

NOTE: It is not acceptable to include in your answer text you have written which has been submitted for another qualification. Such text will show up as through the plagiarism detection software. Although this work was originally produced by you – it cannot be submitted here as your response as this would result potentially in you receiving double credit in your academic history for the same piece of work.

A very simple way of avoiding plagiarism is to quote the sources you use so that you give credit to the person who wrote the original text. If you want to use a piece of source material directly in your own work, you can do this by making it clear that you are quoting it rather than passing it off as your own text. You do need to be clear about which bit of the text comes from that source.

There are a number of publications and websites giving information about plagiarism and advice on quoting sources and constructing a reference list.

6 Formatting and presentation

Assignments should be typed, double-spaced and have generous margins. Use 12 point text with a font that is easily legible (e.g. Calibri, Arial).

Type your candidate number at the top of the first page and every subsequent page (usually in the header). Do not include your name.

On the first page type the full title of the module and the date you started studying the module, eg September 2017. Clearly indicate which questions/ assignment elements are included in your submitted work. In assignments with multiple parts or questions clearly indicate which question you are answering throughout your script, eg essay title/ case study/ question number.

Make sure that each page has the **page number** on the **bottom right-hand side**.

The paragraph formatting should be consistent throughout. Paragraphs should consist of more than one sentence, but avoid over-long paragraphs.

Heading and sub-headings may be used, particularly if your assignment is a report.

You should not use footnotes.

NOTE: Make sure you check the assignment upload instructions so that you are able to upload your work as the required number of files.

6.1 Word count

The word count for your assignment (or for each part of your assignment) should not vary by more than plus or minus 10% from the guidance figure given on the assignment. The word count includes all content which you wish to be marked, including tables and appendices. The contents page, bibliography and reference list are not included in the word count, nor, if you are producing a Board report in your response, is the Executive Summary.

Assignments which exceed the 10% tolerance may be penalised for exceeding the advised word count either by reduction in the grade awarded, or by words exceeding the required count not being considered for marking.

Please note the word count for your assessment submission on the document before submission.

6.2 Illustrations and figures (tables, graphs, charts, etc.)

Illustrations should be clear and of good quality: you should use them to elucidate your argument and therefore refer to them in your text. They should be **numbered** and accompanied by a figure **caption** and the source cited if not your original work. Avoid lengthy discussions in figure captions.

You may insert illustrations into the main text or add them as a separate section at the end of your text as an appendix. Place appendices after the reference list.

Tables and other figures should be numbered, headed, and a source cited. Always ensure that presentation is clear and that you explain the relevance of the illustration or information in the main body of the text.

6.3 Numbers, dates, etc.

Dates should take the form 11 October 1996 (**not** October 11th, etc.).

Numbers up to a **ten** should be written as a word; for larger numbers use figures. When referring to percentages in the text use 'per cent', not '%'.

6.4 Quotations

All quotations and in-text references should use the Harvard referencing system. Your text must include the page number for all quotations, however short. A page number is not required when you paraphrase/ completely rewrite the author's words combining them with an original point of your own – however, you must still reference other authors' work alongside the relevant text.

6.5 Reference list

You must append a reference list to the end of your assignment, using the Harvard referencing system. The Reference list is a list of works cited. It should give full details of each book, article or other source that you have used. You should not separate books from articles, etc. The list must be arranged in **alphabetical order by author, with the surname first.**

(See page below)

Criteria	Grade bands			
	Distinction	Merit	Pass	Unsuccessful
	<i>The work displays:</i>	<i>The work displays:</i>	<i>The work displays:</i>	<i>The work displays:</i>
1. Knowledge & Understanding	Strong evidence of a comprehensive and systematic understanding of an extensive range of appropriate issues, concepts, theories and research.	Clear evidence of a comprehensive and systematic understanding of all major - and some minor - issues, concepts, theories and research.	Evidence of a systematic understanding of all major - and some minor - issues, concepts, theories and research, which may contain some gaps.	Evidence of a limited understanding of issues, concepts, theories and research.
2. Argument <i>(a) Analysis, Synthesis & Evaluation</i> <i>(b) Argumentation</i> <i>(c) Reflection (where relevant)</i> <i>(d) Independent Research</i>	<p>(a) Consistently precise, accurate and reasoned analysis, synthesis and/or evaluation, which may include numerical methods; addressing issues with insight or originality</p> <p>(b) Strong and consistent argument that convincingly addresses issues, including uncertainties and conflicts, with evidence of originality. Comprehensive use of information gathered to support and further the argument</p> <p>(c) Excellent awareness of the effect of personal influence on the values, ideas, assumptions and ways forward shown in the assignment</p> <p>(d) Strong evidence of considerable personal research which is critically evaluated for key conceptual and methodological issues.</p>	<p>(a) Clear evidence of precision, accuracy and clear reasoning throughout the analysis, synthesis and/or evaluation, which may include numerical methods; addressing all issues appropriately</p> <p>(b) Clear evidence of an argument that is generally convincing and addresses most issues. Very good use of information gathered to support and further the argument</p> <p>(c) Very good awareness of the effect of personal influence on the values, ideas, assumptions and ways forward shown in the assignment</p> <p>(d) Clear evidence of considerable personal research which is critically evaluated for key conceptual and methodological issues, with only minor omissions.</p>	<p>(a) Adequate levels of precision, accuracy and reasoning in analysis, synthesis and/or evaluation, which may include numerical methods; and which mainly address key issues</p> <p>(b) Evidence of a mainly convincing argument which may lack consistency. Clear use of information gathered but may fail to support and further the argument at times</p> <p>(c) Awareness of the effect of personal influence on the values, ideas, assumptions and ways forward shown in the assignment</p> <p>(d) Appropriate use of personal research which is critically evaluated for key conceptual and methodological issues, although this may not be consistent throughout.</p>	<p>(a) Errors or a lack of precision, accuracy or reasoning which affect the consistency of the analysis, synthesis or evaluation and/or key gaps in the issues addressed</p> <p>(b) An argument with sustained weaknesses, significant gaps and/or is unconvincing. May include evidence of information gathered but this is not sufficient to sustain the argument and may even indicate a distinct lack of awareness</p> <p>(c) Limited or no awareness of the effect of personal influence on the values, ideas, assumptions and ways forward shown in the assignment</p> <p>(d) Limited evidence of personal research. Methodological or conceptual evaluation may be limited and/or used in inconsistent or inappropriate ways.</p>

Criteria	Grade bands			
	Distinction	Merit	Pass	Unsuccessful
	<i>The work displays:</i>	<i>The work displays:</i>	<i>The work displays:</i>	<i>The work displays:</i>
3. Application to practice	Sustained, precise and well-judged application of thoughts and practices at the forefront of the discipline – showing credible and relevant links with professional practice to an exceptional level.	Consistent evidence of the application of thoughts and practices at the forefront of the discipline – showing credible and relevant links with professional practice.	Mainly clear evidence of an understanding of thoughts and practices at the forefront of the discipline – showing mainly competent links with professional practice. There may be a few minor gaps, lack of clarity or imprecision.	Significant gaps or repeated lack of clarity or precision in the understanding of thoughts and practices at the forefront of the discipline – showing limited or irrelevant links with professional practice.
4. Presentation <i>(a) Assessment guidelines</i> <i>(b) Structure</i> <i>(c) Referencing</i> <i>(d) Use of Language</i> <i>(e) Word count</i>	(a) Excellent interpretation of the assessment requirements (b) Excellent presentation with a highly logical, coherent structure (c) Precise, full and appropriate referencing throughout (d) Subtle and precise use of language expressing highly nuanced thought with clarity and precision (e) Adherence to the word count.	(a) Very good interpretation of the assessment requirements (b) Very good presentation with a logical, coherent structure (c) Full and appropriate referencing with minor or insignificant errors (d) Clear and precise use of language allowing a complex argument to be easily understood and followed (e) Adherence to the word count.	(a) A competent interpretation of the assessment requirements (b) Adequate presentation with a generally coherent structure (c) Appropriate referencing with some minor inconsistencies, errors or omissions (d) Generally clear use of language sufficient for arguments to be readily understood and followed (e) Adherence to the word count.	(a) Limited or very limited interpretation of the assessment requirements (b) Poor presentation and lacks a coherent structure (c) Inadequate referencing which contains repeated inconsistencies, errors or omissions (d) Poor use of language with significant errors in expression affecting overall clarity (e) Unsatisfactory adherence to the word count.

Assessment extensions and re-sits

A candidate who fails a first submission of an assessment will usually be allowed to make a resubmission using the feedback received on their first assessment opportunity. Subsequent resits will be permitted on payment of the appropriate fee.

Where a candidate fails a core module following a resubmission, they will usually be ineligible to continue with the Qualification. A candidate who fails an optional module may be allowed to attempt one further optional module, at the discretion of the Awarding organisation.

A candidate who fails more than one optional module will usually be ineligible to continue with the qualification.

Appeals

There is no right of appeal against a provisional grade. If you believe you have grounds to appeal against a ratified grade/ mark awarded following an Awards board you will need to submit this in writing to:

HFMA Qualifications - Appeals
1 Temple Way
Bristol
BS2 0BU

Or email qualifications@hfma.org.uk. Please see our Appeals Policy (Appendix A to this document) for further information.

Extenuating circumstances

If you will be unable to submit an assessment by the submission deadline due to extenuating circumstances, i.e. significant personal or family problems, an accident or illness you will need to submit a statement in writing, in advance of the submission date, to qualifications@hfma.org.uk which will then be considered by the Awarding organisation team.

HFMA Awarding organisation qualification policies

A wide range of policies and procedures govern the work of HFMA Awarding organisation all of which are designed to ensure an equitable, consistent, transparent process of assessment for each and every candidate for a qualification. The list below identifies the range of policies and a short outline of what each is about – full copies of each policy are provided as appendixes to this document.

- **Appeals policy - See Appendix A**
This policy outlines the three-stage process which applies where candidates wish to appeal the decisions resulting after application of the Reasonable adjustments and considerations policy, the Malpractice and maladministration policy or the Enquiries about results policy.
- **Complaints policy – See Appendix B**
This policy outlines the processes and procedures to be adopted where a candidate has a complaint about the provision of an examination or other service provided by the awarding organisation. For complaints about assessments, please also see the Appeals policy and Enquiries about results policy for the most appropriate route to follow.
- **Enquiries about results policy – See Appendix C**
This policy relates to situations where candidates may wish to query Final results achieved in assessments. It should be read in conjunction with the Appeals policy and the Complaints policy as they may be the appropriate policies to adopt depending on circumstances.
- **Equality and diversity policy – See Appendix D**
This policy covers the actions of everyone acting for HFMA ensuring that they do not discriminate in any situation against another individual or group, directly or indirectly, because of age, sex, disability, gender re-assignment (whether proposing to undergo, is undertaking or has undergone the process), marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief and sexual orientation. The equal opportunities policy applies at all times and influences the way individuals treat their colleagues, clients, candidates, visitors, third parties and contacts
- **Malpractice and maladministration policy - Appendix E**
This policy covers any practice which compromises the quality and integrity of the qualifications HFMA offers as a result of malpractice or maladministration. Malpractice covers any deliberate actions, neglect, default or other practice that compromises or could compromise assessment and the integrity of HFMA qualifications. Maladministration is any activity or practice which results in non-compliance with administrative regulations and requirements and includes the application of persistent mistakes or poor administration.
- **Plagiarism policy - Appendix F**
The HFMA AO Plagiarism policy covers occasions when candidates for qualifications submit work including the ideas of another as their own without full acknowledgement of the source. Candidates are required to agree a declaration that their work is original when submitting work for assessment and any identified cases of plagiarism (whether intentional or through lack of awareness are treated very seriously. Guidance on Harvard referencing is available to HFMA candidates.
- **Reasonable adjustments and special considerations policy – Appendix G**



The purpose of this policy is to set out the procedures that candidates, assessors and tutors should follow when implementing reasonable adjustments and special considerations. The policy also gives details of the service provided by HFMA for these arrangements. This policy is informed by the guidance provided by the Joint Council for Qualifications. Further information and guidance about reasonable adjustments can be found at www.jcq.org.uk



Appendices

Appendix A - Appeals policy and procedure

Introduction

The purpose of this policy is to set out the procedures that centres or candidates should follow if they wish to make an appeal to HFMA.

a. Enquiries about results

If you have an enquiry about the results of an assessment, please refer to the Enquiries about Results policy.

b. Complaints

If you have a complaint to make about the service or qualifications provided by HFMA please refer to HFMA's Complaints policy.

c. Enquiries about results and Appeals

If you are dissatisfied with the result of an assessment you should initially follow the Enquiries About Results Policy and Procedure. If you wish to formally appeal against the decision made from an Enquiry About Results, please use this Policy and Procedure.

1. Appeals by centres and candidates will be considered if they concern:

- a) Appeals against HFMA's decisions on reasonable adjustments or special considerations
- b) Appeals against a HFMA's decision on the outcome of a malpractice investigation
- c) The results of assessments where the Enquires about results process has been exhausted. In such cases HFMA must receive the appeal within 2 calendar weeks from the date of the Enquiry about result outcome letter.

2. Procedure for making an appeal

Candidates and centres should contact HFMA in the first instance and no later than 2 calendar weeks from the postmark of the decision letter they are appealing against.

Any appeal must include:

- The decision that is being appealed against
- The grounds upon which the appeal is being made
- Specific information including the appellant name, if the appeal is being made on behalf of others; and any candidate number(s)

Please provide as much information as possible to enable a thorough investigation to be carried out.

All appeals must be made in writing and should be clearly marked as appeals on any correspondence and sent to:

awarding@hfma.org.uk

HFMA will acknowledge the receipt of an appeal within 5 working days. All information shared with HFMA will be deemed confidential and data protection principles applied.

3. Appeals procedure

The appeals process consists of three levels. All appeals will be considered by at least one independent reviewer.

4.1 First Level Appeal:

The first level appeal will be managed by the Head of Awarding Organisation. An investigation of the evidence available will be made and a decision about whether the appeal should be upheld or rejected will be made.

Appeals will not include a review of candidate's work.

The appellant will receive written confirmation from HFMA of the outcome within 28 working days from the acknowledgement of receipt of the appeal.

4.2 Second Level Appeal

If the appellant is dissatisfied with the judgement made in the first level appeal, then they have the right to a second level of appeal. The appellant must supply all relevant evidence and state the grounds for this second level appeal. Second level appeals must be received no later than 14 working days from the date of the First Level decision notification.

Second level appeals will be acknowledged within 5 working days and go to an internal appeals panel and a decision reached on whether the outcome of the first level of appeal should be upheld or rejected.

Once the judgement had been made the appellant will receive written confirmation of the outcome.

HFMA will inform the appellant within 28 working days from the receipt of the second stage of the process whether the appeal is upheld or rejected.

4.3 Third Level Appeal

If the appellant is dissatisfied with the decisions reached in the second level appeal, they may take their appeal to the third level. The decision of the Quality Assurance Committee is final.

Third level appeals will be acknowledged within 5 working days of their receipt. Third level appeals must be received no later than 14 working days from the date of the Second Level decision notification.

HFMA will inform the appellant within 28 working days from the receipt of the third stage of the process whether the appeal is upheld or rejected.

If the appeal is rejected no further correspondence will be entered into.

Appendix B - Complaints policy

1. Issue and review

The date of issue of this policy is January 2017. This policy will be reviewed annually.

2. When to use this policy

A complaint is defined as an expression of dissatisfaction about the provision of an examination or any other service provided by the awarding organisation or its representatives. A complaint is not defined as an appeal unless it concerns the decisions made by an individual assessor or a breach of assessment procedures (please see Appeals Policy for the grounds for Appeal).

HFMA has three policies available for candidates who wish to make enquiries about the assessment process or the marks and awards given.

a. Enquiries about results

If you have an enquiry about the grades or award given please refer to this policy. This policy is used to carry out initial checks on the grades awarded.

b. Complaints

If you have a complaint to make about the service provided by HFMA which do not affect results or grades, please refer to this policy.

c. Appeals

If you are dissatisfied with the grade or award given or the conduct of an assessment and wish to formally appeal against decisions made, please use appropriate appeals policy for your qualifications.

All the policies are available on our website at www.hfma.org.uk

3. Who can complain?

Anyone who seeks or receives a service from HFMA or its representatives may lodge a complaint under this Policy. Matters of concern may be raised individually or collectively and candidates should feel assured that they will not encounter any disadvantage having lodged a complaint in good faith.

Where there is reason to believe that a complaint is vexatious or malicious, the matter will be referred to the relevant person who may decide to reject the complaint without full consideration of its merits. Reasons will be given as to why the complaint is considered to be an abuse of process.

In the event of uncertainty about the scope of the Policy or if general advice is required on the most appropriate way to pursue a complaint, the candidate should contact HFMA in the first instance for clarification. All stages of the Complaints procedure are internal proceedings.

4. Confidentiality

Confidentiality will be preserved during the investigation of a complaint to safeguard the interests of everyone concerned unless disclosure is necessary to progress the complaint. HFMA expects that all parties will respect the confidentiality of the process. Any individual about whom a complaint is made will have the right to be informed of the fact and nature of the complaint.

5. Procedure for complaints

Any complaint received by HFMA will be treated as official unless the complainant informs HFMA otherwise within ten days of the original complaint made. All complaints must be made in writing to HFMA and clearly marked as such to be deemed official. Complaints should be clearly labelled as such and sent to the following address:

HFMA
1 Temple Way
Bristol
BS2 0BU

Complaints are recorded and a copy of the complaint is sent to the person or persons about whom the complaint has been made for their response.

Complaints will be investigated in the first instance by the Head of Awarding organisation or a designated member of the team. Following the investigation a report will be made to the Quality Assurance Committee who will make a decision about whether the complaint should be upheld after reviewing all the evidence presented. The Quality Assurance Committee may decide to contact the candidate and the person or persons about whom the complaint was made for further information.

HFMA would expect to inform the complainant(s) of the outcome of an initial investigation within five days. For cases involving detailed investigation HFMA will inform the complainant(s) within 20 days.

Should there be any delay in the process, candidates will be informed of the revised timescale as soon as possible.

6. Unresolved complaints

Should the complainant be unhappy with the findings and decision of the Quality Assurance Committee several options are open.

If the complaint was related to an assessment and they feel they have grounds for an appeal, they can make an official appeal to HFMA using the Appeals Policy. If the complaint was related to an instance of suspected malpractice, HFMA may implement its Malpractice Policy and investigate the complaint in relation to malpractice or maladministration.

Candidates may also take their complaint to Ofqual if they are unsatisfied with the outcome of the investigation undertaken by HFMA or at any time during the process.

7. Monitoring the process

In order that HFMA can improve services to candidates and other clients, the receipt of complaints and responses to them will be monitored. A regular report on the outcome of the monitoring process will be made to the Quality Assurance Committee via the Head of



awarding organisation. This will enable HFMA to continuously improve its services and ensure an inclusive, consistent and constructive approach to complaints.

Appendix C - Enquiries about results policy

1. Introduction

The purpose of this policy is to set out the procedures that candidates should follow if they wish to make an enquiry about a result to HFMA.

HFMA has three policies available for candidates who wish to make enquiries about the assessment process or the marks and awards given.

a. Enquiries about results

If you have an enquiry about the marks or award given please refer to this policy. This policy is used to carry out initial checks on the marks awarded.

b. Complaints

If you have a complaint to make about the service provided by HFMA which does not affect results or grades, please refer to HFMA's Complaints Policy.

c. Appeals

If you are dissatisfied with the mark or award given and wish to formally appeal against decisions made, please use the appropriate HFMA Appeals Policy.

All policies are available on our website at www.hfma.org.uk

Applications for enquiry about results must be submitted in writing to HFMA's head office no later than two weeks after the receipt of the results.

HFMA will not consider any telephone requests for enquiries about results.

2. Issue and review

The date of issue of this policy is January 2017. This policy will be reviewed annually.

3. Types of enquiry

At the enquiry stage, a candidate may request the following to be carried out:

3.1 Clerical Re-check

A full clerical re-check including the provision of a statement of the marks for an individual candidate where applicable. The Head of Awarding Organisation will undertake this free of charge for the candidate. Requests for a clerical re-check for an individual candidate will be responded to within 7 working days of receipt.

3.2 Review and re-mark

A review of the mark records and a re-mark of the assessment for an individual candidate by a different assessor and a full clerical re-check and statement of marks awarded.

This incurs a cost of £25 per candidate. Requests for a review and re-mark for an individual candidate will be responded to within 14 working days of receipt.

3.3 Review and moderation

Review and moderation of all the mark records for a group of candidates or a single assessment session by a designated member of the assessment team who did not carry out the original assessment, together with a full clerical re-check and statement of marks awarded by category.

This incurs a cost of £50 per candidate to cover administration costs. Requests for a review and moderation for a group of candidates will be responded to within a 6 week period from receipt.

4. Outcomes and informing candidates

A written response to the candidate with the outcome of the enquiry will be provided. If the outcome of an enquiry is considered to bring into question the accuracy of the results for other candidates in that or other sessions, the outcome of the original enquiry will be notified to the candidate and will extend to include any other candidates who may have been affected. Candidates will be notified of the further investigation and the outcome.

As a consequence of a change to marks awarded following an enquiry, HFMA will:

- (a) notify the candidate at once in writing;
- (b) issue a revised statement of results and/or issue a revised certificate where necessary, when the original certificate has been returned.

In cases where a clerical check, review, re-mark or moderation reveals inaccurate marking or a clerical error, marks for examination components may be confirmed, lowered or raised and the award of a Pass, Merit or Distinction may also be confirmed, lowered or raised. Candidates must be aware of and accept the possible outcomes of an enquiry.

5. Appeals against the Outcome of Enquiries About Results

After the outcome of an enquiry about results has been reported, the candidate may appeal against the decision. All appeals must be made in writing and in accordance with the requirements set out in the appropriate Appeals Policy.

Appendix D - Equality and Diversity Policy

Introduction

It is the policy of the Association that no person acting on the Associations behalf shall discriminate in any situation against another individual or group, directly or indirectly, because of age, sex, disability, gender re-assignment (whether proposing to undergo, is undertaking or has undergone the process), marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief and sexual orientation. There is no equality of opportunity if diversity is not recognised and valued. The equal opportunities policy applies at all times and should influence the way in which individuals treat their colleagues, clients, candidates, visitors, third parties and contacts.

By treating people fairly and equally and by accepting and embracing their diversity, we can also improve our effectiveness as an organisation, foster innovation, enhance our corporate social responsibility and create an inclusive and positive working environment for all employees.

The Association as an employer and service provider is committed to building a workforce which is valued and whose diversity as far as reasonably possible reflects the local employed community.

All Association policies and procedures will dovetail into the Equality and Diversity Policy.

Statement

The Healthcare Financial Management Association believes that unlawful discrimination is unacceptable. The Association aims to become an equal opportunities organisation by ensuring that all customers, applicants, employees, contractors, agency staff, third parties and visitors will receive appropriate treatment and will not be disadvantaged by conditions or requirements which cannot be shown to be justified. This is particularly on the grounds of the protected characteristics of race (including ethnic origin or nationality), disability, sex, gender reassignment (whether proposing to undergo, is undertaking or has undergone the process), marital and/or civil partnership status, maternity or pregnancy, age, sexual orientation and religion or belief as well as trade union activity and political belief.

HFMA aims to promote equality and diversity and values the benefits this brings. Equal opportunities and the embracing of diversity will be central to everything we do from advertising vacancy, short listing candidates, interviewing, promotion, transfer, training, terms and conditions and dismissal.

This Policy and its implementation strategy is fundamental to the delivery of good quality customer service. This can only be achieved by the Association valuing and respecting the diverse talents of its employees and continuing to recruit and apply good employment practice in order to enrich this diversity.

This Policy is written on the premise that inequalities in employment will lead to inequalities in service delivery. By addressing any inequalities in employment practices, the Association seeks to deliver equitable services to all.

The Association is committed to improving services and meeting the needs of the customers it serves. It recognises the importance of effective consultation and communication.

We regard direct or indirect discrimination, victimisation and harassment on any of the grounds above as a serious matter. This also covers discrimination by association (e.g. where an employee is discriminated against because they care for a disabled person) or by perception (e.g. where an employee is discriminated against because it is perceived that they are gay

when actually they are not). Employees who display such behaviour will be subject to our disciplinary procedure. These acts may constitute gross misconduct and may result in summary dismissal.

Workforce Planning & Development

The Association aims to serve the needs of its customers by recruiting the staff best able to deliver customer centred services through these roles.

At every stage of the recruitment process, Managers will treat all applicants equally, showing no discrimination on the grounds of their race (including ethnic origin or nationality), disability, sex, gender reassignment, marital and/or civil partnership status, maternity or pregnancy, age, sexual orientation, religion or belief and trade union activity or political beliefs. Applicants will be selected against criteria based solely on objective, job related criteria and their ability to do the job applied for. The Association will consider providing appropriate assistance to ensure equality for all when it is appropriate to do so.

Relevant educational, training and development opportunities are open to all staff and all staff have a personal development plan in place, which must be reviewed annually. Information on education, training and development opportunities is widely publicised, and attendance monitored for audit purposes.

Monitoring information is gathered periodically to ensure there are no inequalities in opportunities for promotion.

Employee Relations

The Association has developed a number of 'Employee Friendly' Policies and also has in place Disciplinary, Bullying & Harassment and Grievance Policies to handle employment matters. As with any Association Policy these are fair and consistent in their manner. Association policies do not discriminate on the grounds of race (including ethnic origin or nationality), disability, sex, gender reassignment, marital and/or civil partnership status, maternity or pregnancy, age, sexual orientation, religion or belief, trade union activity or political beliefs. Instances of harassment under any of the above are treated very seriously and are addressed under the Bullying & Harassment and Disciplinary Policies.

All staff will have equal access to all staff support services, such as Health & Safety training.

Zero Tolerance

The Association is committed to developing and maintaining a safe and secure environment that acknowledges and respects differences within and between groups of people, for its customers, staff and visitors and has a duty to take all reasonable steps to protect and support its staff.

We regard direct or indirect discrimination, victimisation and harassment as a serious matter. This also covers discrimination by association (e.g. where an individual is discriminated against because they care for a disabled person) or by perception (e.g. where an individual is discriminated against because it is perceived that they are gay when actually they are not). Employees who display such behaviour will be subject to our disciplinary procedure. These acts may constitute gross misconduct and may result in summary dismissal

Violent and abusive behaviour includes bullying and/or harassment of any description. Violent or abusive behaviour by customers, visitors or staff is not tolerated and decisive action will be taken to protect staff, customers and visitors. All violent adverse incidents are reported, investigated and appropriate remedial action is taken. When an incident is reported, a risk assessment may be appropriate to identify the need for change.

Service Provision

The Association aims to ensure that its facilities are not discriminatory and, wherever possible, attend to the physical, psychological, spiritual, and social and communication needs of any customer or visitor showing no discrimination on the grounds of race (including ethnic origin or nationality), disability, sex, gender reassignment, marital status, maternity or pregnancy, age, sexual orientation, religion or belief, trade union activity or political beliefs.

Contractors, Agency staff and voluntary workers undertaking work at the Association are expected to associate the principles of this Policy with their own responsibilities in terms of their contractual obligations and the service they provide.

The Association will fully investigate any complaint or claim of discrimination in relation to the services it provides.

Responsibilities

Board of Trustees - Lead responsibility for the implementation of this Policy rests with the Board, who will ensure the Policy is observed within their sphere of responsibility and that it is reviewed on a regular basis, as appropriate. The Lead Director responsible for this is the Chief Executive.

Managers and Supervisors - Managers and Supervisors are responsible for ensuring that all staff are aware of their responsibilities under the Policy and that it is implemented throughout their sphere of responsibility. They also have a responsibility under this Policy to ensure that proper records of employment decisions are maintained.

Employees, Contractors, Sub Contractors and Volunteers - Whilst the primary responsibility of providing equal opportunity for all is an organisational responsibility, it is also expected that all staff have responsibility for the implementation of this Policy.

Good employee relations and practices depend upon staff attitudes and activities at work. In particular, individual employees and contractors:

- Must operate within established policy and take positive steps to eliminate unlawful discrimination and promote equal opportunity. This applies in terms of applicants, other employees, contractors, agency staff, customers and visitors.
- Must not unlawfully discriminate against other employees, applicants, customers or visitors, or to encourage other employees, unions or management to practice unlawful discrimination.
- Must not victimise individuals on the grounds that they have made complaints or provided information on unlawful discrimination.
- Must be proactive in informing management of unlawful discrimination.
- Must maintain personal awareness of the Policy and associate its principles to their own responsibilities in terms of their contractual obligations and the service that they provide.

Service Provision

The Chief Executive will record complaints about the service the Association provides, to ascertain whether there are trends to suggest perceived discrimination against under-represented groups. Should trends be identified, recommendations will then be made by the HR Lead on the approach required to rectify the issue.

HFMA Qualification Specifics

Monitoring of Equal Opportunities

HFMA monitors equality of opportunity and access to its qualifications through the following means:

Market research processes

HFMA will consult with candidates and tutors to keep under review the accessibility and manageability of its units and qualifications for candidates and to ensure that these are continuing to meet learner needs.

Qualification development processes

During the development new qualifications, HFMA carries out checks which take into account any equal opportunities and/or accessibility issues for the qualification and mitigate these where possible by ensuring that language is clear, free from any bias and appropriate to the qualification.

Reasonable adjustments/special considerations

HFMA will monitor all claims for reasonable adjustments/special considerations to consider whether the amount and type of claims has a relationship to potential barriers to equality of opportunity and/or accessibility. HFMA will take into account information collated from monitoring to inform qualifications development.

Collection of other forms of data which might impact equal opportunities

HFMA regularly collects information on candidate age and gender through its registration requirements which it uses to monitor access to its qualifications. Information about disability is collected via the applications for reasonable adjustments which HFMA uses to ensure that its qualifications allow for maximum access for candidates with learning difficulties or disabilities.

HFMA will monitor tutors on their compliance with the published equal opportunities policy to ensure that tutors are treating all candidates fairly and that all candidates have fair access to assessment and are not discriminated against in any way. Any teacher found not complying with the policy will be subject to malpractice investigations as part of the malpractice policy.

HFMA will monitor its examiners and staff to ensure that they comply with the published equal opportunities policy. Any member of staff found to be not complying with the policy will be subject to disciplinary procedures.

Monitoring and Review of Policy

The impact of the Equality and Diversity Policy will be reviewed by the Board of Trustees every three years or in line with changes to legislation, whichever is sooner.

Appendix E - HFMA Malpractice and Maladministration Policy and Procedure

This policy applies to all HFMA centres, learners, HFMA staff and any third parties.

Malpractice or maladministration is considered to be any action or practice which threatens the integrity of HFMA's examinations and certification.

Malpractice covers any deliberate actions, neglect, default or other practice that compromises or could compromise assessment and the integrity of HFMA qualifications.

Maladministration is any activity or practice which results in non-compliance with administrative regulations and requirements and includes the application of persistent mistakes or poor administration.

The following are examples of malpractice/maladministration:

- Failing to abide by assessment rules, regulations, assessment procedures
- Deliberately falsifying candidate's information
- Impersonation – arranging for another person to take the assessment
- Breach of confidential results following assessment
- Altering results on or certificates
- Providing false information
- Falsification of candidate details
- Falsifying certificates
 - Fraudulent claims for certification
 - Collusion

- Tampering
- Misrepresentation of HFMA qualifications e.g. promoting a non-HFMA regulated course as a regulated qualification
- Failure to report conflicts of interest
- Copying assessment materials
- Divulging the content of assessment materials to any other party
- Presenting fraudulent identification
- Claiming to be someone else / falsification of authenticity
- Acts of plagiarism

Candidate Malpractice/Maladministration

Candidates may be subject to investigation if it is suspected that:

- They have plagiarised information from one or more sources
- They have not adhered to assessment rules
- They have made a false declaration about their assessment submission
- They have produced work that cannot be authenticated to them
- They have colluded with an assessor during an assessment

Should any of the above situations occur, or should there be any other suspected malpractice/maladministration on the part of the candidate, HFMA will carry out an investigation of the suspected malpractice/maladministration which will include contacting the centre at which the candidate is registered.

HFMA Staff and Assessor Malpractice/Maladministration

A staff member or assessor may be subject to investigation if it is suspected that:

- They have colluded with a candidate
- They have not adhered to proper procedures in relation to the assessment of candidates
- They have covered up a mistake that materially affects a learner's result
- They have disclosed confidential information to candidates or centres

Should any of the above situations occur, or should there be any other suspected malpractice/maladministration on the part of the assessor, HFMA will carry out an investigation of the suspected malpractice.

Centres

Centres must have in place their own malpractice and maladministration policy and procedure. HFMA requires centres to report cases of malpractice and maladministration to HFMA. HFMA may also choose to carry out its own investigation into reported cases of suspected malpractice and maladministration.

A centre may be subject to investigation if it suspected that:

- An individual has disclosed confidential assessment information to candidates.
- The centre has not adhered to HFMA assessment guidelines.

Reporting malpractice/maladministration

Any suspected or known malpractice/maladministration must be reported to the Head of Awarding Organisation at HFMA in the first instance. The details of any individuals reporting malpractice/maladministration will be kept confidential. The Head of Awarding Organisation will acknowledge receipt within 3 working days.

Investigating malpractice/maladministration

As soon as possible after the suspected malpractice has been reported, the Head of Awarding Organisation will identify who will carry out the investigation work into the malpractice or maladministration claim. A secure evidence file will be established where any relevant information will be logged.

Not more than 14 working days after notification a meeting of the Quality Assurance Committee will be called to establish the nature of the malpractice/maladministration and whether malpractice/maladministration has occurred or not. The Committee will consider the report of the investigation and evidence and make sure that the correct procedures have been followed; allowing the individual(s)/centre suspected of malpractice/maladministration the opportunity to answer the allegations in a personal statement.

The Committee will also determine if the regulations have been broken and will make a judgment on the appropriate measures to protect the integrity of the assessment and the nature of any sanctions to be imposed.

Sanctions/penalties may be applied flexibly according to the level of the breach of regulation identified, examples include:

:

- Staff/assessors may be given a written warning and may be subject to disciplinary action and/or termination of contract. HFMA HR procedures will be followed in making any such decisions.
- The candidate's results permanently withheld and no certificate is issued
- A centre may be suspended and no longer able to register candidates for HFMA qualifications

In cases in which a previously issued certificate is deemed invalid, that certificate must be returned to the HFMA. The assessment result will be declared void to ensure that no duplicate certificate can be issued.

In cases of centre malpractice/maladministration which is likely to affect other Awarding Organisations (AOs), HFMA reserves the right to alert other AOs them to concerns over the centre.

Anyone accused of malpractice/maladministration must have the opportunity to respond to the allegations in writing and this should be included with HFMA's report. To enable them to do this, they will be given access to the relevant evidence against them.

HFMA reserves the right to withhold the issue of results while any investigations are ongoing. Depending on the outcome of the investigation, results may be released or permanently withheld.

Identifying others affected by the malpractice/maladministration allegations

During the investigation, the Quality Assurance Committee will also consider whether the malpractice/maladministration in question could potentially affect the integrity of assessments taken by a wider cohort of candidates. In such cases, the Head of Awarding Organisation will contact any candidates who are identified as potentially being affected and will take appropriate action to ensure that the integrity of the assessment is maintained.

Further action following an investigation

The decision of the HFMA Quality Assurance Committee will be conveyed within 7 days.

An appeal against the decision may be made following HFMA's Appeals Policy.

A log of allegations and reports of investigations will be kept by HFMA.

The Head of Awarding Organisation will consider any lessons learned from the incident and investigation of malpractice/maladministration and put in place any actions to support improvement in practices or policy.

Last updated: July 2017

Appendix F – HFMA Plagiarism policy

1. Overview

Candidate actions in the completion of assignments and their submission for marking towards the achievement of HFMA qualifications are governed by a series of guidelines, rules and regulations available in the Candidate handbook and on the HFMA website. This Plagiarism policy with the attendant procedures form an important component of this. University of Oxford defines plagiarism as “...presenting someone else’s work or ideas as your own, with or without their consent, by incorporating it into your work without full acknowledgement.”

As in the definition here, plagiarism in text documents does not only include individual phrases, but may also cover the individual words and phrases, sentence structure or paraphrasing (where for example some words have been changed but the content is essentially the same as that found elsewhere). Text sources in publications, on the web and the work of other learners will also be considered in plagiarism checks.

Plagiarism may arise because of inexperience or lack of confidence on the part of the candidate as well as in a deliberate attempt to mislead. Whatever the reasons, plagiarism constitutes academic malpractice and is not acceptable in completion of HFMA qualifications.

2. Purpose

The purpose of this Policy is to maintain academic standards accepted in materials submitted for assessment towards achievement of HFMA qualifications. This policy is supported by documented procedures to maintain these standards.

3. Scope

The scope of this Policy includes all candidate submissions for HFMA qualifications. Knowledge of the policy contents and use in working practices apply to candidates submitting work for assessment as well as employees, all contractors, consultants, temporary employees and business partners with any involvement in preparing candidates for and the marking of HFMA qualifications.

4. Similarity reports

All scripts submitted for assessment on HFMA qualifications will be subject to electronic checks of content through Turnitin. This results in a production of a similarity report identifying instances of potential plagiarism found in the document.

Once generated, the similarity report will be used as part of a process of review by the marking team to check possible instances of plagiarism and to instigate action where required.

5. Exceptions

Any exceptions to this policy must be approved in writing by the CEO and the records kept by the Awarding Organisation. All exceptions to policies should be reviewed on an annual basis.

6. Enforcement

Any candidate for an HFMA qualification or member of the marking team found to have breached this policy may be subject to disciplinary action.

7. Review and monitoring

This policy is monitored by the Head of Awarding Organisation and reviewed by the Quality Assurance Committee for recommendations to the Board of Trustees on an annual basis.

Appendix G - Reasonable adjustments and special considerations policy

1. Introduction

This policy is aimed at tutors and candidates who are involved with HFMA qualifications. HFMA staff and assessors should also refer to this policy. This policy covers all the qualifications we offer.

The purpose of this policy is to set out the procedures that candidates, assessors and tutors should follow when implementing reasonable adjustments and special considerations. The policy also gives details of the service provided by HFMA for these arrangements. This policy is informed by the guidance provided by the Joint Council for Qualifications. Further information and guidance about reasonable adjustments can be found at www.jcq.org.uk

This policy will be subject to review and monitoring by HFMA and if necessary will be amended and updated following feedback from candidates and tutors. All future versions to this policy will be flagged and will be posted on our website.

Please note that we treat all records of reasonable adjustments and special consideration arrangements in confidence and will not make details available to any other parties.

If candidates wish to appeal against the decision by HFMA to decline requests for reasonable adjustments or special consideration arrangements, please refer to our *Appeals Policy*, which will be available to download from our website.

2. Issue and review

The date of issue of this policy is December 2016. This policy will be reviewed annually.

3. What are reasonable adjustments and special considerations?

HFMA is committed to fair and equal assessment of its qualifications. We expect all candidates to have equal and fair access to all the assessments we provide.

Therefore, we recognise that in some cases there will be a need for some candidates to have access to a range of arrangements which meet their individual needs and provide fair access to the assessments they are undertaking. This could include:

- Candidates who have a permanent disability or specific learning needs
- Candidates who have a temporary disability, medical condition or learning needs
- Candidates who are indisposed at the time of the assessment

The provision for reasonable adjustments and special consideration arrangements is made to ensure that candidates receive fair recognition of their achievement whilst maintaining the equity, validity and reliability of the assessment. In this way, these arrangements make valid provision for candidates without making assessment easier for candidates.

Candidates requiring access to fair assessment can gain these in the following ways:

- Through reasonable adjustments
- Through special considerations

3.1 Reasonable adjustments

A reasonable adjustment is defined as an action that will reduce the effect of a disability or difficulty that places the candidates at a substantial disadvantage during assessment.

Reasonable adjustments must not affect the integrity of the assessment, but may involve:

- Making changes for individuals to the standard assessment arrangements, for example allowing candidates extra time to complete the assessment
- Adapting assessment materials, such as providing materials in Braille for those with visual impairments
- Providing access facilitators during assessment, such as a sign language interpreter or a reader
- Re-organising the assessment room, such as removing visual stimuli for an autistic candidate

Reasonable adjustments are requested and approved before the assessment takes place. The use of a reasonable adjustment will not be taken into consideration during the assessment of a candidate's work.

Every request for a reasonable adjustment will be considered on a case by case basis by HFMA. What is reasonable in terms of an adjustment to the assessment will depend on the individual circumstances, cost implications and the practicality and effectiveness of the adjustment.

3.2 Special considerations

Special considerations are different to reasonable adjustments as they apply to a temporary illness or adverse circumstance that could affect the candidate's performance. This could be taken into account before, during or after the assessment. HFMA will consider applications for special consideration based on the information provided on a case by case basis.

4. Reasonable adjustments for candidates

HFMA's assessments are designed to allow candidates flexibility in the way they approach their assessment and although an end deadline is stated for each piece of assessed work, HFMA has a range of options for candidates who are unable to meet this deadline. For more information, please see the Special Considerations section of this policy.

5. Applying reasonable adjustments to assessment

This section sets out the potential arrangements that can be made to HFMA assessments. Please note that this is a comprehensive set of arrangements which can apply across a range of different forms of assessment including examinations, practical assessments and portfolio assessments. Therefore, some arrangements may not be applicable to certain types of assessment. Each request for an adjustment to assessment will be taken on a case by case basis.

5.1 Extra time

It is not expected that additional time would be required for candidates who are completing assessments for the HFMA level 7 qualifications as the assessment is carried out during a set time frame with a deadline. Should a candidate require an extension to the deadline please

see the Special Consideration section of this policy which sets out the process for dealing with 'mitigating circumstances'.

Candidates with permanent disabilities and learning difficulties who require an extension to the deadline of an assessment as a direct result of the disability/learning difficulty should contact HFMA. Extensions will be considered on a case by case basis only.

5.2 Sign Language Interpreter

HFMA assessments for level 7 qualifications are based on a set of written instructions and the expectation is that a candidate will produce written evidence in the form of a case study or response to an essay question. Therefore, the requirement for a Sign Language Interpreter for assessment purposes is limited.

Should a candidate wish to use a Sign Language Interpreter for part of the assessment, they should contact HFMA who will consider these applications on a case by case basis.

5.3 Use of technology during assessments

As candidates will be completing assessments during their own time and not under controlled or supervised conditions, they are free to use technology which suits their needs, including computer readers etc.

5.4 Use of a scribe/assistant during assessments

As candidates will be completing assessments during their own time and not under controlled or supervised conditions there are no limitations in the use of a scribe or any other additional support to enable the candidate to complete an assessment.

However, the candidate is expected to confirm that any work submitted is their own.

5.5 Braille assessment materials

Braille assessment materials (for example case studies or examination questions) may be provided for candidates on a case by case basis and where a clear need is established. In these cases, the standard paper is modified prior to Brailleing by a tutor specialised in vision impairments. The layout and presentation of the standard paper is modified accordingly.

5.6 Other modifications to assessment materials

HFMA will take requests for other forms of modification to assessment materials on a case by case basis. HFMA will require sufficient evidence that the modification requested does not impact on the integrity of the assessment nor gives the candidate an unfair advantage. Such modifications should be within the candidate's normal way of working.

6. Submitting applications for reasonable adjustment arrangements

Candidates should send requests for reasonable adjustments to HFMA before the assessment.

Candidates should submit their applications to HFMA along with any supporting evidence (e.g. a medical certificate) at least 4 weeks before the assessment. HFMA cannot guarantee to process applications less than 3 weeks before the assessment takes place.

Candidates are required to fill in the *Reasonable Adjustments Application form* and send this to HFMA along with an original copy of the relevant supporting information (e.g. a medical certificate).

Each request should include the following information:

- The nature of the candidate's disability/learning need
- The special assessment arrangements requested
- Any supporting evidence or a copy of the evidence.

When we receive the application, we will make a decision and inform centres and individual candidates within 48 hours of receipt. If it will take longer than this to make a decision, we will inform you and indicate a timescale for the decision.

7. Evidence requirements

Candidates requiring arrangements for reasonable adjustments should provide, in the case of centre-based assessment, tutors with evidence of their learning needs or medical condition. The centre must ensure that suitably qualified personnel check that the evidence is current and relevant to the candidates. Examples of evidence could be a relevant diagnostic report or statement of learning needs or medical condition from appropriately qualified personnel. For portfolio or assignment based assessment, candidates should provide HFMA with evidence directly.

In the case of an appeal, centres and candidates must ensure that evidence to support a reasonable adjustment or special consideration is retained for 3 months after the candidate has been issued with the results of an assessment.

8. Special considerations

HFMA recognises that candidates may suffer from a temporary illness or other serious and unforeseen event or set of circumstances which adversely affects their ability to complete an assessment or the results they obtain for an assessment. In such cases special consideration may be applied.

Candidates will need to provide evidence of the circumstances requiring special consideration, preferably as soon as they occur, but no later than 7 days in advance of the assignment deadline.

Examples of special consideration may include:

- significant physical or psychological illness
- severe personal difficulties
- serious illness or death of a member of your immediate family (e.g. mother, father, sister, brother, son, daughter)
- sudden deterioration in a long standing medical condition or disability
- being the victim of a serious crime
- legal proceedings requiring attendance at court.

The following would not normally be accepted as a special consideration:

- failure to read the assessment timetable or deadline properly
- pressure of work

- failure to save work properly
- minor illnesses or self-induced conditions (colds, hangovers etc.)
- religious festivals
- domestic or personal disruptions which may have been anticipated (e.g. moving house, holidays etc.)
- sporting fixtures

Applying for a special consideration

Please complete the special considerations form online as soon as possible and within 7 days of the assignment due date or at the same time as submitting the assignment, whichever is sooner to qualifications@hfma.org.uk. You will need to include documentary evidence in support of your claim.

HFMA will then consider the application and respond within 14 working days about the outcome of the application and whether the special consideration is granted.

Appeals against mitigating circumstances decisions

Candidates may appeal against decisions for mitigating circumstances.

Applications should include:

- Centre name (if applicable)
- Candidate name
- Qualification title and level
- Date of the examination/assessment
- Summary of the temporary illness or indisposition affecting the candidate's performance
- Any medical evidence to support the application

HFMA Application for reasonable adjustments

Please note this form should be read in conjunction with the published Reasonable Adjustments and Special Considerations Policy. All sections of the form should be completed.

Please post or email the completed form for the attention of the Head of Awarding Organisation clearly marked as an application for Reasonable Adjustment.

Postal address:

HFMA
1 Temple Way
Bristol
BS2 0BU

E-mail: qualifications@hfma.org.uk

Name of candidate _____

Date of request: _____

Candidate number _____

Unique learner number (if obtained) _____

Module/qualification for which Reasonable Adjustment is being requested:

Date of assessment

Name of person completing the form (if not the candidate):

Job title/position of responsibility (if not the candidate):

Please state:

1. The nature of the disability/learning need (please continue on a separate sheet if necessary)

2. The special assessment arrangements requested (this should be completed in conjunction with the suggested arrangements in the published policy document)

3. Please provide any evidence to support this application (copies are acceptable). Examples of evidence could be a relevant diagnostic report or statement of learning needs or medical condition from appropriately qualified personnel.

PLEASE NOTE:

Requests for modified external assessment papers must be made at least 15 working days prior to the agreed external assessment date.

Requests for external assessment papers in Braille must be made 30 days prior to the external assessment date.

Office use only

Date form received: _____

Information attached? YES/NO



If no date further information requested _____

Approved? YES/NO

If no, please state reasons:

If yes, date approved _____

Date response sent: _____

Special consideration form

Please use this form to apply for special consideration as defined by the special considerations policy.

Please ensure that you apply for special consideration as soon as you become aware of an issue that would require a special consideration. This form should be submitted no later than 7 days after the assessment deadline.

Candidate information	
Candidate name	
Candidate number	
Year of study	

Assessment information				
Module code	Module title	Type of assessment	Submission deadline	Did you attempt this work?

Special consideration
Please set out clearly and concisely details of the circumstances that you believe have affected your performance in the assessment:
Please provide the precise details of the period(s) affected by your circumstances:
Please list the supporting evidence you have attached to this form in support of your application for special consideration:

Date of submission of this form:
Signature:

Office use only



Date form received: _____

Information attached? YES/NO

If no, date further information requested _____

Approved? YES/NO

If no, please state reasons:

If yes, date approved _____

Date response sent: _____