

ACL Training Assessment Policy

1. Introduction

The aim of this policy is to define the assessment policy for trainee costs lawyers. The design of the units requires students to undertake 6 modules per year that range from 5-20 credit modules meaning that assessments need to be rapid, targeted and supportive as well as evaluative. For these reasons, the assessment practice must remain within reasonably constrained limits whilst recognising the need to allow a full range of capabilities and knowledge to be demonstrated.

2. Guiding Principles

The assessment strategy should be simple, clearly defined and linked to learning outcomes. The assessment regime defined for a module must be appropriate to the subject, level and characteristics being tested. The approach to assessment must be clear to the student and must demonstrate that both capabilities and knowledge are being demonstrated.

In order to qualify as a costs lawyer, students must have demonstrated a level of competence as agreed between the CLSB and ACLT known as the threshold. That threshold is summarised in a single statement as being:

a competent trainee having completed the costs lawyer qualification and 3 years of work based learning will have a good working and background knowledge of costs law and practice, will be able to work independently to draft documentation and conduct advocacy that is fit for purpose, and will be able to cope with complex situations through deliberate analysis and planning.

This level of performance will be evidenced through assignments, examination and supervised practice.

The complexity of the subject matter defines the level rather than the volume of assessment. The following table is to act as guidance only:

Assessment description	Assessment points	Rationale
1-hour examination, this may be seen or unseen papers, computer based assessments or phase tests.	1	A 1-hour paper needs approximately 9 hours of revision and preparation.
1000 original words	1	The preparation and thinking behind 100 words of writing should take of the order of 10 hours.
Case study review or critique of between 1000 words	1	The preparation and thinking behind 100 words of writing should take of the order of 10 hours.

The volume of the assessment should be defined according to the above assessment types and tariff and should comply with an overall volume associated with the stage of the course. Assessment must be returned to the student with both summative and formative elements of feedback within 21 working days of submission.

3. Strategy

Each type or mode of assessment will be defined on a points based system with a rationale to explain the parity of assessment types and tariff and should comply with an overall volume associated with the stage of the course.

Units 1 and 2 within the Costs Lawyer Qualification are 45 CATS which equates to 450 GLH. Students will be provided with up to 162 hours of on-line teaching, tutorial support and through face to face seminars. At this level of study it is reasonable to expect a similar or slightly greater volume of self and externally guided study this is likely to be of the order of 225 hours. This then leaves 63 hours for assessment.

Units 3 within the Costs Lawyer Qualification is 90 CATS which equates to 900 GLH. Students will be provided with up to 324 hours of on-line teaching, tutorial support and through face to face seminars. At this level of study it is reasonable to expect a similar or slightly greater volume of self and externally guided study this is likely to be of the order of 450 hours. This then leaves 126 hours for assessment.

This policy, taking the examination as the baseline definition, defines a 1 hour examination as requiring some 9 hours of preparation and it is on this basis that the tariff of assessment types should be built. A piece of writing that equates to 1000 original words could also be characterised as a 10 hour activity and hence we arrive at the definition of 1 assessment point being equal to 10 hours of student activity.

4. Distribution of assessment components, reassessment and eligibility to be reassessed

Any formally assessed module within ACL Training will be constituted of 1 assessment component, 1 written assignment. The 6 modules and their requisite assignments will

equate to 40% of the unit grade, the specific weighting of each is determined by the credit value of that module. Each unit will also be assessed by a 3 hour closed book unseen synoptic examination amounting to 60% of the unit grade. The examination will require students to demonstrate they have met the programme outcomes applicable to that stage of the course.

A student must attempt the assignment and examination component of a module in order to be entitled to be reassessed in a module or unit, should the need arise. Late submission of work, within the boundaries of the module operational period, will be accepted for attempt recording but any work submitted after the formally declared due date will be scored at 0%.

The pass mark for all Module Assignments and end of Unit Exam is 50%:

49% (inclusive) and below: Fail

50% (inclusive) to 59% (inclusive): Pass

60% (inclusive) to 69% (inclusive): Pass with merit

70% (inclusive) and over: Pass with distinction

Reassessment of the assignment components of assessment would normally take place during the assessment period of the following module. This means that a student would be expected to undertake two written assignments during the following module.

5 Supervised Practice

To achieve Costs Lawyer status, a competent trainee will have successfully completed the Costs Lawyer qualification, have achieved 3 years relevant work experience in costs law and practice and have been granted a practicing certificate by the CLSB. They will have a sound working (and background) knowledge of costs law, practice and procedure to enable them to work independently to prepare costs related documentation and conduct advocacy on costs related matters that may be complex in nature. Further, they will understand the regulatory framework and standard of professional conduct expected of a Costs Lawyer.