PIABC Level 3 Certificate in Packaging

(Qualification Number: 610/0741/9)

Assignment Guidance Notes

Updated: 10 October 2024

WHAT IS AN ASSIGNMENT?

You are allowed a degree of freedom in how you present your assignment.

It is important to note that the assignment is NOT:

- A report that you would produce as a consultant

- A description of the latest developments in your organisation

- A textbook or manual

- A narrative history of your company's successes or failures

An assignment is much more than any of the above and should meet the following requirements:

- It should demonstrate that you are able to relate the theory you have learned during your certificate studies to the topic

- It should show that you can research in depth and demonstrate understanding and logical argument

STRUCTURE AND APPROACH

Your assignment should:

- Contain a beginning, middle and an end

- Contain accurate referencing

- Be your own work

- Relevant use of experience and consultation with others, adding to the quality of the content or argument

An **introduction** – what is it you are investigating or debating and why. A description of the **method** – describe how you tackled the assignment, what methods you used and any difficulties you encountered. The **middle** will include – **results** – what did you find? **Discussion** – this means the main part of the work – what are your findings/research what does it all mean. The end section will include – Your **conclusions** or solution. What can be learned from your work?

At the end of your assignment there should be – references in the form of a **bibliography**. This is an alphabetical list of books and articles cited in your assignment. PIABC recommend that candidates use the Harvard referencing method.

ASSIGNMENT – PRODUCTION REQUIREMENTS

The suggested word guidance is 3,000 words (excluding appendices & and references).

The work should be A4 and be in Arial font size 12 with double line spacing.

Pages should be numbered.

The assignment should have your candidate number, PIABC Level 3 Certificate in Packaging (QN: 610/0741/9), submission date, and page number in the footer at the bottom of each page.

Your name should NOT appear anywhere on your assignment.

You need to submit an assignment covering sheet along with your completed assignment, which is available from your centre co-ordinator.

In submitting the covering sheet, you are confirming that you have complied with the following statement:

"I declare that this assignment is my own work. Where sources such as the internet, books and the work of others has been used; these sources have been fully acknowledged within the text and included in the references and bibliography on the last page. Any assistance given by others has been included in the acknowledgements."

The covering sheet must be signed and submitted as a PDF.

An assignment submitted without this signed covering sheet will not be accepted.

The assignment (in word format) and the covering sheet must be submitted by email to your registered centre. If your registered centre does not acknowledge receipt within 7 days, then please resend and copy PIABC Limited (piabc@iom3.org) into the email.

ORIGINALITY AND PLAGIARISM

There are several definitions of plagiarism, but they all have in common the idea of taking someone else's intellectual effort and presenting it as one's own. The Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) define plagiarism as: *"unacknowledged copying from, or reproduction of, third party sources or incomplete referencing (including the internet and AI tools)"*.

PIABC regards plagiarism as a very serious issue. Plagiarism refers to a candidate copying work and submitting it as their own. This can involve published resources (whether in print or on the internet), AI-generated content, essays, or pieces of work previously submitted for assessments by others or manufactured artefacts. Copying can involve memorisation and reproduction of text.

In practice, severe cases are rare, but the following are examples:

- Downloading information/whole sections of text from the web, without reference to the original source or using quotation marks and without using the material to answer the question or to support your argument.
- Quoting, re-writing or scanning information from books, journal articles, etc., again without adequate reference.
- Copying information from colleagues and including this as if it were your own work (whether modified or not), e.g. individual reports, tutorial assignments, coursework scripts.
- Published resources (whether in print or on the internet), AI-generated content, essays, or pieces of work previously submitted for assessments by others or manufactured artefacts. Copying can involve memorisation and reproduction of text.

While discussing others work is an important part of your research the information must be referenced properly and written in your own words or put into quotation marks. It is difficult to produce definitive guidelines for exactly what is or is not acceptable. To avoid any misunderstanding, always put quotations from other authors within quotation marks and give full references to every source you use, even if you are not quoting directly from it.

All work, statements, images, charts or ideas that you present as your own (i.e. not referenced) must be you own work.

Plagiarism also incorporates the direct and unacknowledged translation of foreign language texts into English.

PIABC regards this as cheating and it can have serious consequences, even if it is unintentional. All suspected cases of plagiarism will be referred to the Business Compliance and Administration Manager for investigation. Based on the evidence obtained, a decision will be made in terms of what penalty, or penalties (see below) will be imposed, and this shall be reported to the PIABC's Packaging Assessment Board. PIABC has guidelines on the penalties that can be imposed:

a) Evidence of plagiarism involving scripts containing minor components of information from third-party sources, without referencing.	Up to a 50% reduction in project marks.
b) Evidence of plagiarism involving scripts containing major components of information from third-party sources, without referencing.	Up to a 100% reduction in project marks and a ban on submitting project for a fixed or indefinite period.

Judgements of what is "minor" and "major" are at PIABC's discretion.

Candidates are required to sign a cover sheet that declares that the assignment is their own work, and any sources used or assistance from others has all been acknowledged.

The citing and referencing section below provide guidance for candidates when using someone else's work within their assignment.

Candidates need to submit with their assignment with a covering sheet, which a candidate should confirm that they have complied with the following statement:

"I declare that this assignment is my own work. Where sources such as the internet, books and the work of others has been used; these sources have been fully acknowledged within the text and included in the references and bibliography on the last page. Any assistance given by others has been included in the acknowledgements."

CITING AND REFERENCING

What?
Candidates must cite and reference all images, tables, illustrations, and graphs taken from printed or internet sources, as well as blogs, e-mails, wikis, conversations, TV and radio broadcasts, plus all statements, opinions, conclusions, etc. taken from another writer's work, whether the work is directly quoted, paraphrased or summarised.

How is citing and referencing done in a work-based project?
PIABC recommends that candidates use the standard Harvard reference system. There are two elements to the Harvard system:

1.   In-text citations

Where do they go?
In-text citations occur within the main body of the work-based report.

What info is included?
An in-text citation gives brief information about the source; the author, the date, and the page number (if appropriate).

How to create in-text citations
Within the text, within brackets:

- Give the author's surname, or the corporate author, organisation, artist, or editor if there is no author (e.g., Smith, Microsoft, Welsh Government).
- Give the year the source was produced (e.g., 2020).
- Give the page numbers if quoted, paraphrased, or summarised words or ideas on a specific page of the source. However, if summarising what an author has argued in an entire book or article, then do not give page numbers.
- If the author's name is used in the sentence, there is no need to put in the brackets, just the year and page number, if appropriate.

Examples of citing within text:

Quoting directly:
Jones argues that land fill sites are "not cost efficient" (2019: 48).

Paraphrasing:
Jones argues that land fill sites are expensive and inefficient (2019: 48).

Summarising an entire book or article:
A recent study reveals new information about child poverty in Scotland (Davidson 2018).

2.   Bibliography

Where do they go?
A bibliography is a list of references which is included on a separate page at the end of the work-based report.

What info is included?
It gives full details of the source and provides enough information for readers to locate it.

How to create a bibliography
A bibliography should contain all the sources that have been cited in the work-based project and should appear on a separate page at the end. The list should be organised in alphabetical order according to the surname of the author.

Examples of how to create a bibliography:

For a website:
Author, A. (year of publication/ update) *Website or Resource Title* [online]. Available from <URL> [Day Month Year]
Smith, J (2020 *Using the Harvard system* [online]. Available from <http://www.bournemouth.ac.uk/servicesdepts/lis/LIS-pub/harvardsyst.htm> [16th Dec 2009]

For a book:
Author, A. (year of publication) *Book Title* Nth edition. Place of publication: Publisher
Ball, M. (1997) *Consulting with Parents: Guidance for practice* 2nd ed. Edinburgh: National Press

ASSESSMENT AND MARKING

Candidates can submit their assignments at any time throughout the year via their centre.

The assignment will be marked against a criterion reference scheme of fail, pass, merit, and distinction. Copy is available from your centre co-ordinator.

The assignment will be graded fail, pass (50-59%), merit (60-69%), and distinction (70%+).

For example:

	Pass 50-59%	Merit 60-69%	Distinction 70%+
How the pack meets the functions of packaging.	Basic points are discussed on how the pack meets the functions of packaging.	Detailed key points are discussed with some explanations on how the pack meets the functions of packaging and why.	Detailed key points and evaluative explanation on how the pack meets the functions of packaging and why.