

Case study grade descriptors – how can they help me?

The case study grade descriptors are available to help you understand your case study exam results feedback across the competencies.

Your results

When you get your case study results you will see;

1. An overall grade (Pass/Fail)
2. A scaled score between 0 – 150 (80 or above represents a pass)
3. Sectional Feedback (this gives you an indication of how you performed against each of the four competencies and integration)

To pass your case study exam you need to score 80 or above AND reach a minimum threshold score for each competency and 'integration'. To receive the grade 'moderate' in a competency you must score somewhere between (approximately) one-third and two-thirds (33% to 67%) of the available marks for that competency.

The competencies that you will be graded against are:

Technical skills

Business skills

People skills

Leadership skills

The only exception to this is for the Operational level case study where the marks available for Leadership and Integration are only a small proportion of those available and so it would not be meaningful to set a minimum threshold. No candidate will fail at Operational level on Leadership or Integration for this reason.

Your Sectional Feedback

When you get your results the sectional feedback looks at how you performed against each of the four competencies (Technical, Business, People and Leadership skills) and Integration.

This is all aligned to the CGMA Competency Framework and reflects the knowledge and skills employers told us they expect to see from finance professionals, at various

levels in their organisations. The framework is what sets the CIMA Professional Qualification, and you as a CIMA student, apart from other similar qualifications.

Success in the Case Study exams demonstrates your all round competence and employability. Successfully passing your case study exams gives employers the reassurance of your workplace readiness and that you are equipped with the appropriate skills and abilities to perform well in your role. Whether that's as a Finance Officer (Operational level), Business/Finance Manager (Management level/CIMA Gateway) or CFO/ Senior Business/Finance Manager (Strategic level).

It's important that you demonstrate your ability across the four competencies as well as scoring enough marks to pass the case study exam.

For each competency you will receive a performance rating of either Fail, Moderate or Strong.

Read these guides for more information:

[Understanding your Operational case study results](#)

[Understanding your Management case study results](#)

[Understanding your Gateway case study results](#)

[Understanding your Strategic case study results](#)

The grade descriptors

The grade descriptors map the performance ratings (Fail, Moderate and Strong) against each competency (and integration).

They are a very useful and objective way of describing the standards of achievement likely to have been demonstrated by candidates at each level of performance.

The grade descriptors are based on the skills and/or abilities expected for different roles. They are part of a holistic system which recognises links between categories and progression between levels. Few of you are likely to be "moderate" or "strong" across or even within all competences. Most exam performance will be a mixture of the categories. Your final result will reflect where you sit overall. Remember, a good in depth answer to all parts of the task requirements will hit the competencies and integration and is the best way to prepare to pass.

How should I use the grade descriptors?

The descriptors at each level are applicable across all variants and case study sessions and they offer a consistent way to feedback on your performance in the exam. Essentially they show you what you are aiming for and will help identify where your

performance in an individual competency may have fallen short of the general standard for the level of case study you sat.

They are best used in conjunction with the syllabus content and all other study resources available for the case study exams. When preparing for the exam, you can use them to benchmark your performance and see what you need to achieve to become “exam ready”.

If you have performed strongly across all competencies, the grade descriptors will highlight what you should continue to do and which skills you can build on for future exams.

Download the grade descriptors for each case study exam:

[Operational case study grade descriptors](#)

[Management/Gateway case study grade descriptors](#)

[Strategic case study grade descriptors](#)