HCDI Certified Independent Reviewer

Level 4

Expanded study text and illustrated case workbook

English edition 1.0

22 October 2026

Based on the HCDI Certification Curriculum pilot. Approved by the Director on 22 October 2026. This book is not an HCDI-issued credential, and reading it confers no credential or engagement authority. All Methodology Protected units are reference-only.

Text edition. The PDF was typeset from the book's text rather than exported from the approved Word file, and its figures were drawn for this edition from the book's own words. It stands until the corrected book replaces it.

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Purpose and scope

This book develops the public teaching content in the supplied pilot through explanation, source case studies, original fictional exercises, tables and conceptual figures. It retains the source chapter and unit order. Its purpose is to help a reader distinguish an observed fact, an interpretation and an authorised act. Reading or completing its exercises confers no credential or engagement authority.

Certification attests competence. Assignment is HCDI-controlled: the holder never reviews an engagement delivered by their own firm, never selects the engagements they review, and is never nominated by the delivering partner. Independence attestation on file.

Where the scheme stands. No HCDI credential has been issued, and none can be issued today. Level 4 is a proposed pathway, subject to job-analysis validation, and its assessment components are not yet set out. The knowledge pass mark is not yet set, and results are not released until it is adopted. The public register is not yet open. The certificate's statement about the scheme's operator and accreditation position is held, and this book says nothing for or against it.

Reading the evidence labels

Label	Meaning in this book
Supplied pilot	Source-derived account with physical PDF locator. The pilot is draft and not HCDI-approved.
General professional knowledge	Editorial explanation, not an HCDI requirement or instrument.
External reference	Named research or professional publication with a reference ID. It does not validate HCDI.
Original fictional exercise	Invented organisation and facts for learning; not an observed company or empirical dataset.
Source fictional case	A case reproduced or reformatted from the supplied pilot, with its original case identifier.
Conceptual figure	Original illustration of a relationship or public role distinction; not a protected calculation.

Source status and editorial boundaries

References to controlled documents not supplied here are indirect. No unseen controlled document, live register, accreditation record or production platform was verified. Source dates describe the pilot rather than an independently confirmed current state.

The source file is HCDI-Pilot-Level-4-Independent-Reviewer-Complete.pdf. It is identified as Edition 1.0 pilot, Candidate for HCDI Approval, with PUBLIC classification proposed. It includes a candidate manual, a three-case pilot casebook and 30 sandbox practice items. References below use physical PDF pages rather than the separate printed page counters within those components.

The pilot reports unresolved accreditation wording and an unset knowledge pass mark. Higher-level assessment rubrics or supervised-practice details are also not fully set out. These gaps remain gaps. No pass mark, accreditation claim, required engagement count or new eligibility rule is invented. The pilot practice items are draft learning material, not a validated examination or a credential award.

The Level 4 pathway is proposed and subject to job-analysis validation. Routes for communicating a refusal and for conduct concerns outside the assessment are held in the pilot. No substitute escalation procedure is taught.

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Chapter 5. Access and confidentiality

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Chapter 7. Reviewing the whole assessment

Chapter 8. Professional scepticism and bias

Chapter 9. Evidence conflicts and how they were handled

Chapter 10. Release conditions and where the review sits

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Chapter 14. Integrity, status, and the report you can point to

Part C Curriculum units in original order

Unit 4.1 - Independence and the limitation block

Unit 4.2 - How an assignment is made and revoked

Unit 4.3 - Access and confidentiality

Unit 4.4 - Reviewing the whole assessment

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Unit 4.9 - The issued report's independence statements

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Unit 4.11 - Testing scores and conclusions against the methodology | METHODOLOGY PROTECTED

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Part D Source casebook; Part E Sandbox questions; Part F Sandbox answers; Part G Original exercise answers; Part H Professional reading notes and laboratories; Part I Reference and source maps.

Part A Orientation

Part A - Orientation

Basis: HCDI governance rule and HCDI platform rule (Edition 0.3, Level 4 document).

A1. Who this is for Experienced practitioners who review another firm's HCDI assessment before its report issues, on engagements HCDI assigns to them

A2. Two reviewers, not one The assigned Independent Reviewer is one named reviewer per assessment, from outside the delivering Firm. It is not the same thing as the "Internal Reviewer", which is an HCDI role. The approved text says the two are easily confused, and that you should not confuse them. Chapter 2 sets them side by side

A3. What the Independent Reviewer does Reads the whole assessment, read-only, and records the review completion. That is the reviewer's one act

A4. What the Independent Reviewer never does Review its own firm's engagement, select an engagement, be nominated by the delivering partner, or change anything on the assessment

A5. Entry (proposed) An independence attestation on file, supervised practice (the number of engagements set by the Scheme Committee [interim value, subject to ratification]), and performance components that are not yet set out. No HCDI-delivered training is required to sit the examination (interim, subject to ratification)

A6. The Committee's basis for supervised practice "An Independent Reviewer refuses issuance. Refusing well requires having seen enough

issuances to know what normal looks like." What counts as a supervised engagement, and who supervises, is not set out in this edition

A7. What a Level 4 reviewer needs from Levels 2 and 3 A reviewer judges other people's evidence and leadership. The Level 2 and Level 3 manuals are the ground

A9. Assessment Not yet set out. Study is self-paced, but assessments are taken at events the Scheme arranges [sitting windows set by the Scheme Committee]

A10. How to use this manual Self-paced. Read a unit, answer its self-check questions without your notes, and go on. Book when you judge you are ready. No one signs you off

A11. The shape of the manual

How to study

Read a chapter and distinguish its source-derived content from the general discussion. Attempt the fictional exercise before reading Part G. For a source case, state the facts before the judgement and identify the actor with authority. Complete the sandbox questions before consulting Part F. A wrong answer is useful when its explanation reveals a scope or evidence error. No study score is a scheme pass mark.

Part B Chapters

The first six chapters place independent review inside assignment, relationship and confidentiality controls. Chapters 7 to 9 focus on reading the whole record, questioning assumptions and recognising the reserved conflict-resolution role. Chapters 10 to 14 examine release, completion, staleness, the held refusal route, remediation safeguards and accurate reporting of the review arrangement.

The chapter exercises test scope literacy rather than protected methodology evaluation. Identify what the reviewer is permitted to read, what the reviewer must not change and which other role owns a decision. A belief that an answer is obvious creates no additional authority. Where the pilot leaves a procedure held, retain the gap instead of copying a familiar process from another profession. The Level 4 pathway remains proposed in the supplied source, and this book establishes neither current accreditation nor entitlement to an assignment.

Chapter 1. Independence is controlled, not chosen

Source basis - S4, physical PDF page 7.

HCDI governance rule (Unit 4.1); general professional knowledge. Independence is not a feeling and not a promise. It is a set of conditions that someone else controls. The three conditions in the limitation block are: never one's own firm's engagement, never self-selected, and never nominated by the delivering partner. The independence attestation sits on file. The control belongs to HCDI, and not to the reviewer or the partner, because both have an interest. A reviewer who picks the engagements may pick the easy ones. A partner who picks the reviewer may pick a friendly one. Certification attests competence. It does not create a right to be assigned.

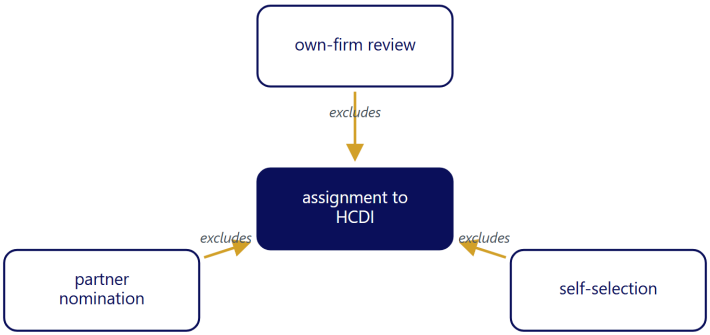
Governance Boundary. A reviewer's availability is not a qualification for an assignment, and the reviewer's wish for one is irrelevant to it.

Independence depends on selection controls

Basis - general professional knowledge and editorial explanation. External references are identified explicitly; this section adds no HCDI rule.

Personal confidence is not independence. Selection by a party with an interest can create pressure before any review begins. The public source reserves assignment to HCDI and excludes own-firm review, self-selection and partner nomination. A credential establishes no entitlement to an assignment.

FIGURE 4.1



Drawn for the text edition from the book's text

Figure 4.1 Independence depends on selection controls. Original conceptual illustration; arrows organise the discussion and do not establish a validated causal effect or a scoring procedure.

Original exercise L4 E01

Basis - original fictional exercise. The organisation, events and any numbers are invented for learning. No HCDI result is assigned.

A delivering partner asks a friendly Level 4 holder to review a difficult engagement privately.

Analytical task	Learner response required
Observation	Identify what the stated record directly establishes.
Inference	State the interpretation that still needs support.

Alternative	Identify a plausible alternative or missing context.
Authority	Identify the relevant credential or role boundary.

Question - Can the holder accept because they feel impartial?

Worked answer: Part G, exercise L4 E01.

Chapter 2. Two reviewers: the Independent Reviewer and the Internal Reviewer

Source basis - S4, physical PDF page 7.

HCDI governance rule (Level 4 document, section 1; Units 4.8 and 4.10). Assigned Independent Reviewer Internal Reviewer

What it is A credential holder, one named person per assessment, from outside the delivering Firm An HCDI role Who appoints HCDI Compliance assigns It is HCDI's own

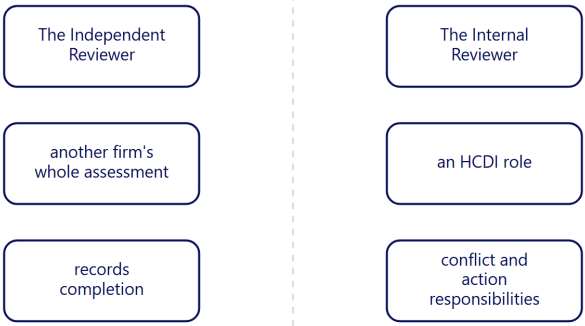
What it does Reads the whole assessment read-only, and records the review completion Resolves evidence conflicts, approves corrective actions, records a check where a Firm offers services in an action's area, and confirms a status change or an integrity closure On a Founding Six engagement Never assigned Records the review, and has no role on the engagement The approved text warns that the two are easily confused. A colleague who says "the reviewer will resolve that conflict" may mean either, and only one of them can. Common Error. Telling a client that the Independent Reviewer resolved an evidence conflict. Only the Internal Reviewer resolves one.

Two reviewer roles have different powers

Basis - general professional knowledge and editorial explanation. External references are identified explicitly; this section adds no HCDI rule.

Similar names can conceal different authority. The Independent Reviewer reads another firm's whole assessment and records completion. The Internal Reviewer is an HCDI role with source-defined conflict and action responsibilities. Do not infer additional powers from seniority or the word reviewer.

FIGURE 4.2



Drawn for the text edition from the book's text

Figure 4.2 Two reviewer roles have different powers. Original conceptual illustration; arrows organise the discussion and do not establish a validated causal effect or a scoring procedure.

Original exercise L4 E02

Basis - original fictional exercise. The organisation, events and any numbers are invented for learning. No HCDI result is assigned.

An Independent Reviewer finds a source conflict and is asked to resolve it because they are the most experienced person present.

Analytical task	Learner response required

Observation	Identify what the stated record directly establishes.
Inference	State the interpretation that still needs support.
Alternative	Identify a plausible alternative or missing context.
Authority	Identify the relevant credential or role boundary.

Question - Which role distinction matters?

Worked answer: Part G, exercise L4 E02.

Chapter 3. Own-firm exclusion, nomination and reviewer-shopping

Source basis - S4, physical PDF page 8.

HCDI platform rule (Unit 4.2); general professional knowledge. HCDI Compliance assigns. The reviewer's Level 4 credential must verify as ACTIVE at the time of assignment. An assignment is never made to someone from the delivering Firm, to a platform administrator, or on a Founding Six engagement, and never after the assessment is finalized. The engagement team sees who reviews each assessment, and it cannot assign or choose. Revocation needs a reason. It ends access at once, and any recorded review goes stale. A replacement without a reason, in the approved text's words, "is indistinguishable from reviewer-shopping". Reviewer-shopping is replacing a reviewer until one is found who will say yes.

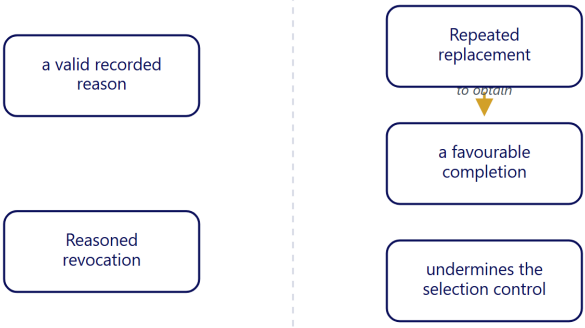
Red Flag. A delivering partner who asks which reviewer would be "best placed" for their assessment.

Replacement can threaten independence

Basis - general professional knowledge and editorial explanation. External references are identified explicitly; this section adds no HCDI rule.

An assignment can end for a valid recorded reason. Repeated replacement to obtain a favourable completion undermines the selection control. Reasoned revocation and immediate access consequences matter separately. This is the pilot public arrangement, not a newly designed appeal procedure.

FIGURE 4.3



Drawn for the text edition from the book's text

Figure 4.3 Replacement can threaten independence. Original conceptual illustration; arrows organise the discussion and do not establish a validated causal effect or a scoring procedure.

Original exercise L4 E03

Basis - original fictional exercise. The organisation, events and any numbers are invented for learning. No HCDI result is assigned.

A team dislikes a reviewer's questions and requests replacement without a reason.

Analytical task	Learner response required
Observation	Identify what the stated record directly establishes.
Inference	State the interpretation that still needs support.

Alternative	Identify a plausible alternative or missing context.
Authority	Identify the relevant credential or role boundary.

Question - What concern arises?

Worked answer: Part G, exercise L4 E03.

Chapter 4. Conflicts, relationships and prior work

Source basis - S4, physical PDF page 8.

general professional knowledge. The approved text states only the three conditions and the attestation. Independence can be compromised in ways the three conditions do not name: a financial relationship with the assessed company or the delivering Firm, earlier advisory work for either, a prospect of follow-on work, or a close personal tie. The three conditions are a floor, not a full account. The professional habit is to declare any relationship that could bear on independence to the party that controls assignment, before accepting an assignment and not afterwards. Under the approved text that party is HCDI Compliance. Whether a particular relationship disqualifies a reviewer is for HCDI to decide, and not for the reviewer.

Evidence Check. Ask whether an informed observer, knowing everything you know, would doubt your independence. If they might, say so.

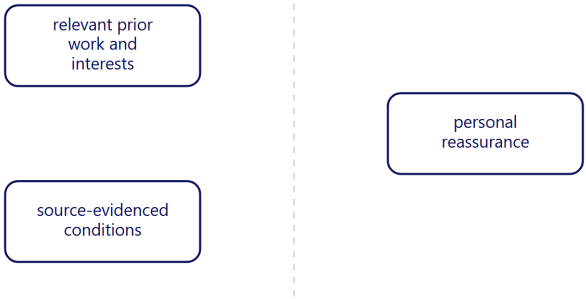
Prior relationships require disclosure

Basis - general professional knowledge and editorial explanation. External references are identified explicitly; this section adds no HCDI rule.

Relationships can affect judgement without conscious dishonesty. Identify relevant prior work and interests rather than relying on personal reassurance. General independence concepts do not invent a

cooling-off period, financial threshold or undisclosed HCDI eligibility test. Apply only source-evidenced conditions.

FIGURE 4.4



Drawn for the text edition from the book's text

Figure 4.4 Prior relationships require disclosure. Original conceptual illustration; arrows organise the discussion and do not establish a validated causal effect or a scoring procedure.

Original exercise L4 E04

Basis - original fictional exercise. The organisation, events and any numbers are invented for learning. No HCDI result is assigned.

A reviewer previously advised the target and recognises a former colleague in the draft. The reviewer says familiarity will improve efficiency.

Analytical task	Learner response required
Observation	Identify what the stated record directly establishes.

Inference	State the interpretation that still needs support.
Alternative	Identify a plausible alternative or missing context.
Authority	Identify the relevant credential or role boundary.

Question - What is missing?

Worked answer: Part G, exercise L4 E04.

Chapter 5. Access and confidentiality

Source basis - S4, physical PDF page 8.

HCDI platform rule (Unit 4.3). Only the live assignee opens the assignment, with two-factor authentication on. Anyone else is told only that it was not found. No price, Order Form or invoice reaches the reviewer. After issuance the working material leaves the reviewer's view, and the issued report stays. Never share the page address. Never forward a draft to the client.

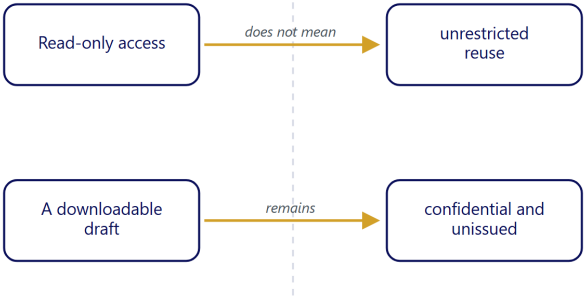
Governance Boundary. A draft is watermarked and is not an issued report. Forwarding one lets a client act on something that has not been reviewed.

Access serves a defined purpose

Basis - general professional knowledge and editorial explanation. External references are identified explicitly; this section adds no HCDI rule.

Read-only access does not mean unrestricted reuse. A downloadable draft remains confidential and unissued. Page addresses can expose access context. The source removes working material after issuance while retaining the issued report. Do not reconstruct access through shared credentials or forwarded links.

FIGURE 4.5



Drawn for the text edition from the book's text

Figure 4.5 Access serves a defined purpose. Original conceptual illustration; arrows organise the discussion and do not establish a validated causal effect or a scoring procedure.

Original exercise L4 E05

Basis - original fictional exercise. The organisation, events and any numbers are invented for learning. No HCDI result is assigned.

A reviewer sends a watermarked draft to a client executive to reassure them that review is nearly complete.

Analytical task	Learner response required
Observation	Identify what the stated record directly establishes.
Inference	State the interpretation that still needs support.

Alternative	Identify a plausible alternative or missing context.
Authority	Identify the relevant credential or role boundary.

Question - Does the watermark authorise sharing?

Worked answer: Part G, exercise L4 E05.

Chapter 6. Inside information and the reviewer

Source basis - S4, physical PDF page 9.

general professional knowledge. This chapter gives no legal advice. A reviewer reads material about companies, some of them listed or preparing to list, before their reports issue. Information that is not public and could affect a company's securities may carry legal restrictions on use and disclosure. The restrictions differ between jurisdictions, and this chapter does not state them. The professional position is simple. Treat everything in an assignment as confidential, use it only for the review, and take advice from counsel on your own legal obligations. If you are unsure whether something is restricted, treat it as if it were.

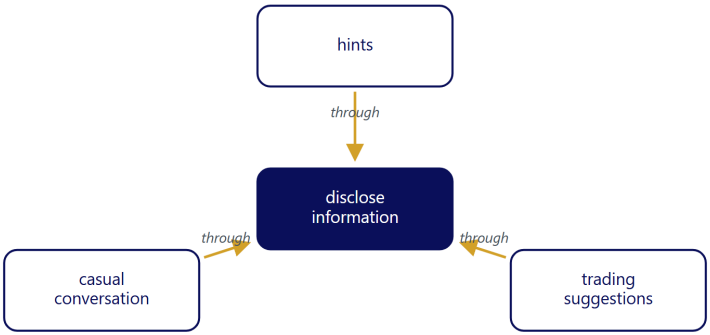
Red Flag. A friend or relative asking about a company you are reviewing.

Sensitive information can be misused indirectly

Basis - general professional knowledge and editorial explanation. External references are identified explicitly; this section adds no HCDI rule.

A person can disclose information through hints, trading suggestions or casual conversation without sending a document. Confidential review material must be used for the authorised purpose. This chapter states general professional restraint, not jurisdiction-specific legal duties or an insider-trading opinion.

FIGURE 4.6



Drawn for the text edition from the book's text

Figure 4.6 Sensitive information can be misused indirectly. Original conceptual illustration; arrows organise the discussion and do not establish a validated causal effect or a scoring procedure.

Original exercise L4 E06

Basis - original fictional exercise. The organisation, events and any numbers are invented for learning. No HCDI result is assigned.

A relative asks whether a reviewed company's forthcoming transaction is likely to proceed and offers to trade on the answer.

Analytical task	Learner response required
Observation	Identify what the stated record directly establishes.
Inference	State the interpretation that still needs support.

Alternative	Identify a plausible alternative or missing context.
Authority	Identify the relevant credential or role boundary.

Question - What should the reviewer do?

Worked answer: Part G, exercise L4 E06.

Chapter 7. Reviewing the whole assessment

Source basis - S4, physical PDF page 9.

HCDI platform rule (Unit 4.4). You read everything: overall result and coverage, how much is scored, how much is evidenced but unscored, and how much could not be evidenced. Not evidenced is never a low score and leaves every denominator. You read every party's actions, because the review is of the whole assessment. You read the recorded rationale and the action text, and you edit neither. You read the not-evidenced indicators and the action written for each. Draft reports are watermarked and are not issued reports. A corrective action carries a materiality, a response type, a timing, an accountable function, the implementation instrument, and approval in English and in Arabic with the equivalence check. The reviewer reads these in order to understand the action, and tests them against the methodology in a unit that is Methodology Protected (Unit 4.12).

Indexer Perspective. You are reading work that someone else did under pressure. Read it as they would want a stranger to read it: for what it says and not for what it is meant to say.

Whole-assessment reading prevents selective comfort

Basis - general professional knowledge and editorial explanation. External references are identified explicitly; this section adds no HCDI rule.

A convincing conclusion can draw attention away from gaps, parties or actions. Read what supports the conclusion and what limits it.

Keep evidenced-but-unscored and not-evidenced matters distinct. The review is read-only; understanding a weakness does not authorise editing its rationale.

FIGURE 4.7

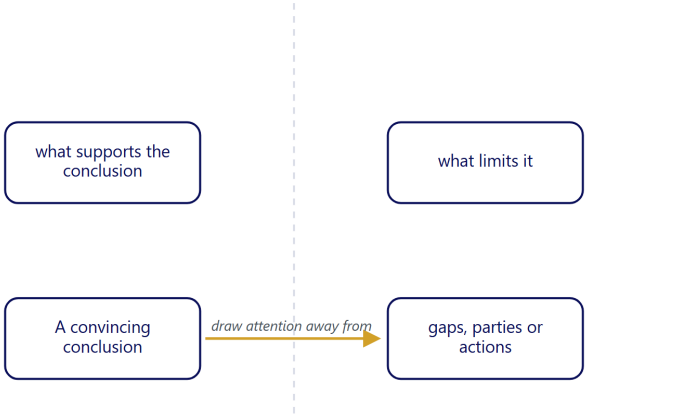


Figure 4.7 Whole-assessment reading prevents selective comfort. Original conceptual illustration; arrows organise the discussion and do not establish a validated causal effect or a scoring procedure.

Original exercise L4 E07

Basis - original fictional exercise. The organisation, events and any numbers are invented for learning. No HCDI result is assigned.

A covering note highlights strong findings and asks the reviewer to ignore unevidenced areas as administrative details.

Analytical task	Learner response required
Observation	Identify what the stated record directly establishes.

Inference	State the interpretation that still needs support.
Alternative	Identify a plausible alternative or missing context.
Authority	Identify the relevant credential or role boundary.

Question - What should be read?

Worked answer: Part G, exercise L4 E07.

Chapter 8. Professional scepticism and bias

Source basis - S4, physical PDF page 9.

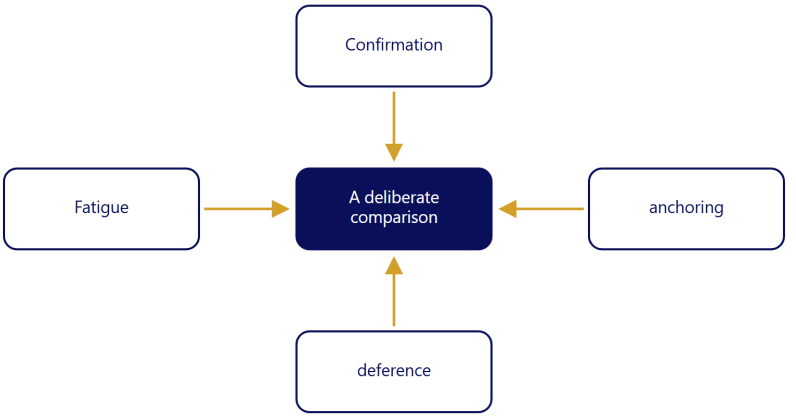
general professional knowledge. Scepticism is a questioning mind and a habit of looking for what might be wrong, without assuming that it is. The common failures are confirmation (seeking what supports the conclusion already reached), anchoring (leaning on the first number seen), deference (accepting a conclusion because a senior person reached it), and fatigue (reading less carefully as the pile grows). A reviewer is especially exposed to deference, because the work comes from another firm and may arrive with a confident covering note. A useful discipline is to read the evidence and the conclusion separately, then compare them, instead of reading the conclusion first. Common Error. Reading the conclusion first and then looking for evidence to fit it.

Scepticism tests alternatives

Basis - general professional knowledge and editorial explanation. External references are identified explicitly; this section adds no HCDI rule.

A questioning mind is different from assuming dishonesty. Confirmation seeks support for an existing view; anchoring gives the first number undue influence; deference substitutes seniority for evidence. Fatigue can weaken attention. A deliberate comparison of evidence and conclusion can expose unsupported steps without turning the reviewer into the scorer.

FIGURE 4.8



Drawn for the text edition from the book's text

Figure 4.8 Scepticism tests alternatives. Original conceptual illustration; arrows organise the discussion and do not establish a validated causal effect or a scoring procedure.

Original exercise L4 E08

Basis - original fictional exercise. The organisation, events and any numbers are invented for learning. No HCDI result is assigned.

A prominent partner supplies a confident summary before the reviewer opens the evidence. A conflicting date is dismissed as immaterial without explanation.

Analytical task	Learner response required
Observation	Identify what the stated record directly establishes.
Inference	State the interpretation that still needs support.

Alternative	Identify a plausible alternative or missing context.
Authority	Identify the relevant credential or role boundary.

Question - What bias risks are present?

Worked answer: Part G, exercise L4 E08.

Chapter 9. Evidence conflicts and how they were handled

Source basis - S4, physical PDF page 10.

HCDI platform rule (Unit 4.8); general professional knowledge. Finalize refuses while any Evidence Conflict Flag is open, and only the Internal Reviewer resolves one. A reviewer who finds an unresolved conflict does not resolve it. What the reviewer can notice, reading the assessment as a whole, is whether the conflicts that were raised appear to have been handled by the right role, with a note, and whether the assessment looks as if conflicts that should have been raised were not.

Governance Boundary. The Independent Reviewer is not the Internal Reviewer and cannot resolve a flag, however obvious the answer looks.

Conflict handling needs an auditable basis

Basis - general professional knowledge and editorial explanation. External references are identified explicitly; this section adds no HCDI rule.

A resolved flag should have the source-required role and note. A closed flag is not self-explanatory proof that the evidence conflict was understood. An Independent Reviewer can notice an absent or inadequate record without taking over the reserved resolution. No new escalation route is supplied here.

FIGURE 4.9

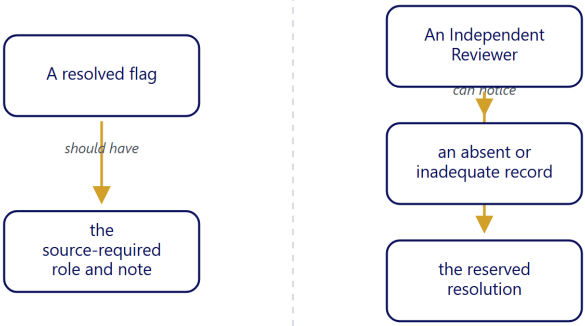


Figure 4.9 Conflict handling needs an auditable basis. Original conceptual illustration; arrows organise the discussion and do not establish a validated causal effect or a scoring procedure.

Original exercise L4 E09

Basis - original fictional exercise. The organisation, events and any numbers are invented for learning. No HCDI result is assigned.

A draft shows a conflict closed but no explanation visible. The team says the answer was obvious.

Analytical task	Learner response required
Observation	Identify what the stated record directly establishes.
Inference	State the interpretation that still needs support.

Alternative	Identify a plausible alternative or missing context.
Authority	Identify the relevant credential or role boundary.

Question - Can the reviewer fill in the note?

Worked answer: Part G, exercise L4 E09.

Chapter 10. Release conditions and where the review sits

Source basis - S4, physical PDF page 10.

HCDI platform rule (Unit 4.5). The six release conditions are credential valid, authorisation valid, conflict check complete, Independent Reviewer assigned, review completed and methodology version locked. The reviewer's condition is "review completed", recorded last. Finalize refuses on any missing condition, with no manual override, and finalizing cannot be undone. A Founding Six engagement meets the credential and assignment conditions on the programme's substitutes.

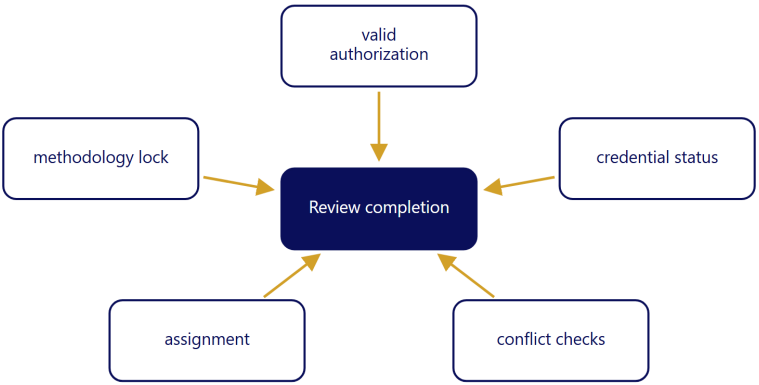
Evidence Check. Before you record completion, ask whether you are the last gate in the sequence, because you are. Nothing after you can be undone.

Completion is one release condition

Basis - general professional knowledge and editorial explanation. External references are identified explicitly; this section adds no HCDI rule.

Review completion sits among six public release conditions. It does not replace valid authorization, credential status, conflict checks, assignment or methodology lock. Source Founding Six substitutes are a different disclosed arrangement rather than an independent Level 4 assignment.

FIGURE 4.10



Drawn for the text edition from the book's text

Figure 4.10 Completion is one release condition. Original conceptual illustration; arrows organise the discussion and do not establish a validated causal effect or a scoring procedure.

Original exercise L4 E10

Basis - original fictional exercise. The organisation, events and any numbers are invented for learning. No HCDI result is assigned.

A team says a reviewer's completion can compensate for an incomplete conflict check.

Analytical task	Learner response required
Observation	Identify what the stated record directly establishes.
Inference	State the interpretation that still needs support.

Alternative	Identify a plausible alternative or missing context.
Authority	Identify the relevant credential or role boundary.

Question - Is that correct?

Worked answer: Part G, exercise L4 E10.

Chapter 11. Recording completion, and staleness

Source basis - S4, physical PDF page 10.

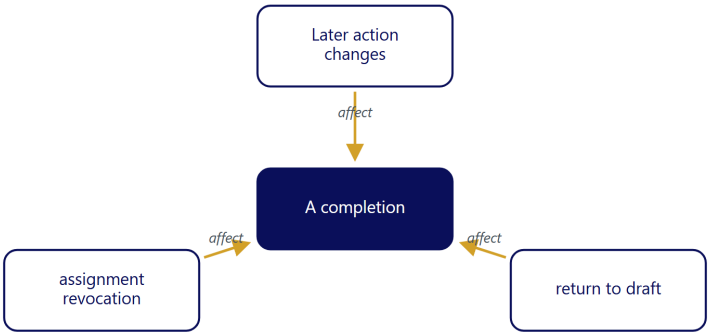
HCDI platform rule (Unit 4.6). Recording the review completion is the reviewer's one act. Record it last, after the actions are final, with a note of what you reviewed. A completion goes stale when a corrective action changes after it, when the assessment returns to draft, or when the assignment is revoked. Finalize refuses until it is recorded again. A stale review is a review of something that no longer exists. Re-recording it is a fresh judgement, not a formality. Common Error. Recording completion early "to be ready" and then re-recording it without re-reading what changed.

A changed record can make a review stale

Basis - general professional knowledge and editorial explanation. External references are identified explicitly; this section adds no HCDI rule.

A completion concerns the assessment actually reviewed. Later action changes, return to draft or assignment revocation affect that relationship. Re-recording is a fresh judgement, not a routine renewal. Compare the changed material and its consequences before acting. This is public staleness logic, not protected methodology testing.

FIGURE 4.11



Drawn for the text edition from the book's text

Figure 4.11 A changed record can make a review stale. Original conceptual illustration; arrows organise the discussion and do not establish a validated causal effect or a scoring procedure.

Original exercise L4 E11

Basis - original fictional exercise. The organisation, events and any numbers are invented for learning. No HCDI result is assigned.

A reviewer records completion. A corrective action is edited afterward; the team asks for an immediate repeat click.

Analytical task	Learner response required
Observation	Identify what the stated record directly establishes.
Inference	State the interpretation that still needs support.

Alternative	Identify a plausible alternative or missing context.
Authority	Identify the relevant credential or role boundary.

Question - What is required?

Worked answer: Part G, exercise L4 E11.

Chapter 12. Declining to complete

Source basis - S4, physical PDF page 10.

general professional knowledge; HCDI governance rule (the Committee's basis, and Unit 4.5). The Committee's basis for the supervised-practice requirement says that an Independent Reviewer refuses issuance. The approved text gives the reviewer one act, which is to record the completion. A reviewer who is not satisfied does not record it. Because "review completed" is a release condition, finalize then refuses. Public source gap CC-L4-002: the route for recording reasons and escalating disagreement is held. No procedure is supplied here.

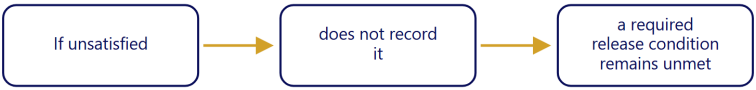
Professional Judgment. Declining is a serious act. It should rest on something you can state, in a sentence, to someone with authority to hear it.

Not completing is not an invented veto procedure

Basis - general professional knowledge and editorial explanation. External references are identified explicitly; this section adds no HCDI rule.

The public source gives the reviewer one act: recording completion. If unsatisfied, the reviewer does not record it and a required release condition remains unmet. The route for recording reasons and escalating disagreement is explicitly held. This book supplies no invented form, recipient chain or appeal timetable.

FIGURE 4.12



Drawn for the text edition from the book's text

Figure 4.12 Not completing is not an invented veto procedure. Original conceptual illustration; arrows organise the discussion and do not establish a validated causal effect or a scoring procedure.

Original exercise L4 E12

Basis - original fictional exercise. The organisation, events and any numbers are invented for learning. No HCDI result is assigned.

A trainer proposes a formal refusal notice with a five-day appeal deadline, although no approved source describes one.

Analytical task	Learner response required
Observation	Identify what the stated record directly establishes.
Inference	State the interpretation that still needs support.

Alternative	Identify a plausible alternative or missing context.
Authority	Identify the relevant credential or role boundary.

Question - Why must that procedure be excluded?

Worked answer: Part G, exercise L4 E12.

Chapter 13. Remediation safeguards and implementer rules

Source basis - S4, physical PDF page 11.

HCDI platform rule (Unit 4.7). The delivering Firm discloses at scoping whether it offers remediation services to the client. Issuance is refused until it does, and the answer is printed in the report. Where the Firm offers services in the area an action names, the Internal Reviewer records a check of that action before issuance. At issuance, two statements are attested by a named person. On the Tracker, the implementer of the work is recorded. A Firm recorded as the implementer of remediation may not deliver the reassessment of what it addressed.

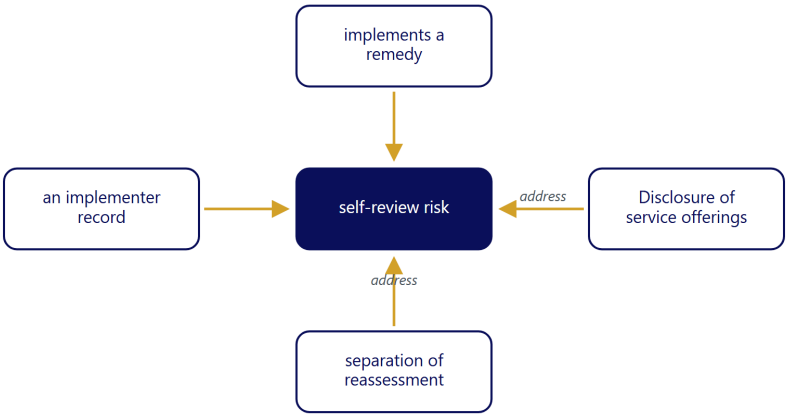
Red Flag. An action whose wording happens to describe a service the delivering Firm sells.

Remediation creates a self-review risk

Basis - general professional knowledge and editorial explanation. External references are identified explicitly; this section adds no HCDI rule.

An organisation that implements a remedy may have an interest in later calling it successful. Disclosure of service offerings and separation of reassessment address different parts of that risk. The public workflow includes an implementer record. A disclosure statement alone does not remove every conflict.

FIGURE 4.13



Drawn for the text edition from the book's text

Figure 4.13 Remediation creates a self-review risk. Original conceptual illustration; arrows organise the discussion and do not establish a validated causal effect or a scoring procedure.

Original exercise L4 E13

Basis - original fictional exercise. The organisation, events and any numbers are invented for learning. No HCDI result is assigned.

The delivering firm implements remediation and then offers to reassess the same findings at a reduced price.

Analytical task	Learner response required
Observation	Identify what the stated record directly establishes.
Inference	State the interpretation that still needs support.

Alternative	Identify a plausible alternative or missing context.
Authority	Identify the relevant credential or role boundary.

Question - What does the source prohibit?

Worked answer: Part G, exercise L4 E13.

Chapter 14. Integrity, status, and the report you can point to

Source basis - S4, physical PDF page 11.

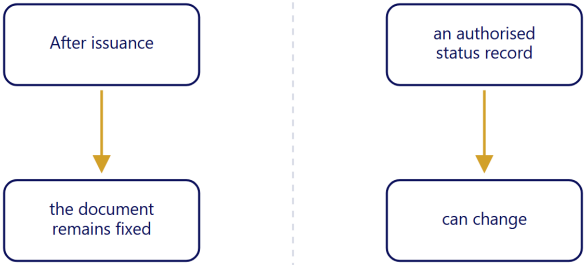
HCDI platform rule (Units 4.8, 4.9 and 4.10). An open integrity matter of a suspending kind stops scoring, submission, finalize and issuance until HCDI Compliance closes it. After issuance the document is never amended. Its status changes instead, by a two-person HCDI act: HCDI Compliance proposes, a different Internal Reviewer confirms, with a reason for every status. A Founding Six engagement is never assigned an Independent Reviewer. Its review is recorded by an Internal Reviewer who has no role on the engagement, and two release conditions are met by the programme's substitutes, which the report prints. The cover carries the reviewer disclosure in place of an Independent Reviewer's name. Never describe a Founding Six report as reviewed by a Level 4 reviewer. Public source gap CC-L4-003: the route for conduct concerns outside the assessment is held. No procedure is supplied here.

A fixed document can have a changing status

Basis - general professional knowledge and editorial explanation. External references are identified explicitly; this section adds no HCDI rule.

After issuance the document remains fixed while an authorised status record can change. Founding Six reports must describe their actual substitute arrangement and must not claim Level 4 independent review.

FIGURE 4.14



Drawn for the text edition from the book's text

Figure 4.14 A fixed document can have a changing status. Original conceptual illustration; arrows organise the discussion and do not establish a validated causal effect or a scoring procedure.

Original exercise L4 E14

Basis - original fictional exercise. The organisation, events and any numbers are invented for learning. No HCDI result is assigned.

A marketing team calls a Founding Six report independently reviewed by a Level 4 reviewer and says its later Tracker update changed the issued score.

Analytical task	Learner response required
Observation	Identify what the stated record directly establishes.
Inference	State the interpretation that still needs support.

Alternative	Identify a plausible alternative or missing context.
Authority	Identify the relevant credential or role boundary.

Question - Which claims are wrong?

Worked answer: Part G, exercise L4 E14.

Part C Curriculum units

Unit titles and sequence follow the pilot. Protected units contain only a title and an exclusion notice. They have no explained mechanics, examples, exercises or equations.

Unit 4.1 - Independence and the limitation block

Learning outcome - State the limitation block and explain why independence is controlled by HCDI rather than chosen by the reviewer or the partner.

Source basis - S4, physical PDF page 12.

HCDI governance rule (Unit 4.1).

The rules. Three conditions: never one's own firm's engagement, never self-selected, and never nominated by the delivering partner. The independence attestation is on file. Certification attests competence. It does not create a right to be assigned.

Worked example (illustrative). A Level 4 holder is told by a friend at a delivering Firm: "We would like you to review ours." The holder cannot accept that request. Assignment is HCDI's, and a nomination by the delivering partner is one of the three things the limitation block rules out. Common Error. Treating Level 4 as a licence to be assigned.

Unit 4.2 - How an assignment is made and revoked

Learning outcome - List the conditions an assignment must meet, and explain revocation.

Source basis - S4, physical PDF page 12.

HCDI platform rule (Unit 4.2).

The rules. HCDI Compliance assigns. The reviewer's Level 4 credential must verify as ACTIVE at the time of assignment. An assignment is never made to someone from the delivering Firm, to a platform administrator, or on a Founding Six engagement, and never after the assessment is finalized. The engagement team sees who reviews each assessment, and cannot assign or choose. Revocation needs a reason. It ends access at once, and any recorded review goes stale. A replacement without a reason "is indistinguishable from reviewer-shopping".

Governance Boundary. An assignment is made on a live credential, never a lapsed, suspended or revoked one.

Unit 4.3 - Access and confidentiality

Learning outcome - Reach an assignment correctly and keep it confidential.

Source basis - S4, physical PDF page 13.

HCDI platform rule (Unit 4.3).

The rules. Only the live assignee opens the assignment, with two-factor authentication on. Anyone else is told only that it was not found. No price, Order Form or invoice reaches the reviewer. After issuance the working material leaves the reviewer's view, and the issued report stays. Never share the page address. Never forward a draft to the client. Common Error. Forwarding a draft "for comfort".

Unit 4.4 - Reviewing the whole assessment

Learning outcome - Read every part of the assessment and know what each tells you.

Source basis - S4, physical PDF page 13.

HCDI platform rule (Unit 4.4).

The rules. Overall result and coverage show how much is scored, how much is evidenced but unscored, and how much could not be evidenced. Not evidenced is never a low score and leaves every denominator. Every party's actions are shown, because the review is of the whole assessment. You read the recorded rationale and the action text, and you edit neither. You read the not-evidenced indicators and the action written for each. Draft reports are watermarked and are not issued reports. An action carries a materiality, a response type, a timing, an accountable function, the implementation instrument, and approval in English and in Arabic with the equivalence check.

Unit 4.5 - Release conditions and finalize

Learning outcome - Read the six release conditions and explain where the review sits among them.

Source basis - S4, physical PDF page 13.

HCDI platform rule (Unit 4.5).

The rules. The six conditions are credential valid, authorisation valid, conflict check complete, Independent Reviewer assigned, review completed and methodology version locked. The reviewer's condition is "review completed", recorded last. Finalize refuses on any missing condition, with no manual override, and finalizing cannot be undone. A Founding Six engagement meets the credential and assignment conditions on the programme's substitutes.

Unit 4.6 - Recording the review completion

Learning outcome - Record the completion at the right moment, and renew it when it goes stale.

Source basis - S4, physical PDF page 13.

HCDI platform rule (Unit 4.6).

The rules. Recording the review completion is the reviewer's one act. Record it last, after the actions are final, with a note of what you reviewed. A completion goes stale when a corrective action changes after it, when the assessment returns to draft, or when the assignment is revoked. Finalize refuses until it is recorded again. Common Error. Re-recording a stale completion without re-reading what changed.

Unit 4.7 - Remediation safeguards and implementer rules

Learning outcome - Explain the controls that keep remediation work from compromising an assessment's independence.

Source basis - S4, physical PDF page 14.

HCDI platform rule (Unit 4.7).

The rules. The delivering Firm discloses at scoping whether it offers remediation services to the client. Issuance is refused until it does, and the answer is printed in the report. Where the Firm offers services in the area an action names, the Internal Reviewer records a check of that action before issuance. At issuance, two statements are attested by a named person. On the Tracker, the implementer of the work is recorded. A Firm recorded as the implementer of remediation may not deliver the reassessment of what it addressed.

Unit 4.8 - Integrity, evidence conflicts and report status

Learning outcome - Explain how open integrity matters, open evidence conflicts and report status bear on a review.

Source basis - S4, physical PDF page 14.

HCDI platform rule (Unit 4.8).

The rules. An open integrity matter of a suspending kind stops scoring, submission, finalize and issuance until HCDI Compliance closes it. Finalize refuses while any Evidence Conflict Flag is open, and only the Internal Reviewer resolves one. After issuance the document is never amended. Its status changes instead, by a two-person HCDI act: HCDI Compliance proposes, a different Internal Reviewer confirms, with a reason for every status.

Unit 4.9 - The issued report's independence statements

Learning outcome - Read the report's independence and integrity sections and the cover's reviewer line.

Source basis - S4, physical PDF page 14.

HCDI platform rule (Unit 4.9).

The rules. Read the report's independence and integrity sections, and the disclaimer. On a Founding Six engagement the cover carries the reviewer disclosure in place of an Independent Reviewer's name. The report gives a conclusion, never a verdict.

Unit 4.10 - The Founding Six substitute

Learning outcome - Describe the Founding Six substitute and state what may and may not be said about a Founding Six report.

Source basis - S4, physical PDF page 15.

HCDI platform rule (Unit 4.10).

The rules. A Founding Six engagement is never assigned an Independent Reviewer. Its review is recorded by an Internal Reviewer who has no role on the engagement. Two release conditions are met by the programme's substitutes, which the report prints. Never describe a Founding Six report as reviewed by a Level 4 reviewer. Common Error. Treating the substitute as a lesser version of an Independent Reviewer's review. It is a different arrangement, and it is described as one.

Unit 4.11 - Testing scores and conclusions against the methodology | METHODOLOGY PROTECTED. Excluded.

Unit 4.12 - Testing corrective actions against the methodology's attribute rules | METHODOLOGY PROTECTED. Excluded.

Part D Source casebook

Each source case contains a factual setting, possible judgements and model reasoning. Attempt the candidate task before reading the model. Separate the source facts from a character's opinion: a statement made by a senior person is part of the case, not an instruction to the learner. The source organisations and events are fictional and should not be treated as empirical evidence about transaction outcomes.

Use a concise answer structure: the observation, the unsupported inference, the applicable public role boundary and the consequence for the next step. Where evidence is absent, say what is missing rather than inventing a fact. Where sources conflict, preserve both accounts and the reserved resolution role. The model answer is useful because it explains those distinctions, not because its wording must be memorised.

Case L4-01 - The friendly request

Basis - source fictional case, supplied Level 4 pilot, physical PDF pages 20-25. This is not an empirical company history. Original source case reasoning is retained with the scoring amendment stated in the front matter.

Background Tariq is a Level 4 holder who works at an advisory firm. HCDI Compliance has not yet assigned him to anything. At a conference, a partner from another firm, Meridian Advisory, mentions that her team is finishing an assessment of Najd Holdings.

Transaction and decision context Meridian's report is due to issue within three weeks, and its delivering partner wants an independent review lined up.

Stakeholders Tariq. The Meridian partner. HCDI Compliance. Tariq's own firm.

Evidence available The partner's account of the engagement, over coffee.

Evidence missing Any assignment from HCDI. Any record of whether Tariq's firm has ever worked for Najd.

Facts The partner says: "You would be perfect. I will ask HCDI to put you on it." Tariq's firm once advised Najd on an unrelated matter two years ago. Tariq was not involved, but he knows of it. The partner adds: "No need to mention it. It is not the same engagement."

Potential judgments Accept, and wait for the assignment. Decline the request, and tell HCDI Compliance about the earlier work. Accept, and say nothing, since it is not the same engagement.

Governance issues A nomination by the delivering partner is one of the three things the limitation block rules out. The earlier advisory work is a relationship that could bear on independence, even though it does not fall under the three conditions.

Candidate task Write Tariq's reply to the partner, and say what, if anything, he should tell HCDI Compliance and when.

Discussion questions

1. Which independence condition does the partner's offer touch?

2. Does the earlier work matter, given that it is a different engagement?

3. Who decides whether a relationship disqualifies a reviewer?

4. When should Tariq speak?

5. How should he reply, so as to keep the relationship without compromising it?

Model reasoning The partner's offer touches the condition that the holder is never nominated by the delivering partner. Whatever the partner asks HCDI, Tariq cannot accept a nomination by the partner. Assignment is HCDI's. The three conditions are a floor and not a full account. An earlier piece of advisory work by Tariq's firm for Najd is a relationship that could bear on independence, and "it is not the same engagement" is the kind of reasoning an independence check exists to test, not to accept. Whether the relationship disqualifies him is for HCDI to decide, and not for Tariq or the partner. He should declare it to HCDI Compliance, which assigns, before any assignment and not after one. His reply to the partner can be courteous and plain: he can-

not accept nominations, assignment is HCDI's, and he is declaring a prior relationship of his firm to HCDI.

Role boundary Tariq does not select his engagements and cannot be nominated by the delivering partner. HCDI Compliance assigns, and decides what a relationship means for independence.

Common mistakes Accepting a friendly nomination. Treating "a different engagement" as settling a question of independence. Declaring a relationship after an assignment instead of before.

Debrief Tariq replies politely and declares the earlier work. HCDI Compliance may assign him or someone else, and Tariq is not told why. Whatever the outcome, no one can say that the delivering partner chose the reviewer. Relevant curriculum units Unit 4.1, Unit 4.2, Part B Chapters 1, 3 and 4.

Case L4-02 - A review gone stale

Basis - source fictional case, supplied Level 4 pilot, physical PDF pages 20-25. This is not an empirical company history. Original source case reasoning is retained with the scoring amendment stated in the front matter.

Background Samira is an assigned Independent Reviewer on an assessment of Delta Foods. She recorded the review completion on Monday, with a note of what she had reviewed. The assessment is due to be finalized on Friday.

Transaction and decision context Delta's board plans to use the report at a lenders' meeting on Monday of the following week.

Stakeholders Samira. The delivering Deal Lead. The Internal Reviewer. HCDI Compliance. Delta's board.

Evidence available The assessment as Samira reviewed it on Monday.

Evidence missing Any sight of the changes made since.

Facts On Wednesday the assessment returned to draft. On Thursday a corrective action was edited. The Deal Lead tells Samira: "Your completion is still there on the system. Just leave it. Nothing material has changed." Finalize refuses on Friday morning.

Potential judgments Leave the Monday completion and ask the Deal Lead to finalize. Read what changed, and record the completion again, with a new note. Edit the action herself so that it matches what she reviewed.

Governance issues A completion goes stale when a corrective action changes after it or when the assessment returns to draft. Finalize re-

fuses until it is recorded again. The Independent Reviewer changes nothing on the assessment.

Candidate task Explain why finalize refused, and write Samira's reply to the Deal Lead and her new review note.

Discussion questions

1. Why did finalize refuse?

2. What happened to the Monday completion, and when?

3. What does recording it again require?

4. What may Samira not do about the edited action?

5. How should Samira answer "nothing material has changed"?

Model reasoning The Monday completion went stale on Wednesday, when the assessment returned to draft, and again on Thursday, when an action changed. Finalize refuses until a completion is recorded again, so it refused on Friday morning. Recording it again is a fresh judgement and not a formality. Samira has to read what changed, because a stale review is a review of something that no longer exists. She may not edit the action. The Independent Reviewer changes nothing on the assessment. As for "nothing material has changed", she is not in a position to take that on trust. Whether a change is material is the very thing she is there to judge, and the Deal Lead is not independent of the delivery. Her new note records what she reviewed and what had changed.

Role boundary Samira records completion, and does so last, after the actions are final. She does not edit anything, and she does not take the delivery team's word on materiality.

Common mistakes Leaving a stale completion in place. Re-recording without re-reading. Editing the action to fit the earlier review. Taking the Deal Lead's reassurance as a review.

Debrief Samira reads the changes, records a new completion with a new note, and finalize can proceed once the other conditions are met. If she had not been satisfied, she would not have recorded it, and finalize would have continued to refuse. Relevant curriculum units Unit 4.5, Unit 4.6, Part B Chapters 8, 10 and 11.

Case L4-03 - "Independently reviewed by a Level 4

Basis - source fictional case, supplied Level 4 pilot, physical PDF pages 20-25. This is not an empirical company history. Original source case reasoning is retained with the scoring amendment stated in the front matter.

reviewer"

Background Orbit Partners is an advisory firm that delivered one of the programme's early engagements under the Founding Six arrangement. Its website now carries a case study about the engagement.

Transaction and decision context Orbit is pitching for new work and wants to show its quality controls.

Stakeholders Orbit's marketing lead. The client. HCDI. A prospect reading the website. An observer, Lina, who holds Level 4.

Evidence available The case study text, and the report's cover.

Evidence missing Any record that an Independent Reviewer was assigned, because none could have been.

Facts The case study says: "Our report was independently reviewed by a Level 4 reviewer before issue." The report's cover carries the reviewer disclosure in place of an Independent Reviewer's name. The delivering Firm also offers remediation services, and the case study describes the implementation work it later did for the client.

Potential judgments The claim is fair, since an independent review took place. The claim is wrong, because a Founding Six engagement is never assigned an Independent Reviewer. The claim is wrong and the implementation work needs separate attention too.

Governance issues Never describe a Founding Six report as reviewed by a Level 4 reviewer. The review was recorded by an Internal Reviewer with no role on the engagement. The Firm is recorded as the implementer, and may not deliver the reassessment of the findings it addressed.

Candidate task As Lina, write a short note to Orbit explaining what is wrong with the claim and what should be said instead. Then say what else deserves attention.

Discussion questions

1. Why is the claim wrong?

2. What did happen on this engagement?

3. What should the case study say?

4. Why does the implementation work matter?

5. What should Lina do, and what should she not do?

Model reasoning The claim is wrong. A Founding Six engagement is never assigned an Independent Reviewer, and its report must never be described as reviewed by a Level 4 reviewer. The review was recorded by an Internal Reviewer who had no role on the engagement, under the programme's substitute, which the cover discloses. The case study should say what the cover says, and should not describe the substitute as the thing it replaces. The implementation work matters in its own right. The Firm offers remediation, disclosed in the report, and is recorded as the implementer of three actions. Under the rule on implementers it may not deliver the reassessment of the findings it addressed. The case study should not imply that its later involvement and the original independence are the same thing.

Lina has no standing to correct Orbit herself, and she should not accuse. She can draw the discrepancy to Orbit's attention courteously and, if it is not corrected, to HCDI.

Role boundary Lina is not assigned to this engagement and has no role in it. She cannot change Orbit's website, and does not speak for HCDI.

Common mistakes Treating the substitute as a lesser Independent Reviewer. Letting a marketing claim outrun the report's own cover. Overlooking the implementer rule. Accusing before asking.

Debrief Orbit corrects the sentence to match the cover, and says plainly that the Firm also implemented three actions. The prospect sees an accurate account, which is also the more credible one. Relevant curriculum units Unit 4.7, Unit 4.9, Unit 4.10, Part B Chapters 13 and 14.

Part E Sandbox questions

These questions are practice/sandbox material only. They are not HCDI examination-bank items, are never reused as examination-bank items, and performance on them does not predict or determine a certification result.

Basis - supplied pilot practice items, reformatted for study. These are draft sandbox items, not a validated examination. No score here certifies competence. Attempt the items before reading Part F.

SBX-L4-0001 | Unit 4.1 | Single best answer

Which of these is NOT one of the three independence conditions in the Level 4 limitation block?

A. Never reviewing an engagement in a sector one dislikes

B. Never reviewing an engagement delivered by one's own firm

C. Never selecting the engagements one reviews

D. Never being nominated by the delivering partner

SBX-L4-0002 | Unit 4.1 | Role-boundary question

A delivering partner tells a Level 4 holder: "We would like you to review our assessment." What is the position?

A. Accept, since the holder is qualified

B. Accept, if the holder declares the relationship

C. Accept, if the Reviewer on the engagement agrees

D. The holder cannot accept the request. HCDI Compliance assigns, and a nomination by the delivering partner is one of the three things the limitation block rules out

SBX-L4-0003 | Unit 4.1 | Single best answer

A newly certified Level 4 holder asks HCDI when their first assignment will come. What is the accurate position?

A. Within a set period of certification

B. As soon as the holder asks

C. When the holder's firm has an engagement to be reviewed

D. Certification attests competence and does not create a right to be assigned. HCDI controls assignment

SBX-L4-0004 | Unit 4.2 | Multiple response

Which of these are conditions of an assignment? Select all that apply.

A. The assessment has already been finalized

B. The reviewer's Level 4 credential verifies as ACTIVE at the time of assignment

C. The reviewer works at the delivering Firm

D. HCDI Compliance makes the assignment

SBX-L4-0005 | Unit 4.2 | Single best answer

A Level 4 holder's credential is currently SUSPENDED, and a delivering partner says the matter is "nearly resolved". Can HCDI assign the holder to an assessment?

A. Yes, since the matter is nearly resolved

B. Yes, if the partner vouches for the holder

C. Yes, for a Founding Six engagement

D. No. An Independent Reviewer is assigned on a live credential, never a lapsed, suspended or revoked one

SBX-L4-0006 | Unit 4.2 | Single best answer

An assignment is revoked, and a different reviewer is assigned a week later, with no reason recorded for the revocation. How does the approved text describe that?

A. Normal rotation

B. A routine administrative change

C. "Indistinguishable from reviewer-shopping", which is why revocation needs a reason

D. Acceptable if the delivering Firm agrees

SBX-L4-0007 | Unit 4.2 | Single best answer

A reviewer's assignment is revoked on Tuesday. On Wednesday the delivering team asks whether the review the reviewer recorded last week still counts. What is the accurate answer?

A. It still counts, because it was recorded before the revocation

B. It has gone stale, access ended at once, and finalize refuses until a completion is recorded again

C. It counts, if the delivering team agrees

D. It is deleted, and the engagement starts again

SBX-L4-0008 | Unit 4.3 | Single best answer

An Independent Reviewer wants a colleague to glance at the assignment page. What is the right approach?

A. Never share the page address. Only the live assignee opens the assignment, with two-factor authentication on, and anyone else is told only that it was not found

B. Share the page address, since the colleague is trusted

C. Share it for ten minutes

D. Share a screenshot instead

SBX-L4-0009 | Unit 4.3 | Role-boundary question

The delivering partner asks the reviewer to forward a draft report to the client's chairman "for comfort".

What is the right response?

A. Forward it, since the chairman is senior

B. Forward it with a covering note

C. Decline. Never forward a draft to the client. A draft is watermarked and is not an issued report

D. Forward it only to the chairman

SBX-L4-0010 | Unit 4.4 | Multiple response

Which of these are part of reviewing the whole assessment? Select all that apply.

A. Editing the recorded rationale where it is weak

B. The not-evidenced indicators and the action written for each

C. Coverage, and how much is scored and not scored

D. Every party's actions

SBX-L4-0011 | Unit 4.4 | Role-boundary question

A reviewer reads a scorer's rationale and thinks it is thin. What may the reviewer do about it?

A. Not edit it. The reviewer reads it and edits neither the rationale nor the action text, and may decline to record the review completion if not satisfied

B. Edit it so that it is stronger

C. Ask the scorer to delete it

D. Approve the score

SBX-L4-0012 | Unit 4.4 | Single best answer

A report arrives in the reviewer's view marked with a watermark. Which assessment of it is best?

A. It is a draft and not an issued report. It may be read and downloaded, and it may not be forwarded

B. It is the issued report, so it can be relied on

C. It can be shared with the client if the client asks

D. It replaces the assessment itself

SBX-L4-0013 | Unit 4.5 | Sequencing

Put these in order: The reviewer records the review completion, with a note of what was reviewed; The corrective actions become final; The assessment is finalized.

SBX-L4-0014 | Unit 4.5 | Multiple response

A Lead lists the conditions for a pre-finalize meeting. Which of these belong on the list? Select all that apply.

A. The client has approved the report's wording

B. Review completed

C. The methodology version is locked

D. The credential is valid

SBX-L4-0015 | Unit 4.5 | Scenario

One release condition is not met, and the client is pressing for the report. A partner proposes that finalize go ahead "on trust". Which assessment is best?

A. Allow it, since the partner is senior

B. Allow it if the reviewer sends a note

C. Finalize refuses on any missing condition, with no manual override, and finalizing cannot be undone, so the condition has to be met first

D. Allow it for a Founding Six engagement only

SBX-L4-0016 | Unit 4.6 | Single best answer

After the reviewer has recorded the review completion, a corrective action is edited. What follows?

A. Nothing, since the review was already recorded

B. The edit is reversed automatically

C. The completion goes stale, and finalize refuses until it is recorded again

D. The reviewer is removed from the assignment

SBX-L4-0017 | Unit 4.6 | Single best answer

A reviewer recorded completion on Monday. On Wednesday the assessment returned to draft, and on Thursday the actions were re-approved. A colleague suggests simply re-recording the same completion.

What is the best assessment?

A. Fine, since the content is similar

B. Fine, if the Reviewer agrees

C. Unnecessary, since the completion is still valid

D. A stale completion is a review of something that no longer exists, so it must be recorded again after a fresh review of what changed, with a new note

SBX-L4-0018 | Unit 4.7 | Single best answer

The delivering Firm offers remediation services in the very area that a corrective action names. Which safeguard applies?

A. None, because remediation is separate from assessment

B. The Independent Reviewer rewrites the action

C. The Internal Reviewer records a check of that action before issuance, and the Firm's disclosure is printed in the report

D. The action is removed

SBX-L4-0019 | Unit 4.7 | Single best answer

A Firm recorded as the implementer of a client's remediation is proposed to lead the reassessment of the findings it addressed. Which assessment is best?

A. Acceptable, since the Firm knows the client

B. Not acceptable. A Firm recorded as the implementer of remediation may not deliver the reassessment of what it addressed

C. Acceptable if the client consents

D. Acceptable if an Independent Reviewer is also assigned

SBX-L4-0020 | Unit 4.8 | Role-boundary question

A reviewer sees an open Evidence Conflict Flag whose answer seems obvious. The timetable is tight. Which course is best?

A. Resolve it, since the answer is clear

B. Tell the delivering team how to resolve it

C. Do not resolve it. Finalize refuses while a flag is open, and only the Internal Reviewer resolves one. The Independent Reviewer is not the Internal Reviewer

D. Record the completion anyway

SBX-L4-0021 | Unit 4.8 | Single best answer

A report has been issued, and new information then comes to light. How is it dealt with?

A. The document is never amended. Its status changes by a two-person HCDI act: HCDI Compliance proposes, a different Internal Reviewer confirms, with a reason

B. The document is amended in place

C. The delivering Firm reissues it

D. The Independent Reviewer edits it

SBX-L4-0022 | Unit 4.9 | Single best answer

A reader of a Founding Six report sees no Independent Reviewer's name on the cover. What should the reader conclude?

A. That no review took place

B. That the cover carries the reviewer disclosure in place of the name, because a Founding Six engagement is never assigned an Independent Reviewer

C. That the review was withheld

D. That the report is a draft

SBX-L4-0023 | Unit 4.10 | Ethics scenario

A Firm's marketing says its Founding Six report was "independently reviewed by a Level 4 reviewer". Which assessment is best?

A. Acceptable, since the review was independent

B. Acceptable if footnoted

C. Acceptable if the Internal Reviewer holds Level 4

D. It is wrong. A Founding Six engagement is never assigned an Independent Reviewer, its review is recorded by an Internal Reviewer with no role on the engagement, and it must never be described as reviewed by a Level 4 reviewer

SBX-L4-0024 | Unit 4.10 | Matching

Match each situation to the outcome. Situations: (1) A standard engagement; (2) A Founding Six engagement; (3) An assessment that has already been finalized. Outcomes: (a) An Internal Reviewer with no role on the engagement records the review; (b) The assigned Independent Reviewer records the review completion; (c) No assignment is made.

SBX-L4-0025 | Unit Chapter 2 | Single best answer

A colleague says: "The Independent Reviewer will resolve that evidence conflict." Which response is correct?

A. Not correct. Only the Internal Reviewer resolves a flag. The Independent Reviewer is a different person, assigned per assessment from outside the delivering Firm

B. Correct, since the Independent Reviewer reviews everything

C. Correct, if the conflict is minor

D. Correct, if the Reviewer on the engagement agrees

SBX-L4-0026 | Unit Chapter 12 | Scenario

Having read the assessment, a reviewer is not satisfied that the corrective actions are final. What is the proper course?

A. Record the completion and note the concern

B. Do not record the completion until satisfied. The completion is a release condition, so finalize then refuses. The reviewer does not edit the actions

C. Edit the actions so that they are final

D. Approve the actions

SBX-L4-0027 | Unit Chapter 6 | Ethics scenario

While reviewing the assessment of a company preparing to list, a reviewer learns something that could move its share price. At dinner, a friend asks about the company. Which course is best?

A. Hint at it, since nothing is final

B. Tell the friend, if they promise secrecy

C. Tell the friend, if the information is minor

D. Say nothing about it, treat the assignment as confidential, and take advice from counsel on any legal obligations

SBX-L4-0028 | Unit 4.2 | Single best answer

A platform administrator holds a Level 4 credential and is proposed as the assigned reviewer on a delivering Firm's assessment. What is the position?

A. Acceptable, since the administrator is qualified

B. An assignment is never made to a platform administrator

C. Acceptable, if the administrator has no role on the engagement

D. Acceptable, if HCDI Compliance agrees

SBX-L4-0029 | Unit 4.3 | Single best answer

Which of these never reaches the Independent Reviewer?

A. The price, the Order Form and the invoice

B. The scorer's rationale

C. The draft reports

D. The not-evidenced indicators and their actions

SBX-L4-0030 | Unit 4.4 | Single best answer

On a two-party assessment, why does the reviewer see every party's actions?

A. Because the reviewer acts for both parties

B. Because the review is of the whole assessment

C. Because the reviewer must approve each party's actions

D. Because the parties asked for it

Part F Sandbox answers

Basis - supplied pilot answer key. Explanations are source-derived, with the explicit scoring-authority correction. Source item metadata and repeated headers have been removed. These answers do not establish an examiner rubric or scheme pass mark.

SBX-L4-0001

Correct answer. A

Explanation. The three conditions are: never one's own firm's engagement, never self-selected, and never nominated by the delivering partner. The independence attestation is on file.

Why the alternatives are wrong. B, C and D are the three conditions. Role-boundary note. None. Source. Level 4 document, section 3 and Unit 4.1.

SBX-L4-0002

Correct answer. D

Explanation. Assignment is HCDI-controlled. The holder is never nominated by the delivering partner and never selects the engagements they review.

Why the alternatives are wrong. A, B and C treat the request as something the holder can decide. Role-boundary note. Assignment is HCDI's, not the holder's or the partner's. Source. Level 4 document, Unit 4.1.

SBX-L4-0003

Correct answer. D

Explanation. Holding Level 4 does not entitle anyone to an assignment. HCDI controls assignment.

Why the alternatives are wrong. A promises what no approved text promises. B and C let the holder or the holder's firm drive assignment. Role-boundary note. None. Source. Level 4 document, section 3 and Unit 4.1.

SBX-L4-0004

Correct answer. B, D

Explanation. HCDI Compliance assigns, and the credential must verify as ACTIVE at assignment. An assignment is never made to someone from the delivering Firm, and never after the assessment is finalized.

Why the alternatives are wrong. C and A describe things that rule an assignment out. Role-boundary note. None. Source. Level 4 document, Unit 4.2.

SBX-L4-0005

Correct answer. D

Explanation. The credential's status is checked at assignment, and the release condition "credential valid" checks it again at finalize.

Why the alternatives are wrong. A and B accept a promise in place of a status. C is false: a Founding Six engagement is never assigned an Independent Reviewer. Role-boundary note. None. Source. Level 4 document, Unit 4.2 and section 9.2.

SBX-L4-0006

Correct answer. C

Explanation. Revocation needs a reason. A replacement without a reason is indistinguishable from reviewer-shopping, which is replacing a reviewer until one is found who will say yes.

Why the alternatives are wrong. A, B and D treat an unexplained replacement as ordinary. That is the appearance that the rule exists to prevent. Role-boundary note. None. Source. Level 4 document, Unit 4.2; Part B, Chapter 3.

SBX-L4-0007

Correct answer. B

Explanation. Revocation ends access at once, and any recorded review goes stale. Finalize refuses until a completion is recorded again.

Why the alternatives are wrong. A and C keep a review alive that the rules end. D invents a restart. Role-boundary note. None. Source. Level 4 document, Units 4.2 and 4.6.

SBX-L4-0008

Correct answer. A

Explanation. Only the live assignee opens the assignment. Never share the page address. Never forward a draft to the client.

Why the alternatives are wrong. B, C and D each put assignment material in front of someone who is not the assignee. Role-boundary note. Access belongs to the live assignee alone. Source. Level 4 document, Unit 4.3.

SBX-L4-0009

Correct answer. C

Explanation. Never forward a draft to the client. Draft reports are watermarked and are not issued reports.

Why the alternatives are wrong. A, B and D release an unreviewed draft to someone who might act on it. Role-boundary note. The reviewer may download a draft, and may not forward it. Source. Level 4 document, Units 4.3 and 4.4.

SBX-L4-0010

Correct answer. B, C, D

Explanation. You read overall result and coverage, every party's actions, the recorded rationale and action text (editing neither), and the not-evidenced indicators and their actions.

Why the alternatives are wrong. A is false: you edit neither the rationale nor the action text. Role-boundary note. None. Source. Level 4 document, Unit 4.4.

SBX-L4-0011

Correct answer. A

Explanation. You read the recorded rationale and the action text; you edit neither. Recording the review completion is the reviewer's one act, and a reviewer who is not satisfied does not record it.

Why the alternatives are wrong. B changes what the reviewer is reviewing. C destroys the record. D gives the reviewer an approval that does not exist. Role-boundary note. The Independent Reviewer

changes nothing on the assessment. Source. Level 4 document, Units 4.4 and 4.6; Part B, Chapter 12.

SBX-L4-0012

Correct answer. A

Explanation. Draft reports are watermarked and are not issued reports. The reviewer may download them, and never forwards one to the client.

Why the alternatives are wrong. B and D mistake a draft for something final. C lets a client act on an unreviewed draft. Role-boundary note. None. Source. Level 4 document, Units 4.3 and 4.4.

SBX-L4-0013

Correct answer. The corrective actions become final; The reviewer records the review completion, with a note of what was reviewed; The assessment is finalized.

Explanation. Record the review completion last, after the actions are final, with a note of what you reviewed. Finalize refuses on any missing condition.

Why the alternatives are wrong. A completion recorded before the actions are final goes stale when an action changes, and finalizing first is not possible while the completion is missing. Role-boundary note. None. Source. Level 4 document, Units 4.5 and 4.6.

SBX-L4-0014

Correct answer. B, C, D

Explanation. The six conditions are credential valid, authorisation valid, conflict check complete, Independent Reviewer assigned, review completed and methodology version locked.

Why the alternatives are wrong. A is not a release condition. The client's approval of wording is not a test of release. Role-boundary note. None. Source. Level 4 document, Unit 4.5.

SBX-L4-0015

Correct answer. C

Explanation. Finalize refuses on any missing condition, with no manual override. Finalizing cannot be undone.

Why the alternatives are wrong. A and B propose an override that does not exist. D is false: a Founding Six engagement meets only two conditions on the programme's substitutes. Role-boundary note. No one can override a missing condition. Source. Level 4 document, Unit 4.5.

SBX-L4-0016

Correct answer. C

Explanation. A completion goes stale when a corrective action changes after it, when the assessment returns to draft, or when the assignment is revoked. Finalize refuses until it is recorded again.

Why the alternatives are wrong. A ignores staleness. B and D invent outcomes. Role-boundary note. None. Source. Level 4 document, Unit 4.6.

SBX-L4-0017

Correct answer. D

Explanation. A completion goes stale when the assessment returns to draft. Finalize refuses until it is recorded again, and re-recording is a fresh judgement and not a formality.

Why the alternatives are wrong. A and B treat re-recording as a formality. C is false: the completion went stale on Wednesday. Role-boundary note. None. Source. Level 4 document, Unit 4.6; Part B, Chapter 11.

SBX-L4-0018

Correct answer. C

Explanation. Where the Firm offers services in the area an action names, the Internal Reviewer records a check of that action before issuance. Issuance is refused until the Firm has disclosed.

Why the alternatives are wrong. A ignores the safeguard. B gives the Independent Reviewer an edit it does not have. D removes a finding's action. Role-boundary note. The check is the Internal Reviewer's, not the Independent Reviewer's. Source. Level 4 document, Unit 4.7.

SBX-L4-0019

Correct answer. B

Explanation. On the Tracker the implementer of the work is recorded. A Firm recorded as the implementer of remediation may not deliver the reassessment of what it addressed.

Why the alternatives are wrong. A, C and D each allow a conflict that the rule exists to prevent. Role-boundary note. None. Source. Level 4 document, Unit 4.7.

SBX-L4-0020

Correct answer. C

Explanation. Finalize refuses while any Evidence Conflict Flag is open. Only the Internal Reviewer resolves one. The two roles are easily confused, and should not be.

Why the alternatives are wrong. A gives the Independent Reviewer a power that belongs to the Internal Reviewer. B advises the party under review. D does not clear the flag. Role-boundary note. Only the Internal Reviewer resolves a flag. Source. Level 4 document, Unit 4.8 and section 1; Part B, Chapter 2.

SBX-L4-0021

Correct answer. A

Explanation. After issuance the document is never amended. Its status changes instead, by a two-person HCDI act, with a reason for every status.

Why the alternatives are wrong. B, C and D each amend or replace the issued document, which is never done. Role-boundary note. None. Source. Level 4 document, Unit 4.8.

SBX-L4-0022

Correct answer. B

Explanation. On a Founding Six engagement the cover carries the reviewer disclosure in place of an Independent Reviewer's name. Its review is recorded by an Internal Reviewer who has no role on the engagement.

Why the alternatives are wrong. A and C read an absence of a name as an absence of review. D confuses an issued report with a draft. Role-boundary note. None. Source. Level 4 document, Unit 4.9.

SBX-L4-0023

Correct answer. D

Explanation. A Founding Six engagement is never assigned an Independent Reviewer. Never describe a Founding Six report as reviewed by a Level 4 reviewer.

Why the alternatives are wrong. A, B and C each describe the substitute as the thing it replaces. Role-boundary note. The substitute is a different arrangement and is described as one. Source. Level 4 document, Unit 4.10.

SBX-L4-0024

Correct answer. 1-b; 2-a; 3-c

Explanation. A standard engagement has an assigned Independent Reviewer. A Founding Six engagement is never assigned one, and its review is recorded by an Internal Reviewer with no role on it. An assignment is never made after the assessment is finalized.

Why the alternatives are wrong. Any other pairing gives a situation an outcome that the rules forbid. Role-boundary note. None. Source. Level 4 document, Units 4.2 and 4.10.

SBX-L4-0025

Correct answer. A

Explanation. The assigned Independent Reviewer is not the same thing as the Internal Reviewer, which is an HCDI role. The approved text says the two are easily confused.

Why the alternatives are wrong. B, C and D give the Independent Reviewer a resolving power. Role-boundary note. Only the Internal Reviewer resolves a flag. Source. Level 4 document, section 1 and Unit 4.8; Part B, Chapter 2.

SBX-L4-0026

Correct answer. B

Explanation. Recording the review completion is the reviewer's one act. A reviewer who is not satisfied does not record it, and because it is a release condition, finalize refuses. How the reasons are communicated is not set out in the approved text.

Why the alternatives are wrong. A releases the report on a review the reviewer does not stand behind. C and D give the reviewer powers it does not have. Role-boundary note. The reviewer changes nothing and approves nothing. Source. Level 4 document, Units 4.4 to 4.6; Part B, Chapter 12.

SBX-L4-0027

Correct answer. D

Explanation. Treat everything in an assignment as confidential and use it only for the review. Information that is not public may carry le-

gal restrictions that differ between jurisdictions, so take advice from counsel.

Why the alternatives are wrong. A, B and C each disclose, or imply, information that the reviewer should treat as confidential. Role-boundary note. The assignment is confidential. The reviewer cannot judge what is safe to say. Source. Part B, Chapter 6; Level 4 document, Unit 4.3. General professional knowledge, no legal advice.

SBX-L4-0028

Correct answer. B

Explanation. An assignment is never made to someone from the delivering Firm, to a platform administrator, or on a Founding Six engagement, and never after the assessment is finalized.

Why the alternatives are wrong. A, C and D each treat a rule as something that qualification or agreement can waive. Role-boundary note. None. Source. Level 4 document, Unit 4.2.

SBX-L4-0029

Correct answer. A

Explanation. No price, Order Form or invoice reaches the reviewer. The reviewer reads the whole assessment, read-only, including rationale, actions, not-evidenced indicators and draft reports.

Why the alternatives are wrong. B, C and D are all part of what the reviewer reads. Role-boundary note. None. Source. Level 4 document, Units 4.3 and 4.4.

SBX-L4-0030

Correct answer. B

Explanation. Every party's actions are shown, because the review is of the whole assessment. You read the action text and you edit nothing.

Why the alternatives are wrong. A gives the reviewer a client. C gives the reviewer an approval it does not have. D invents a reason. Role-boundary note. Approval of actions is HCDI's, and the reviewer edits nothing. Source. Level 4 document, Unit 4.4.

Part G Original exercise answers

Basis - editorial model reasoning for the original fictional chapter exercises. These are educational answers, not HCDI determinations or protected methodology examples. Alternative answers can be defensible when they preserve the stated facts, uncertainty and role limits.

Exercise L4 E01

No. The assignment conditions, not personal confidence, govern. The delivering partner cannot nominate a reviewer under the source limitation block.

Exercise L4 E02

Only the Internal Reviewer resolves the flag. The Independent Reviewer cannot edit, rescore or resolve it. Experience does not merge the roles.

Exercise L4 E03

Reviewer-shopping. Revocation requires a reason, ends access and makes recorded review stale. The engagement team cannot choose a friendlier replacement.

Exercise L4 E04

Disclosure of the relationship through the available authorised route and application of the actual source controls. Efficiency is not evidence that independence is protected. No unsourced time limit is invented.

Exercise L4 E05

No. A draft may be downloaded for the review but not forwarded to the client. Follow the source confidentiality and access limits.

Exercise L4 E06

Do not disclose, hint or trade on confidential review information. Keep the material for the review and obtain qualified advice about personal legal obligations where needed.

Exercise L4 E07

The whole assessment, including coverage, each party's actions, rationales and not-evidenced actions. A favourable covering note does not narrow source-defined scope.

Exercise L4 E08

Anchoring and deference may have narrowed attention. Examine the dated sources and rationale independently. Do not assume fraud or resolve a flag as Independent Reviewer.

Exercise L4 E09

No. Read the record and preserve the concern within available authority. Only the Internal Reviewer resolves the flag with a note; the Independent Reviewer cannot repair it by editing.

Exercise L4 E10

No. Each condition has its own meaning. Finalize refuses on missing conditions, with no manual override. Do not treat one completion as permission to waive another requirement.

Exercise L4 E11

The source makes the completion stale. Review what changed and record completion again only on a fresh basis. The reviewer does not edit the action or assume unchanged meaning.

Exercise L4 E12

It would create an unsupported HCDI rule. Retain the distinction between not recording completion and the unspecified communication route. General professional judgement cannot fill the held procedure.

Exercise L4 E13

A firm recorded as implementer cannot deliver reassessment of the findings it addressed. Read the remediation disclosures and relevant checks without inventing a new exemption.

Exercise L4 E14

The programme uses the source-disclosed Internal Reviewer substitute, not a Level 4 assignment. Tracker progress does not change the issued score or document. Use accurate programme and status wording.

Part H Professional reading notes and laboratories

The reading notes develop general research literacy and professional judgement. They introduce no HCDI rule, indicator description, scoring criterion, protected test or replacement instrument. Shared concepts are repeated here so each level can be read as a standalone study book. Apply them only within the role boundaries of this level.

Reading note 4 N01 What an observation can establish

Basis - general professional knowledge. Conceptual explanation, not HCDI methodology instruction.

An observation is always an observation of something under particular conditions. A record may establish that a policy was approved, while an interview may establish that a person described a particular experience. Neither automatically establishes how the whole organisation operates. State the narrow proposition first. A useful sentence identifies the subject, period, source and limitation rather than combining them into a broad adjective.

There are several possible distances between a source and a conclusion. Direct description reports what the source says. Interpretation explains what that statement might mean. Generalisation extends the interpretation to other people, periods or contexts. Prediction extends it into the future. Each step needs additional justification. A conclusion can be reasonable without being certain, but its language should match the distance travelled.

This distinction matters in professional learning because an accurate quotation can still be used to support an inaccurate conclusion. A director may truly say that communication is excellent; the quotation establishes the director's account, not the experience of every shift. Ask what would have to be observed for the broader statement to be supported, and what alternative account remains plausible.

Distinction	Illustration	Limit
Description	A director reports confidence	Attributed statement

Interpretation	Communication may be working	Needs other relevant evidence
Generalisation	All staff understand	Population-wide claim not established

Reading note 4 N02 Mechanisms and alternative explanations

Basis - general professional knowledge. Conceptual explanation, not HCDI methodology instruction.

A mechanism explains how one condition could produce another through intermediate events. An authority change might delay decisions, delayed decisions might create rework and rework might increase cost. The sequence is a hypothesis rather than proof. Evidence that the intermediate events actually occurred is more informative than a general statement that change is difficult.

Temporal order is necessary for many causal claims but is not sufficient. A training programme can precede an improvement that was actually caused by new equipment. A transaction can precede departures caused partly by a wider labour-market change. A common cause can produce both the supposed cause and the outcome. Selection can also distort comparisons when the teams receiving an intervention were already different.

Counterfactual reasoning asks what would probably have happened without the proposed cause. In practice, the counterfactual is not directly observed. Comparisons with another period, location or group can help but bring assumptions about comparability. State those assumptions. A good professional explanation identifies the mechanism, competing causes and evidence that could distinguish them. It does not turn a convenient chronology into an exclusive causal verdict.

Distinction	Illustration	Limit

Sequence	A happens before B	Does not isolate the cause
Mechanism	Intermediate events observed	Strengthens a specific explanation
Comparison	Similar work with different exposure	Useful only with stated comparability limits

Reading note 4 N03 Constructs and observable proxies

Basis - general professional knowledge. Conceptual explanation, not HCDI methodology instruction.

A construct is an idea used to organise understanding, such as trust, engagement or readiness. It cannot always be observed directly. A proxy is an observable feature that may relate to it: attendance, stated confidence or turnover, for example. A proxy can be useful while remaining incomplete. Attendance can reflect interest, obligation, convenience or fear of absence consequences.

Construct clarity comes before data collection. Specify what the concept means in the discussion and which aspects the observation can cover. Converging observations can strengthen an interpretation, while disagreement can reveal different aspects or a poor proxy. More data of the same narrow kind may add little if it all misses the relevant concept. A count is precise as a count without being a complete measure of the intended construct.

For this study series, these are general research-literacy concepts. They do not define HCDI indicators, establish scoring descriptions or authorise a replacement instrument. A reader should be able to ask whether a claim and its stated basis concern the same thing, while leaving every protected operational definition and methodology test outside the book.

Distinction	Illustration	Limit
Concept	Engagement	Requires a clear discussion meaning

Proxy	Attendance	May have several explanations
Limit	High attendance	Does not establish willing contribution

Reading note 4 N04 Independence of information sources

Basis - general professional knowledge. Conceptual explanation, not HCDI methodology instruction.

Independence is a relationship between information origins, not a property created by having different file names. A spreadsheet, a slide and a memo can all repeat one unsupported number. Two interviewees can also rely on one briefing. Agreement is more informative when sources had separate access to the relevant facts and were not simply repeating the same account.

Independence is also claim-specific. A presentation copied from a spreadsheet can independently demonstrate that a figure was communicated to a committee, while providing no independent support for the figure itself. A reviewer should therefore trace the claim as well as the document. Different documents may support different parts of one narrative.

This does not mean that copied material is useless or dishonest. It means its contribution must be described correctly. Record what is known about origin, access and repetition. Do not count containers as independent confirmations, convert agreement into an invented confidence percentage or apply unofficial weights to the pilot evidence-state vocabulary. Preserve uncertainty where provenance cannot be established.

Distinction	Illustration	Limit
Container	Different files	Does not establish different origins

Origin	Shared spreadsheet	One demonstrated source for a number
Different claim	Figure presented to committee	Presentation may directly support this

Reading note 4 N05 Denominators and selection

Basis - general professional knowledge. Conceptual explanation, not HCDI methodology instruction.

A percentage is a relationship between a numerator and a denominator. Both must be named. Accurate answers among voluntary respondents are different from accurate answers among all eligible people. An increase in the proportion can occur because the numerator grew, the denominator shrank or both changed. Headline percentages often hide this distinction.

Selection concerns how observations entered the record. People who respond voluntarily may have different access, motivation or experiences from nonrespondents. A larger response count reduces some forms of random uncertainty but does not automatically remove systematic selection. Missing observations also have different possible causes. Nonresponse is not evidence of resistance, and a withheld result is not evidence that a group answered negatively.

Compare like populations and periods before interpreting a change. State who was eligible, who was observed, what event was counted and whether membership changed. Use a starting cohort when the question concerns retention of original members. Use another denominator only when it answers the intended question and is labelled. These general arithmetic ideas supply no HCDI reporting threshold, coverage rule or protected calculation.

Distinction	Illustration	Limit
Eligible population	Everyone in scope	Defines the intended population

Observed population	People who replied	May be selected
Reported proportion	Accurate among replies	Does not establish non-respondent understanding

Reading note 4 N06 Time validity and record changes

Basis - general professional knowledge. Conceptual explanation, not HCDI methodology instruction.

An assertion can be true for one period and inappropriate for another. A chart can accurately describe January while failing to establish May reporting lines. A file received in May can still speak from January. A later statement does not silently amend an earlier issued document. Distinguish content time, receipt time and the time of a subsequent claim.

Changes also affect review reliance. A completion or approval concerns a particular record under a particular state of affairs. Where the public pilot defines staleness events, those events are retained exactly rather than replaced by a general judgement that an edit is small. Outside those rules, the general professional question is whether the basis being relied upon is still the basis actually examined.

Version history makes the difference visible. Preserve originals and identify derivatives without claiming that byte preservation establishes truth. A fixed issued document and a changing live status answer different questions. The first shows what was issued; the second describes its applicable current standing through the authorised process. Neither a screenshot nor a progress note should be treated as automatic proof of the other.

Distinction	Illustration	Limit
Content time	Period described	Not necessarily receipt time
Version	Record actually examined	Changes may affect reliance

Status	Current authorised standing	Distinct from fixed document content

Reading note 4 N07 Scepticism and the danger of automatic disbelief

Basis - general professional knowledge. Conceptual explanation, not HCDI methodology instruction.

Professional scepticism keeps questions open until the evidence supports a bounded conclusion. It does not require assuming that everyone is dishonest. Automatic disbelief can be as biased as automatic acceptance: both replace examination with a prior attitude. A careful reviewer identifies the proposition, considers what would count against it and examines the actual supporting record.

Confidence, polished formatting and senior authorship are weak substitutes for a usable basis. Equally, an untidy record may contain relevant evidence. Separate presentation quality from substantive support. Where sources disagree, the Independent Reviewer does not resolve the flag; that power remains with the Internal Reviewer under the public pilot.

The general discipline is to slow the transition from impression to conclusion. Record what is observed, what is inferred and what remains unclear. This note teaches no protected methodology test of scores or actions. It explains why independent reading requires a questioning attitude that is consistent across favourable and unfavourable material, and why role limits remain in place even when the reviewer believes the answer is obvious.

Distinction	Illustration	Limit
Acceptance without examination	Deference	Can overlook unsupported claims

Disbelief without examination	Suspicion as default	Can ignore valid support
Bounded examination	Questions tied to sources	Preserves uncertainty and authority

Reading note 4 N08 Anchoring and order of reading

Basis - general professional knowledge. Conceptual explanation, not HCDI methodology instruction.

The first number or confident summary can shape later interpretation. Once a reader expects a strong result, ambiguous material may be read as support and inconsistent material may receive less attention. This is an anchoring and confirmation risk in ordinary professional judgement. It is not proof that the reader has acted improperly.

A general countermeasure is to state the question and examine relevant sources before accepting another person's framing. Compare the conclusion with the evidence and limitations rather than searching only for quotations that agree. Keep a distinction between a genuine contradiction, a different period and a different claim. Precision about the question reduces the tendency to explain away every inconvenient fact.

These are general reading habits, not a new mandatory review order or an HCDI scoring test. The source public whole-assessment scope remains the applicable instruction. An Independent Reviewer reads without editing the rationale or action. If the issue concerns an open flag or a reserved decision, believing that the evidence is obvious does not confer authority to resolve it.

Distinction	Illustration	Limit
Initial summary	Frames expectations	May anchor attention
Independent reading	Examines sources and limits	Tests the frame

Role boundary	Read-only review	No editing or conflict resolution

Reading note 4 N09 Independence in judgement and in structure

Basis - general professional knowledge. Conceptual explanation, not HCDI methodology instruction.

A person can sincerely believe they are impartial while working within an arrangement that creates influence. Structural safeguards address who selects, pays, assigns or replaces a reviewer; judgement concerns how the reviewer actually reasons. A promise of impartiality does not replace the public source selection conditions.

The pilot excludes own-firm engagement review, self-selection and nomination by the delivering partner. HCDI Compliance controls assignment. A live credential state is a separate condition from a holder's general competence. Prior relationships can be relevant without this book inventing a cooling-off interval or financial-materiality threshold.

Do not confuse an individual's willingness to ask difficult questions with authority to accept an informal assignment. Conversely, an assignment record does not mean that careful reading is unnecessary. The public arrangement aims to protect the review from interests held by the reviewer or delivering firm. It remains a source-defined scheme arrangement, not an assertion that this development book or the Level 4 pathway is accredited or independently validated.

Distinction	Illustration	Limit
Personal belief	I am impartial	Does not satisfy assignment controls

Structural condition	Controlled selection	Source-defined protection
Professional act	Careful bounded review	Still required

Reading note 4 N10 Familiarity and commercial dependency

Basis - general professional knowledge. Conceptual explanation, not HCDI methodology instruction.

Repeated professional relationships can improve context while also making assumptions feel too obvious to question. A reviewer may hesitate to challenge a respected colleague or may anticipate future commercial work. Influence can operate without an explicit threat or bargain. Identify relevant relationships accurately rather than relying on assurances that experience makes them harmless.

The public pilot controls assignment and excludes reviewing one's own firm's engagement. Other source-evidenced declarations and conditions remain applicable, but this book adds no eligibility tests, fees, numerical limits or independence waivers. A relationship should not be hidden merely because the reviewer expects to reach the same conclusion anyway.

Commercial dependency also affects the delivering firm. Offering remediation and reassessing implemented findings create distinct concerns, addressed by the public disclosure and implementer safeguards. The Independent Reviewer reads those records within the source scope. The reviewer does not become the commercial negotiator, does not choose a more convenient reassessment firm and does not approve an exception based on personal comfort.

Distinction	Illustration	Limit
Familiarity	Repeated relationship	May reduce challenge

Dependency	Future work expectation	May influence wording
Public safeguard	Controlled roles and disclosures	No personal waiver

Reading note 4 N11 A completion record refers to a version

Basis - general professional knowledge. Conceptual explanation, not HCDI methodology instruction.

Review completion makes sense only in relation to the material reviewed. If that material changes, reliance on the old completion may describe work no one performed. The source identifies specific events that make completion stale: an action change, return to draft or assignment revocation. These events are retained without adding a materiality exemption.

An unchanged assignee does not make changed content unchanged. Re-recording requires a fresh judgement based on the relevant current record. A request to repeat a click because nothing important changed is itself a claim to examine, not an authorised waiver. The reviewer remains read-only throughout.

The general lesson is about the subject of assurance: a statement applies to a record at a time, not to every future derivative. Preserve the distinction between completed work, changed content and renewed examination. This note describes the public completion lifecycle only. It supplies no protected test of a score, conclusion or action and no invented procedure for communicating a refusal.

Distinction	Illustration	Limit
Reviewed content	Version A	Completion refers to this record
Changed content	Version B	May trigger public staleness

Renewed completion	Fresh basis	Not a mechanical repeat

Reading note 4 N12 Reasoned non-completion and procedural silence

Basis - general professional knowledge. Conceptual explanation, not HCDI methodology instruction.

A source can define an act while leaving its communication route unspecified. The pilot gives the Independent Reviewer the act of recording completion and states that a dissatisfied reviewer does not record it. It also holds the route for recording reasons and escalating disagreement. A study edition must preserve both statements rather than filling the gap with a plausible procedure.

General professional clarity still matters. A concern that can be stated precisely is easier for someone with authority to evaluate. But advice to be clear does not establish an authorised recipient, formal notice, appeal right or response deadline. An editor's familiarity with another profession's process does not make that process part of HCDI.

This distinction protects the learner from false certainty. It is better to know that a route is held than to follow an invented rule with confidence. The same restraint applies to the held conduct-concern route outside the assessment. No operational whistleblowing mechanism, legal protection or reporting chain is created here. The public release condition remains unmet until completion is appropriately recorded.

Distinction	Illustration	Limit
Defined act	Record completion	Public source
Defined consequence	Condition unmet if absent	Public source
Unspecified route	Reasons and escalation	Held, not invented

Reading note 4 N13 Disclosure and an accurate public claim

Basis - general professional knowledge. Conceptual explanation, not HCDI methodology instruction.

A statement can be technically related to a review while giving a misleading impression of its nature. Programme substitutes, internal review and assigned independent review are different arrangements. A marketing sentence should describe the arrangement actually supported rather than borrow the credibility of another credential or role.

The public source states that Founding Six engagements are never assigned an Independent Reviewer and must not be described as reviewed by a Level 4 reviewer. The report prints the substitute arrangement. A later progress update also cannot upgrade the issued document or its score. Fixed content, current status and client-reported action progress are separate records.

A development book should be equally careful about its own claims. These books are expanded study editions based on supplied pilots, not evidence of HCDI approval, accreditation, credential issuance or current platform operation. Where the source describes a dated conditional restriction, report it as a source condition rather than asserting that its triggering record exists. Accurate attribution preserves the value of the information without overstating its authority.

Distinction	Illustration	Limit
Actual arrangement	Programme substitute	Describe accurately

Unsupported upgrade	Level 4 review claim	Not permitted for Founding Six
Later progress	Client update	Does not amend issued score

Applied reading laboratories

A laboratory table is a set of stated fictional observations, not a completed HCDI evidence record. Read each row with its subject and time. Two different dates may describe different events; two different totals may use different populations. A management claim in a row remains a claim rather than the case author's conclusion.

Answer the question in your own words before consulting the worked reasoning. Name the supported proposition, any competing explanation and the information that would distinguish them. For numerical exercises, show the population and denominator. For authority exercises, identify the precise role rather than the most senior person. The final scope boundary explains what the laboratory does not establish. None supplies a protected instrument, indicator-level example, gate calculation, action-classification rule or fit assessment. Successful completion demonstrates learning from a fictional case; it is not an examination result, supervised-practice credit or an authorised engagement act.

Basis - original fictional cases for general professional learning. These laboratories extend the public chapter themes through documents, timelines, denominators and role distinctions. They contain no HCDI inquiry instrument, indicator-level example, protected calculation or new scheme rule. All organisations, events and data are invented. Work through each question before reading its reasoning.

Laboratory 4 L01 The assignment request that cannot be accepted

Learning purpose - The assignment request that cannot be accepted. The task is to distinguish the stated observations from the conclusion they can support.

A partner offers an experienced reviewer a quick assignment outside the normal allocation process.

Record	Subject	Stated fact
Credential	Holder	Level 4 claimed
Nomination	Source	Delivering partner
Prior work	Relationship	Reviewer advised target
Selection	Proposal	Reviewer chooses the assignment
Assignment	Compliance record	Absent
Personal view	Reviewer	I can be impartial

Question

Identify the assignment issues without inventing an eligibility threshold.

Worked reasoning

The partner nomination and self-selection conflict with the public limitation block. A claimed credential and personal confidence do not create an assignment. HCDI Compliance controls assignment and checks the required live credential state. Prior work is relevant to disclosure and the actual applicable controls, but this case invents no

cooling-off period or financial threshold. The reviewer cannot accept the informal offer as if a private agreement were an authorised assignment. Keep competence, eligibility, relationship information and assignment as separate matters.

Scope boundary

Public independence and assignment boundaries; no unsourced eligibility test or waiver.

Laboratory 4 L02 Revocation and access history

Learning purpose - Revocation and access history. The task is to distinguish the stated observations from the conclusion they can support.

An assigned reviewer has recorded completion, then HCDI revokes the assignment with a reason.

Record	Subject	Stated fact
Original assignment	Actor	HCDI Compliance
Completion	Timing	Recorded
Revocation	Reason	Recorded in authorised process
Access	Consequence	Ends immediately
Completion	Consequence	Stale
Team request	Shortcut	Share old page address with replacement

Question

Why is access transfer not a solution?

Worked reasoning

Revocation ends the former assignee's access and makes the completion stale under the public source. A replacement needs a controlled assignment, not access through the old person's page address or credentials. The team cannot select a preferred substitute. A reasoned revocation should not be confused with reviewer-shopping, but removing reasons from the record makes that distinction impossible to

evaluate. The old completion does not attach automatically to a new reviewer or a changed assessment. No new appeals or reassignment timetable is supplied.

Scope boundary

Public assignment lifecycle; no invented replacement or appeal procedure.

Laboratory 4 L03 Three reviewers in one conversation

Learning purpose - Three reviewers in one conversation. The task is to distinguish the stated observations from the conclusion they can support.

A delivery team uses the word reviewer loosely while discussing a conflict and final issuance.

Record	Subject	Stated fact
Engagement Reviewer	Public task	Reviews score reasoning
Internal Reviewer	Public task	Resolves evidence conflicts
Independent Reviewer	Public task	Read-only whole-as-sessment review
Team request	Conflict	Ask Independent Reviewer to close it
Team request	Action	Ask engagement Reviewer to approve it
Independent act	Completion	Recorded last

Question

Identify the role conflations.

Worked reasoning

The engagement Reviewer, Internal Reviewer and assigned Independent Reviewer are distinct roles. The Independent Reviewer cannot close the conflict or edit the assessment. The engagement team cannot take over source-reserved corrective-action approval. The public source assigns conflict resolution to the Internal Reviewer.

Understanding who can act is separate from understanding what the evidence means. Use precise role names rather than assuming that every reviewer has the same powers.

Scope boundary

Public role comparison only; no protected test of a score or corrective action.

Laboratory 4 L04 A draft and a confidential hint

Learning purpose - A draft and a confidential hint. The task is to distinguish the stated observations from the conclusion they can support.

An assigned reviewer can download watermarked drafts. A friend asks about an imminent transaction.

Record	Subject	Stated fact
Draft	Status	Watermarked, not issued
Permission	Purpose	Review
Request A	Client executive	Send draft for comfort
Request B	Friend	Give hint about transaction
After issuance	Working material	Leaves reviewer view
Issued report	Availability	Remains

Question

Explain the separate confidentiality risks.

Worked reasoning

Downloading a draft for review does not authorise forwarding it to a client. A watermark describes status rather than permission to distribute. A verbal hint can misuse confidential information even without sending a file. Use information only for the authorised review and do not share page addresses or credentials. The public access change after issuance should not be bypassed by collecting uncontrolled

copies. This is general professional restraint and the supplied access boundary, not jurisdiction-specific legal advice about trading or disclosure duties.

Scope boundary

Public confidentiality controls and general ethics; no legal opinion or expanded access permission.

Laboratory 4 L05 Selective evidence in a polished pack

Learning purpose - Selective evidence in a polished pack. The task is to distinguish the stated observations from the conclusion they can support.

A covering note highlights a favourable conclusion and asks that several areas receive little attention.

Record	Subject	Stated fact
Cover note	Emphasis	Strong findings
Evidence	Gap	One not-evidenced area
Action set	Parties	Two parties plus joint actions
Rationale	Record	Must be read
Review request	Team	Read summary only
Reviewer authority	Mode	Read-only

Question

What makes the proposed narrowing unacceptable?

Worked reasoning

The source review concerns the whole assessment. Read the evidence basis, coverage, not-evidenced areas, rationales and actions across parties. The covering note can direct attention but cannot redefine the review scope. A favourable result does not make a missing area irrelevant, and a gap is not automatically a low score. The reviewer reads the rationale and action text without editing either. This laboratory tests public scope literacy and resistance to selective presenta-

tion. It does not teach the protected methodology for testing scores, conclusions or corrective-action attributes.

Scope boundary

Public whole-assessment scope; protected testing methods are excluded.

Laboratory 4 L06 Staleness after an apparently small edit

Learning purpose - Staleness after an apparently small edit. The task is to distinguish the stated observations from the conclusion they can support.

A reviewer completes work on Monday. Changes occur before finalization.

Record	Subject	Stated fact
Monday	Completion	Recorded on reviewed version
Tuesday	Action wording	Changed
Wednesday	Assessment state	Returns to draft
Thursday	Team request	Repeat completion without reading
Assignment	Assignee	Unchanged
Public consequence	Review	Stale after listed changes

Question

Why does an unchanged assignee not preserve completion?

Worked reasoning

Completion relates to reviewed content and state as well as identity. Both the action change and return to draft are source-defined staleness events. The reviewer should review the changed record and its implications before recording completion again. Calling an edit small

does not waive the public condition, and repeating a click is not a fresh judgement. The assignee remains read-only and cannot fix the action themselves. The example concerns the public relationship between a review record and a changed assessment, with no protected methodology evaluation.

Scope boundary

Public staleness lifecycle; no protected corrective-action or score test.

Laboratory 4 L07 When the communication route is held

Learning purpose - When the communication route is held. The task is to distinguish the stated observations from the conclusion they can support.

A reviewer has a stated concern and is not ready to record completion. The training team wants to standardise the response.

Record	Subject	Stated fact
Public act	Reviewer	Records completion when satisfied
Current concern	Position	Not satisfied
Release	Condition	Completion remains unmet
Source gap	Reasons and escalation	Route held
Proposed form	Training team	Invented refusal notice
Proposed deadline	Training team	Invented five-day appeal

Question

What can a study book safely teach?

Worked reasoning

It can explain that not recording completion leaves the public release condition unmet. It cannot turn an unevidenced refusal form, recipient chain or appeal deadline into HCDI instruction. The source explicitly holds the communication and escalation route. General advice

to state a concern clearly is not an authorised procedure. Preserve the gap and seek an authoritative controlled source before creating operational guidance. A development book should not make a held point appear complete merely to make the chapter look comprehensive.

Scope boundary

Public completion distinction only; no invented refusal, escalation or whistleblowing procedure.

Laboratory 4 L08 Programme disclosure and later progress

Learning purpose - Programme disclosure and later progress. The task is to distinguish the stated observations from the conclusion they can support.

A Founding Six report is used in a marketing proposal after the client supplies a completion update.

Record	Subject	Stated fact
Programme	Engagement	Founding Six
Review	Actual arrangement	Internal Reviewer substitute
Marketing	Claim	Level 4 independently reviewed
Tracker	Later claim	Client submitted completion
Marketing	Further claim	Issued score increased
Status	Current position	Requires authorised record

Question

Correct the claims while preserving the underlying records.

Worked reasoning

The programme uses the disclosed source substitute and is never described as a Level 4 Independent Reviewer assignment. The client's submitted completion is not independent verification and does not

increase an issued score. Preserve the fixed document and consult the applicable current status separately. The source conditional date concerning scored issuance remains a source-bound condition, not proof of a current concurrence record. Marketing may describe only the review arrangement and records actually supported. It cannot upgrade either programme review or progress claims through reassuring terminology.

Scope boundary

Public programme, status and Tracker distinctions; no protected method or current accreditation assertion.

Part I Source and reference maps

Protected unit register

Unit	Reference only
4.11	Unit 4.11 - Testing scores and conclusions against the methodology / - excluded.
4.12	Unit 4.12 - Testing corrective actions against the methodology's attribute rules / - excluded.

Chapter source map

Chapter	Physical PDF page
1	7
2	7
3	8
4	8
5	8
6	9
7	9
8	9
9	10
10	10
11	10

12	10
13	11
14	11

Unit source map

Unit	Physical PDF page
4.1	12
4.2	12
4.3	13
4.4	13
4.5	13
4.6	13
4.7	14
4.8	14
4.9	14
4.10	15
4.11	15
4.12	15

References

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R5. OECD (2023). G20/OECD Principles of Corporate Governance 2023. OECD Publishing. External board and disclosure context; local

law and HCDI rules remain separate.

https://www.oecd.org/en/publications/2023/09/g20-oecd-principles-of-corporate-governance-2023_60836fcb.html

R7. Tversky, A., & Kahneman, D. (1974). Judgment under uncertainty: Heuristics and biases. Science, 185(4157), 1124-1131. DOI 10.1126/science.185.4157.1124.
https://doi.org/10.1126/science.185.4157.1124

Research context for R7 - judgement can be influenced by an initial frame and by readily available examples. Use this classic research as background to the discussion of careful reading, not as evidence that HCDI is validated or that a reviewer is free of bias. No experimental estimate is transferred to a fictional case, and no protected methodology test is derived from the paper.

External bibliographic records and publisher or primary-source pages were checked on 22 October 2026. Citation does not imply that the external author endorses HCDI or that HCDI has validated the cited theory. Works named only in the pilot remain indirect references unless listed above.

Source documents mentioned but not supplied

The pilot refers to Edition 0.3 curriculum documents, a Study Companion, certificate designs, controlled registers and platform decisions. These were not separately supplied or independently inspected. Their content is described only to the extent the supplied pilot states it. No missing rule, implementation detail or current approval is inferred.

Working vocabulary

Source basis - supplied Level 4 pilot glossary, physical PDF page 16. Wording is condensed; source qualifications apply. The Integrity Event entry follows the public body distinction between suspicion and determination rather than the Level 1 glossary shorthand.

Term	Meaning in the public source
Assigned Independent Reviewer	An outside-firm reviewer assigned by HCDI Compliance for one assessment; not the Internal Reviewer.
Internal Reviewer	The HCDI role with reserved conflict, action-approval, check and confirmation responsibilities in the public source.
Independence attestation	A statement on file concerning the source independence conditions.
Review completion	The assigned reviewer's one act, recorded last as a release condition.
Reviewer-shopping	Replacing a reviewer until a favourable completion is obtained.
Revocation	Reasoned ending of an assignment; access ends and any completion becomes stale.
Stale review	A completion no longer applicable after the source-defined action change, return to draft or revocation.
Founding Six substitute	Review by an Internal Reviewer without an engagement role, under the disclosed programme arrangement; not a Level 4 assignment.

Release conditions	The six public conditions required before finalization.
Watermark	A mark identifying the report as a draft rather than an issued document.

Edition review record

Review item	Treatment
Scope	Source chapter and unit sequence retained.
Protected content	Reference-only unit entries; no teaching examples or equations.

Cases and figures	**Source cases distinguished from original fictional exercises; conceptual figures labelled.**
Scheme status	Pilot and held positions remain qualified.
Pagination	The final PDF page count is reported in the delivery quality record. Markdown is reflowable and has no invariant page count.