COMMISSIONING SPECIALISTS ASSOCIATION

Commissioning Management

Commissioning Management

Application Process

Rev12 | March 2026

This document is provided under license and may not be reproduced, distributed, or disclosed without prior written consent from the © 2026 Commissioning Specialists Association (CSA).
All rights reserved.

MAKING BUILDINGS WORK

Contents

CM Introduction 3

Overview of The Commissioning Management Application Process 4

Stage 1 CM CV, CM Supporting Evidence & Client References 6

1.1 Commissioning Managers CV 6

1.2 Client References 6

1.3 CM Supporting Project Evidence 7

1.4 Application form for CM grade (must be completed) 8

Stage 2 Dissertation Report 9

2.1 Key Assessment Criteria for Dissertation 9

2.2 Dissertation Content & Structure 10

2.2.1 Planning / Design 10

2.2.2 Pre-Construction 10

2.2.3 Construction 10

2.2.4 Testing & Commissioning 11

2.2.5 Handover 11

2.2.6 Post-Handover (Initial & Aftercare) 11

2.2.7 Important Dissertation Notes 12

2.2.8 Check List 12

Stage 3 Commissioning Managers Interview 13

3.1 Interview date/time in UK time zone. 13

3.2 Interview Invites 13

3.3 The interview itself 13

3.4 Finding out the official decision 13

Stage 4 Upgrades / Path of Development 14

4.1 Candidates holding CSA Grade 5 or 6 14

4.2 Candidates currently on the CM pathway of Development 14

4.3 CM Upgrade requests process 14

Plagiarism – what it is and how to avoid it! 15

CSA Zero Tolerance Policy 15

Avoid using AI Writing Tools/Programmes/Websites 15

Why can't I use AI to help write my dissertation? 15

© CSA 2026. All rights reserved.

Academic Integrity 16
Original Work 16
Thesis author 16
Commissioning Managers Criteria Table 17
Commissioning Management Pathway of Development 19

© CSA 2026. All rights reserved.

CM Introduction

Welcome to the Commissioning Specialists Association (CSA) Commissioning Managers (CM) grading system.

This CM process is open to all commissioning managers across all backgrounds. This document sets out the detailed requirements that you will need to complete / submit, to be assessed against the grade you are applying for.

There are 3 **CSA Commissioning Managers Grades:**

- CSA Commissioning Manager (CM1)
- CSA Senior Commissioning Manager (CM2)
- CSA Project Commissioning Manager (CM3)

The CM process for all new candidates across all CM grades has been split into 3 sequential stages. This is a stop/go process. Each Stage must be complete/approved before commencing the next stage.

Stage 1 Commissioning Managers CV, CM Supporting Documentation & Client References

Stage 2 Dissertation Report

Stage 3 Commissioning Managers Interview

For commissioning managers already on the CSA PoD they can follow Upgrades / Path of Development

Important note: Applicants that submit more than 1 stage at the same time, will have their applications will be returned.

© CSA 2026. All rights reserved.

Overview of The Commissioning Management Application Process

The CM process has been split into 3 sequential stages. Each stage is stop/go process.
Approval of Stage 1 is required before proceeding to Stage 2.
Approval of Stage 2 is required before proceeding to Stage 3.

Stage 1 Commissioning Managers CV, CM Supporting Evidence & Client References

1) **Submit your most recent Commissioning Management CV**. This CV should follow the criteria detailed in Commissioning Managers CV
2) **Submit client references**. This should follow Client References**.**
3) **Submit CM project supporting documents that you have produced or signed-off, from a recent CM project.** This should follow CM Supporting Project Evidence
4) **Fill in the** Application form for CM grade (must be completed)

   Candidates with Stage 1 approved*, can proceed to **Stage 2**.

Stage 2 Commissioning Management Dissertation

5) **Submit a dissertation commissioning management report**. The structure of the report should follow the detailed guidelines provided under Dissertation Report. In addition to this:

   a. This dissertation should cover each stage of the commissioning managers duties and the obstacles faced/overcome. This requires the candidate to give project examples for each project duty shown.
   b. The candidate is required to demonstrate their knowledge of the process and prove (via evidence) how they use this on at least 1 project for each stage of commissioning using project specific examples and evidence.

   Dissertations that are approved*, can move onto **Stage 3**

Stage 3 Commissioning Management Interview

6) **Candidates that have successfully completed and been approved for Stages 1 and 2 will enter the final Interview Stage:**

   a. Candidates will be requested to choose from 5 dates for the CM interview.
   b. Once a suitable date is chosen, the CSA will issue an Microsoft Teams Interview invite.

© CSA 2026. All rights reserved.

7) **Candidates Interview will be based on their CM experience.**

8) **Candidates with successful interviews* will have their full application circulated to the CM panel for final approval.**

*****Candidates that are unsuccessful at any stage may be requested to provide additional supporting evidence, be asked to repeat the stage, or potentially have a different grade awarded than applied for.

© CSA 2026. All rights reserved.

Stage 1 CM CV, CM Supporting Evidence & Client References

1.1 Commissioning Managers CV

Differing from a standard CV - the Commissioning Managers CV should **only relate to commissioning management** duties. This Commissioning Management CV should be limited to:

- Profile describing technical background & Professional qualifications.
- Years' experience as a commissioning manager followed by
- Commissioning Management Project Experience (Name / Type of project / Project CM dates / Role you conducted)
- Sequential list of Commissioning Management Projects using the above format (this should match the total years' experience as a CM)
- If commissioning management formed part of your project role, identify the timeframe dedicated to commissioning management duties only.

IMPORTANT NOTE: Generic CV's that are non-Commissioning Management specific will be rejected by the Assessment Panel.

1.2 Client References

Client references shall be from recent projects that you have undertaken the duties of a Commissioning Manager. Client references must be on letter headed paper or email in PDF format.

CM1 - Statement of applicants Commissioning Management experience from a CSA Corporate member / Senior manager within the applicant's company or 2 x client references for a recent project.
CM2 - 3 x Client references from recent projects.
CM3 - 4 x Client references for recent projects.

© CSA 2026. All rights reserved.

1.3 CM Supporting Project Evidence

As part of your initial submission for Commissioning Management Grading you must submit CM project supporting documents that **you have produced** or **signed-off**, from a recent project you have or are currently working on. These documents must be project specific and non-generic (no templates).

CM1
2 documents from a recent CM project – e.g Commissioning Plan, Commissioning Study, Commissioning meeting minutes…

CM2
4 documents from a recent CM project - e.g Commissioning Plan, Commissioning Study, Commissioning meeting minutes…

CM3
6 documents from a recent CM project - e.g Commissioning Plan, Commissioning Study, Commissioning meeting minutes…

© CSA 2026. All rights reserved.

1.4 Application form for CM grade (must be completed)

1. Commissioning Management Grade Applying for (CM1, CM2 or CM3):	
2. Confirmation you have provided a Commissioning Management CV (CM CV must only relate to CM Projects) (Yes/No)	
3. Confirmation you are applying for Stage 1 only (Yes/No)	
4. Confirmation you have submitted supporting CM documentation and all documents project specific – including your Name/Initials (Yes/No)	
5. Confirmation you have submitted the appropriate number of CM documents for CM grade being applied for (CM1 - 2 docs) (CM2 – 4 docs) (CM3 – 6 docs)	
6. Years' Experience as a Commissioning Manager (CM duties only)	

I confirm that I will comply and issue the criteria as set out in this document and agree to abide by the Articles of the Association, its Constitution & Code of Practice (these are included in the Members Handbook which will be issued to you on acceptance of your Membership of the Association. Should you require prior sight of these documents, please contact the CSA Secretary office@csa.org.uk)

Applicants Company .....

Applicant Signature ..... **Date** .....

Employer/Directors Full Name ..... **Signature** .....

If applying through your employer, please supply your Employer/Director's signature.

Note: Section 1.4 must accompany all CM Stage 1 applications.

© CSA 2026. All rights reserved.

Stage 2 Dissertation Report

This section sets out the content requirements and framework for the CSA dissertation report.

This is an evidenced based dissertation.

The CSA expect the applicant to base their dissertation on a previously completed CM project or projects.

For each CM role you undertake provide at least one project example that explains how you managed this process or task as a CM (for each stage).

For example, if you performed a commissioning focused design review on project XYZ – include:

1) A section that shows a project example of what your CM review found on project XYZ
2) Supporting evidence of how this was raised/recorded/tracked/closed (this can be screenshots or linked appendices)

This process should be repeated for all sections that relate to your role.

This demonstrates your knowledge of the process for a project specific application using CM tools and documents.

2.1 Key Assessment Criteria for Dissertation

Some of the key assessment criteria for Dissertation Report are shown below:

- Does the CM show clear evidence of CM Roles being undertaken?
- Does the CM exhibit a detailed knowledge of the CM process?
- Does the dissertation show that the CM has the necessary report writing skills?
- Has the CM provided specific project evidence to support their stance?
- Has the CM written this from an individual CM's perspective using their own experience and using your own words?
- Has the CM performed self-check – is the Dissertation Check List accurate?
- Passes the Plagiarism deep checker (refer to Section 5 for full breakdown)

© CSA 2026. All rights reserved.

2.2 Dissertation Content & Structure

2.2.1 Planning / Design

Identify the key processes that relate to commissioning management for the planning/design phase.

Some examples below, but not be limited to: Obstacles overcome, Review design brief, commissioning focused design reviews (commissionability study), commissioning specification, preparation of the commissioning plan and Commissioning Activity Sheets / Schedules.

For each CM role you undertake provide at least one project example that explains how you managed this process or task as a CM.

2.2.2 Pre-Construction

Identify the key processes that relate to commissioning management for the pre-construction phase.

Some examples below, but not be limited to: Obstacles overcome, Commissioning programmes, review Hands on / TAB commissioning tenders, commissioning workshops, project tracking schedules, FAT's.

For each CM role you undertake provide at least one project example that explains how you managed this process or task as a CM.

2.2.3 Construction

Identify the key processes that relate to commissioning management for the Construction phase.

Some examples below, but not be limited to: Obstacles overcome, Commissioning meetings, logic linked commissioning programme to Construction / M&E, review commissioning methodologies / method statements, proforma test sheets, site installation checks, witnessing static testing and mock-up performance

For each CM role you undertake provide at least one project example that explains how you managed this process or task as a CM.

© CSA 2026. All rights reserved.

2.2.4 Testing & Commissioning

Identify the key processes that relate to commissioning management for the testing & commissioning phase.

Some examples below, but not be limited to: Obstacles overcome, Pre commissioning & setting to work, managing the commissioning process, meetings, witnessing of MEP systems, monitoring, and reporting the commissioning progress, co-ordination of 3rd party witnessing, reviewing and collation of commissioning documentation.

For each CM role you undertake provide at least one project example that explains how you managed this process or task as a CM.

2.2.5 Handover

Identify the key processes that relate to commissioning management for the handover phase.

Some examples below, but not be limited to: Obstacles overcome, review / collating statutory commissioning documentation, Handover meetings, Final Commissioning reports with updated commissioning plan, As Built, O & M's Building logbook, Snagging, Client, Training etc.

For each CM role you undertake provide at least one project example that explains how you managed this process or task as a CM.

2.2.6 Post-Handover (Initial & Aftercare)

Identify the key processes that relate to commissioning management for the post-handover phase.

Some examples below, but not be limited to: Obstacles overcome, close out reporting, client training, troubleshooting and fine tuning, producing lesson learnt reports. Seasonal testing, occupant satisfaction surveys, building performance reviews, updating of commissioning records, Soft Landings, BREEAM, LEED, NABERS, ESTIDAMA (UAE).

For each CM role you undertake provide at least one project example that explains how you managed this process or task as a CM.

© CSA 2026. All rights reserved.

2.2.7 Important Dissertation Notes

1) Applicants' submission must include the completed checklist below (2.3.8)
2) This is an evidence-based dissertation, the dissertation must include evidence of CM duties tools or process being used.
3) Dissertation Format: Dissertation must be in word or PDF format.
4) Dissertation must be in as a single PDF formatted document with index/appendices.
5) Dissertation reports to be limited to the required maximum words i.e. CM1 2500, CM2 3000, CM3 3500 (evidence is excluded from word count)
6) Candidates can white out any sensitive client/project info, in the evidence submitted to the CSA.
7) The candidate will have 6 months to submit their dissertation report.
8) For CM1/2 The candidate must highlight areas of the commissioning managers role that they do not yet have the relevant experience or carried out on recent projects.

2.2.8 Check List

Action	Yes/No	Date confirmed
CSA office have confirmed your dissertation can proceed		
Check you are using the latest CSA CM guidance.		
Check dissertation is a single document (word or PDF format) – including all supporting evidence		
Evidence must: Relate to point being raised (Yes/No) Be project specific - no templates allowed. (Yes/No) Be combined within single document as screenshots or appendices –no attachments! (Yes/No)		
Check that the Dissertation report has been written from a project perspective – explaining each CM duty via a project example.		
Dissertation report includes supporting evidence for each section		
Check the word count is correct for the CM level applied for.		
Submit dissertation report within 6 months of start date		
Confirmation that the submitted dissertation is your own work reflecting your own view on CM Duties. (Yes/No)		

I confirm by signing this application that I have completed this checklist, and my dissertation is ready for Assessment Panel review.

Applicant signed ..... Date .....

Note: Section 2.1.8 must accompany all CM Stage 2 dissertation applications.

© CSA 2026. All rights reserved.

Stage 3 Commissioning Managers Interview

On successful completion of Stages 1 & 2 candidates will move onto the CM Interview stage

3.1 Interview date/time in UK time zone.

Candidate will be requested for a selection of available online interview potential date/times for the interview to be scheduled including time zones.

3.2 Interview Invites

An Microsoft Teams on-line interview will be sent at the next available free time slot that suits interviewer/interviewee schedule.

3.3 The interview itself

An online interview will be conducted recording the candidates answers to the pre-selected questions. At the end of the interview the candidate will be informed of the outcome.
The outcome can be:

- Approved for applied CM grade.
- Request for additional information.
- Request for a second interview.
- Approved at a grade different to the one applied for.
- On hold awaiting candidate completing ITCM course

3.4 Finding out the official decision

In all circumstances the interview will be sent to the CM Panel for a final decision.
The CSA office will communicate the final CM Panel decision to the candidate.

Important note that Commissioning Management Core Concepts (CMCC) must be passed within 6 months of applying for Commissioning Management grade.

© CSA 2026. All rights reserved.

Stage 4 Upgrades / Path of Development

Upgrading from the existing path of development / CM grading system.

4.1 Candidates holding CSA Grade 5 or 6

CSA Grade 5 or 6 candidates require to follow the full CSA Commissioning Management process. This can be accessed from www.csa.org.uk

4.2 Candidates currently on the CM pathway of Development

Candidates currently on the CM pathway of Development (CM1 or CM2) would require sending an email to office@csa.org.uk requesting a CM upgrade. This CM upgrade request must include:

A. Which CM Grade they are applying for
B. Reason for upgrade (Currently CM1 and now have 4+ years' experience having now performed client training and handover as CM so would like to upgrade to CM2)
C. Updated Commissioning Managers CV showing total CM experience.

Any upgrade requests that don't contain items A through C will be rejected.

4.3 CM Upgrade requests process

The Assessment Panel will review each upgrade request on an individual basis. Outcomes may vary. The Assessment Panel reserve the right to:

A. Request additional information for dissertation and new evidence.
B. Request rewriting previous dissertation to include new CM Duties and responsibilities and evidence.
C. Request another CM Interview.
D. Reject upgrade request.
E. Request specific requirements before awarding upgrade.
F. A combination of some of the options above

IMPORTANT NOTE: The CSA highly recommend Commissioning Managers joining the CSA select the most appropriate grade suited to their Commissioning Management experience on their original application!

© CSA 2026. All rights reserved.

Plagiarism – what it is and how to avoid it!

Plagiarism is defined as the presentation of someone else's work or ideas as your own, without proper attribution. This includes copying text, ideas, images, or data from any source, including books, articles, websites, and other CM's work. We can eliminate the risk of being flagged for plagiarism by:

- Not using anyone else's work
- In relation to dissertation there is no need to use someone else's work – this should be your individual take on the process using your own examples and CM findings

CSA Zero Tolerance Policy

The CSA Assessment Panel hold a zero-tolerance policy on AI assisted writing Tools/ Programmes/ Websites

The CSA Assessment Panel hold a zero-tolerance policy on plagiarism.

Avoid using AI Writing Tools/Programmes/Websites

The CSA are aware that AI writing tools/programmes/websites are available for the public – including potential dissertation applicants. The CSA Assessment Panel use a number of plagiarism detections tools and software to detect the use of these tools, programmes and websites (refer to **CSA Zero Tolerance Policy)**

The CSA use multiple levels of checks far deeper than most commercially available apps and tools to scan dissertations. Our checks include text comparison, string matching , fingerprinting and semantic analysis amongst other checks with the final step including Assessment Panel Review.
Also, with an evidence-based dissertation, this should be unique to each applicant, so there should be no need or benefit to using tools.

Why can't I use AI to help write my dissertation?

Integrity. Originality. Ownership. These are the 3 main reasons the CSA Assessment Panel offer a zero-tolerance policy on plagiarism and or AI assisted writing tools being used as even small parts of the dissertation process.

© CSA 2026. All rights reserved.

Academic Integrity

Using AI to write or partially write or help write a dissertation undermines the principles of having academic integrity.
It also misrepresents the CM's abilities and knowledge.

Original Work

A dissertation generated by AI or partially written by AI or Plagiarised from someone else is not original in the sense that it does not reflect the CM's personal understanding, analysis, and synthesis of the topic. This could allow a CM to obtain assessment criteria without showing their own personal understanding of the topic.

Thesis author

Being a dissertation author typically implies that the author has engaged in the intellectual process of creating the work.
If a dissertation is generated by AI, or plagiarised (in whole or in part) the student has not engaged in this intellectual wiring or personal research elements of thesis.

© CSA 2026. All rights reserved.

Commissioning Managers Criteria Table

CSA Grade	CM Years' Experience Required	Required Projects	Required Evidence / Criteria / Dissertation Report	CSA Course requirement
CSA Commissioning Manager (CM1)	1 - 3 years	As a minimum has worked on 1 x commissioning management project	CV highlighting Project experience + Professional Qualifications. Statement of applicants Commissioning Management experience from a CSA Corporate member / Senior manager within the applicant's company or 2 x Client references for a recent project. Provide a 2000 – 2500 – words. Commissioning Management dissertation report. This report requires each candidate to provide evidence for each section. On approval of dissertation an online interview will be conducted.	Commissioning Management Core Concepts (CMCC) within one year of applying for CM1 grade.
CSA Senior Commissioning Manager (CM2)	4 – 10	>4 x Medium sized projects Or >2 x large scale projects	CV highlighting Project experience + Professional Qualifications. 3 x Client references for recent projects. Provide a 2500 – 3000 – words. Commissioning Management dissertation report. This report requires each candidate to provide evidence for each section. On approval of dissertation an online interview will be conducted	Commissioning Management Core Concepts (CMCC)

© CSA 2026. All rights reserved.

CSA Project Commissioning Manager (CM3)	+10	>5 x large scale projects	CV highlighting Project experience + Professional Qualifications. 4 x Client references for recent projects. Provide a 3000 – 3500 – words. Commissioning Management dissertation report. This report requires each candidate to provide evidence for each section. On approval of dissertation an online interview will be conducted.	Commissioning Management Core Concepts (CMCC) + New Advanced CM course *when available
Note 1: If a candidate has a mechanical/electrical degree, then a 6-month credit in required experience will be granted. *Note 2: Scale of projects from a commissioning perspective can be subjective. Project scales will be discussed at Interview stage for those candidates that are unsure of scale.*				

© CSA 2026. All rights reserved.

Commissioning Management Pathway of Development

© CSA 2026. All rights reserved.

This is a simplified illustration of the CSA Commissioning Management Structure. For full details and breakdown refer to the latest version of the CM Grading System & Application Process.

All Commissioning Managers are requested to review the CSA CM Grading System and choose the CM Grade that is the most suited to their CM experience

ALL CSA Commissioning Management Grades are rated at Black SKILLcard level

COMMISSIONING SPECIALISTS ASSOCIATION Making Buildings Work

SYMBOL KEY

CM Entrance Point

ITCM Course requires to be purchased

© CSA 2026. All rights reserved.

COMMISSIONING SPECIALISTS ASSOCIATION Commissioning Management