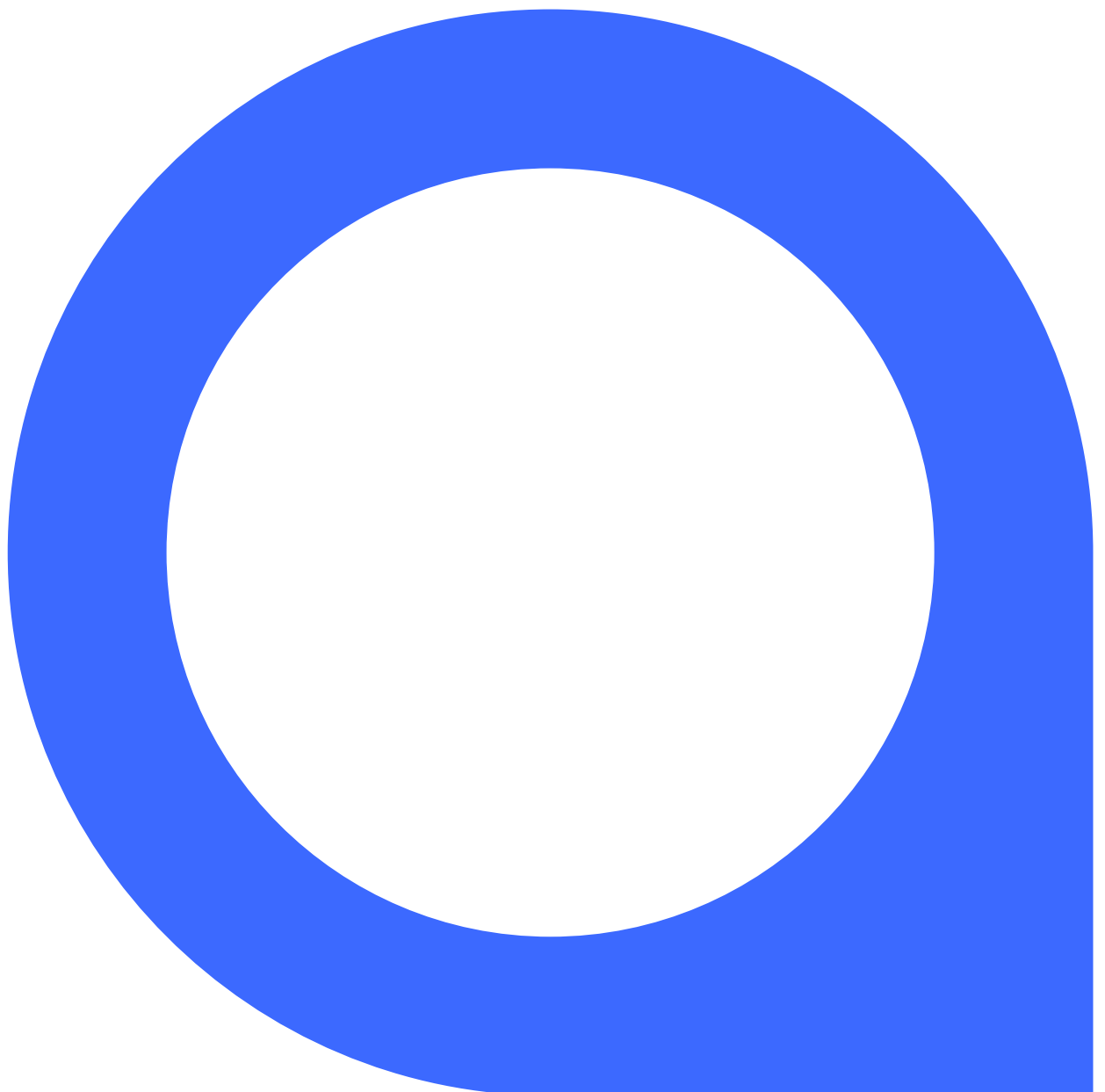


# **Investment**

## **Assignment Semester 2 2025 – Feedback for students**





## Feedback materials

- Assignment purpose
- Assignment overview
- Results summary
- Overall feedback
- Results and feedback by question
- Example of assignment

## Assignment purpose

The main purpose of the assignment from your perspective is to help you to develop your capacity to evaluate a set of capital market assumptions and your skills in analysis and writing.

The specific skills that are being developed and assessed in the assignment are the ability to:

- Research, explain and evaluate subject material which may be unfamiliar to you;
- communicate relevant points in language appropriate to the readership, in a logical and coherent manner; and
- meet business standards for presentation of written materials.

These skills will also help you pass the end of semester examination and perform well in the workplace.

This assignment provides an opportunity for you to think deeply, spend time preparing a detailed answer and self-reflect on your **writing** skills. Whilst there is ample time to write your assignment answers, you should ask yourself if you need to spend more time improving your writing skills to help you pass time-limited examinations.

There may not be a single correct answer to the question(s) posed. Ensure you have adequately demonstrated your steps, assumptions, reasoning and checks to the marker(s) so that your answer can be considered in context.



### Overview of assignment content

The candidates were asked to provide a report evaluating a set of Capital Market Assumptions, which a Board of a sovereign wealth management fund has used extensively, to provide the Board some understanding of the degree of uncertainty in the assumptions and how this may influence its continued use of such inputs in determining its investment strategy.

The candidates were provided with several documents from various sources that relate to Capital Market Assumptions (CMA) across various asset classes:

- SSGA 2024 Q4 Long-Term Asset class Forecasts/ Q4 2024
- SSGA Geopolitical Outlook 2025
- Capital Group cma-white-paper-long-read-2025
- bii-global-outlook-2025
- Morningstar 2025 Outlook Report
- PineBridge AUD Capital Market Line 31 Dec 2024
- PIMCO\_Cyclical\_Outlook\_Apr2025

They were advised that they may also search for other information or documents that may assist them in the evaluation of the nominated set of capital market assumptions (SSGA 2024 Q4 Long-Term Asset class Forecasts/ Q4 2024).

The report word limit was 3000 words including any words that are contained in tables included in the report. Candidates were advised that the markers may not read past 3000 words.

The assignment comprised 2 questions as summarised in Table 1 Assignment questions.



Table 1 Assignment questions

Marks	Question
12	1. Explain what you consider to be the three most important factors that may influence the total returns of each of the following two asset classes: Large Cap US Equities and US Government Bonds over the next 5 years, noting that the three factors affecting each asset class may be different.
8	2. Evaluate the Capital Market Assumptions for the intermediate term (3 to 5 years) for Large Cap US Equities and US Government Bonds as forecast in the SSGA 2024 Q4 Long-Term Asset class Forecasts/ Q4 2024 document having regard to all the information and opinions that you have been provided with, and other information and opinions that you have sourced, indicating the degree of uncertainty in the CMA over the intermediate term of the next 3 to 5 year period.

## Results summary

Overall, candidates performed well on the assignment with a pass rate of 92.9% with an average score of 74.5%. A summary of the results is presented in Table 2 Overall results.

Table 2 Overall results

Grade	Number of candidates	Percentage of candidates
Significantly above pass	29	41.4%
Above pass	12	17.1%
Pass	24	34.3%
Below pass	5	7.1%
Total		100.0%



## Overall feedback

We expect students to pass the assignment and for a high proportion to perform well because students are not time pressured when working on their submissions. We also expect that students will closely follow the directions we provide in the rubric.

Key observations are:

- the results for this semester are better than previous semesters because:
  - candidates were provided with extensive high quality reference material which most appeared to use very well
  - candidates were prompted to look for more research material to support their analysis
  - candidates were explicitly prompted to use AI and many did so very well to improve their analysis as well as the quality of their writing and presentation
  - the combination of the above three factors led to candidates making good use of reference materials and improving their capacity to analyse;
- there were two tutorials which addressed preparation for the assignment: tutorial 2 early in the semester, and tutorial 4 shortly before the submission date - in previous semesters there was only one such tutorial;
- we expect students to pass the assignment and for a high proportion to perform well because of the guidance provided in the rubric and the fact students are not time pressured while working on their submission;
- 5 students (7%) received a grade of 'below pass level':
  - All 5 of these received a grade of three for question one and a grade of two for question 2;
  - i.e. they failed to answer question 2 adequately;
  - in their answers to question 2 most either:
    - missed the assessment of uncertainty of the CMA's which was required by the question; or
    - provided a response which was either weak, too brief or too shallow, or all of these;
  - one of the candidates provided a poorly written response which the marker found difficult to follow
  - the assignments submitted by all 5 of these candidates were reviewed by the Chief Examiner who concurred with the grades and marks awarded by the markers.



- The assignments submitted by all 18 candidates who were borderline passes were reviewed by the Chief Examiner who concurred with the grades and marks awarded by the markers.
- 29 students (41%) achieved a grade of “significantly above pass”:
  - a review of these assignment submissions revealed:
    - widespread use of extensive analysis of the reference materials provided and of a wide range of other reference materials sourced;
    - significant time taken in the analysis and evaluation of capital market assumptions and possible factors affecting them, leading to some very insightful observations that were unexpected from candidates who are at the early stage of their career.
  - most of these candidates wrote well, albeit with assistance from AI in some cases, so that the reader (or marker) could easily follow their explanation or evaluation.

## General tips

The following feedback from the assignment has been provided to help you to prepare for the exam.

### Fully answer questions

Make sure you answer all parts of the questions. It is important to go back to the questions after you have started writing to ensure you are answering the question asked. Similarly, apply the information provided in the questions.

After you have drafted your answer, it is always a good idea to re-read the question and physically tick off that you have answered all parts of it. You should also make sure you have addressed all areas described in the marking rubric.

### Review your work

Given that this assignment is worth 20% of your final grade and you did not have the time pressure of exams, you were expected to spend some time reviewing your work and making sure your assignment was easy to read. A lot of issues around clarity of explanations could have been avoided by proof reading and spending time “getting the easy marks” for report writing.

### Use structure

Remember that each paragraph should cover a single topic. Each paragraph should have a clear beginning, middle and end which relate to this single topic.



## Write concisely and clearly

Keep your answers succinct and use dot points where appropriate.

## Results and feedback by question

The results by question are shown in Table 3 Results breakdown.

**Table 3 Results breakdown (Grade out of 5)**

Question	1	2
Weighting	60%	40%
Average	3.7	3.5
Minimum	3.0	2.0
Maximum	5.0	5.0
Standard Deviation	0.7	0.8

Each part of the assignment was marked out of 5, in line with the rubric grading. For example, a student who achieved a “pass” standard for Q1 was awarded a 3 out of 5 and this contributed 10% towards their overall grade.

## Observations by question

- Q1: almost all candidates identified the three most important factors that may influence the total returns of each of two asset classes: Large Cap US Equities and US Government Bonds. Stronger answers went on to make clear explanations as required by the question and clearly delineated between the recent past and the next 5 years, as also required by the question. Weaker answers (receiving a grade of 3 rather than 4 or 5) did not do so clearly and concisely.
- Q2: stronger responses showed a high level of engagement with the task of analysing and evaluation the SSGA CMAs, bringing in references to peers. Weaker responses provided more superficial analysis and less definitive evaluation and /or did not provide a sufficiently enough on sharp analysis of uncertainty in the CMAs as required by the question.



## Will we get feedback on our assessment?

Our approach to feedback is for students to receive general feedback, a sample assignment marked as 'significantly above pass level' and the marking guide for the exam.

You should review the feedback that is provided as well as the sample assignment and exam marking guide. For the assignment, you should use the general feedback and marking rubric to grade the sample assignment and your submission. This will help you to compare the assignments and identify areas where your submission could have been improved. For the exam, you should use the general feedback and the marking guide to identify areas where you could improve your future exam performance.

Our belief is that this active approach to studying will provide you with a deeper understanding of where you need to improve. This is the best way for you to learn about your areas of strength and weakness in your understanding. We do not provide students with individual feedback on their assessments.

At the end of the semester, you will receive:

- a letter to indicate whether you have passed or failed the subject;
- if you have failed the subject, a breakdown of your grade for each assessment;
- general feedback to all students about assignment and exam performance;
- a sample assignment that was graded as 'significantly above pass level'; and
- the exam marking guide.

## EXAMPLE OF ASSIGNMENT

An assignment which achieved a “significantly above pass grade” will be posted to LMS.