

Professional Certificate in Banking (PCertB®)

A qualification assessed and awarded by the **ifs** School of Finance, a registered charity incorporated by Royal Charter.

***ifs* School of Finance**
PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION

Professional Certificate in Banking (PCertB®)

1. GENERAL INFORMATION

UCAS Code	Award	Programme Title	Duration	Mode of Study
N/A	Professional Certificate in Banking Designatory letters: PCertB®	Professional Certificate in Banking	Maximum programme study period: 4 years Module study period: 24 weeks	Part-time via: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supported distance learning, or • Flexible learning, or • Approved international academic centre.

Awarding Institution	<i>ifs</i> School of Finance (<i>ifs</i>)
Teaching Institution	<i>ifs</i>
Programme accredited by:	N/A
Relevant QAA subject benchmark group(s)	General Business & Management / Finance
Date of production/revision	March 2011 / June 2011
Applicable cohorts	June 2011 onwards

2. INTRODUCTION / EDUCATIONAL AIMS OF THE PROGRAMME

Introduction

The Professional Certificate in Banking (PCertB®) provides foundation knowledge and skills in banking and financial services management. It is fully developed, examined and awarded by the *ifs* and is recognised throughout the financial services sector as a benchmark qualification.

The credits gained by achieving the PCertB® enable students to progress to the *ifs* FdSc/Professional Diploma in Banking Practice and Management (awarded by the University of Kent).

The qualification is designed to offer the following benefits to students:

- Achievement of an internationally recognised and highly respected qualification;
- Demonstration of a commitment to developing professional competence;
- Development of a broad set of skills that are highly sought after by employers;
- Development of technical knowledge and management skills to support a managerial career in the financial services sector;
- A flexible and integrated approach to learning and assessment;
- The opportunity to progress to a higher level qualification.

Educational Aims		
<p>Note: The programme aims and intended learning outcomes (ILO) are referenced to the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) subject benchmark statement(s) for General Business and Management (GBM), and Finance (F). The level of achievement expected of students is equivalent to that of the first year of undergraduate degree studies at a UK university set by the QAA's Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ), level 4.</p> <p>Students, regardless of their module choices, will have the opportunity to acquire and develop knowledge and skills in the majority of the following generic areas.</p>		
The programme aims to:		SUBJECT BENCHMARK STATEMENT REFERENCE
1	Provide current, applied learning opportunities for UK and international students who are either new to the financial services and banking sectors or are seeking continuing professional development opportunities.	GBM3.1 GBM3.7
2	Develop relevant specialist knowledge [including an awareness of the range of financial services institutions, their functions and how they interrelate] and the ability to evaluate and apply this [together with practical and intellectual skills] to specific areas of banking and wider financial services activity.	GBM3.4, 3.7 & 3.9 F3.2
3	Develop the skills of reflection and strategic decision-making required for a managerial career, thus improving the quality of management as a profession.	GBM3.6 & 3.8 F3.2 & 4.1
4	Develop an awareness and understanding of the ways in which regulation and legislation impact on and are relevant to organisations within the banking and financial services sector.	GBM3.5 F3.2
5	Develop an understanding of the measures commonly employed by organisations to monitor performance in their core business sectors.	GBM3.6 F3.2
6	Provide an awareness of the need for, and the value of, effective customer service.	GBM3.7
7	Raise awareness of moral, ethical and environmental issues as these relate to banking and financial services.	GBM3.5 F3.2
8	Enable students to set and prioritise objectives and prepare, implement and monitor plans for the achievement of organisational objectives in the light of available and required resources.	GBM3.6

3. INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES OF THE PROGRAMME

At the end of the programme of study, students should be able to:		SUBJECT BENCHMARK STATEMENT REFERENCE
1	Plan, work and study independently and use relevant resources appropriately	GBM3.9 F 4.1
2	Locate, record, organise and manipulate data/information, extract key points from complex material and use ICT where appropriate	GBM3.9 F4.1
3	Demonstrate sound knowledge and understanding of the subject matter, apply basic concepts and principles relevant to the area of study, and interpret and evaluate these within that context	GBM3.9 F 4.1
4	Analyse problems, using appropriate quantitative/qualitative skills, and evaluate a range of approaches and solutions, making recommendations as appropriate	GBM3.9 F3.2 & 4.1
5	Communicate the results of their study/work accurately and reliably, with appropriate justifications and evidence/examples, in a format relevant to the audience and purpose, e.g. business reports	GBM3.9 F4.1
6	Learn through reflection on practice and experience, including identifying future development needs	GBM3.9 F4.1

All learning outcomes are referenced to the QAA qualification descriptors (as set out in the FHEQ) for a higher education qualification at level 4 and the subject benchmark statements for i) General Business and Management and ii) Finance degrees.

NB. All modules within this programme contribute to the fulfilment of the above programme learning outcomes.

Learning and Teaching Methods/Strategy
Students are required to follow an approved course of study, which provides them with learning support. Information in this regard is provided in the <i>ifs School of Finance</i> document <i>Learning and Teaching Strategy</i> and is summarised in Section 4 of this programme specification.

Assessment Methods/Strategy
30 credit modules: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ One objective test or one short answer paper comprising eight questions, and ◆ Two summative coursework assignments.
15 Credit modules: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ One objective test or one short answer paper comprising eight questions.

4. LEARNING AND TEACHING STRATEGY

Student induction

Students enrolled on the programme will be provided with induction materials, including a learning style questionnaire and guidance on how to study effectively.

The student induction materials will be available in online and also in printed format. The online form will be accessible through the 'My*ifs*learning' environment.

Tuition support

The level of tuition support provided to students will vary according to the credit weighting of the module. These are detailed in references to modes of study in Section 5 and each module specification.

Learning materials

The learning materials for each 30-credit module comprise activities and resources designed to support students in achieving the learning outcomes. Learning materials and reading links are provided in a folder at registration and each student will have access to the 'My*ifs*learning' environment containing learning activities and discussion forums and the *ifs* KnowledgeBank learning resources (an electronic library service). Text and journal readings are provided online and tailored to student assignments where appropriate.

5. PROGRAMME STRUCTURE & PROGRAMME REQUIREMENTS

Programme Structure

To achieve the award of PCertB[®], students are required to obtain 120 level 4 credits which must include 30 credits from Financial Markets and Risk (FMRI) and which must form part of the first 60 credits achieved plus at least one further 30 credit module plus any combination^{oo} from the remaining modules as specified below. However, students with appropriate accredited prior learning may be eligible for up to 60 credits.

Code	Core Module	Level	Credits
FMRI	Financial Markets and Risk	4	30

Code	Option Modules	Level	Credits
OAIN	Organisations and Individuals	4	30
CTNE	Customers and Their Needs	4	30
MEAP	Measuring Performance	4	30
CCBL	Corporate, Commercial and Business Lending	4	30

MCBR	Managing Corporate and Business Relationships	4	30
PFA	Practice of Financial Advice	4	30
IBF1	Foundations of Islamic Banking and Finance	4	15
IBF2*	Practice of Islamic Banking and Finance	4	15
PLCR	Principles of Lending and Credit	4	15
CCRM	Consumer Credit Risk Management	4	15
RAWM	Relationship and Wealth Management	4	15
RMAN	Retail Management in Financial Services	4	15
IWBL**	Introduction to Work Based Learning	4	15

*Students who wish to study the module IBF2 must have passed or as a minimum must have attempted the assessment required for the module IBF1 prior to registration,

**Currently available only to students based in the UK or studying at an international academic centre approved by *ifs* to deliver work-based learning modules.

Full details of a module's content are contained in the relevant module specification published by *ifs*. These specifications also summarise the contribution each module makes to the achievement of the programme's intended learning outcomes.

Programme requirements

30 credit modules

Course of study

There are three distinct modes of study:

1) Supported distance learning

Students studying via distance learning will be allocated to a subject tutor and an *ifs* Higher Education Student Advisor (HESA) to support them through their study session.

2) Flexible learning

Flexible learning students are allocated to a subject tutor and a HESA. They also attend three enhancement workshops per module, aligned to the assessment structure, delivered by specialist tutor(s) at appointed locations.

3) Approved international academic centre

Students enrolled for academic centre mode will be provided with an approved schedule of workshops designed to support students to achieve the learning outcomes of the module.

Students may opt to pursue individual modules by any of the above modes of study. There is a defined period of study of 24 weeks for each module with defined attendance/submission dates for the three pieces of assessment.

Learning hours

For a 30 credit module of study, the total expected study hours is 300 (i.e. 10 notional hours of study per credit). The contact hours will be dependent upon the student's mode of study.

Students studying via distance learning can have regular contact with their appointed *ifs* subject tutor and HESA.

Students studying via flexible learning will also have 3 workshop sessions of c. 6 hours each, at appointed dates aligned to the assessment structure.

Students studying with an international approved academic centre will have face-to-face sessions at regular intervals over each session of study. The timing will be dependent on student and local conditions though typically will be c. 40 hours.

15 credit modules

All modules except IWBL:

Course of study

There are two distinct modes of study:

1) Web support

Students have access to a web tutor through My*ifs*learning.com where they can post queries in a forum and be allocated a HESA.

2) Workshop support

Students can also attend two enhancement workshops per module delivered by an *ifs* appointed tutor. These are offered subject to demand.

Introduction to Work-based Learning

Students will undertake learning within the workplace and are required, in consultation with their employer/line manager, to undertake a variety of activities and keep a personal reflective journal. The duration of the work based learning module should be negotiated by the student with their employer and will normally span a period of six to twelve months.

Learning hours

For a 15 credit module the total expected study hours is 150 (i.e. 10 notional hours of study per credit). The contact hours will be dependent upon the student's mode of study. Students can contact the web tutor and HESA. Students who opt for enhancement workshops will have face-to-face sessions of c. 6 hours each at appointed dates each session.

For both 30 and 15 credit modules

Duration: It is anticipated that most students pursuing the programme will be studying on a part-time basis and that a typical student will complete the programme in two years. Students who are able to devote more time to their studies may be able to complete the programme in less time.

Time limit: There is a four-year time limit for completion of the programme.

6. ASSESSMENT

Assessment – 30 credit modules

All modules except Practice of Financial Advice

Achievement of the learning outcomes for each 30 credit module is assessed by three prescribed components as set out below. The assessment regime applied varies across modules and incorporates appropriate intervention at specific stages within the programme:

1. Via paper-based objective testing (multiple choice) comprising 40 questions. This mode of assessment focuses on the early learning within the module ie the underpinning subject knowledge content of a defined proportion of the syllabus, as detailed in the module specifications. (For the module 'Organisations and Individuals' (OAIN) the first assessment will comprise 8 short answer questions). This assessment is held after 10 weeks study.
2. Via a 750 word coursework assignment: this mode of assessment is a focused piece of assignment writing allowing students to develop their research and writing skills and provide tutors with the opportunity to give specific feedback. This assessment is held after 16 weeks study.
3. Via a 2,500 word end of course assignment: this mode of assessment uses the underpinning subject knowledge across the breadth of the syllabus as the framework within which to assess the achievement of the intellectual, subject specific and transferable skills summarised in the module specification. This assessment is held after 24 weeks study.

Practice of Financial Advice

Achievement of the learning outcomes for the Practice of Financial Advice module is assessed by two summative assessment elements:

- a) A coursework assignment testing technical knowledge and its application which contributes 30% of the assessment total;
- b) A three-hour written examination, based around a customer fact-find released to learners six weeks prior to the examination, testing technical knowledge, its application and the learners ability to communicate in a customer friendly manner. This element contributes 70% of the assessment total.

Grading of module performance – 30 credit modules

Each component has a published % weighting towards the overall module assessment.

To achieve a pass for a module and gain 30 pass level credits, students are required to pass all individual assessment components (subject to compensation ruling as detailed below) and achieve an overall combined mark across all assessment components of 45% (40% for OAIN and PFA).

(NB: refer to module specifications for detail on individual assessment requirements).

Compensation – 30 credit modules

Compensation between assessment components within a module is allowable. Students are required to pass all three components, but a marginal fail (ie up to 5% less than the pass mark) in one component can be compensated by a sufficient mark in the other two components within that module so that the aggregated mark for the module equals or exceeds the required pass mark for the module.

There is no compensation between modules.

Assessment – 15 credit modules

All modules except IWBL

Achievement of the learning outcomes for each 15 credit module is assessed using the same single test structure either by a written paper or an objective test (multiple choice questions). This mode of assessment focuses principally on the underpinning subject knowledge content of the module, as detailed in the module specifications.

Introduction to Work-based Learning

The assessment for IWBL is based on a student's performance against the subject-specific and generic skills learning outcomes set out in the module specification. Sources of evidence will be employer observations and the student's own reflective personal journal.

Grading of module performance – 15 credit modules

Refer to the module specification for detail of the assessment requirements.

Compensation – 15 credit modules

There is no compensation within or between 15 credit modules.

Overall Qualification Grading

To achieve the award of Professional Certificate in Banking, students are required to achieve 120 level 4 credits by passing the required syllabus modules according to the published regulations.

The Professional Certificate in Banking programme is **not** graded on the basis of a student's performance across all their contributing Level 4 modules.

A student's module performance grade is determined by their overall weighted average percentage score in accordance with the following conversion table:

For 30 credit modules and 15 credit modules not assessed by Objective Test

Distinction: 70% – 100%

Pass: 40% – 69%

For 30 credit modules including assessment by Objective Test

Distinction: 70% – 100%

Pass: 45% – 69%

For 15 credit modules assessed by Objective Test

Distinction: 85% – 100%

Pass: 60% – 84%

A student's weighted average percentage score for each module is determined by the overall percentage achieved for the assessment components within the module.

7. ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

Entry requirements for the **Professional Certificate in Banking** (PCertB®) are:

- Tariff of 300 UCAS points or equivalent, to include at least one subject qualification at A2 level or the International Baccalaureate, plus:
 - GCSE Mathematics minimum grade C (or equivalent) **and**
 - GCSE English Language minimum grade C (or equivalent) **or** IELTS score of 6.0 with no element below 5.5

OR

- UK degree or equivalent, plus:
 - GCSE Mathematics minimum grade C (or equivalent) **and**
 - GCSE English Language minimum grade C (or equivalent) **or** IELTS score of 6.0 with no element below 5.5

OR

- Successful completion of a programme approved by the **ifs** for provision of credits at FHEQ Level 4
 - Students should normally hold GCSE Mathematics **and** English Language minimum grade C (or equivalent) **or** IELTS score of 6.0 with no element below 5.5. Students unable to meet these criteria should contact HE Student Services.

OR

- Students who do not meet the above entry requirements will be required to undertake and pass the **ifs** Entry Assessment for which a fee will be payable.

All students are required to join the **ifs** *School of Finance* as a student member when they enrol on an **ifs** Professional Higher Education programme.

Please refer to the **ifs** *School of Finance* website for information about the admissions process.

8. QUALITY ASSURANCE

Quality Assurance

The *ifs* Learning and Teaching Committee monitors the factors affecting the student learning experience, including but not restricted to achievement, progression and retention. The Learning and Teaching Committee reports to the *ifs* Academic Board which is the supreme academic authority for *ifs* higher education awards.

Processes relating to the maintenance of academic quality and standards are set out in the *ifs* *School of Finance* Code of Practice for Quality Assurance, the General and Academic Regulations for Students and the *ifs* Credit Framework.

The Professional Certificate in Banking programme has been developed by taking guidance from the Quality Assurance Agency's Academic Infrastructure which include:

- ◆ The framework for higher education qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland (FHEQ);
- ◆ The Code of practice for the assurance of academic quality and standards in higher education;
- ◆ Subject benchmark statements (where appropriate); and
- ◆ Guidelines for preparing programme specifications.

June 2011

PROFESSIONAL CERTIFICATE IN BANKING (PCertB®)
MAPPING: PROGRAMME AND MODULE LEARNING OUTCOMES

	PROGRAMME LEARNING OUTCOMES	FMRI	OAIN	CTNE	MEAP	CCBL	MCBR	PFA	IBF1	IBF2	PLCR	CCRM	RAWN	RMAN	IWBL
1	Plan, work and study independently and use relevant resources appropriately	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
2	Locate, record, organise and manipulate data/information, extract key points from complex material and use ICT where appropriate	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
3	Demonstrate sound knowledge and understanding of the subject matter, apply basic concepts and principles relevant to the area of study, and interpret and evaluate these within that context	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
4	Analyse problems, using appropriate quantitative/qualitative skills, and evaluate a range of approaches and solutions, making recommendations as appropriate	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
5	Communicate the results of their study/work accurately and reliably, with appropriate justifications and evidence/examples, in a format relevant to the audience and purpose, e.g. business reports	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
6	Learn through reflection on practice and experience, including identifying future development needs	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓