

National Progression Award in Financial Services

General Information

Background

This project has been funded by the Scottish Funding Council and is a collaboration between the following colleges:

- Stevenson College Edinburgh (Lead College)
- Stow College
- Adam Smith College
- Anniesland College

Activities have been supported by a Steering Group comprising:

- Principal Stevenson College Edinburgh
- Vice Principal Stow College
- Principal, Anniesland College
- Director ib+m Adam Smith College
- Director of Human Resources Intelligent Finance
- Representative of the Chartered Insurance Institute
- Senior Executive Scottish Enterprise Financial Services
- Development Consultant, Educational and Professional Development Unit, Royal Bank of Scotland
- Development Officer, Financial Services, SQA
- Financial Services Skills Council, Manager for Scotland
- Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Education, Chartered Institute of Bankers
- Scottish Funding Council

The project aimed to identify relevant training that would encourage linkages to be developed between Further Education Colleges and the financial services sector with a focus on:

- Entry level requirements:
 - Employability and core skills
 - Knowledge of basic financial services information
 - Business awareness in financial services context
- Anticipated Target client groups:
 - School-college partnership groups
 - School leavers
 - Return to work adults
 - Those seeking to change occupations
 - Ethnic groups

The National Progression Award in Financial Services was identified as meeting these requirements. The qualification has been developed by SQA in collaboration with the industry and reflects areas that have been raised as skill gap areas in a number of surveys of financial organisations.

It is aimed across the range of Financial Services organisations including insurance companies, building societies, banking, National Savings and Investments, investment operations, credit unions, finance companies and pension companies.

The qualification is intended for roles with a customer service focus and is intended for delivery in the workplace or in an appropriate simulated setting.

The qualification is recognised by the Chartered Institute of Bankers and credit is given against a general unit of banking qualifications at the appropriate level. The Chartered Institute of Insurers is also looking to see if credit can be given towards any of their professional qualifications.

The qualification sits within existing SQA developments and planned developments including:

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| • NQ Financial Services – Skills For Work | SCQF level 5 |
| • National Progression Award Financial Services | SCQF level 6 |
| • PDA Financial Services – Securities and Investment | SCQF level 7 |
| • HNC in Financial Services | SCQF level 7 |
| • HND in Financial Services | SCQF level 8 |

The National Progression Award provides progression, or an appropriate entry point, across the range of client groups we anticipated FE attracting.

Award structure

To achieve the award candidates must complete 7 units – 4 mandatory and 3 optional.

Mandatory units:

- Regulatory framework – an introduction (DDV7C 12)
- Legislation, guidelines and working relationships (DDV7D 12)
- Communication methods (DDV7E 11)
- Personal development planning (DDV7F 12)

Optional units:

- Promoting products and services (DDV7K 12)
- Customer service standards (DDV7J 12)
- Call handling (DDV7L 12)
- Using Information Communication Technology (DDV7H 11)
- Performance goals (DDV7G 11)

Please note that approval to deliver this qualification has to be sought through SQA and not through devolved approval mechanisms.

Materials provided

Learning materials have been developed as a resource for deliverers. The format and approach required for a delivery programme will vary depending on the client group - abilities, backgrounds and experience in the areas covered. For some groups it will be appropriate to include additional activities such as employability skills, communication and IT skills in order to increase their potential as prospective employees in the sector. It would not, therefore, be appropriate to be prescriptive about learning activities and the materials are intended as a bank of resources for deliverers to select from, as appropriate.

The financial services sector is highly regulated and some materials can go out of date quickly particularly those relating to legislation and regulatory framework. In order to ensure that topics in these areas, e.g. money laundering, remain up to date The Chartered Insurance Institute (CII) has agreed to provide access to its on-line learning materials for a small fee. The relevant CII materials are specified in the learning materials. Access to them can be arranged by contacting:

Shona Downie, Chartered Insurance Institute, Drumsheugh House, 38b Drumsheugh Gardens, Edinburgh, EH3 7SW
Tel. 0131 220 5769
Email: shona.downie@cii.co.uk

Assessment exemplars have also been developed in collaboration with SQA. All assessments have been approved and sit on the SQA secure site as part of the National Assessment Bank. The assessments are accessible to any provider approved to deliver the National Progression Award in Financial Services.

Materials provided include:

- Tutor notes
 - Descriptor
 - Summary of what learning pack covers
 - Considerations for programme planning:
 - General assessment information

- Learning materials

Some general points to note

- All units are set within the context of the financial services sector.
- Students should be encouraged to relate to actual organisational policies and procedures where relevant:
 - If employed in the financial sector, these can relate to their own organisation
 - If students are not employed this can be achieved through research and reference to exemplar procedures from various financial institutions.
- For groups who are not employed in the finance sector direct links with financial organisations should be built into the programme e.g. through visits, talks, possibly work experience. These will offer opportunities for candidates to do some directed research as part of their learning and will vary from centre to centre according to the opportunities arranged.
- Information on a 'dummy' company can also be built up through project, research and visit activities.