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March 2026

CII Level 3 Certificate in Financial Services Qualification specification



Thank you for considering study with the CII. This specification summarises the purpose and the content of this qualification to help you decide whether it meets your learning needs.

The qualifications section of the CII website, unit syllabus documents and CII policies provide further detail on the features summarised here.

Qualification overview

The CII Level 3 Certificate in Financial Services is a qualification providing fundamental knowledge and understanding of the financial services sector, including its customers, its products and practices and the regulatory and legislative environment. It has been developed to meet the needs of those working in operational and technical support roles and offers two targeted learning routes.

Who is this qualification for?

This qualification is particularly appropriate for:

- those working in the life, pensions and long term savings sector, including customer operations back-office staff and contact centre team leaders (particularly the life and pensions route).
- those providing operational support to financial planners, including paraplanners, and technical support staff working in financial services (particularly the general route).

Benefits for individuals and employers

You will be able to use the qualification content to support and develop your understanding of your organisation's practices and your role within these. It is also designed to support your career development by introducing the broad areas of the industry in which you may wish to specialise further. Key progression routes include the Award in Financial Administration, the Certificate in Regulated Financial Services Operations or personalised technical professional development using specific units.

Summary of content

You will learn about the financial services sector and the customer needs and products within it by taking one of two routes.

Life and Pensions route:

This develops knowledge and understanding of the life, pensions and long-term savings sector's role and its activities; key customer needs, solutions and products; and how individuals and organisations work within a regulatory and legislative environment.

General route:

This develops knowledge and understanding of the financial services industry in general, including regulation and legislation; fundamental aspects of customer service, administration and marketing in financial services; and key retail investment products.

Entry and professional completion requirements

Entry requirements

There are no entry requirements for this qualification.

Additional completion requirements

There are no additional completion requirements for this qualification.

Qualification structure

To complete the qualification, you will need to select one of the two routes below.

Life and pensions route

You will need to complete the three following units.

(LP1) Life and pensions customer operations
15 CII Credits

(LP2) Financial services products and solutions
20 CII Credits

(LP3) Life and pensions principles and practices
10 CII Credits

General route

You will need to complete one of the following two regulation and ethics units,

(R01) Financial services, regulation and ethics
20 CII Credits

(CF1) UK Financial services, regulation and ethics
15 CII Credits

and the following unit.

(LP2) Financial services products and solutions
20 CII Credits

Learning and assessment

Learning materials provided

For units in this qualification, students typically have access to the following materials as part of their enrolment:

- Study text (digital only or printed and digital) with online updates

- Online support including exam guide via RevisionMate

Additional or different resources may be available for some units.

Study time

Specific study time guidelines are provided for each unit on its webpage and in the CII qualifications brochure.

The notional Ofqual 'Total Qualification Time' for this qualification is 160 hours*. This represents the time a student might typically take to complete the qualification by the shortest combination of units. The number of hours may increase dependent on the units chosen so will be between 160–210 hours.

Assessment format

Each unit is assessed by a single multiple-choice on screen exam, exams are available weekly at UK and non-UK online exam centres or via remote invigilation. The qualification award will be graded pass/fail.

To be awarded this qualification, each unit within the route must be passed. The nominal pass mark for each unit within this qualification can be found on the relevant unit page. Please note, pass marks may vary from examination to examination to take account of the relative difficulty of examinations presented to candidates, ensuring that the pass standard remains constant.

We regularly update our qualifications, units and assessments to maintain industry relevance and assessment standards.

Further information on learning and assessment for each unit

Please ensure that you refer to the individual unit syllabus for unit-specific details:

- learning outcomes and assessment criteria
- further reading and resources
- important notes, such as the tax and legislative position that will be assessed

This is available on each unit webpage, accessible from the [qualification webpage](#).

Please also select your unit from the webpage to find out about any unit updates.

Important assessment policies

Details of terms and conditions which apply to candidates entering for assessments with the CII are set out on the CII website. By entering any assessment with the CII, you agree to be bound by these terms and conditions and our [assessment policies](#).

*'Total Qualification Time' is a term that awarding organisations are required by Ofqual (the qualifications regulator in England) to use to describe the size of qualifications.

Fair access to our qualifications

The CII acts at all times to ensure that no unfair barriers apply to those seeking to gain the qualifications it offers. If, due to disability or illness, you may require adjustments in order to access an assessment, please read the [Qualifications accessibility and special circumstances policy and guidance](#) and contact the CII Customer Service team as soon as possible to discuss how we can meet your needs.

Qualification Fees

We are required by our regulators to publish a standardised set of qualification fees and these are set out below. The best way for you to calculate the cost of completing a qualification is by looking at the unit shop pages for the units you are planning to take.

The terms, 'Standard Qualification Fee', 'Package fee' and 'Associated Learner Fees' are defined by our regulators, Ofqual, CCEA and Qualifications Wales, to create consistency between UK-based awarding organisations. It is a regulatory requirement to illustrate our pricing in this way. The total price paid will depend upon specific pathway chosen, membership status and local currency. Further pricing information by unit and component relevant to your specific pathway remains available on your qualification webpage. The table below describes what each fee indicates.

Fee	Description
Standard Qualification Fee	The standard total fees payable for the assessment elements of the core qualification throughout a typical course of study.
Package Fee	Where applicable, the total of the fees payable for mandatory learning materials elements of the core qualification throughout a typical course of study.
Associated Learner Fees	Additional fees for optional services payable: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • at the learner's discretion. • in specific circumstances only; or, • for additional study requirements prior to completing this qualification.

Please note these fees are based on non-CII members taking the qualification in the UK, following a typical route to completion, using digital only options where available. Costs may vary for those residing outside the UK and depending on the route to completion. Substantial discounts are available to members and are detailed on the individual unit shop pages.

Life and Pensions Route

Standard Qualification Fee	£477.00
Package Fee	£249.00
Associated Learner Fees	

Annual

Non-Mandatory Annual Membership (per annum) (Assumes entry level membership)	£84.00
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One off

Digital and printed enrolment	£303.00
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Key facts booklet (Printed and Digital)	£138.00
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Key facts booklet (Digital Only)	£117.00
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For post results services prices, please visit the [Post results services webpage](#).

General Route

Standard Qualification Fee	£359.00
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Package Fee	£83.00
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Associated Learner Fees

Annual

Non-Mandatory Annual Membership (per annum) (Assumes entry level membership)	£84.00
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One off

Digital enrolment	£217.00
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Digital and printed enrolment	£260.00
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Digital only enrolment plus	£270.00
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Digital and printed enrolment plus	£302.00
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Key facts booklet (Printed and Digital)	£92.00
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Key facts booklet (Digital Only)	£78.00
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Knowledge checker	£46.00
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E-learn	£67.00
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Audio revision	£63.00
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Revision Extra	£90.00
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For post results services prices, please visit the [Post results services webpage](#).

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