



Certificate in property finance and investment



Course guide

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Language: English

Market sector: Commercial real estate

Course type: Perpetual training programme

CPD hours: 90 hours

Welcome

We are very excited that you have chosen to study the certificate in property finance and investment. This guide provides essential information and tips to help you make the most out of this course, including details about your course materials.

First steps

1. Familiarise yourself with the guidance materials provided on the main page of your course.
2. Introduce yourself to your peers and your trainer in the Introduction Forum.
3. Bookmark the course page.
4. We recommend that you use Google Chrome.
5. Disable pop-up blockers in the settings of your Internet browser.

Method of study

The course is designed to be flexible around your existing commitments and is structured to be completed within 10 months. The schedule allows 8 months to complete the modules and 2 months to complete your exam and any outstanding work. As guidance, you should aim to complete one module per month to stay on track.

Each module takes 10–15 hours and includes eLearning, reading, a case study, and a quiz. You also have access to consolidation sessions, where a tutor will guide you through the module, case study, and any challenging elements of the learning.

What support do you receive?

Your course tutor will remain accessible via the discussion forum throughout the entire course. Expect tutor responses within 3 to 5 working days.

A dedicated support team will be on hand to help you with any questions that you may have. You can reach the OLA team at onlineacademy@rics.org

Course description

Understanding the principles behind property finance and investment can help property professionals to make more informed decisions. This course is designed to provide you with the fundamental knowledge you need, from making basic financial models to learning about different sources of financing.

This course is for practicing professionals in the real estate or finance industry. The course content assumes that you have a background in property, although you will not need any specific knowledge in property finance and funding before starting this course.

Course structure

Module 1 – Real estate as an asset class

- Part 1 – Introduction to real estate markets
- Part 2 – Property investment decision making
- Part 3 – Real estate space market and asset market
- Part 4 – Real estate cycles and market analysis

Module 2 – Corporate finance and accounting principles

- Part 1– Introduction to corporate finance
- Part 2 – Understanding financial statements I: The balance sheet
- Part 3 – Understanding financial statements II: Income statement and cash flow
- Part 4 – Working with financial statements

Module 3 – Financial modelling

- Part 1 – Review of financial mathematics
- Part 2 – Discounted cash flow (DCF) model basics
- Part 3 – Investment decision criteria: Net present value (NPV) and internal rate of return (IRR)
- Part 4 – Sources of debt and equity for commercial property investments

Module 4 – Property finance and funding

- Part 1 – Use of debt in property investment: The effect of financial leverage
- Part 2 – Mortgage basics
- Part 3 – Mortgage mathematics

Module 5 – Real estate investment analysis

- Part 1 – Levered DCF model to estimate the investment value of commercial properties
- Part 2 – Property development finance
- Part 3 – Hybrid form of financing: Mezzanine financing

Module 6 – Investment management

- Part 1 – Investment portfolio management
- Part 2 – Portfolio risk and return
- Part 3 – Modern portfolio theory & capital asset pricing model (CAPM)
- Part 4 – Measuring portfolio performance

Module 7 – Indirect investment vehicles

- Part 1 – Direct and indirect real estate investments
- Part 2 – Indirect equity investments in real estate
- Part 3 – Indirect debt investments in real estate
- Part 4 – Real estate derivatives

Module 8 – Future of real estate

- Part 1 – The future of real estate
- Part 2 – Sustainable investing in real estate: Environmental, social, and governance (ESG) investing
- Part 3 – What is PropTech and how is it reshaping the real estate industry?

Online Course Exam

Learning outcomes

At the end of this course, you will be able to:

1. Interpret the fundamentals of real estate as an asset and its context in the wider financial market
2. Identify the economic drivers of bonds and shares and how property compares with them
3. List out appropriate sources and principles of finance for property investments, in operating assets and development projects
4. Familiarize with accounting concepts, such as how property assets and liabilities are addressed in financial statements
5. Interpret the company accounts with the tools and analyses used to make financial decisions within the context of the property world
6. Create a property cash flow and understand the mechanics of financial models
7. Apply the principles of managing the property as a financial asset to property investment decisions
8. Identify how investing indirectly can assist portfolio risk and return management and which structures might suit an investor or lender in given scenarios
9. Explain how the latest trends or techniques would affect or interact with real estate investment, including ESG, PropTech, and smart homes.

Learning resources

The resources in each technical module include various learning components to ensure you achieve the right level of knowledge for each module.

eLearning module

Interactive and responsive eLearning modules deliver the technical content of the learning objectives. The content will be delivered in bite-size chunks, including examples, top tips, scenarios and interactive activities.

Note: Please select 'Exit course' at the top right of the screen before closing eLearning to save progress for later resumption.

Completion requirement: you must view all slides for this activity to be marked as completed.

Reading materials

The eLearning is supported by structured essential reading materials such as professional guidance and standards, videos or the latest insight articles and research.

Completion requirement: you must view the essential reading for this activity to be marked as completed.

Quiz

A short quiz tracks how much of the learning has been absorbed and acts as a progress tracker for you.

Completion requirement: Quizzes do not require a passing grade, but you must attempt them to have the activity marked as completed.

Consolidation session

These 1-hour recorded web classes consolidate the key takeaways from the eLearning modules and reading materials.

This activity has no completion requirement, but we strongly recommend watching the recorded session.

Case study

This is an activity based on simulated projects for you to put the theory into practice. The case studies are not marked by the course tutor. Instead, the Case Study Exchange provided in your course page will serve as a platform for you to share your work with peers, a valuable practice that can broaden your perspectives and generate a diverse range of insights and ideas as they may offer unique viewpoints that you hadn't previously considered, ultimately enhancing the depth and quality of your case study.

Upon sharing your case study, you will gain access to its model answer, which includes both a downloadable PDF and a recorded video in which your tutor explains the solution.

We encourage all learners to share their Case Study work. Your case study might be chosen as an outstanding example.

This activity has no completion requirement, but we strongly recommend completing your case studies and sharing them in the Case Study Exchange forum.

Discussion forum

The forum is the place for you to engage with your peers and tutors. Tutors will reply within 3 to 5 working days.

For further guidance, please refer to the "Discussion Forum – Guidance and Code of Conduct" that is available on the course page.

This activity has no completion requirement.

Exam

Upon completion of all the eLearning modules and quizzes, you will unlock the programme examination.

- The exam consists of 50 multiple-choice questions.
- The passing grade is 65% and you have 120 minutes to complete it.
- You are allowed 2 attempts; however, the second attempt is only released 24 hours after the first attempt.
- A certificate of completion will be granted upon successful completion.