

CII Level 4 Diploma in Financial Planning

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 4 Diploma in Financial Planning** develops core technical knowledge and understanding across a broad range of key financial planning areas.

Who is this qualification for?

- This qualification is particularly appropriate for:
 - Paraplanners and technical consultants
 - Those in roles supporting financial planning processes, in particular those who already hold CII credits that count towards completion (otherwise the Diploma in Regulated Financial Planning is more suitable)

Benefits for individuals and employers

The CII Level 4 Diploma in Financial Planning will enable you to understand, analyse and apply financial planning products, processes and approaches and expand your areas of expertise in your professional practice.

Summary of content

Modular in structure, with no compulsory units, the Diploma allows you to develop a learning programme that reflects your personal circumstances or career aspirations. The range of units available covers financial services market and regulatory context, investment principles, key product areas, technical and advisory skills.

Entry and professional completion requirements

Entry requirements

There are no entry requirements for this qualification. However, please note the additional completion requirements below.

Additional completion requirements

To complete this qualification, you must have completed one of the following qualifications:

- CII Level 3 Certificate in Regulated Financial Services Operations
- CII Level 3 Certificate in Financial Services
- CII Level 3 Certificate in Financial Planning (withdrawn).

If you believe that you hold an equivalent qualification at level 3 or above to those listed, please contact Customer Services to see whether it is one that we hold on our exemptions list or that we could consider reviewing for the exemptions list.

Important note

The completion requirements described are for achieving the qualification. You should consult the FCA Handbook to identify whether units for this qualification satisfy any qualification requirements for specific regulated financial services roles. Changes to the handbook and qualification requirements occur from time to time.

Qualification structure

Optional units (level 4 or above)

Your selection will need to total at least 80 CII credits at Level 4 or above and include a CII assessed unit from the following: J02, J03, J05, J07, J09-12, R01-4 and R06-8).

Unit title	CII Credits	Level
R01 Financial services, regulation and ethics	20	4
R02 Investment principles and risk	20	4
R03 Personal taxation	10	4
R04 Pensions and retirement planning	10	4
R06 Financial planning practice	30	4
R07 Advanced mortgage advice	15	4
R08 Pensions update	10	4
J02 Trusts	20	4
J03 The tax and legal aspects of business	20	4
J05 Pension income options	20	4
J07 Supervision in a regulated environment	20	4
J09 Paraplanning	30	4
J10 Discretionary investment management	20	4
J11 Wrap and platform services	20	4
J12 Securities advice and dealing	20	4
Up to one Advanced Diploma unit (AF1-AF8)	30	6
Credits already held from withdrawn CII AFPC units	varies	

Optional units (choice from the CII financial services framework)

Your selection will need to total at least a further 60 CII credits from the units above or elsewhere in the CII financial services framework (excluding unit LF1). No more than 30 CII credits may come from Level 6 Advanced Diploma units. Please see the 'completion requirements' section of the qualification webpage for details of the current units available: www.cii.co.uk/dip-financialplanning

CII credits from Level 3 prerequisite qualifications detailed above under 'additional completion requirements' will be carried forward and count towards the additional 60 credits needed.

Learning and assessment

Learning materials provided

For units in this qualification, students typically have access to the following materials as part of their enrolment or for an additional price

- Study text with updates
- RevisionMate online study support, including end of chapter tests
- Exam guides containing a practice exam and guidance
- Further reading suggestions

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 570 hours.¹ 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, plus further study time for any units required to meet the additional completion requirements.

Assessment format

Depending on your unit choices, you will be assessed by:

- multiple-choice on screen exam, tested year-round throughout the UK at a choice of over 40 centres
- written examination
- written coursework.

The qualification award will be graded fail/pass.

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 legislative position that will be assessed

This is available in our syllabus menu on the qualification webpage: www.cii.co.uk/dip-financialplanning

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

¹ '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. <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/awarding-organisations-understanding-our-regulatory-requirements>

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, which can be found in our exam policies page:

www.cii.co.uk/exampolicies

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 access arrangements and reasonable adjustments policy and contact the CII Customer Service team as soon as possible to discuss how we can meet your needs. Further details are provided here:

www.cii.co.uk/exampolicies/#Accessibility

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