**Post graduate certificate in finance business partnering**

**CIPFA North West Region**

**January - June 2018**

# Course Outline

##### About the finance business partner role

CIPFA is an advocate of the development of the finance business partnering role in public bodies. Finance professionals in the public sector have developed their role by evaluating how they can best support their organisations in a strategic as well as operational sense. This adaptation to their role has enhanced the relationship between finance and non-finance professionals across the organisation, with finance professionals earning their position and putting finance at the heart of decision making.

CIPFA is delighted to be able to support this approach and to develop the different skill sets and approaches required to operate effectively as a finance business partner (FBP) through this qualification.

##### About the qualification

The qualification offers a unique blend of online and classroom based training as well as providing refresher guidance on some of the technical/professional skills required of a finance business partner.

Once enrolled on the programme, each participant will be given access to an online learning platform containing workbooks and additional reading for each module that take them through the learning outcomes. The learning is further enhanced by face-to-face, highly discursive workshops that bring to life the learning achieved through the online platform. As part of the assessment process, delegates are tasked with completing reflective activities contained within each workbook to build up a Portfolio of Evidence.

We are committed to providing a qualification that not only arms delegates with a range of best practice knowledge and skills, but also enables them to actively apply the learning back in the workplace in whichever sector they are based.

##### Accreditation

To gain accreditation delegates are required to submit a portfolio of evidence and a work-based project that records:

* evidence of learning and critical analysis for each module (other than module two),
* how the skills development has been translated to the working environment,
* and the development of delegates’ ability to undertake specific tasks.

Completing the qualification offers a Post Graduate Certificate (level seven) in Finance Business Partnering, as well as the opportunity to apply for CIPFA Affiliate membership.

##### Modules

The qualification contains the 8 modules below.

1. **Fundamentals of business partnering**

This opening module provides an overview of the role of the finance business partner (FBP) in the wider context; the key skills and behaviours that need to be demonstrated in an effective FBP; and the strategies required to successfully embed finance business partnering within the organisation.

1. **Technical and professional skills**

This module provides a refresher on the core technical and professional skills that a FBP needs to have in their toolbox to be successful in their role. These will reflect the most current guidance available and will cover hot topics of the time. This module is a technical refresher that is delivered through e-learning.

1. **Behavioural skills – emotional intelligence**

The finance business partner needs to be able to successfully manage internal and external clients to ensure they best met the needs of their clients. A thorough understanding of organisational relationships will be crucial. Emotional intelligence is a key skill required.

1. **Influencing skills**

In today’s world of partnerships, alliances and flatter organisations, finance business partners need to increase their influencing skills at senior levels to maximise effectiveness in their roles.

This module introduces a range of influencing techniques which can be used by FBPs within and across organisations to help achieve more win/win outcomes in their day-to-day communications.

It helps them work out how they typically influence others, both within and outside their organisation, and gives them a wider range of options to use.

1. **Communication and presentation of figures**

One of the major challenges for FBPs in their reporting function is not only the production of accurate and timely financial information, but also ensuring that this information is disseminated in an understandable manner so that effective decision-making can take place.

The aim of this module is to enable participants to present information effectively so that performance can be monitored and controlled and robust financial management maintained.

**5a. Impact and pressures**

FBPs need to create a powerful impact on the people they meet and work with. Finance needs to be at the top table and when there, it needs to maximise its presence to add value. This process will enhance the role and impact of the FBP at senior levels within the organisation in supporting financial management and decision-making.

1. **Transformational change**

This module will examine how FBPs can influence strategies for planning aimed at bringing about large scale complex change programmes.

As organisations undertake significant and complex change programmes, this module will analyse key success factors; the risks that have to be managed; and the pitfalls, problems and challenges.

It uses a number of accepted models of change to help FBPs understand the practical planning and management of transformational change.

1. **Developing commercial acumen**

This module develops participants’ awareness of the importance of commercial acumen and skills in the modern public services and how public bodies are developing to become more commercial in their outlook and strategy. The module will provide insight into the importance of the FBP's role in supporting the move to a more commercial environment.

Key Dates

Launch date       5th Dec 2017        Alistair/Brendan

Modules 1 & 2   11th Jan 2018       Nick Auer

Module 3           6th March 2018   Gill Barron or Gareth Batterbee

Module 4 & 5     11th May 2018    Sue Carruthers

Module 6           24th July 2018      Brendan McCarron

Assessment       26th Oct 2018      Alistair