

EDUCATE — ENABLE — EMPOWER

FUNDS

LEVEL **9**

Professional Diploma in

Applied Alternative Investments

2023-2024



Who we are

IOB

IOB is a professional community of over 33,200 members who work in banking and the international financial services sector. Professional development of our members through education is at the heart of what we do. IOB provides university level programmes to enable our members achieve and sustain their professional qualifications and Continuing Professional Development (CPD) – essential in meeting customer and regulatory expectations. 6,906 individuals studied with us last year and over 23,000 members are registered for CPD schemes administered by IOB.

Excellence in education – a recognised college of UCD

As a recognised college of UCD and the standout banking industry educator, we offer qualifications of the highest standard. We currently offer more than 40 programmes ranging from Professional Certificates (level 7) on the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ) to Masters Degrees (level 9). We design our programmes to be practical and relevant, but grounded in academic rigour.

Irish Funds

The Irish Funds Industry Association (Irish Funds) is the representative body of the international investment fund community in Ireland. It represents fund promoters / managers, administrators, depositaries, transfer agents and professional advisory firms involved in the international funds industry in Ireland, with over 14,000 funds and net assets of more than €5.4 trillion.

The objective of Irish Funds is to support and complement the development of the international funds industry in Ireland, ensuring it continues to be the location of choice for the domiciling and servicing of investment funds. Through its work with governmental and industry committees and working groups, Irish Funds contributes to the development of Ireland's regulatory and legislative framework. Irish Funds is also involved in defining market practice through the development of policy and guidance papers and supporting industry specific training.

Irish Funds raises the profile of Ireland as the premier location to enable and support global investing through its reputation for trust, capability, and innovation. The Association promotes awareness of the funds industry both internationally and domestically by hosting conferences, events, and seminars and by engaging with the media. Irish Funds is committed to the continued development of its most valuable resource – its people.

For further information, visit [irishfunds.ie](https://www.irishfunds.ie).

IFS Skillnet

The IFS Skillnet is co-funded by Skillnet Ireland and member companies. The IFS Skillnet programme is dedicated to providing training and networking opportunities for the international financial services sector.

The Network aims to support the sector in maintaining Ireland's position as a top international financial services centre through investment in the specialist skills and expertise of its workforce. The Network is led by a steering group which includes member companies and the leading financial services industry associations.

Network activity

The IFS Skillnet was established in mid-2009. Since then we have delivered over 2,000 courses to 15,000 plus participants from 430 companies operating in the international financial services sector in Ireland. We support our members to upskill in areas such as digitalisation, ESG, leadership, people skills, project management and regulatory compliance.

Why get involved

- Avail of a comprehensive range of specialist courses designed for the international financial services sector
- Opportunity to significantly reduce training costs through the availability of grant funding
- Provides the opportunity to work with education and training providers to update and amend course content in line with market developments
- Ensure your employees acquire the latest skills to maintain your organisation's competitiveness
- Opportunity to network and collaborate with other member companies.

How to get involved:

- Sign up for free at: www.ifsskillnet.ie
- Email: info@ifsskillnet.ie
- Tweet us: [@ifsskillnet](https://twitter.com/ifsskillnet)
- LinkedIn: [@ifsskillnet](https://www.linkedin.com/company/ifsskillnet)

Introduction

The investment industry is in the midst of the most significant evolution in investment asset allocation in the past 50 years. Investors are allocating ever increasing funds to alternative assets and alternative investment strategies as they seek higher yields and stronger returns. As a result, there has been a major change in the type of products which investors are demanding and in the broadness of fund types which the investment industry is managing, as investors move from public stock and bond markets to private markets.

As alternative assets and alternative investment strategies have become increasingly mainstream, from hedge funds through to private equity, and from alternative credit funds through to infrastructure, and in the growth of ESG compliant investment mandates, the funds industry faces the challenge of upskilling to meet this wave of evolving investment structures and management techniques. It is critical for long term success that professionals who work in the investment industry understand how the continued shift to alternatives demands a broader understanding of the investment landscape and the choice of asset type available to investors.

To this end, IOB, in association with Irish Funds, is pleased to introduce the Professional Diploma in Applied Alternative Investments. The programme will provide you with a unique opportunity to gain a qualification, accredited by University College Dublin, in the area of applied alternative investments and alternative assets. The course is designed not only to advance understanding of the alternatives investment landscape but also how traditional asset classes are adapting to the unique challenges of an ever changing investment landscape.

I look forward to welcoming you on the programme.

Kevin Mc Connell CFA
Programme Director



About the programme

Who is this programme for?

The Professional Diploma in Applied Alternative Investments provides an opportunity for professionals working in international financial services to develop their expertise in the growing alternative assets market.

Increasingly, alternative assets which includes hedge funds, commodities, private equity, structured products and real asset investments such as infrastructure investments are becoming mainstream investments which are predicted to grow.

The international investment fund industry faces the challenge of upskilling to meet this wave of new investment structures. Given the breadth of alternative assets the programme will appeal to professionals working in international financial services who want to develop expertise in alternative investments. It is critical for long term success that those who work in the industry understand how the move to alternatives demands a broader understanding of the investment landscape and the choice of asset type available to investors.

Benefits for you and your organisation

The overall aim of the programme is to develop your technical knowledge and skills in alternative investments. It will:

- Advance your knowledge and understanding of valuation issues relevant to alternative investments and alternative investment funds;
- Progress your understanding of long-term trends in the demand for alternative investments;
- Deepen your knowledge and expertise in the range of alternative investment strategies;
- Introduce the relevance and importance of alternative investments to various types of investors;
- Develop your knowledge of legal and regulatory issues affecting alternative investment funds.

Award

When you successfully complete the three modules of this programme, you will be awarded the Professional Diploma in Applied Alternative Investments from UCD (at postgraduate level 9).

Progression

This award is on the Pathway to MSc in Financial Services. Those wishing to continue their studies and achieve the MSc (90 ECTS credits) are required to complete two further Professional Diplomas (30 ECTS each). Further details at iob.ie/programme/msc-financial-services

Accredited Funds Professional designation

Employees working in Ireland's investment funds sector can now demonstrate and maintain competence and professionalism in the international investment funds sector through the new Accredited Funds Professional designation.

The Accredited Funds Professional designation was developed by IOB, the leading provider of applied education to the financial services industry in conjunction with Irish Funds, the representative body for the international investment fund community in Ireland and it meets an objective set out in *Ireland for Finance 2025*. Professional designations are an externally validated badge of excellence and are an endorsement of academic qualifications, professional knowledge and experience.

Accredited Funds Professional creates an industry standard for recognising consistency and professionalism in the funds industry. Support for the designation will distinguish Ireland's investment funds industry amongst its global peers and differentiate Ireland as a leading fund services jurisdiction and sustain Ireland's world ranking for its people talent.

Curriculum

NFQ: Level 9

Academic credits: 30 ECTS

Modules: 3

Awarding body: UCD

The programme is comprised of three modules as follows:

1. **Investment Valuation and Risk**
2. **Applied Alternative Investment Strategies**
3. **Legal and Regulatory Aspects of Alternative Investments**

1. Investment Valuation and Risk

(NFQ level 9, 10 ECTS)

The module introduces the principles underpinning asset valuation and risk analysis to provide a foundation for exploring fund valuation drivers relevant to alternative investment funds. It presents a range of alternative investments available to investors and explains their drivers of market performance. It also explores the key economic variables impacting returns in conjunction with performance evaluation methodologies relevant to alternative investment funds. The module concludes with an analysis of the empirical evidence identifying trends for alternative investments and the structural drivers of the predicted increase in long-term demand.

2. Applied Alternative Investment Strategies

(NFQ level 9, 10 ECTS)

This module builds upon investment valuation and risk to develop a deeper understanding of available alternative investments including private equity, hedge funds and managed funds, commodities, real assets and structured products. Next, it considers key issues in relation to asset allocation and portfolio management and develops an understanding of alternative fund management and issues of illiquidity risk which has important implications for endowment and foundation portfolios and pension fund portfolio management. This module concludes with an analysis of risk management, manager selection and due diligence.

3. Legal and Regulatory Aspects of Alternative Investments

(NFQ level 9, 10 ECTS)

This module introduces the rationale and structure of regulatory regimes for investment funds domiciled and operation in Ireland, examining the basis for regulation and the institutions responsible for regulation at domestic and EU levels. It develops students' ability to critically analyse a piece of regulatory legislation and identify the legal and regulatory obligations imposed by the regulation. It will also examine the preparation of a memorandum in relation to a new piece of regulation, highlighting the obligations it imposes and the competencies necessary to discharge those obligations and the tools available to the regulator to enforce such regulation.

Further Information

Entry requirements

The minimum entry requirements for the programme are:

- An Honours degree (min. 2.2 L8 NFQ)
- or
- Admission may also be considered for experienced professionals who do not meet the admission requirements as set out above, where they can demonstrate knowledge through their work i.e. they have more than 5 years' experience in a management role.

Professional body membership

You must be a current member of IOB, or become a member, to undertake this programme.

Fees

The programme fee is €4,785.
IFS Skillnet price €3,350**/**

We encourage candidates to register for the full academic year but if you choose to register on a per module basis the fees are broken down as follows:

Module	Fee	IFS Skillnet Price
Autumn Trimester Sep 2023 – Jan 2024		
Investment Valuation and Risk	€1,595	€1,116**
Spring Trimester Feb 2024 – May 2024		
Applied Alternative Investment Strategies	€1,595	€1,117**
Legal and Regulatory Aspects of Alternative Investments	€1,595	€1,117**

Fees will be reviewed annually.

*2023 modules are eligible for IFS Skillnet funding for a limited number of places on a first come first served basis.

**The availability of funding for modules in future trimesters will be confirmed in advance of their commencement.

Tax relief may be available to candidates who are paying fees in a personal capacity. Further information is available from www.revenue.ie

How to Apply

To apply online, visit iob.ie/programme/applied-alternative-investments

If demand from applicants exceeds the number of available places, a waiting list will apply.

Duration

This programme will be delivered over two trimesters. The programme will commence with Module 1. Investment Valuation & Risk.

Delivery

Delivery will be online through a combination of pre-recorded and live webinars.

Assessment

Assessment of learning outcomes is by assessment components during and at the end of the trimester.

Programme commencement

The programme commences in September 2023.

Contact Us

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Explore your module and CPD resources

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Taighde, Nuálaíochta agus Eolaíochta
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