

EDUCATE — ENABLE — EMPOWER

FUNDS

LEVEL **9**

Professional Diploma in

# Applied Alternative Investments

2021—2022



# Who we are

## IOB

IOB is a professional community of 33,600 members who work in banking, investment funds and international financial services on the island of Ireland. 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. More than 9,800 individuals studied with us last year and over 23,800 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](http://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. Courses available include, Digital Financial Services, Regulatory Reporting, International Funds, Business Analysis, Project Management and a wide range of management and leadership skills.

## 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](http://www.ifsskillnet.ie)
- Email: [info@ifsskillnet.ie](mailto:info@ifsskillnet.ie)
- Tweet us: [@ifsskillnet](https://twitter.com/ifsskillnet)
- LinkedIn: [@ifsskillnet](https://www.linkedin.com/company/ifsskillnet)

# A new era

In 2021 IOB launched 3 innovations that set a new benchmark.

## IOB Learn

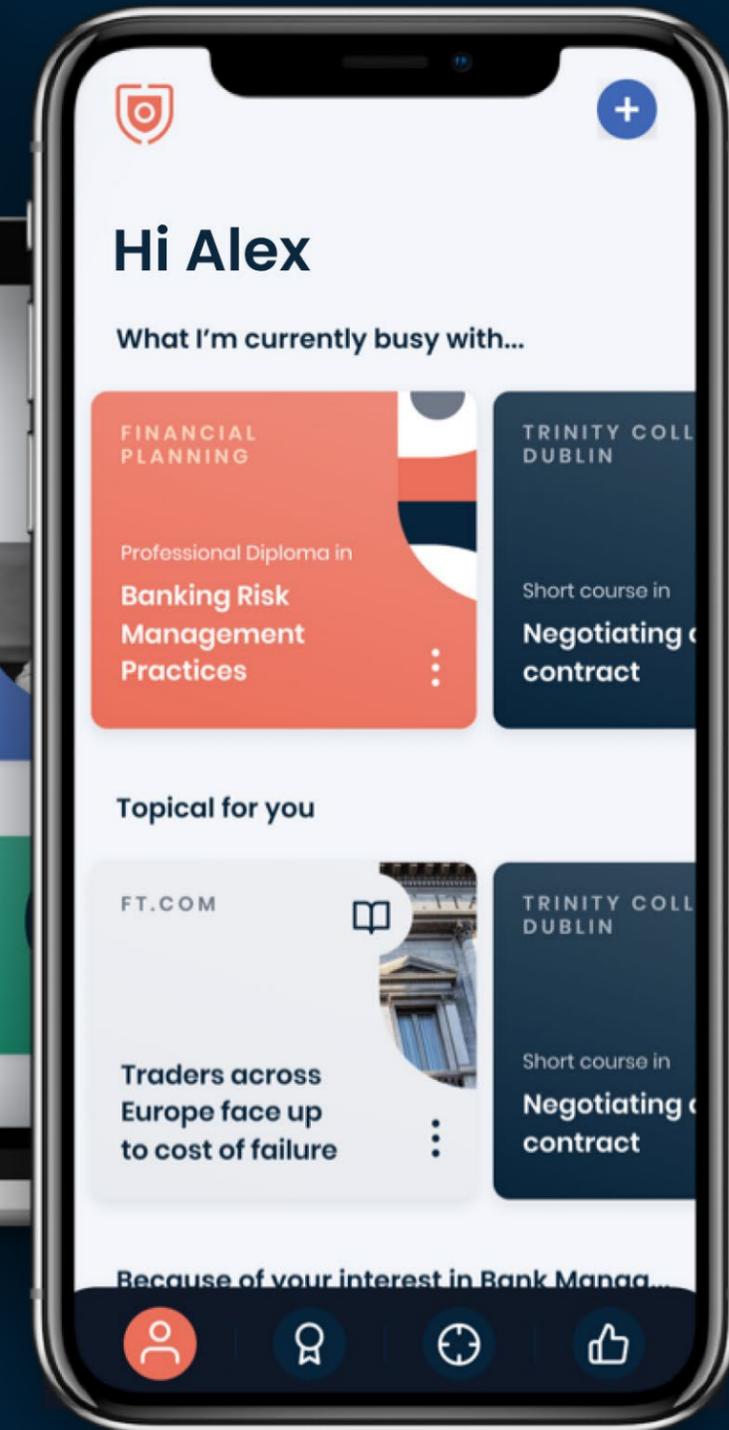
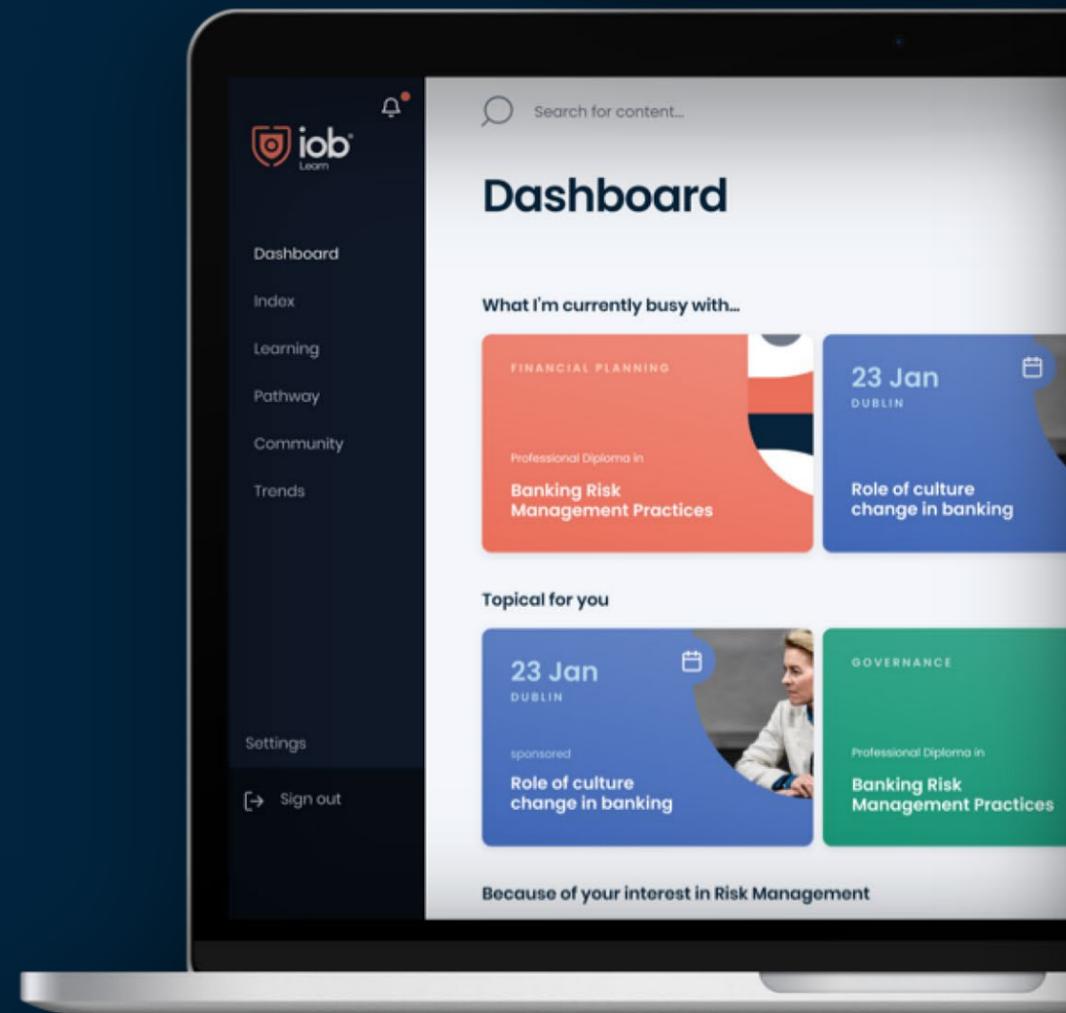
Our new learning experience platform, IOB Learn, is a digitally enabled, intuitive, personalised, lifelong learning and career ecosystem. For everyone working in financial services, including investment funds and international financial services.

## The IOB App

From discovering curated content, following your learning pathways, to logging CPD on-the-go, IOB App opens a new world of possibility in staying connected and up to date with IOB.

## EdQ by IOB

A new dynamic education credentialling ecosystem that tracks and certifies qualifications, continuing professional development and lifelong learning, supporting career profile recognition across a wide reach of financial services.



# 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.

In addition, the programme has been adapted this year to reflect the unique challenges created by the impact of COVID on the global economy and investment markets. We will look to examine the impact of COVID on the different asset classes, the challenges it has created for valuation and we will look to the future, as people adapt to new ways of living and working as a result of the virus.

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](https://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

The programme comprises 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 €4,290.  
IFS Skillnet price €3,000\*/\*\*

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
<b>Autumn Trimester Sep 2021 – Jan 2022</b>		
Investment Valuation and Risk	€1,430	€1,000**
<b>Spring Trimester Feb 2022 – May 2022</b>		
Applied Alternative Investment Strategies	€1,430	€1,000**
Legal and Regulatory Aspects of Alternative Investments	€1,430	€1,000**

Fees will be reviewed annually.

\*2021 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](http://www.revenue.ie)

## How to Apply

To apply online, visit [iob.ie/programme/applied-alternative-investments](http://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 2021.

## Contact Us

**William Lawless**  
Programme Manager  
E: [education@iob.ie](mailto:education@iob.ie)

**Margaret D'Arcy**  
Programme Director  
E: [education@iob.ie](mailto:education@iob.ie)

**Claire Madigan**  
IFS Skillnet  
E: [claire.madigan@ibec.ie](mailto:claire.madigan@ibec.ie)  
T: +353 (1) 605 1546



# Key Dates 2021–2022



Autumn Trimester September 2021 – January 2022	Level 9 September Start†	Level 9 October Start†
Closing date for applications*	29/08/2021	13/09/2021
Closing date for module registrations	03/09/2021	01/10/2021
Trimester start date**	13/09/2021 (Year 1) 06/09/2021 (Year 2)	04/10/2021
Re-registration closing date	05/11/2021 for Dec exams 12/11/2021 for Jan exams	12/11/2021
Module withdrawal date	05/11/2021 for Dec exams 12/11/2021 for Jan exams	12/11/2021
Exam period	04/12/2021 – 12/12/2021 OR 03/01/2022 – 23/01/2022	03/01/2022 – 23/01/2022
Exam results release date	04/03/2022	04/03/2022

Spring Trimester January 2022 – May 2022	Level 9
Closing date for applications*	28/01/2022
Closing date for module registrations	04/02/2022
Trimester start date**	07/02/2022
Re-registration closing date	18/03/2022
Module withdrawal date	18/03/2022
Exam period	02/05/2022 – 21/05/2022
Exam results release date	01/07/2022

Summer Trimester June 2022 – September 2022	Level 9
Closing date for applications*	27/05/2022
Closing date for module registrations	03/06/2022
Trimester start date**	06/06/2022
Re-registration closing date	15/07/2022
Module withdrawal date	15/07/2022
Exam period	15/09/2022 – 25/09/2022
Exam results release date	28/10/2022

\* Places may be available after this date depending on availability  
 \*\* Member Resources in IOB Learn

† Check individual programme pages on [iob.ie](http://iob.ie) for start dates  
 Dates may change - check IOB Learn and [iob.ie](http://iob.ie) for up-to-date information



# Membership

## IOB membership

Learn more about the value and benefits of becoming a member of IOB.



### Your standout educator

IOB is a recognised college of UCD, which is Ireland's largest university and ranked within the top 1% of higher education institutions in the world. A leading provider of applied education in financial services, we offer more than 40 university accredited qualifications, taught by academics and leading industry experts.

- Access to IOB's full suite of accredited learning, taught by academics and leading industry experts.
- Access via IOB to Government Funding for education programmes, e.g. Springboard, IFS Skillnet.
- Graduation Ceremony for level 8 and 9 graduands.



### We get you qualified

We offer 14 professional designations, including all the essential regulatory required designations to qualify you for roles in financial services. Free accreditation of your training for CPD hours on IOB CPD schemes.



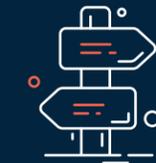
### We keep you qualified

Lifelong learning is essential to sustain a career and your professional designation(s). As Ireland's largest provider of continuing professional development (CPD), we keep you qualified. Included in your membership subscription at no additional cost is access to a minimum of four continuing professional development events in addition to our suite of eCPD modules.



### IOB Learn

An exciting new learning experience platform, and an IOB app personalised to your professional development needs. IOB Learn will give you access to a new suite of micro learning and curated learning content across a number of channels.



### Your essential career partner

Through IOB Learn we empower you to explore your talent and potential. We fuel your personal growth and career trajectory.



### Your professional community

Membership of your industry's professional body, the largest professional membership community in Ireland, brings you into a community of like-minded people. Professionals from across financial services working in a similar specialism as you, dealing with similar challenges to those that you face. Through in-person events, digital events and forums you can hear key note speakers and share experiences, exchange knowledge, network, expanding your contacts and personal profile.

- Invitations to in-person and virtual events and networking opportunities.
- Access to breakfast briefings / lunch and learns.
- Access to the latest insights, thought leadership, emerging issues and trends.

# Membership

## Corporate membership

Learn more about the value and benefits of becoming a corporate member of IOB.



### Strategy and Governance

IOB Council (board of directors) and Council committees are responsible for the effective, prudent and ethical oversight of IOB, setting its strategic aims and direction. Corporate members are entitled to either appoint or elect persons to Council.

Active engagement, participation and leadership in IOB Council and Council Committees is a commitment to setting and maintaining high professional and ethical standards, and enhancing the technical expertise of the financial services industry.



### Talent development

An organisation's greatest resource is its people. IOB's wide range of applied education and lifelong learning programmes develop your talented staff.



### Future skills

Financial services continues to change rapidly. IOB helps build transferable skills for the individual and a more flexible workforce for your organisation.



### Regulatory compliance

Where relevant, our education qualifications, professional designations and CPD schemes meet the Central Bank of Ireland's Minimum Competency Code and Fitness and Probity requirements. Our new EdQ credentialing platform supports you in meeting your regulatory responsibilities.



### Professional standing

IOB offers a range of professional designations which are a recognition of educational achievement and professional standing. They are a badge of excellence and an endorsement of academic qualifications, professional knowledge and experience. Several of the designations are recognised worldwide.



### Independent assurance

IOB is an independent stamp of assurance that supports organisations in engaging, motivating and empowering their employees to learn and perform.



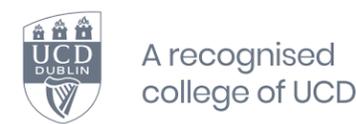
### Corporate community

Build your network with a community of peers – learn from other leading organisations, share your knowledge and expertise.

**IOB**  
1 North Wall Quay, Dublin 1,  
D01 T8Y1, Ireland  
  
**Phone:** +353 (0)1 611 6500  
**Email:** info@iob.ie  
  
**iob.ie**

**IFS Skillnet**  
84-86 Lower Baggot Street,  
Dublin 2, Ireland  
  
**Phone:** +353 (0)1 605 1546  
**Email:** info@ifsskillnet.ie  
  
**ifsskillnet.ie**

**Irish Funds**  
Ashford House, Tara Street,  
Dublin 2, D02 VX67, Ireland  
  
**Phone:** +353 (0)1 675 3200  
**Email:** info@irishfunds.ie  
  
**irishfunds.ie**



IFS Skillnet is co-funded by Skillnet Ireland and network companies. Skillnet Ireland is funded from the National Training Fund through the Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science.



An Roinn Breisoideachais agus Ardoideachais,  
Taighde, Nuálaíochta agus Eolaíochta  
Department of Further and Higher Education,  
Research, Innovation and Science

