

## **Diploma of Financial Counselling CHC51115**

### **Course Information Guide**



#### **Gain skills in**

- Financial counselling assessment, casework and referral
- Individual and Systemic Advocacy
- Client centred practice
- Counselling using counselling techniques
- Understanding financial and consumer protection laws and codes
- Community development
- Understanding integrated practice

#### **Delivery Mode & Location**

- Live online real time group
- Weekly class schedule

#### **Course duration**

- 18 - 24 months

The Diploma of Financial Counselling CHC51115 reflects the role of financial counsellors working in a variety of agencies that meet the requirements for the Australian Securities and Investments Commission (ASIC) exemption from a Financial Services Licence under ASIC Corporations (Financial Counselling Agencies) Instrument 2017/792 or credit licence. Financial counsellors work across a variety of metropolitan, rural and remote settings.

This course is structured to give students specialist knowledge about legal remedies and options to manage debt and financial difficulty and develop advocacy skills to work in a model of social justice and client empowerment.

This qualification is NOT related to the work performed by financial planners, financial advisers or accountants, whose role is to provide clients with strategies to address investment and financial management options and require a financial services licence for their work under the National Consumer Credit Protection Act 2010 and the Corporations Act. This qualification is not required to undertake financial capability work.

Many people from marginalised socio-economic backgrounds are not afforded their financial rights as consumers and members of society. Your work in financial counselling will empower people for change and develop their capacity to be in charge of financial choices and share that knowledge with their families and communities. You will be an instrument for them to create new money stories in their lives.

Commitment to financial counselling education comes with significant responsibility; there is much to learn which requires commitment, hard work and fortitude. All ICAN Learn teachers are experienced financial counsellors and provide expert insight into financial counselling casework and the financial counselling and capability sector. ICAN Learn teachers provide study support throughout the course and facilitate a variety of ways to learn.

ICAN Learn's model is focused on a mentoring approach using financial counsellor experts. We expect the student to commit to the learning process and to communicate challenges that risk success, should these arise, so that we can assist you to jump those hurdles. We pride ourselves in assisting you to achieve success!

## Why become a Financial Counsellor?

Financial counselling is a great way to contribute to the wellbeing of others and make a real difference in a practical way.

Financial counsellors provide free, independent and confidential information, support, advocacy and referral to people in financial difficulty.

Financial counsellors provide services that are without conflict, and hence are not financial planners or advisers and work in organisations that are funded for this work and have an exemption from an Australian Financial Services License or a Credit License.

If you'd like to provide practical advice, support and advocacy for people in financial difficulty; and you're passionate about social justice and client rights, this job is for you!

## Entry requirements

This course is open to anyone living in Australia (residential status) and is not suitable for people living outside Australia, nor is it a qualification that you can use in any other country. It relates specifically to the Australian monetary and social support systems and associated regulation.

It is desirable that applicants demonstrate an interest and relevant experience in the social and community services field and that they have the appropriate maturity and interpersonal skills to work with a diverse range of people.

Applicants must demonstrate functional verbal and written English literacy skills equivalent to Year 12 level or beyond.

## Skill development

This course challenges you to develop excellence in:

- How to apply knowledge about laws and codes to inform financial counselling client assessment, casework and referral
- Individual and systemic advocacy
- Person centred and integrated ways of working
- Use of counselling models of practice to guide the client to make informed choices around debt resolution and ensuring that income sources are appropriate
- Sourcing additional supports for clients in hardship

## Job opportunities

At successful course completion you can apply to become a member of the financial counselling peak body in your state/ territory and be recognised as a practicing financial counsellor. Career advancement can be achieved through comprehensive professional development programs available in the Financial Counselling sector and through additional accredited education.

## IT requirements

To participate and engage in learning and assessment for this course, you must have computer skills and access to a laptop or desktop computer along with a stable internet connection. Your computer must have:

- Access to Microsoft Office (Word, Excel)
- Chrome or Firefox as browsers
- Video capacity (webcam)
- Audio capacity (with headset or suitable computer settings for computer sound)
- Stable internet connection

## Our team

### Administration & management

The Administration team handles all enquiries and student communication relating to enrolment and outcomes and assist students to problem solve and handle the process of assessment extensions, leave of absence and other requests.

To get in touch with a member of the administration team, email [administration@icanlearn.edu.au](mailto:administration@icanlearn.edu.au)  
For enquiries outside of course enrolments, email [enquiries@icanlearn.edu.au](mailto:enquiries@icanlearn.edu.au)

### Teachers

Teachers are the key contact for students once they are enrolled. The Teacher allocated to a course or unit within the course makes contact with all students as they commence and throughout the course, provide a professional learning environment, access to resources and are the touch point for the student if they have any problems.

The Diploma of Financial Counselling is delivered by qualified and experienced financial counsellors who meet the requirements to teach a vocational qualification. Our teachers maintain current membership with the financial counselling peak bodies to ensure currency in financial counselling practice.

## The course

The Diploma of Financial Counselling CHC51115 sits in the Community Services Training Package and is an Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) level 5 Vocational Education Training course.

## Competency based training

Vocational Education is conducted in a competency based approach. This means that the student can work with the teachers and course coordinator to become competent. Competence refers to the consistent application of knowledge and skill to the standard of that profession in the workplace, in this case, Financial Counselling. A graduate of a competency based qualification is work-ready on course completion.

## What is ACSF level 5?

ACSF levels and the AQF levels criteria are an indication of the relative complexity and/or depth of achievement and the autonomy required to demonstrate that achievement. ACSF level 5 requires specific abilities that relate to the understanding and application of knowledge and skills in a particular profession / job-role.

Graduates at this level have specialised knowledge and skills for skilled/paraprofessional work and/or further learning.

## Skills

Graduates at this level have a broad range of cognitive, technical and communication skills to select and apply methods and technologies to:

- analyse information to complete a range of activities
- provide and transmit solutions to sometimes complex problems
- transmit information and skills to others

## Application of knowledge and skills

Graduates at this level apply knowledge and skills to demonstrate autonomy, judgement and defined responsibility in known or changing contexts and within broad but established parameters.

Application of knowledge and skills requires specific understanding and application of:

- appropriate communication [verbal and non-verbal expression and understanding]
- reading, writing, numeracy;
- problem solving,
- mental wellness and
- behavioural awareness.

## **Knowledge**

Graduates at ACF level 5 have technical and theoretical knowledge in a specific area or a broad field of work and learning.

## **Other vital skills**

### **Verbal and non-verbal expression and understanding**

Students must use, respond to and be aware of verbal and non-verbal communication throughout the course. These are skills used every day in financial counselling and allow the development of client relationships to ensure positive outcomes whilst maintaining dignity and unconditional positive regard.

Students selected for this course will demonstrate an awareness of non-verbal communication such as: eye contact, gestures, facial expression, speaking volume, tone of voice, proximity and verbal turn-taking. These skills are crucial when undertaking Learning in the Workplace activities.

### **Computer skills**

ICAN Learn uses a significant amount of computer technology [e.g. all assessment is on an online platform; the student is required to access and interact with this and other technology]. Students are expected to be able to use a computer and associated software for their studies to engage in learning, classroom attendance and assessment. This is not limited to the skills below- which relate to reading, writing and comprehension, but also to skills that include computer processes such as upload, download and use of Word and Excel functions.

### **Reading**

Students are required to read and understand a range of written material in differing forms from a variety of sources such as: on screen material, screen-based, image-based and sign/symbol-based texts. The ability to read, understand and interpret written information is fundamental for the delivery of client support and services.

## **Writing**

Proficiency in written English is paramount. [This refers not to the physical act of writing but rather to the written content].

The course requires students to engage with complex information and concepts and produce logical, professional written communication appropriate to both classroom-based learning and assessment activities and learning in the workplace tasks. This includes writing reports, answering questions, interpreting information and writing client notes.

## **Numeracy**

The student must be able to correctly analyse, accurately apply and interpret numerical data for classroom based assessment and Learning in the Workplace tasks which lead to the ability to prepare financial statements and related documentation as part of client advocacy.

## **Concentration, memory and problem solving skills**

The student must be able to retain information from classroom based learning and apply this to assessment tasks. Concentration is required consistently throughout classroom, assessment and Learning in the Workplace based activities.

## **Mental wellness**

Mental wellness is vital for successful completion of this course. This refers to the student being in a state of well-being where they can realise their own abilities or potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life and can work productively and fruitfully. It means that the student can moderate their own behaviour.

Mental wellness is crucial to be able to deal with challenging concepts in classroom based learning, work with peers and teachers, and reflect on challenging concepts to develop professional capacity. In the workplace the student may experience difficult situations with clients, requiring resilience, alertness and an ability to remain focused.

If a student has periods of being mentally unwell, they are required to self-identify and seek assistance from ICAN Learn staff to prevent impact on studies and workplace-based client interactions.

## Course structure

The Diploma of Financial Counselling CHC51115 is a competency based Vocational Education course that has 17 units. 14 of those are core units and 3 are electives chosen by ICAN Learn. The Diploma of Financial Counselling CHC51115 is part of the VET Community Services Training Package.

Full Qualification information can be found on <https://training.gov.au/Training/Details/CHC51115>

## Units of study

Core Units	Unit Title
CHCADV001	Facilitate the rights and interests of the client
CHCDIV001	Work with diverse people
CHCFIN001	Facilitate the financial counselling process
CHCFIN002	Identify and apply technical information to assist the client with financial issues
CHCFIN003	Develop and use financial counselling tools and techniques
CHCCCS019	Recognise and respond to crisis situations
CHCLEG002	Interpret and use legal information
CHCCDE002	Develop and implement community programs
CHCADV005	Provide systems advocacy
CHCCSL001	Establish and confirm the counselling relationship
CHCCSL002	Establish specialist interpersonal and counselling interview skills
CHCCSL003	Facilitate the counselling relationship and process
CHCCSL007	Support counselling clients in decision making processes
CHCPRP003	Reflect on and improve own professional practice
Elective Units	Unit Title
CHCMHS005	Provide services to people with co-existing mental health and alcohol and other drugs issues
CHCCSM005	Develop, facilitate and review all aspects of case management
CHCSOH001	Work with people experiencing or at risk of homelessness



## **Attendance and study commitment**

The Diploma of Financial counselling is course that requires significant application. Students must be able to put aside at least 8 - 10 hours per week of personal study time and be prepared to attend a weekly 6 hour class for 18 months. Attendance at classes according to the timetable is a requirement.

## **Learning in the Workplace**

Students are required to complete 220 hours of Learning in the Workplace. This is undertaken in the context of working within an approved financial counselling agency under direct supervision of a qualified financial counsellor.

ICAN Learn assists students to find and secure Learning in the Workplace opportunities ensuring that graduates are work ready. Learning in the workplace can be flexible and is designed to fit in with individual and organisational needs.

There are three units that require 220 hours of learning in the workplace before they can be completed:

- CHCFIN001 Facilitate the financial counselling process
- CHCFIN002 Identify and apply technical information to assist the client with financial issues
- CHCFIN003 Develop and use financial counselling tools and techniques

## **Skills recognition**

Once you are an enrolled student, you are able to apply for recognition of skills that you may have gained from previous studies or work experience. Skills recognition is a time limited process which requires the student to complete the Skills Recognition Application and Self-Assessment kit. Information about skills recognition can be obtained from the ICAN Learn website or by emailing [adminstration@icanlearn.edu.au](mailto:adminstration@icanlearn.edu.au).

Evidence provided must be genuine and any qualifications presented for skills recognition must be verified. Units that are approved for Skills Recognition attract a fee as per fee schedule unless the student has achieved exactly the same unit [same code] in another qualification and this qualification verified and presented at application; this is called Credit Transfer and is granted at no cost to the student.

## Course resources

Students are given access to all learning, reading and assessment resources through ICAN Learn electronic platforms. Students are not required to purchase books and any other resources are available via teachers and free online opportunities.

Resource	Description
Language, Literacy & Numeracy	Students are given access to an electronic approved platform for the required Language Literacy and Numeracy test. The LLN forms part of ICAN Learn's assessment of academic suitability
Catapult e-learning	This is a fully electronic portal that hosts all learning and assessment materials. Students are given access to this portal when enrolled; Individual student communication relating to assessment progress and outcomes
E-lecta portal	Additional reading, session Power Points and resources for development Student group communication – general messaging and notices

## Fees and payments

ICAN Learn charges fees for the Diploma of Financial Counselling using a unit by unit approach. Students are sent an invoicing schedule on enrolment so that they know when invoices will be sent. All information about fees and charges is on the ICAN Learn website.

Students who suffer financial difficulty are encouraged to contact the finance department by emailing [accounts@ican.org.au](mailto:accounts@ican.org.au) to discuss payment options. Failure to pay or negotiate a suitable arrangement can result in course withdrawal.

ICAN Learn has policies and procedures that govern enrolment and associated financial management. Refunds are issued as per the refund policy.

Important policies are found on the ICAN Learn website <https://icanlearn.edu.au/policy/students/>

## Where can I find out more?

More detail is provided in the Student Handbook which can be accessed on the ICAN Learn courses page.

For further enquiries email [enquiries@icanlearn.edu.au](mailto:enquiries@icanlearn.edu.au)

## Student Testimonial

Kellie Davis spent her career working in private enterprise and was looking for a new opportunity to contribute to the community and advocate for others. When Kellie graduated from ICAN Learn's Diploma of Financial Counselling course she was keen to share her experience.

*"I was happy in my career, but I felt I needed to hit the reset button. I was looking for a new challenge where I could help others and be a voice for people in our society that don't always get heard. I am a confident person and have strong advocacy skills, so I wanted to use these strengths in my new career.*

*When I researched the role of Financial Counsellor, I knew it was the path for me. I made sure I understood as much as I could about the role and the study commitment required before making the leap, but it was the perfect fit.*

*Once I started the course, I was amazed at how much there is to learn to become a Financial Counsellor. There's so much to it! The course was incredible and I learnt so much, not just about financial counselling, but about myself too."*

## Other courses of interest

- Financial Literacy Education Skill Set CHCSS00077
- Professional Supervision for Financial Counsellors (Non-Accredited)
- Mentoring Education for Financial Counsellors (Non-Accredited)