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FM WORKFORCE – GOING FROM GOOD TO GREAT

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For More Information
visit FM Online or email us at
dodfmcertificationprogram@mail.mil

The FM Certification
Program Policy is published!

[Click here to view.](#)

Comptroller Corner



Robert F. Hale
Under Secretary of Defense
(Comptroller) and Chief
Financial Officer

As many of you know, sometime in the coming weeks I expect to transfer my responsibilities to Mr. Mike McCord. With this impending transition, I have taken time over the past few weeks to reflect on the tremendous progress made across the Department toward full implementation of the DoD FM Certification Program (DFMCP). Looking ahead, I would like to underscore the importance of the DoD FM Certification Program and remind us all of the underlying purpose of the program: To make a good workforce even better!

Each week, I see a steady increase of DoD financial managers who have completed the certification requirements and achieved their certification. My sincerest congratulations to the individuals listed on the next page – thank you for doing your part. As of February 25, 2014, I was able to count myself among those who hold the DFMCP designation.

Having completed certification requirements for Certification Level 3, I know what we are asking you to do. We are asking you to briefly put down what you are doing to dedicate some time to gaining the skills you need to do your job better. We are asking you to take some vitally important courses focused on Audit Readiness, Ethics and Fiscal Law. We are asking you to work with your supervisor to identify gaps in competency-based education and training and to fill them by taking new training. Finally, we are asking you to continually hone your skills by keeping current with Continuing Education and Training credit hours. Over the course of two years, we are asking a lot of you and as you develop your plan for achieving certification, I ask that you keep the big picture in mind.

The benefits of the FM Certification Program reach far beyond the education and training gained by DoD individuals. Taken altogether, the program develops a common language and establishes a professional development framework across the Department. With a common language and a standardized training framework, the Department is better positioned to work across organizational boundaries to resolve challenges common to DoD departments and agencies – like that of full auditability.

In challenging fiscal times, it would be easy to relegate professional development to the backseat, but I hope that each of you will act as leaders and embrace the program for yourselves and for those who work for you. Please do so for the good of the FM career field.



CONGRATULATIONS!

Congratulations to the FM members listed below on earning their DFMCP credential since our last newsletter update in December!



The Honorable Robert F. Hale, Under Secretary of Defense (Comptroller) received his certificate for the DoD Financial Management Certification Level 3 from Mr. Mike McCord, the Principal Deputy Under Secretary of Defense (Comptroller) on February 25, 2014.

LEVEL 1*

- William Sweeney (AF)
- Anthony Dickens (AF)

LEVEL 2*

- Laura Cantrell (AF)
- Murray Connor (AF)
- Judy Griffis (AF)
- Charles McKenzie (AF)
- Joseph Wingo (AF)
- Benjamin Harter (AF)
- Mark Parsons (AF)
- Melinda Jaynes (AF)
- Nancy Marty DeLeon (AF)
- Suzane Tucker (AF)
- William Lannaman (AF)
- Dario Izquierdo (OUSDP)
- Alberta Palmer (AF)
- Kevin McKinley (AF)
- Judy Chandler (AF)
- Jennell Chalk (AF)
- Phillip Roth (AF)
- Valerie Smith (AF)
- Dawn Demars (AF)
- Rebecca Ostrander (AF)
- Michele Tomczak (AF)
- Juan Garza (AF)
- Cynthia Fikes (AF)
- Mark Patterson (AF)
- Lisa Scott (AF)
- Linda Taylor (AF)
- Carol Moore (AF)
- Lisa Bickham (AF)
- Susan Cooper (AF)
- Kelly Rhodes (AF)
- Antonio Cotto (OUSDC)

LEVEL 3*

- Henry Bentley (WHS)
- William Berry (WHS)
- James Cunningham (AF)
- John Cewe (OUSDC)
- Sam Carter (OUSDC)
- Tracey Watkins (AF)
- Teresa McKay (DFAS)
- William Sullivan (AF)
- Sandra Richardson (OUSDC)
- Audrea Nelson (OUSDC)
- Jonathan Witter (DFAS)
- William Relyea (OUSDC)
- Faith Heckler (OUSDC)
- Robert Hale (OUSDC)
- Kevin Arnwine (OUSDC)
- Margo Sheridan (OUSDC)
- Aaron Gillison (DFAS)
- Steven Clark (AF)
- Kathleen Noe (DFAS)
- Lori Tetla (AF)
- John Lyon (DFAS)
- Anthony Hullinger (DFAS)

*Names listed in order of achievement.



How to Use the Academic Matrices

Many of you have completed academic courses in financial management (FM) or leadership-related subjects from accredited colleges and universities and have asked if these course hours can be used to satisfy initial certification requirements. In general, the answer is “Yes” if it properly aligns to FM Certification requirements at your certification level. It is up to you to determine if your coursework is applicable to the Certification Program by using the academic matrices. Then, within the FM Learning Management System (LMS), your supervisor and ultimately your Component Certification Authority (CCA) must validate the applicability and approve the request. To determine if your course work is applicable for credit toward certification, compare your course names and levels on your transcript to the information found in the FM and Leadership Matrices.

For a full explanation of how to use the academic matrix to obtain credit for college courses in the FM Certification Program, watch the [Practical Exercise](#) video available on [FM Online](#). This article provides five basic steps for using the Academic Matrices to make that determination.

Step 1. After you have collected academic transcripts from your college or university, review your transcript and highlight courses in financial management and leadership subject areas, as these courses may potentially apply toward certification.

Step 2. Next, you should only focus on courses that correspond to the certification level required for your current position. For Certification Level I, you’ll need to focus on courses taken at the 1XX (or 1XXX) to 2XX (or 2XXX) level of an undergraduate degree. For example, course hours from a class titled “Accounting 101” or “Accounting 2001” in an undergraduate program align to FM Certification Level 1.

	COURSE LEVEL	CERTIFICATION ALIGNMENT
Undergraduate Level	100 or 1000 range	FM Certification Level 1
	200 or 2000 range	
	300 or 3000 range	FM Certification Level 2
	400 or 4000 range	FM Certification Level 3
	Graduate Level Courses	

Step 3. Use the title of the course to identify which competency the course may be credited. For example, if the course title includes the phrase “Decision Analytics” your course would likely apply to the Decision Support competency. The FM Academic Matrix is divided into separate pages for each FM Competency including information for all three certification levels; whereas, the Leadership Academic Matrix is divided into separate sections by leadership competency levels that satisfy requirements for each FM Certification level.

For an academic course to be used for certification and approved by your CCA, the title of the course must closely match one of the sample titles from the matrix (either FM or leadership).

FM Academic Matrix

Accounting Concepts, Policies & Principles			
Accounting Concepts, Policies and Principles	Parameters	Academic Courses	
		Course Level	Sample Course Titles
PL 1 (FM Certification Level 1)	Identify Applicable Accounting Policies & Procedures Describe & Apply Accounting & Financial Procedures & Principles	Lower Division - Undergraduate (1XXX – 2XXX level)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advanced Financial Accounting Cost Accounting for Strategic Management Accounting Systems Federal Accounting Standards & Theory I Financial Accounting Financial Accounting & Reporting I Financial Accounting & Reporting II Financial Accounting Standards & Theory II Intermediate Accounting Theory and Contemporary Issues in Accounting
	Perform Basic Research on Accounting & Financial Procedures & Principles		
PL 3 (FM Certification Level 2)	Develop Accounting SOP or Policies & Procedures Doc. IAW USSGL Analyze & Review Accounting & Financial Procedures & Principles	Upper Division - Undergraduate (3XXX level)	
	Test & Validate Internal Controls		
PL 5 (FM Certification Level 3)	Interpret Impacts of Accounting & Financial Procedures & Principles	Senior Upper - Division Undergraduate and Graduate (4000 and higher level)	
	Formulate & Evaluate Accounting Policy Recommend Solutions & Implement Decisions on Accounting & Financial Procedures & Principles		

Click the image above to download.

Leadership Academic Matrix

FM Certification Level 1: LEAD SELF		
Competencies	Academic Courses	
	Course Level	Sample Course Titles
Computer Literacy	Lower Division - Undergraduate (1XXX – 2XXX level)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduction to Computers and Computing Computer Literacy
Continual Learning	Lower Division - Undergraduate (1XXX – 2XXX level)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Self-Improvement Academic Survival Self Evaluation/Self Awareness
Customer Service	Lower Division - Undergraduate (1XXX – 2XXX level)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Essentials of Communication
Flexibility	Lower Division - Undergraduate (1XXX – 2XXX level)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dealing with Difficult People
Integrity/Honesty	Lower Division - Undergraduate (1XXX – 2XXX level)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ethical Leadership Skills Workplace Ethics
Interpersonal Skills	Lower Division - Undergraduate (1XXX – 2XXX level)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduction to Interpersonal Communication Essentials of Communications Negotiation

Click the image above to download.



How to Use the Academic Matrices (con't)

Step 4. Once you have determined that you have an applicable course, you need to figure out the course hour value as it relates to the Program. Since most academic institutions use semester or quarter hours, you can use the Course Hour Conversion Chart to the right to determine the course hour value in the FM Certification Program.

Step 5. Finally, after you have determined which academic courses are applicable to certification requirements and have determined how many course hours it provides, you will follow the three-step process in the DoD FM LMS to record learning for this achievement.

As you complete the three-step process (see article below) and begin to record learning in the FM LMS, here are a few helpful tips to help you navigate the process smoothly:

Academic Course	Course Hours
3 Semester Hours	45
2 Semester Hours	30
1 Semester Hour	15
5 Quarter Hours	50
4 Quarter Hours	40
3 Quarter Hours	30
2 Quarter Hours	20
1 Quarter Hour	10

- **Note key information in your comments (course title, course number, and applicable competency requirements).** Your approver should be able to easily identify which course is being used to satisfy a requirement then identify it in the Academic matrices.
- **Keep course information on-hand.** In cases where your supervisor or CCA does not agree with your recommended use of a course, you may be asked to provide a course description or syllabus for more information.
- **CCAs may submit additional academic courses to the FM Certification Team.** There may be some cases in which the course title is not clearly a similar match to the example course titles provided in the academic matrix, but the course's learning objectives clearly align with the example parameters under a given competency. In these situations, your CCA will review your recommendation and if he or she agrees, the CCA will submit the course to the FM Certification Team as a potential addition to the academic matrix.
- **Review courses with your supervisor before submitting the achievement for approval in the DoD FM LMS.** Doing this ensures that your supervisor agrees that your courses are applicable and is familiar with your recommendations if your CCA has any questions.

For questions on this process, contact the FM Certification Team at dodfmcertificationprogram@mail.mil.

Getting Started in the FM LMS

The DoD Financial Management (FM) Learning Management System (LMS) is the system of record for the DoD FM Certification Program. It is the system you will use to track your progress toward obtaining and maintaining your FM Certification.

Specifically, it is where you will:

- Complete the three-step process as you satisfy certification requirements
- Launch web-based courses, such as DoD FM 101 modules, Audit Readiness, Ethics, and other courses aligned to DoD FM competencies
- Record completed coursework for initial certification and then Continuing Education and Training (CETs) hours to maintain your certification.

What's an Achievement

The FM Certification Program refers to successfully completed certification requirements as "achievements." Once you've completed the requirements for a set competency, you will submit that "achievement" to your supervisor for approval.

THE THREE-STEP PROCESS*

1. **Record Learning** – Use the system to record completed courses aligned to ONE DoD FM Certification requirement. You will record learning for one or more course(s) until the number of hours required for a certain competency is complete.
2. **Record Documentation** – Simply upload documentation (completion certificates or academic transcripts) for the courses recorded in step one. Make sure that you save your completion documentation as ONE PDF file per competency.
3. **Request Achievement Approval** – Once you've satisfied, or achieved, each certification requirement, submit that achievement for supervisor approval.

This three-step process will be repeated for each achievement documented in the FM LMS until you've met all the requirements for your level. Once you've completed all the requirements, or achievements, at your level, you'll need to request approval of your overall certification level. The FM LMS will automatically route your certification to your supervisor, then the Approver Level 2 (A2), if appropriate, and finally your organization's Component Certification Authority (CCA).

*To learn more, watch the Three-Step Process instructional video on FM Online.



Course Spotlight: Advanced Principles of DoD Budget Execution

Competency: Budget Execution

Certification Level 3 - 4.5 Course Hours

This course equips senior DoD financial managers to deal with a wide range of contemporary issues in a constantly changing landscape. This course covers pertinent policies, laws, and general requirements of the budget execution process in the DoD.

Upon completion, you will be able to:

- Identify policies, laws and general requirements of the budget execution process;
- Identify the relevant funds control regulations and processes in budget execution;
- Identify the common obligation actions in budget execution and their related processes; and,
- Define Execution Performance Monitoring and how it is implemented in the budget execution process.

How to Access the Course:

1. For those already participating in the FM Certification Program and who have access to the DoD FM LMS, we recommend that you launch and complete OUSD(C) courses in the DoD FM LMS: <https://whs.plateau.com/learning/user/personal/landOnPortalHome.do>
2. For those without DoD FM LMS access, launch the courses from the FM myLearn website, using the exact title as the keyword in the search bar. FM myLearn: <https://fmonline.ousdc.osd.mil/FMmyLearn/default.aspx>

The FM Certification Team would like to thank the subject matter experts from Air Force, Army, and DISA for their integral support during the development of this course. If you have any questions, please contact the FM Certification Team at dodfmcertificationprogram@mail.mil.

2014 Course Development Sneak Peek

Throughout 2014, the OUSD(C) course development team – in partnership with subject matter experts from across the DoD – will develop courses focused on the following competencies. Stay tuned!

Level 1

- Fundamentals and Operations of Accounting (4 Course Hrs)

Level 2

- Accounting Analysis Tools, Applications and Methods (4 Course Hrs)
- Accounting Concepts, Policies and Principles (4 Course Hrs)
- Budget Formulation, Justification and Presentation (4 Course Hrs)
- Financial Management Systems (4 Course Hrs)
- Financial Management Analysis (4 Course Hrs)
- Budget Concepts Policies and Principles (2-3 Course Hrs)

Level 3

- Advanced Financial Management (4 Course Hrs)

Quarterly Quiz?

What is the difference between a Primary and Alternate Track?

- A. No difference – they are just two different terms used to categorize training.
- B. Your Primary Track is normally tied to your occupational series/specialty, or to the subject area in which you are currently working. When you select a Primary Track, you are focusing your development on one facet of financial management to help you grow your expertise in that subject matter.
- C. Your Alternate Track is a subject area other than your Primary Track. When you select an Alternate Track, you gain a basic understanding of the fundamentals of a subject area outside your realm of expertise.
- D. B and C

See page six for the answer.



Certification Implementation: An Update

As of 31 March 2014, 22,295 financial managers from 21 organizations have been officially brought into the program. We are approximately halfway to our goal of ~50K in the program by 30 September 2014. Those already in the program are hard at work as evidenced by the 6,378 web-based training courses that have been successfully completed in the **FM Learning Management System** and **FM myLearn**. Keep up the good work!

In the next quarter, we anticipate approximately 15,000 individuals will be brought into the program bringing our cumulative number to about 37,000 by 30 June 2014. March has been our biggest month for implementations with over 8,357 new people brought into the program.

If your organization hasn't been brought into the program, but you would like to get a head start, check out the 30 web-based training courses available on FM myLearn or in the DoD FM LMS. For those who are already participating in the Certification Program through the DoD FM LMS, courses can be launched and completed in the FM LMS where completion is recorded automatically. If you don't have access to the DoD FM LMS, visit **FM myLearn** to launch the courses. Once you have access to the FM LMS, record your learning by uploading the completion certificate to receive credit toward certification.

Financial Management (FM) Workforce Competency Assessments Are Coming!

Title 10 U.S.C. 115b requires the Under Secretary of Defense (Personnel & Readiness) to develop and implement a strategic workforce plan that includes an assessment of the critical skills and competencies needed now and in the future within the civilian workforce along with strategies to close competency and skill gaps. The Defense Competency Assessment Tool (DCAT) is the Department-wide tool to validate competency models and to assess civilian employees' proficiency levels in the competencies within their occupational series. The first FM community workforce competency assessment will begin April 7 and close April 25, 2014.

The Defense Competency Assessment Tool (DCAT) survey will be sent to a random sample of civilian FM employees in the mission critical occupations series 501- Financial Administration and Program, (510 - Accounting, 511- Auditing, and 560 - Budget Analyst). If you are selected, you will receive an e-mail notification prior to April 7, 2014 with a subject line that includes our functional community name - Financial Management - along with the target occupational series. Employees will be asked to rate themselves, and supervisors will be asked to rate their employee's proficiency in all FM competencies applicable to the position. The survey should be completed during duty hours.

The competency assessment survey is anonymous and intended for developmental purposes only. It is not a performance management tool and results are not linked to performance ratings. Individual results will be immediately available to employees. Employees and supervisors are encouraged to jointly review the results and discuss options for future development and career broadening experiences.

While participation in the survey is voluntary, all FM employees selected to take the survey are strongly encouraged to participate. Full participation by employees and supervisors is critical to identifying competency gaps across the workforce. Data received from this survey will help inform future workforce development strategies. Additional information on the DCAT assessment, along with a series of frequently asked questions for employees and supervisors, can be found on **FM Online**.

Quarterly Quiz?

Answer: D

- A. No difference – they are just two different terms used to categorize training.
- B. Your Primary Track is normally tied to your occupational series/specialty, or to the subject area in which you are currently working. When you select a Primary Track, you are focusing your development on one facet of financial management to help you grow your expertise in that subject matter.
- C. Your Alternate Track is a subject area other than your Primary Track. When you select an Alternate Track, you gain a basic understanding of the fundamentals of a subject area outside your realm of expertise.
- D. B and C



Calling All CCAs

To help Component Certification Authorities (CCAs) review certification approval requests for completeness and accuracy, we have developed a Scorecard Report in the FM LMS. CCAs are critical to the integrity of the Certification Program, and in light of their important role, we have developed a new tool to help them do the following:

1. Identify whether an FM member has completed all the requirements in the FM LMS.
2. Respond to uploaded documentation.
3. Quickly review the FM member's comments, e.g., when a member uses an academic course to meet certification requirements.

We also developed a step-by-step Job Aid that walks CCAs through how to review typical requests for certification. The Job Aid outlines situations that CCAs will most likely see and provides additional information they may need to know in certain cases. This Job Aid "FM Certification CCA Guidance" can be found at <https://fmonline.ousdc.osd.mil/LMS/JobAids.aspx>.

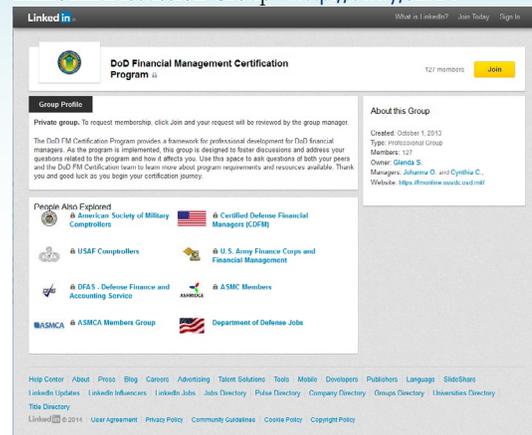
Be on the lookout for new CCA training tools and opportunities. We are working on a complementary instructional video and are happy to conduct Virtual Instructor Lead Training sessions for CCAs and quarterly forums (teleconferences) for collaboration.



Looking for a new way to connect, ask questions, and learn new information about the DoD FM Certification Program?

Join us on LinkedIn! The DoD Financial Management Certification Program discussion group provides timely notifications of new courses, policy updates, and helpful hints for completing your FM Certification. Join the group by visiting the site below and clicking the yellow "Join" button in the top right of your screen.

LinkedIn Discussion Group: <http://ow.ly/sZfDv>



Mini-Courses and Initial Certification Credit

Mini-courses provided in conjunction with training conferences and symposia are now eligible for consideration for initial certification credit for the DoD FM Certification Program. Professional Associations conducting conferences or other training events are allowed to submit mini-courses to OUSD(C) for potential alignment to satisfy DoD FM Certification Program requirements.

Below you will find links to the memorandum announcing the definition, criteria and process for submitting mini-courses, the Mini-Course Submission Template, and the Mini-Course Evaluation Form.

- Memorandum announcing the definition, criteria and process for submitting mini-courses
- Mini-Course Submission Template
- Mini-Course Evaluation Form

For further information or clarification about this topic, please feel free to contact Dr. Pamela Clay at 703-697-0537 or pamela.j.clay6.civ@mail.mil.

DoD FM Certification Program



New Tools to Help Plan Your Path to Certification

As members across the Department continue to check off certification requirements, the FM Certification Team is here to support your effort. Outlined below are tools and resources to help you on the path toward certification. Download these items from [FM Online](#). Click on each image below to view these resources.

GET FAMILIAR



These overview and instructional training videos provide you with a basic understanding of the DoD FM Certification Program, its requirements, and associated resources to include FM Online, FM myLearn, and the DoD FM Learning Management System.

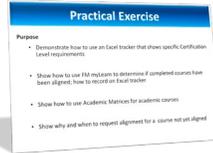


These datasheets outline the requirements for each level and provide additional need-to-know information on the back.



This tool defines each of the 17 FM competencies associated with the Program and provides examples of what kind of performance is expected at each Proficiency Level.

GET ORGANIZED



The Practical Exercise follows “Kelly,” a GS-14 accountant, who occupies a position designated at Certification Level 3, as she reviews her completed training and applies it to the FM Certification Program requirements.



Use these Learning History Worksheets to organize your prior education and training and identify where you need more training to fill gaps in certification requirements.

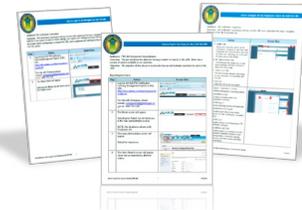


The FAQ document is home to over 100 questions about the DoD FM Certification Program. Use this document to research your question before contacting your supervisor or the DoD FM Certification Team.

GET STARTED



The LMS User Quick Guide provides a list of easy actions you can take to get started using the FM LMS.



The LMS Job Aids provide step-by-step instructions for all FM LMS Tasks.



Join the LinkedIn discussion group to keep up with new resources such as newly released web-based training, lessons learned, and ask questions of peers and the FM Certification Team.