

BUSINESS SKILLS FOR THE IT PROFESSIONAL

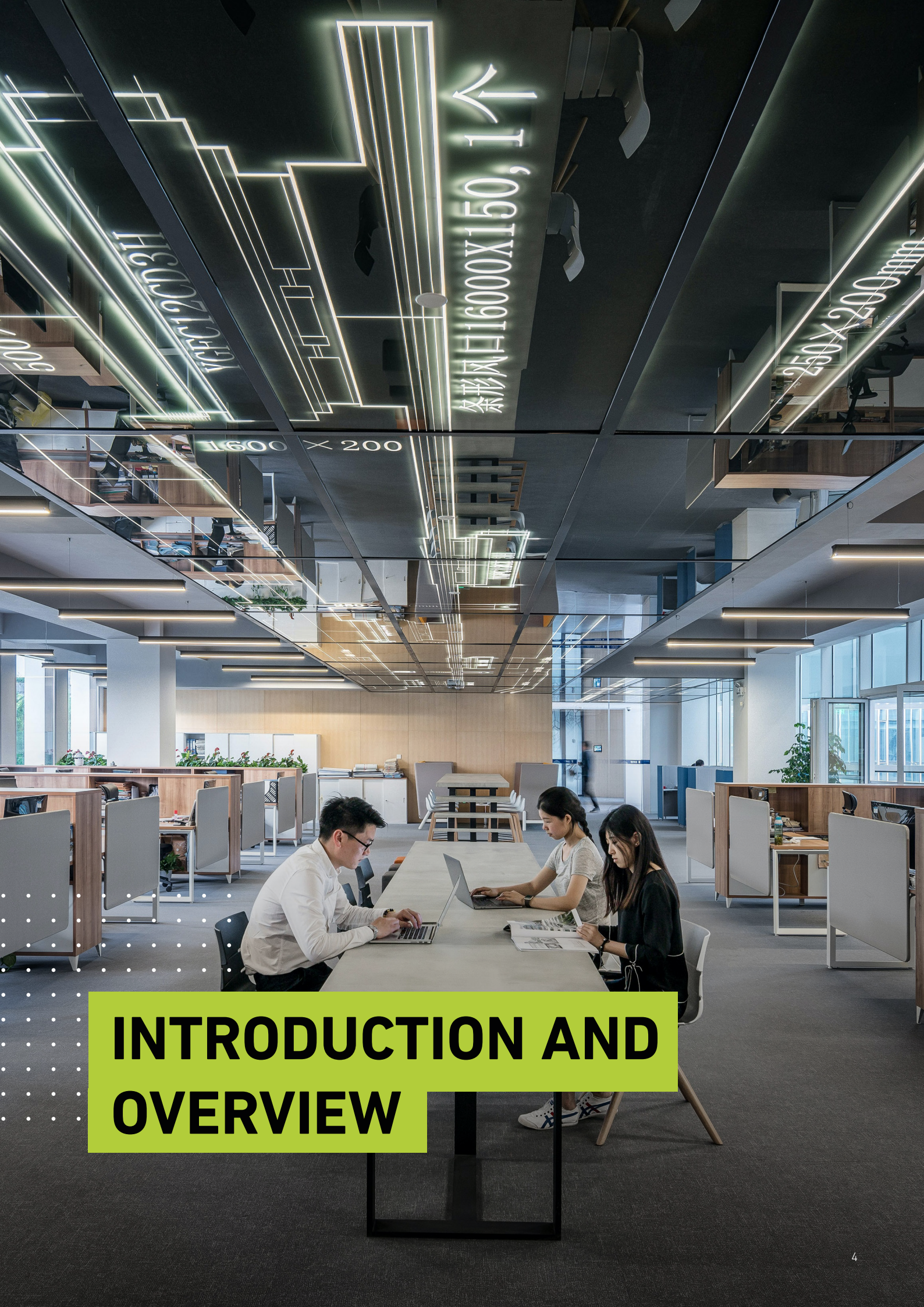
BCS PRACTITIONER AWARD

This professional certification is not regulated by the following United Kingdom Regulators - Ofqual, Qualification in Wales CCEA of SQA.



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INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW

INTRODUCTION

With digital transformation at the forefront of many organisational strategies, there is an ever-growing need for IT professionals to be equipped with rounded business knowledge and strong interpersonal and leadership skills.

This practitioner-level award encourages individuals in IT and technical roles to explore the many teams, ideas, and functions within an organisation and maximise their contribution. Learners will discover the importance of understanding the “bigger picture” to succeed within their organisation.



LEARNING OUTCOMES

By completing this certificate learners will be able to demonstrate a practical understanding of:

- Organisational structures and propositions.
- The financial principles of projects and organisations.
- The customer experience of an organisation.



QUALIFICATION SUITABILITY AND OVERVIEW

There are no mandatory requirements for candidates to undertake this award, although candidates will need a good standard of written English. Centres must ensure that learners have the potential and opportunity to gain the award successfully.

This award is suitable for candidates who are currently in or working towards a digital or technical role, who want to develop the necessary skills to progress into a leadership role, be involved in project work or collaborate with other business teams.

It can be taken as a standalone award. When combined with the BCS Award in Leading with an IT Mindset and BCS Award in Collaborating with

Business Teams, the learner will progress onto the BCS Practitioner Certificate in Being an IT Business Partner.

This is an occupationally focused award that will:

- Encourage the learner to consider their behaviour and response in various scenarios.
- Allow the learner to demonstrate a practical understanding of key concepts across the topic areas.
- Enable a learner to progress in their career.

Candidates can study for this award by attending a training course provided by a BCS accredited Training Provider or through self-study.

TOTAL QUALIFICATION TIME	GUIDED LEARNING HOURS	INDEPENDENT LEARNING	ASSESSMENT TIME
30 hours	20 hours	10 hours	45 minutes



TRAINER CRITERIA



It is recommended that to deliver this award effectively, trainers should possess:

- Ten days of training experience or have a Train the Trainer qualification.
- A minimum of 3 years of practical experience in the subject area.

SFIA LEVELS

This award provides candidates with the level of knowledge highlighted within the table, enabling them to develop the skills to operate successfully at the levels of responsibility indicated.

LEVEL	LEVELS OF KNOWLEDGE	LEVELS OF SKILLS AND RESPONSIBILITY (SFIA)
K7		Set strategy, inspire and mobilise
K6	Evaluate	Initiate and influence
K5	Synthesise	Ensure and advise
K4	Analyse	Enable
K3	Apply	Apply
K2	Understand	Assist
K1	Remember	Follow

This syllabus supports learning around aspects of CITP standards as follows:

A1

Works under broad direction.

C3

Understand the relationship between their specialism and the broader customer/organisational requirements.

D1

Advises on the available standards, methods, tools and applications relevant to their specialism and can make an appropriate choice from alternatives.

For further information regarding the SFIA Levels
[Chartered IT Professional \(CITP\) | BCS](#)

SFIAPLUS

This syllabus has been linked to the SFIA knowledge, skills and behaviours required at level 4 for an individual working in the following subject areas.

KSB12

Understanding commercial considerations and ensuring alignment when making decisions or recommending actions.

KSB18

Understanding the hierarchy and culture of ownership, customer, supplier and partner organisations and identifying the decision-makers and influencers.

KSB13

Understanding the needs of the internal or external customer and keeping these in mind when taking actions or making decisions.

KSD15

Principles, methods, techniques, and tools for preparing and monitoring budgets to manage costs and ensure cost-effectiveness and value for money.

KSD06

The functions or departments' activities, structure, and position provide services.

KSC38

The business environment relating to own sphere of work (own organisation and/or closely associated organisations, such as customers, suppliers, partners and competitors), particularly those aspects of the business that the specialism is to support (i.e. localised organisational awareness from a technical perspective).

KSD74

The analysis and reporting of financial costs and forecasts against budgets.

KSD74

The analysis and reporting of financial costs and forecasts against budgets.



SYLLABUS

SYLLABUS

1. THE BUSINESS STRATEGY AND TRANSFORMATION (30%) K4

1.1 Explain different types of organisations and the sectors in which they can operate.

Indicative content

- a. Different types of organisations and the range of legal structures associated with different business forms.
 - Limited Companies
 - Private Limited Companies
 - Public Limited Companies
 - Third Sector - Sole Proprietorship
 - Partnerships
- b. Sectors, levels of information, authority and detail.
- c. Types of organisational structure.

Guidance

Understanding types of business organisations and management can help candidates interact with co-workers and help you better understand company processes, procedures and legal obligations.

1.2 Interpret the organisation's mission and vision.

Indicative content

- a. Mission and vision statements.
- b. The impact of having a clear vision and mission in an organisation.
- c. Using the mission and vision to drive and understand the company's culture.
- d. The internal impact and contributing factors that influence.
 - VMOST
- e. The external impact and contributing factors that influence.
 - PESTLE

Guidance

The ability to understand the mission and vision are integral to the company's strategy, which defines future goals and operational tactics. The purpose and application of PESTLE analysis should be understood and how it supports the approach to awareness of the organisation. Frameworks, such as VMOST could help identify these different levels of goals.

1.3 Interpret organisational objectives and key performance indicators.

Indicative content

- How organisational objectives relate to individual teams.
- Critical success factors.
- The impact of having clear objectives and KPIs.
- Using KPIs to manage performance.

Guidance

Objectives help define goals, identify conflicting activities, guide elements of the decision-making process, and ensure accountability of personnel within an organisation. Without clearly defined plans and supporting objectives, goal displacement often occurs.

1.4 Demonstrate the organisation's values.

Indicative content

- Values-driven behaviours.
- Balancing organisational values with personal integrity and beliefs.
- Recognising values in others and applying values in a realistic way (expectation vs reality).
- Brand and cultural identity.
 - Onion model of culture

Guidance

Values are a vital component of a healthy workplace culture because they clarify how your organisation and its staff intend to behave. They provide the framework to test decisions, accomplish tasks, and interact with others, guiding its brand identity.



The diagram features a green rectangular background. On the left, the word "VMOST" is written in large, bold, black letters. Below it, a paragraph explains the analysis: "BY COMPARING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF AN ORGANISATION'S CORE STRATEGIES WITH THE SUPPORTING ACTIVITIES, THE VMOST ANALYSIS CAN EVALUATE THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE ORGANISATION'S CORE STRATEGIES." At the bottom of this text is "BCS COURSEWARE". On the right, a pyramid is divided into five horizontal layers, each with a letter: V (top, white), M (blue), O (white), S (orange), and T (bottom, black).

VMOST

BY COMPARING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF AN ORGANISATION'S CORE STRATEGIES WITH THE SUPPORTING ACTIVITIES, THE VMOST ANALYSIS CAN EVALUATE THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE ORGANISATION'S CORE STRATEGIES.

BCS COURSEWARE

V
M
O
S
T

SYLLABUS

2. THE FINANCIALS (20%) K4

2.1 Understand and analyse a budget to calculate any variance.

Indicative content

- a. Financial management and budgeting.
- b. Applying a variance formula.
- c. Why variance occurs.
- d. Tolerable and intolerable variance.

Guidance

The ability to recognise companies' financial management and budgeting will help improve organisations' profitability, increase the overall value of the organisations, provide economic stability, encourage employees to save money, and allow individuals to hit their targets on projects they manage. Candidates will analyse a procurement business case where they effectively apply a variance formula, understand its occurrence, and determine the tolerable and intolerable variance.

2.2 Understand the terms CAPEX and OPEX in an organisational context.

Indicative content

- a. CAPEX and OPEX in IT.
- b. What expenses are included in CAPEX and OPEX.
- c. Capital expenses versus operating expenses.
- d. Depreciation.

Guidance

Candidates will understand IT spending, the difference between OPEX and CAPEX, and the most beneficial to their companies' end of year performance. CAPEX includes physical assets, such as buildings, IT equipment, and vehicles. Examples of OPEX include employee salaries, rent, utilities, property taxes, and cost of goods sold (COGS).

2.3 Use a cost-benefit analysis model.

Indicative content

- a. Tangible and intangible costs and benefits.
- b. Breakeven point and calculate margins.
- c. Taking action based on the results of a cost-benefit analysis.
- d. The significant steps in a cost-benefit analysis.

Guidance

Performing cost-benefit analysis allows companies to measure the benefits of a decision that helps businesses compare different projects based on net benefits irrespective of dissimilarities.

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

MAKING A BUSINESS PLAN AND ENSURING ALL DEPARTMENTS ARE ON TRACK IS PART OF FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT.

BCS COURSEWARE

SYLLABUS

3. THE ROLE OF PEOPLE IN TEAMS AND ORGANISATIONS (25%) (K4)

3.1 Interpret project and organisational requirements to select a suitable project approach.

Indicative content

- a. Collaborating with organisations and teams with different approaches.
 - 7 Sources of Power
 - French and Raven
- b. How to avoid an error.
- c. Agile practises versus Waterfall practises.

Guidance

Organisations may favour a particular development approach while others may choose another method. Adapting to different techniques allows organisations to collaborate more efficiently and develop new perspectives. Candidates will understand how to interpret projects and requirements that help minimise project risks, enable tools to estimate times and costs correctly, improve cost-benefit relationships and develop teams' skills.

3.2 Demonstrate continuous improvement techniques.

Indicative content

- a. Changing to the external environment.
- b. Structural change.
- c. Mergers and acquisitions.

Guidance

Change and improving techniques in an organisation are essential to many aspects of business and working life, and continuously improving processes allows candidates to influence positively.

3.3 Interpret the role and needs of stakeholders.

Indicative content

- a. The need to manage stakeholders.
- b. Why stakeholders must be identified.
 - Stakeholder wheel.
- c. Performing stakeholder analysis.
 - Power/Interest Grid.
- d. The need to manage stakeholders.

Guidance

Managing stakeholder expectations can help increase levels of trust, improve satisfaction among internal and external parties, build better relationships, add value to those relationships and result in smoother operations for the project or organisation.



COLLABORATING

ADAPTING TO DIFFERENT TECHNIQUES ALLOWS ORGANISATIONS TO COLLABORATE MORE EFFICIENTLY AND DEVELOP NEW PERSPECTIVES.

BCS COURSEWARE

SYLLABUS

4. YOUR ORGANISATION'S PROPOSITION (25%) K4

4.1 Analyse the specific proposition of your organisation.

Indicative content

- a. Value and strategic propositions.
- b. Unique benefits organisations bring to their customers (unique selling points).
- c. Market position and customer perception.
- d. Understanding competitors.

Guidance

An organisation's proposition is an easy-to-understand reason a customer should buy a product or service from that business. A value proposition should clearly explain how a product fills a need, communicate the specifics of its added benefit, and state why it is better than similar products on the market (USPs). A strategic brand proposition is the first part of the equation we need to solve when creating a successful corporate branding solution.

4.2 Describe the internal and external customers in an organisation.

Indicative content

- a. Internal customers may include:
 - Employees.
 - Owners.
 - Representatives.
- b. External customers may include:
 - Shareholders.
 - Creditors.
 - Governments.
 - Society.
- c. Internal customer's effects on external customers.
- d. Customer versus consumer.

Guidance

Candidates should understand the difference between external customers, internal customers, and consumers and their different expectations. Comprehending the internal customer's needs (who participates in your business), who pays and uses the products, and what a consumer wants from an organisation (which are goods or services) will allow a broader understanding of how the products and services of a company operate.

4.3 Analyse factors that could impact the organisation's reputation.

Indicative content

- a. Ethical CSR.
- b. Risk factors.
- c. Positive factors.
- d. How reputation affects performance.
- e. The impact of actions taken by the organisation.

Guidance

Knowing the importance of companies' reputations will attract better people. They perceive it as providing more value, which often allows them to charge a premium. Their customers are more loyal and buy broader ranges of products and services.



EXAMINATION FORMAT

This award is assessed by completing an invigilated online exam that candidates will only be able to access at the date and time they are registered to attend.

Adjustments and/or additional time can be requested in line with the [BCS reasonable adjustments policy](#) for candidates with a disability or other special considerations, including English as a second language.

TYPE

TEN KNOWLEDGE
QUESTIONS AND TEN
SCENARIO-BASED
QUESTIONS

DURATION

45 MINUTES

SUPERVISED

YES
THIS AWARD WILL BE
SUPERVISED

OPEN BOOK

NO
(NO MATERIALS CAN
BE TAKEN INTO THE
EXAMINATION ROOM)

PASSMARK

(70%)
21/30

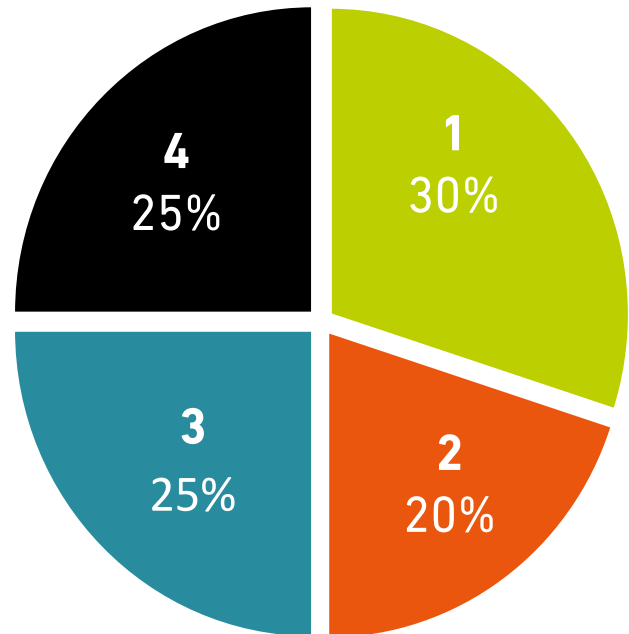
DELIVERY

DIGITAL FORMAT ONLY

QUESTION WEIGHTING

Each primary subject heading in this syllabus is assigned a percentage weighting. The purpose of this is:

- Guidance on the proportion of content allocated to each topic area of an accredited course.
- Guidance on the proportion of questions in the exam.



Syllabus Area

- 1** Understanding the business strategy and transformation.
- 2** Understanding the financials.
- 3** Understanding the role of people in teams and organisations.
- 4** Understanding your organisation's proposition.

Question Type

- Multiple choice, Multiple responses, Scenario-based multiple answers.

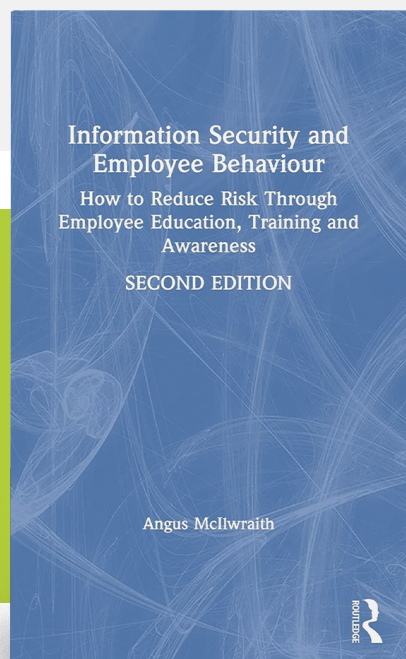
RECOMMENDED READING

The following titles are suggested reading for anyone undertaking this award. Candidates should be encouraged to explore other available sources.

TITLE: The Human Touch
AUTHOR: Philippa Thomas, Debra Paul, James Cadle
PUBLISHER: BCS
PUBLISHER DATE: 13 Dec 2012
ISBN: 9781906124915

TITLE: Business Analysis (4th Edition)
AUTHOR: Debra Paul and James Cadle
PUBLISHER: BCS
PUBLISHER DATE: July 2020
ISBN: 9781780175102

TITLE: Information Security and Employee Behaviour
AUTHOR: Angus McIlwraith
PUBLISHER: Routledge
PUBLISHER DATE: August 23, 2021
ISBN: 9781032055916



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DOCUMENT CHANGE HISTORY

Any changes made to the syllabus shall be clearly documented with a change history log. This shall include the latest version number, date of the amendment and changes made. The purpose is to identify quickly what changes have been made.

VERSION NUMBER	CHANGES MADE
Version 1.0	

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