

“Badge of approval”



Accreditation is one of the most efficient pathways to professional qualification. Here we take a look at the accreditation work being carried out between the Institute and Lloyds Banking Group.

As we reported in the last issue of *Chartered Banker*, there's increasing demand for Institute accreditation of the professional development work being undertaken across the banking sector – not only in the UK but overseas too.

These institutions are looking for the Chartered Banker Institute's "quality hallmark" on the learning programmes they're delivering.

As Giles Cuthbert, the Institute's Director of Professional Standards, points out, these bodies are increasingly seeing accreditation initiatives with the Chartered Banker Institute as a first step on the route towards professionalism: "Accreditation is bringing a far wider population of banking sector personnel into direct contact with their industry's professional body, including those for whom aspiring to the top-level Chartered Banker qualification wouldn't necessarily be an educational pathway."

The Institute is currently working closely with Lloyds Banking Group, and in particular Credit Operations and their induction programmes.

As Sharon Childs, Senior Manager Academy, Credit Operations at Lloyds Banking Group, explains: "We set out on our journey to gain accreditation as we wanted to have some external verification that our training programmes were robust. "The aim of our organisation is to be world class in everything we do. We felt the Chartered Banker Institute could support us in this aim.

"Accreditation ensures our training programmes are providing credit operations with highly skilled new colleagues."

Childs underlines how the objective of accreditation was not only to provide external validation of the overall programme, but also to identify practical application of knowledge and skills.

"The accreditation provides a starting point for colleagues

on their learning journey," she says, "while from a customer perspective, it truly instils the excellent training and support the bank provides to ensure the best possible customer service is provided."

The accreditation programme is available across Lloyds Banking Group's Credit Operations function and to all telephony and support staff who have successfully completed the comprehensive induction programmes.

The telephony programme and the quality assurance programme, in addition to the accreditation, also provides colleagues with a credit equivalent to one-third of the Professional Banker Diploma which gives them a pathway into professional qualifications.

"Our induction programmes are split between telephony, support and quality assurance," Childs says. "Telephony

induction, the most comprehensive, takes five to six weeks depending on the product."

The inductions contain theory, systems and practical application of the required knowledge, and as Childs points

out: "Our programme's assessment was seen as particularly robust by the Institute, ensuring that we only graduate colleagues once they have reached the necessary criteria.

"We won't let anyone graduate into our Operational Academy until they have met all of the criteria. It is only on successful meeting of targets and passing the various test elements that we will graduate them out to mainstream operations, so it is a very structured, very measured way of assessment."

Credit Operations are now working to build on the accreditation to ensure that colleagues take advantage of their credit and begin to study towards obtaining their Professional Banker Diploma.

Giles Cuthbert was particularly impressed by the bank's vigorous approach to accreditation: "It's an extremely high-quality programme, leading at the cutting edge of bank training and development."

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