

## CIMA Development assessment matrix

### Quality standards for the development of finance professionals.

The CIMA Development scheme is based on a set of principles offering a robust and non-prescriptive approach. Applications are assessed by an audit procedure using the assessment matrix - which is shown below.

Please access and update the assessment matrix for inclusion with your application by visiting:  
[www.cimaglobal.com/cimadevelopment](http://www.cimaglobal.com/cimadevelopment)



	Quality standard	Guide	What success looks like
<b>1. DEFINE</b>	A key contact for professional development within the organisation has been identified.	It is important for both the organisation and CIMA that an individual responsible for professional development is identified.	There is a point of contact within the organisation if individual employees need advice or information about the organisation's policies and processes with regard to learning and development.
	There is a clearly defined policy for learning and development with a focus on professional development, which is available for all staff to view. This should detail the processes, procedures and support which are in place. It should also contain information about available learning and development activities - both formal and informal, with guidance on the extent to which members may use these resources at work (e.g. internet usage, reading material, coaching and mentoring, training courses, etc.).	It is important that organisations have a clearly defined policy in place which governs individual learning and development, with a focus on professional development.	Such a document contains information on the types of development activities available to individuals at the organisation and outlines the processes and procedures involved in how to go about developing themselves.  It includes information on both formal and informal learning mechanisms and explains the process involved in assessing skills gaps, fulfilling these, evaluation of learning and also how to utilise the associated documentation effectively.  It is important that the policy is easily available for all to view e.g. on the company intranet.
<b>2. ASSESS</b>	Formal performance reviews take place at least once a year with additional informal input as required.	Performance reviews are the tools used to review progress against goals and to identify future needs and how/when these might be fulfilled.	A formal review of performance is conducted at least once in a 12 month period for each employee. In addition, it is expected that written records are kept.
	<b>Performance reviews:</b> a) assess members' current and potential requirements - related to their job role, career stage and determine skills gaps and learning opportunities.	It is important that individuals assess their current abilities against what is required of them now and in the future.	For most organisations a performance review begins with the appraisal process; this is the basis of all planning, review and recording of learning and development.

	Quality standard	Guide	What success looks like
<b>2. ASSESS CONT'D</b>	b) offer a two way dialogue between members and managers and use development planning as a way of linking individual development with organisational goals (i.e. the top level scorecard and strategy).	Learning and development is ongoing throughout a CIMA member's career and can be used to link individuals' development with organisational needs, both immediate and longer term.	Individuals set development goals which are informed by their performance objectives, which in turn are informed by organisation objectives.
	A career development planning process for individuals is in place which links to succession planning within the organisation - this should include career planning as part of the development process and internal career opportunities for individuals.	Individuals should be actively encouraged to plan for their career within the organisation.	Career progression mechanisms are in place, whether simple - internal selection and recruitment processes; or complex - full succession planning processes.
	The organisation provides an area on the personal development plan where specific, measurable, and time-bound learning and development objectives are set.	A structured approach to development planning is more beneficial to both the individuals and to employers alike.	A structured approach to development objective setting is used (i.e. a structured personal development plan, showing specific objectives, actions and timescales for completion).
<b>3. DESIGN AND SUPPORT</b>	The organisation provides each member with an individual/ personal development plan which is derived from the performance review process.	Self-explanatory.	Areas which should be discussed at performance reviews and targeted via individual development plans include: a) knowledge and skills b) professional ethics c) management development needs d) personal skills development e) long-term career objectives.
	The organisation provides an area on the individual/personal development plan where individuals can plan a programme which is based on their structured learning and development objectives as defined under the 2nd standard in Assess on the matrix.	Self-explanatory.	See 'What success looks like' for the standard above.
	The planning and review of learning and development is continuous throughout the employees'/CIMA members' careers.	Individual development plans are used to drive future development by assessing a member's current abilities in relation to their career.	Members are actively encouraged to regularly review plans to ensure that they are still relevant.
	The organisation provides guidance and resources for ethical awareness (i.e. ethics policy or code of conduct; and training and development in this area).	Ethical awareness and a broader social responsibility to the wider public should be addressed and compliance with the organisation's ethical code should be implicit.	Where required, the organisation is providing the necessary development tools in this area. An ethics policy or code of conduct is available for staff to view.

	Quality standard	Guide	What success looks like
<b>3. DESIGN AND SUPPORT CONT'D</b>	A wide range of resources are made available for individuals to develop themselves and this is communicated through the learning and development policy and/or company intranet, bulletin board etc.	There may also be opportunities to develop more technical skills or to broaden the skill base, for example, via cross-functional/ departmental projects. Additional development opportunities can be provided via external courses and, where these will lead to on-the-job improvements in performance.	Financial support for development activities is provided.  All employees are made aware of the wide range of activities which make up learning and development.
<b>4. ACT</b>	Learning and development activities are undertaken as planned within performance review process and documented on the individual/personal development plan.	CIMA Professional Development requires that all members are recording all of the stages of the CIMA Professional Development cycle.	Employers provide documentation to this affect.  Records are also kept on a three year rolling basis and members are advised that should they change employers during this period, they will need to take a copy of their employer forms with them.
	Evidence to support learning and development activities/progress is gathered by members and kept in some form of portfolio (whether online, hard copy or a combination).	These records are evidence that the CIMA Professional Development cycle is being utilised and also provide a written record which can be used in discussions with line managers and CPD mentor.	Members keep records of learning and development activities, including certificates.
<b>5. REFLECT</b>	The organisation provides an area on the individual/personal development plan where members can document reflection (application of learning) on completed learning and development undertaken - both formal and informal. Guidance regarding how to use this area is also included in the policy document as outlined under 'Define'.	Reflection on learning and development undertaken is a key aspect within the CIMA Professional Development cycle and is arguably where the most value can be obtained by both individual members and their employers. The value to be gained from future development is a function of the quality of the reflection on previous activities.	This process is recorded in the area provided on the member's personal development plan to show that a dialogue and reflection have occurred.
	Future planning and performance is informed by this reflection (application of learning).	Once the manager and member are happy that reflection is complete, managers can sign off the learning and development record, adding any comments they feel are appropriate	Any gaps occurring in the personal development plan are taken forward to the following year/cycle.

	Quality standard	Guide	What success looks like
6. EVALUATE	The organisation provides an area on the individual/personal development plan or performance review documentation where both members and line managers comment on the year's learning and development as a whole.	Evaluation is an extension of reflection. It is usually about development activities, whereas evaluation refers to a consideration of overall progress towards goals and the development of future plans.	This exists either as part of the appraisal documentation or the personal development plan itself.
	As a result of this evaluation members and managers carry forward any remaining gaps into the new year's plan.	This provides an opportunity for members to 'stand back' from their day-to-day activities and consider their development progress and continuing needs over a longer period of time; this can be extremely useful particularly in terms of longer term career planning.	Any gaps occurring in the personal development plan are taken forward to the following year/ cycle.
	General or organisational implications arising from evaluation of learning and development activities undertaken, identified and taken forward as appropriate (e.g. where a broader learning need has been identified within the organisation as a result of individual feedback).	In instances where individuals have either found a resource useful or ineffective, it is beneficial to other members and to the organisation to channel this information so that it is useful to others within the organisation.	Feedback on these activities is made available to others within the organisation, where appropriate.

'Having been qualified for ten years now, I am always conscious of keeping my CIMA knowledge and skills up-to-date. CIMA Development accreditation at American Express is extremely beneficial to me as it provides the framework to allow me to be continuously thinking about my re-training and keeping my professional qualification up-to-date through my development plan at work.'

**Simi Mudhar,**  
**Director, Global Reporting**  
**American Express Services**  
**Europe Ltd**



# CIMA Development - assessment matrix guidelines

## Quality standards for the professional development of CIMA members

The matrix for the CIMA quality standards for the professional development of CIMA members defines baseline standards linked to the learning and development process recommended by CIMA. These guidelines have been drawn up to give guidance on interpretation and implementation of the CIMA quality standards for learning and development of CIMA members and they should be used in conjunction with the assessment matrix. See also 'Guide' and 'What success looks like' in the matrix.

---

## 1. Define

It is important for both the organisation and CIMA that an individual responsible for professional development is identified.

In larger organisations, there may be a 'champion' who has an overall co-ordinating role but in smaller organisations, it may well be an individual's line manager who is both the 'champion' for the organisation and also the person who conducts individual performance reviews.

### Job roles and job descriptions

For any performance review and learning and development process to be effective, job roles must be clearly defined with written job descriptions attached. Only in this way can the organisation assess the level at which employees are currently performing; identify the level and form of development required to meet both immediate and longer term needs; and ensure that both business and individual employee needs are being fulfilled. Long-term career planning for individuals and succession planning for the organisation also depend on this clarity with regard to job roles and competencies.

### Responsibility for professional development

Employees need to be clear about who is responsible for reviewing their performance, assisting them with the identification of learning and development needs and signing off their learning and development records. Again, this will probably be the line manager but in larger organisations, the process may be split, with individuals in both human resources and finance departments playing a role.

---

## 2. Assess

CIMA is aware that different organisations have different approaches to performance reviews and the recording of outputs. However, it is a requirement of the CIMA Development scheme, although the format is not prescribed (see Act and Reflect on page 13 for more information).

It is important that individuals assess their current abilities against what is required of them now and in the future.

Learning and development needs will vary according to an individual's career stage, a newly qualified CIMA member, for example, will require a different

approach to learning and development than one who is longer qualified and already established in his/her career. Individual's long-term career aspirations and succession planning within the organisation will all be encompassed within the cycle.

---

## 3. Design and support

Individual development plans are derived from the performance review process and are used to drive future development. When designing learning and development programmes it is useful to focus on both on- and off-the-job development.

### Skills development

There are many opportunities for furthering managerial and interpersonal skills in the workplace, for example, chairing meetings, deputising for more senior colleagues, acting as a mentor to a CIMA student and so on.

However, continuing learning and development is an individual as well as a corporate responsibility and CIMA would recommend that employers and their employees take a balanced view to ensure that suitable development opportunities are provided/funded by the organisation. Employees must also recognise that they have a vital role to play in their long term development and should be prepared to devote some personal resources to this.

### CPD resources and support

CIMA members should be encouraged to contribute their own thoughts and feedback on activities undertaken in order to benefit others (i.e. via the Learning and Development policy). So, for example, if an individual has been on an external course or completed a further qualification (whether or not resourced by the organisation), they might be encouraged to share their experiences/recommendations with others. The organisation could facilitate this via an intranet/ searchable resource bank for learning and development etc.

## 4. Act

The CIMA Professional Development scheme has been designed not only to recognise the diverse roles of CIMA members but also to recognise that individuals have different learning and development activity preferences. At the heart of CIMA Professional Development is the CIMA Professional Development Cycle that enables the individual to 'design' their own action plan for development, not only in terms of topic - but also type of development activity. Traditionally seminars and face-to-face training have been regarded as the main means of development and learning. However, there are a range of activities available that will meet CIMA's requirements, many of which members will already be doing as part of their daily work and many of which will not have additional time and cost implications. Types of activities members can consider include:

- work based learning
- project work
- on-the-job training
- academic and professional qualifications
- reading technical reports, journals and articles
- structured training courses
- conferences and events
- local CIMA events
- resources on the CIMA website
- online learning
- giving presentations
- coaching and mentoring
- networking
- delivering training and development
- research
- discussion groups
- observation and feedback
- secondments.

## 5. Reflect

Managers and members should meet together to discuss the member's thoughts on activities undertaken in terms of, for example:

- learning outcomes
- whether the original objectives have been met
- any objectives which need to be carried forward into future development activity
- any performance improvements arising out of the learning and development

- maintenance of effectiveness in current role/contribution to future roles
- whether this development is an end in itself or whether it can be built upon in future activities.

Recording this is a vital part of the CIMA Professional Development Cycle, as it enables members to assess what they have learnt and how it can be carried forward within their roles and how maximum benefit can be gained from their learning and development.

## 6. Evaluate

Managers and members work together to evaluate the overall effectiveness of learning and development throughout a defined period and to use this to inform future development needs.

Individual learning and development activities can also be evaluated in a

more general sense so that members would look at formal development activities such as internal/external courses and evaluate their strengths and limitations overall rather than just in terms of how far they contributed to meeting individual development needs.

## Supporting evidence

We ask that employers provide supporting evidence to show that the criteria on the assessment matrix are being met satisfactorily.

Whilst we request that a personal development plan is submitted as standard with your application, we may request additional supporting documentation once an initial review has been carried out. When listing links to supporting documentation, please give detailed examples of how these actions are implemented, as this will enable us to understand more clearly the processes and procedures that are in place within your organisation.

We require the following supporting documentation to be submitted with your application:

- sample personal development plan
- performance appraisal template
- learning and development policy
- code of ethics - where this is not available, a money laundering policy, whistle blowing policy and statement of business principles should be submitted.

## An evolutionary CIMA Development scheme

The CIMA Development scheme itself will be reviewed and evaluated on a regular basis and will take into account feedback from employers, managers and CIMA members to refine the scheme and guidelines and ensure that it remains customer focused.