



Can I do two diplomas at the same time?

Theoretically yes - much would depend on an individual delegate's background and experience level.

It should be remembered that all diploma programmes are graduate level courses and should not be underestimated. They are complementary to some degree. For example the compliance diploma programme by nature covers some high level aspects of AML whilst the AML and Financial Crime Prevention programme naturally share some aspects when referring to the law and criminal conduct.

Whether you attend workshops or the distance learning route only you need to remember that apart from studying and revision you will also have to complete 2 assignments for each diploma all within allocated time scales. If taking the exam only route (available only to those with extensive compliance or AML experience), although this does not include assignments the workload will still be high.

For those in full time employment it might be better to tackle the courses one after the other rather than at the same time. Only you can say how much time you have available to allocate to the courses and what other work or personal commitments you have.

From experience, generally people who have taken the courses one after the other found that it works well – very few delegates have tackled two courses within the same year but those who have tend to eventually elect to defer the second exam.

What is the difference between distance learning only and the full course?

There is no substantial difference between the distance learning and workshop courses in terms of the quality of materials provided – the absence of workshops in the distance learning option is compensated for by the provision of a distance learning workbook and further readings. For both routes additional delegate mentoring and assistance by email on an individual basis is provided.

At all times ICA strongly recommends that delegates take the workshop option when ever available/possible as the benefits to be obtained from attending the workshops, meeting the tutors face to face and networking with other delegates and hearing their experiences are significant. It would be inappropriate for there to be a differential between the course costs as this might result in a tendency for delegates to select on price alone which would not necessarily be educationally beneficial.

Do I have to attend workshops if these are available?

Workshops are not mandatory and do not carry any assessment element, however, the ICA strongly recommends that delegates take the workshop option when ever available/possible as the benefits to be obtained from attending the workshops, meeting the tutors face to face, networking with other delegates and hearing their experiences cannot be underestimated.

There is no reduction of fees should a delegate elect not to attend part or all of a workshop.

Should you wish to speak with a delegate who has previously attended the workshops to obtain a first hand impression of these events please contact the admin team and we will do our best to put you in touch with someone in your jurisdiction (if available).

I am a graduate who has just left university with no relevant experience - should I get a relevant job and then enrol onto a diploma programme or enrol onto the programme anyway?

The diploma programmes are aimed at those who are practitioners within the industry however we have had many successful delegates who have either been considering a transfer into financial services or into the AML/Compliance /FCP area from other areas of the industry or indeed undergraduates with no specific experience.

It has to be said that for those not currently working in the industry or with limited experience the learning curve may be somewhat steeper than for those currently practicing. Much depends on the individual delegate's dedication to the course and the additional research probably required if they have limited experience.

Assignments within the course and case studies within the exam are often scenario based and sometimes for those who are not currently involved in the industry this can be somewhat more difficult to tackle requiring additional research. However, many past delegates in these circumstances have done very well and as mentioned above it really depends on the dedication and effort of the individual. ICT will give every assistance to those who are inexperienced or not currently within the industry. In addition, many delegates who have completed the diplomas offer to act as mentors to new delegates and this can be arranged for delegates, on request.

Consideration should also be given to the fact that many employers sponsor delegates to the programme if they are in full time employment (occasionally employers will "bond" employees who have been sponsored for this and any other training and this is worth ascertaining before accepting such sponsorship).

Obtaining the diploma will be a useful addition to your CV and will indicate that you have reached the appropriate benchmark for the industry in this specific area but, as with any other qualification, in no way guarantees you employment which as always will be based on individual merit and "fit" with an organisation and role.

What modules/units are covered in each workshop?

The content of workshops is kept relatively flexible in order to ensure that it meets the needs of the individual delegates present and you can find broad outlines of the topics to be covered for each diploma course in the Course Guide at the front of the course manual.

Is it possible to provide some examples of the assessments set?

Assignments are formal written papers with a 2500 minimum word count and a 3500 maximum word count and tend to be based around work related scenarios such as preparing for a regulatory visit or undertaking an annual review. Delegates have to complete two assignments for the Diploma Programmes and one assignment for the Advanced Certificates.

Examination questions tend to be a mixture of case study or scenario based and those of a more technical/specific nature and aim to cover the entire course syllabus within each exam.

An example exam question paper, suggested answers and a limited number of past exam papers are available to delegates on the ICT web site for each course.

A past assignment is utilised at the briefing session and often within the workshops as learning exercises to assist delegates with assignment techniques.

All delegates are provided with a guidance note on marking within the Study Handbook which is intended to provide a broad description of the factors to be considered and level of attainment expected when writing assignments and exams.

ICA only utilises multiple choice answer questions within the Certificate examination structure at the current time.

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Does the ICA arrange internships for graduates from their diploma courses?

ICA does not currently operate an internship programme but would suggest contacting your local regulator to see if they have such a programme in place – also many of the international organizations have internships (although entry criteria vary) and it would be worth checking the web sites for OECD/FATF, IMF and World Bank.

Some commercial enterprises operate internship programmes however entry criteria vary widely and you would have to approach each one individually.

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I am interested in the course but unable to sign up at present, however i would like to buy a set of the course materials for reference purposes - are they available for sale?

ICT does not currently sell the course materials to those not registered on the programmes.

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What prep do I need to do before the first workshop?

Ideally you should have familiarised yourself with the overall layout of the course manual and identified any further readings that might be of particular importance to you and have read, at least once, the modules/units to be covered at the workshop.

However if you have not had sufficient time to achieve this do not worry. You should still attend the workshop as the sessions do not simply revisit the course materials but provide delegates with interactive group exercises and case studies based on (but not repeating) the course materials in order to build a depth and breadth of understanding.

Do I need to bring my course materials to each workshop and if so what?

Not unless you wish to do so, any materials required for the day will be provided within the Workshop Note packs provided on the day. Occasionally you may find it useful either to be able to refer to the main text or make appropriate notes in your own manual during the workshop. You do not need to bring the appendices with you (although you can do so if you prefer). Should a group exercise require that you bring a specific appendix with you this will be advised ahead of the workshop and the facilitator should also have additional copies available at the event.

Can you tell me the pass rate for the programme in my jurisdiction in the previous years?

It is not the policy of the ICA to publicise pass rates currently. Past rates vary from course to course and jurisdiction to jurisdiction. The average completion rate over the years is of the order of 75 - 85%.

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Are courses suitable for disciplines other than the financial services?

The ICA courses are designed with financial services in mind and utilise financial services examples extensively although occasionally other disciplines such as regulation of airlines/construction and utilities are used as examples as well.

However the over arching concepts within the course are equally applicable to any industry with regulatory parameters/risk and monitoring issues. We have had delegates from other industries (newspaper industry/pharmaceuticals/utilities/quality assurance) successfully complete the course utilising scenarios from their own industry in the assignments when appropriate although it is recognised that the course is not tailored to these other sectors.

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Are the courses FSA accredited?

The FSA does not currently accredit any training courses, however with the publication of The National Occupational Standards of Competence in Compliance and AML and more recently in FCP, the Financial Services Skills Council (FSSC) now publishes an approved list of courses that map into the standards. The ICA courses appear on this list and are the only ones to do so for these standards.