

# Appropriate Qualifications...but which one?



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My business is pensions; technical pension consultancy and competence in pensions – through CPD and/or appropriate qualifications. That's what we do at expert pensions.

We help people understand what the right pension qualifications for them are and how to go about passing them, as well as helping those qualified to maintain, develop and demonstrate their competence.

I wrote an article a while back about 'appropriate qualifications' for those who wanted to be competent pension transfer specialists. Right now, this is a 'hot topic' and I suspect will be a hot topic for a while yet. So, it's important to understand what is the "right" option for you, for your team and for your business.

The FCA has proposed changes concerning the Training & Competence sourcebook list of appropriate qualifications and the new qualifications and amendments to TC Appendix 4 2.4 proposing the adding of more appropriate qualification options, for activity 11 (pension transfers).



There are now several different ways to obtain the appropriate qualification for activity 11 (pension transfers) and each of the main examination bodies (who also provide SPS certificates) have their own route to being 'appropriately qualified' – and they are not all equal, or are examined in the same way and it's worth understanding how each work and the very important subtle differences: they are not all equal in the eyes of the FCA.

Let me go through each of the three main options for financial advisers:

## 1. CII AF3 Pension Planning exam

Standalone appropriate qualification can be used by any CF30 adviser (with any appropriate L4 RDR diploma qualification) to advise activity 11, through a business with the permissions to conduct that activity.

The standalone variety being the strongest and most flexible for any adviser, regardless of background or how they obtained their RDR compliant diploma.

This is the "gold" standard exam.

## 2. CII AF7 Pension Transfers exam

**Not** a standalone appropriate qualification and cannot be used by any CF30 adviser: this 'appropriate qualification' can **ONLY** be used in conjunction with CII R01, 2 and 4 OR with CII Diploma.

Therefore, that stops all those advisers from a different background from the CII – you cannot mix and match your qualifications. You cannot use an IFS/LIBF diploma with the AF7 exam qualification on its own... Interestingly, there have been some interesting developments from the LIBF in this space since I last wrote on this subject.

## 3. LIBF PETR

The LIBF PETR (award in Pension Transfers) is now a twice-yearly exam, where 50% of the marks are based on a case study sent out **6 WEEKS BEFORE** the exam. It is a 3 hour written exam, focused on a case study and critical evaluation of a

pension transfer case study.

**This is Not** a standalone appropriate qualification and cannot be used by any CF30 adviser: this 'appropriate qualification' can **ONLY** be used in conjunction with LIBF DipFA RDR compliant Diploma.

Our LIBF PETR exam support is in place for purchase on our website. We have 2 options available for the June 2018 exam:

Option 1: Case study analysis

Option 2: Case study analysis and 4-Day workshop

Access the link below for further details: <https://expertpensions.co.uk/libf-pension-transfers-petr/>

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## 4. CISI PTPA

There is also the Pension Transfer and Pension Advice (PTPA) exam from the CISI – which is a 3 hour exam made-up of MCQs, short technical questions and case study questions, offered twice a year.

This is a standalone "appropriate" exam qualification. You are appropriately qualified for activity 11, with ANY RDR compliant diploma. That gives you maximum flexibility and portability.

As you can see there are now a number of different options to become appropriately qualified as a Pension Transfer Specialist. They each have their merits and there is a choice for all advisers – depending on your current RDR compliant diploma and/or your preferred learning styles. Drop us a line anytime if you would like help with the maze of study options, to work out which one could suit you best.