



IFS Sector Returners Programme

This Modular Programme will be delivered over six months from October '24 to March '25.

The 18 Modules include a combination of practical and interactive modular sessions, self-directed learning (short exercises to complete for pre-work, videos and articles to review, and assignments to embed learnings), short reminders from the lead trainer between each module and buddy accountability. Participants will receive ongoing support from the lead facilitator during the Programme.

Each participant is also offered 3 x 1-2-1 coaching sessions with one of our specialist Coaches, each of 1 hour duration, throughout the Programme. This will greatly assist attendees in developing the required self-confidence and readiness to make a confident return to the workforce, and to receive support in overcoming any challenges.

The Programme is designed to have a connection between its Modules. Learning is most effective when concepts are integrated and applied in a practical context. To achieve this, each Module is deliberately linked, forming a cohesive and progressive learning journey. For instance, problem-solving skills, are directly connected to real-world challenges faced in the financial services sector. As an example, the Problem-Solving Skills Module may be tied to the exploration and application of a newly introduced regulation. Through assignments, case studies, and practical exercises, participants will not only develop essential skills but also gain a deeper understanding of how these skills can be applied in the context of evolving regulatory landscapes. This interconnected approach ensures that participants are equipped not only with theoretical knowledge but also with the practical tools and insights needed to excel in their roles within the financial services industry.

Programme Kick-Off Session (45-60 mins)

This session is included so that participants can meet the facilitator team and learn what to expect from the programme. We will provide an overview of the programme and how they can plan for success. We discuss and agree the group's operating principles together. An item of pre-work will be assigned for participants to complete between this kick-off and the first Module.

1) Return to Work Practical Skills (0.5 Day – AM)

This opening Module is designed to equip participants with the essential skills and tools to successfully reintegrate into the workforce. By the end of this Module, participants will have gained practical skills and actionable strategies to enhance their CVs, optimise their LinkedIn profiles, and navigate the job interview process, setting them up for success as they transition back into the workforce. The session will include some role-playing exercises to give the participants a chance to engage in mock interviews, with feedback provided by the facilitator and peers. We then look at rebuilding participants' Personal Brand in the afternoon session.

1) Rebuilding Your Professional Brand (0.5 Day - PM)

This second half of the opening Module allows for personal reflection and connection with one's future steps. It also enables participants to get to know each other better and create psychological safety for group learning as we move forward. It is an exercise-based interactive Module where participants move through a series of exercises to explore their own strengths, values, purpose and goals for their career/or next steps. Participants will also gain an understanding of the concept of professional branding and its place in today's business environment and develop their own Professional Brand and USP by identifying strengths and skills.

2) Global Financial Markets Foundations (0.5 Day - AM)

This Module on Global Financial Markets Foundations aims to provide participants with a comprehensive understanding of the structure, instruments, mechanics, regulations, and trends in global financial markets. By covering key concepts, market dynamics, and regulatory frameworks, participants will be better equipped to navigate and participate in global financial markets effectively.

3) Regulatory Update: Latest on the Regulatory Landscape in the IFS Sector (0.5 Day - AM)

This Regulatory Update Module (spread over two Module delivery dates) aims to provide returning individuals in the IFS sector with the knowledge and skills needed to navigate the evolving regulatory landscape in Ireland. We cover key regulatory frameworks, recent updates, compliance best practices, and practical implementation strategies.

4) Problem Solving and Critical Thinking (0.5 Day - AM)

The Problem-Solving and Critical Thinking Module will equip participants with the skills and mindset necessary to tackle complex challenges effectively. By fostering critical thinking, enhancing problem-solving abilities, promoting collaboration and communication, and providing opportunities for practical application, participants will be better prepared to navigate uncertainties and make informed decisions in various aspects of their role in financial services.

5) Establishing Priorities (0.5 Day - AM)

This Establishing Priorities Module is full of information on useful concepts, tools and techniques with the invitation throughout for each individual to discuss and apply the tools to current and future schedules and roles, in pairs and small groups. Habits and routines form the backbone of our daily behaviour, the way we manage our time, and our ability to move forward towards our day-to-day goals and responsibilities with consistency. Participants will learn how to recognise the inner and outer blocks to prioritisation.

6) CV Writing, Interview Skills and Tips for Navigating the Jobs Market (0.5 Day - AM)

This Module expands on the content of the opening Return to Work Practical Skills Module at the beginning of the programme, providing further guidance on practical skills for navigating the jobs market through CV writing, interview skills and lots of useful tips.

7) Developing Confidence & Goal setting (0.5 Day - AM)

Confidence is a skill, not a trait. In this Module, we break down confidence and discover the key skills that create a practice of confidence in your life. We dive into these skills and create a strong understanding of how to use them consistently in order to develop and strengthen confidence as a skill we can access as needed. Self-reflection, learning buddy sharing and interactive exercises make this an enjoyable and impactful Module.

8) Foundation Coaching Skills and Peer Coaching & Action Learning Sets (1 Day)

This Coaching Module aims to equip participants with the basic knowledge and skills needed to start their coaching journey. By covering fundamental coaching principles, active listening, questioning techniques, effective communication, and providing opportunities for practice and feedback, participants will be better prepared to incorporate coaching skills into their personal and professional interactions. These coaching skills will serve them in getting the best out of interactions with all types of stakeholders.

Peer Coaching is a structured approach to taking real live challenges with a trusted groups of peers, where you are coached and supported by peers to understand different perspectives and actions you might take next. The group are invited to use peer coaching through the continuation of the programme. As part of this Peer Coaching, the group of peers are also invited to identify a common challenge or aspirations they all have and to work towards ideas and solutions, which they can present on as a team at the end of the programme.

9) Data Analytics for Financial Services: visualisation, interpreting data, storytelling (0.5 Day - AM)

By the end of this Module, participants will have gained a solid understanding of data analysis fundamentals and their application in decision making. They will be equipped with practical techniques and tools to analyse data effectively to support informed decision making. The learning objectives are to Understand Data Analysis Fundamentals, Develop Data Interpretation Skills, Enhance Decision-Making Abilities and Apply Data Analysis Techniques in Decision Making. The Module uses group discussions and exercises to apply data analysis techniques to solve decision-making problems.

10) Regulatory Update: Latest on the Regulatory Landscape in the IFS Sector (1 Day)

This Regulatory Update Module (spread over two Module delivery dates) aims to provide returning individuals in the IFS sector with the knowledge and skills needed to navigate the evolving regulatory landscape in Ireland. We cover key regulatory frameworks, recent updates, compliance best practices, and practical implementation strategies.

11) IT essentials: MS office, Teams, Outlook (0.5 Day - AM)

The IT Essentials Module aims to equip participants with the essential skills and knowledge needed to effectively utilise common IT tools such as MS Office, Teams, and Outlook. By covering topics ranging from basic IT skills to advanced features of Microsoft applications and emphasising cybersecurity awareness, participants will be better prepared to leverage technology for improved productivity, communication, and collaboration in their professional roles.

12) Networking and Relationship Building (0.5 Day - AM)

This Networking and Relationship Building Module covers the skills needed to be comfortable to speak to people you do not know when representing yourself and your organisation externally or to expand your connections internally - thereby growing your network of people in your industry or service. We break it down to the 6 stages of networking: Preparation, First Impressions, Building Rapport, Getting Down to Business, Escape and Follow Up. Participants will be encouraged to attend relevant IFS events over the duration of the programme.

13) Working in a Hybrid Environment (0.5 Day - AM)

Research and experience have painted a vivid picture of what is required to create a successful hybrid workplace environment. In this Module, we cover some useful models, concepts and exercises to bring this all to life and to enable reflection on behalf of all participants. It will allow participants to understand what we mean by Hybrid work and what to ask for when you are returning to work, along with expectations of the organisation.

14) Presentation Skills & Effective Communication (1 Day)

This Module empowers participants to understand best practice for crafting content and for delivering that content in presentation format F2F or virtually. Many of the skills covered apply not only to presentations, but to one-to-one meetings, emails and more. We invite participants to reflect on where items apply across different communication scenarios. Programme participants are expected to bring a 3-5-minute presentation to this Module (this can be a presentation about a hobby or topic of interest or a previous professional presentation). Participants are required to be ready to deliver to an audience (each other) in small groups to the best of their current ability.

15) Risk Management in Financial Services (0.5 Day - AM)

This Module on Risk Management aims to provide participants with a comprehensive understanding of risk management principles, techniques, and best practices. By covering risk identification, assessment, mitigation, monitoring and reporting, participants will be better prepared to proactively manage risks within their organisations and contribute to organisational resilience and success.

16) Sustainability (0.5 Day - AM)

This Sustainability Module aims to provide a comprehensive introduction to the concepts and practices of integrating sustainability into financial decision-making. It will provide an Introduction to ESG and Sustainable Finance, Current Trends and Regulatory Landscape, Case Studies and Examples, and ESG Reporting and Disclosure.

17) Client Relationship Management (0.5 Day - AM)

This Module on Client Relationship Management aims to equip participants with the skills and knowledge needed to build and maintain strong client relationships. By covering communication, client engagement strategies, and CRM tools and technologies, participants will be better prepared to effectively manage client interactions, enhance customer satisfaction, and drive business growth.

18) Programme Conclusion (0.5 Day - AM)

In this last Module, we will together review programme learnings and reflect on both the personal and group impact experienced. Participants will be asked to declare individual action steps to bring their learnings forward. The participants will have prepared to present in teams in this last Module (Action Learning Topics). Having completed the Presentation Skills Module earlier in the programme, participants can now apply the skills learned in that Module and receive feedback from the facilitators and from peers on how they have improved their presentation style and delivery. We will also allow time for any final questions that may arise before concluding this final Module of the programme.