



## DoD FM Certification Frequently Asked Questions

If you have component-specific or individual requirement questions, please refer to your organization's [FM Certification POC](#). If you have policy questions, please email the DoD FM Certification team at [dodfmcertificationprogram@mail.mil](mailto:dodfmcertificationprogram@mail.mil).

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### Points of Contact:

#### 1. I have a question on the DoD FM Certification Program. Who shall I ask?

Each DoD organization has a POC for the FM Certification Program, and that's where you should start. Your DoD organization POC may raise the question to the OUSD(C) Financial Workforce Management Division if unable to address the question. Click [here](#) to find your organization's POC.

#### Important Links

LMS Quick Start Guide: <http://go.usa.gov/3ABC4>

Job Aids: <https://fmonline.ousdc.osd.mil/LMS/LMS-Job-Aids.aspx>

### General Policy:

#### 1. What is the FM Certification Program and how would I actually get certified?

The DoD FM Certification Program is a course-based certification program designed to help create a uniform understanding of the Department's strategy, approach and methodology to financial management and the Certification Program establishes a standard body of knowledge to guide DoD FM professional development, provide a mechanism to ensure appropriate training and development in key areas such as Audit Readiness, Fiscal Law, Ethics, and Decision Support, and helps with career broadening and leadership development. Talk with your supervisor to learn your level and review certification requirements. Click [here](#) to view certification requirements. See question three below to learn how to get started!

#### 2. Where can I review the DoD Policy for the program?

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The FM Certification Program Policy document (DoDI 1300.26) is available [here](#).

For questions specific to your organization's implementation, policies, or procedures, contact your organization's [FM Certification POC](#). For generic questions, you may contact the DoD FM Certification team by clicking [here](#) or by contacting Ms. Kellie O'Mara-Gordon (703-697-0841).

**3. I was recently notified that I have officially been brought into the program. What should I do to get started?**

There several things you can do to plan your path to achieving your certification.

- Start by following the steps outlined in the DoD FM LMS User Quick Guide, available [here](#).
- Read the DoD [FM Certification Handbook](#). This overview will give you a thorough understanding of the program's background, why it's important, and the requirements for each level.
- Talk to your supervisor to get an idea of what your designated FM certification level will be and visit FM Online to view the requirements for your certification level.
- Collect your education and training history documentation. The certification is course-based, meaning that you can use previous training (academic courses, online courses, etc.) to satisfy requirements. Be sure to have documentation or proof of this successfully completed education and training, as you will need to upload it to the FM LMS. Keep in mind that you will not need to load every course/training that you have taken, but only the courses/trainings that satisfy FM Certification requirements.
- Work with your supervisor to fill out the Learning History Worksheets to identify which requirements you already satisfy, identify gaps, and develop a plan to complete any remaining requirements. Visit FM myLearn to identify available courses that meet your remaining requirements. To help you with this process, click [here](#) to complete a practical exercise that walks you through each step of aligning your prior training to certification requirements.

**4. Does the DoD FM Certification Program apply to me?**

Most members of the FM workforce are required to participate in the DoD FM Certification Program. The FM workforce includes civilian positions with a 05XX series, military positions with FM occupational specialties, and non-05XX/military positions performing financial management work when designated by their DoD organization. For your specific position, contact your [FM Certification POC](#).

Term and temporary DoD, non-appropriated funded (NAF), and foreign national and local national (FN/LN) employees can take the training voluntarily, but cannot achieve certification.

**5. My position is coded as a 0343/1515. Can I participate?**

The leadership of your organization has the flexibility to include civilian positions which fall outside the 05XX occupational series. If you perform, supervise, or manage work of a fiscal,

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financial management, accounting, auditing, cost, or budgetary nature, then your organization may include your position in the DoD FM Certification Program. Check with your supervisor to see if your position is included in the program.

If you sit in an Acquisition-coded position that falls outside of Business-Financial Management, Business-Cost Estimating, or Acquisition-Audit, AT&L approval is required for inclusion in the program.

**6. Are the FM Certification requirements standard throughout DoD?**

Yes, the overarching framework for FM Certification is standard throughout the DoD. Each level requires a certain number of hours in competency-based and leadership development training, specified years of FM experience, as well as standardized training in key areas such as Audit Readiness and Fiscal Law. Click [here](#) to view the requirements for each level.

**7. I read that the DoD FM Certification is based on DoD FM and leadership competencies and proficiency levels. Where can I find more information about competencies and proficiency levels?**

FM Online provides a thorough overview of what a competency is and how it serves as the foundation and overarching structure of the DoD FM Certification Program. Click [here](#) for more information or download the [FM Certification Handbook](#) for a thorough description of the certification's background, requirements, competencies, and other relevant information.

**8. How was it determined that the FM Certification Program would include 17 of the 23 enterprise-wide FM competencies?**

The Senior Working Group (SWG), which developed the conceptual framework for the DoD FM Certification Program, determined which FM competencies and associated proficiency levels would be required for each certification level. Factors considered in their selection of specific competencies were (1) the universal or enterprise-wide requirement for the competency; (2) the emphasis on improved analysis; and (3) the "broadening" guidance, i.e., to ensure that all employees are trained in other than their respective primary occupational series or specialties.

**9. Will I be given adequate time while at work to accomplish these trainings or will it need to be accomplished during my off time?**

The DoD FM Certification Program policy document (DoDI 1300.26) states that DoD organizations are responsible for ensuring all FM members are provided the opportunity to complete the requirements of the Certification Program coursework and professional development during normal duty hours to the greatest extent possible within workload and funding constraints. Employees should work with their supervisors to develop a plan to meet their certification requirements.

**10. Who is tracking whether or not I am certified?**

The DoD FM LMS is the system of record for tracking certification status for the FM Certification Program. Each DoD organization has flexibility in how to monitor the

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certification status of its employees. For specific information, please refer to your organization's [FM Certification POC](#).

**11. Will certification be a hiring requirement?**

The certification will not be used as a mandatory requirement in DoD hiring systems. A member who is not certified may still qualify for a position that requires FM Certification. Hiring managers will select the most qualified individual for the position and may consider achievement of the DoD FM Certification in the selection of a candidate.

**12. If I want to apply for another position, how will I know if it requires the FM Certification and what level is required?**

The position announcement should include whether the position requires FM Certification and at what level. You can also discuss it with the hiring official during the interview process.

**13. Must I meet the certification level before I am assigned to a higher-level position?**

No, you are not required to complete the FM certification level of an assigned position before you can move to a position requiring a higher certification level. If you are assigned to a position requiring a higher certification level, you will have two years to meet the new FM Certification requirements of that position.

*Tip: If you complete courses to fulfill initial certification requirements that are aligned to multiple certification levels and you eventually move into a position requiring a higher level, then those completed courses will be tracked and credited to you in the FM LMS.*

**14. Once I am certified at a certain level, will my certification transfer with me if I move to other positions at the same level, either within my current DoD organization or within the DoD?**

Yes, since your FM Certification is recorded in the DoD FM LMS, as well as in the appropriate record in the Personnel Data Systems (DCPDS for DoD Civilians and varied Military Personnel Data Systems), when you move within the DoD your FM Certification will follow you via the appropriate system.

**15. What is the deadline for completing this certification?**

You will have two years from the date you are notified to begin or 1 July 2016, whichever date is later.

**16. What will happen if I do not meet the two-year requirement for certification?**

You have two years to complete the certification. This time constraint can be waived in one-year increments by the Component Certification Authority (CCA), as needed. If you fail to obtain the FM Certification requirements for your position and the CCA-approved time extension(s) have expired, the DoD organization has flexibility to administer adverse actions as deemed appropriate by the organization. For specific details on your organization's policy, contact your [FM Certification POC](#).

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## Certification Requirements:

### 1. How do I know which certification level I need to earn?

You will be officially notified of your FM Certification Level by your supervisor or your HR POC when you start your new position. The notification document will include the required FM Certification Level and your start date.

*Tip: If you are hoping to get a head start on meeting certification requirements, meet with your supervisor first to determine your level and click [here](#) for a list of things you can do now to prepare.*

### 2. If I am required to obtain an FM Certification Level 3, will I also be required to attain Certification Levels 1 and 2?

No, you are not required to complete preceding certification level(s) before obtaining the certification level for which you are assigned.

### 3. If I am reassigned to a position that requires a lower certification level than I currently have, will I need to obtain the lower level?

No, if you have previously achieved a higher certification level than required by your current position it is not required to complete the certification requirements for the lower levels. Your certification will “follow” you regardless of the position in DoD, so long as you maintain the appropriate number of Continuous Education and Training hours.

### 4. May I obtain a higher certification level than the level required by my current position?

No, you cannot achieve an FM Certification Level different than the level designated for the position to which you are currently assigned. However, components may encourage FM Members to take the course work required for the next certification level as part of their CET requirements and document the completed training in their resumes.

*Tip: After you have already completed the initial certification requirements for your level, you may take courses aligned to a higher certification level to meet Continuing Education and Training (CET) hour requirements. Although these completed courses will not be documented in the FM LMS, you may keep their completion certificates in a personal file to be uploaded to the LMS once you are in a position requiring a higher level. When you are assigned to a position at the next level, you can record completed classes at the higher level in the DoD FM LMS – be sure to keep your completion certificates.*

### 5. Can I work towards meeting higher certification level requirements to increase my chances of moving into a position that requires a higher certification level?

Once you complete your required FM Certification Level, you may take courses to satisfy requirements for a higher level for Continuing Education and Training (CET) to sustain your certification. However, completion of the additional training is not recorded in the FM LMS

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against the higher certification level and does not guarantee that it will increase your chances of moving into a position requiring a higher level certification.

**6. Is there an academic degree requirement in FM Certification?**

No, there is not an academic degree requirement; however, it is recommended for FM members in Certification Level 2 or 3 positions to earn bachelor's and master's degrees, respectively.

**7. Do I have to pass any final tests to achieve the DoD FM Certification?**

No, the FM Certification program is a course-based certification that does not require a final comprehensive exam. You may be required to take and pass exams on individual courses that are required to achieve the certification, however. Click [here](#) to view the DoD FM Certification requirements.

**8. Is there a requirement for DoD contractors to meet FM Certification Program requirements?**

No, DoD contractors are not authorized to participate in the FM Certification Program. However, if a contractor would like to complete DoD FM training and has a DoD CAC, [FM myLearn](#) provides an e-catalog of available training. Be sure to check the course's pre-requisites to see if you are eligible to take the course (i.e., some organizations have restrictions on students).

**9. What is the difference between a Primary Track and an Alternate Track?**

The Primary Track you select represents the subject that most closely aligns to your occupational series or specialty. At Certification Levels 2 and 3, you are required to broaden your knowledge base through the selection of an Alternate Track. An Alternate Track is a subject area that falls outside your Primary Track. For example, if your Primary Track is Accounting, then your Alternate Track could be Budget or Finance or others as shown on the program requirements.

**Note:** Alternate Track for 510 series should be Accounting; 511 series, Auditing; 560 series, Budget. Other FM series and non-FM series should choose the track most closely aligned to the work you are doing.

**10. Do course hours for my Alternate Track have to come from a single track, or can they be from a combination of all tracks that fall outside my Primary Track?**

Course hours for your Alternate Track need to come from a single track or "subject" (e.g. Accounting, Auditing, Budget, Finance, Payroll (Military or Civilian), or Commercial Pay) that is different from your Primary Track. You are required to complete all course hours within that single Alternate Track.

**11. Do my Alternate Tracks at level 2 and level 3 have to be the same?**

No, you may select any competency different from your Primary Track for your Alternate Track at each level. This requirement was developed to provide breadth of experience to

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the member. Be sure to talk with your supervisor when making this decision and work together to develop a plan for you to achieve FM Certification.

**12. Some courses cover competency hours that apply to more than one certification level. Do I get credit for all hours for that course, or only the hours that apply to my certification level?**

Yes, you will receive credit for all the course hours completed at all relevant certification levels; however, in the FM LMS, you will only be able to see those credits which are aligned to courses at your level.

When you are assigned to a position with a different certification level, you will need to record the course again for the new proficiency level and upload documentation.

**13. At each level, there are "Other Required Courses." Can you explain what these are and where I can find them?**

"Other Required Courses" are specific courses required at Certification Levels 1, 2, and 3. At Level 1, the Other Required Courses are the modules of the DoD FM 101. At Level 2 and 3, the Other Required Courses include Audit Readiness, Fiscal Law, and Ethics. These courses were developed to ensure every DoD FMer has a standardized understanding of these key areas. These are web-based courses and can be launched from the FM LMS or FM myLearn (with the exception of Fiscal Law at Level 3, which is available at the Department of Navy Financial Management website).

**14. Is there a recommended order or sequence to completing the DoD FM 101 Modules in table 4 of DoDI 1300.26?**

We recommend starting with the "Introduction to DoD Module" if you are new to the Department of Defense. It is also recommended that you complete the "PPBE Process Module" before the "Budget Module." The rest of the modules can be completed in any order.

**15. I am working toward earning my FM Certification Level 3 and when I tried to launch Fiscal Law 301 (Fiscal Law Refresher course), it did not launch. Did I do something wrong?**

No. The Fiscal Law 301 course is a Department of the Navy course and is hosted on their Web site. When you click on the link on the FM LMS, it takes you to where you will:

- 1) Register by providing your name and email address.
- 2) Complete the course.
- 3) Save completion documentation that will appear at course conclusion.

After you complete the course and save the documentation you will need to complete the three-step process in the FM LMS.

**16. What is a Developmental Assignment?**

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A Developmental Assignment is generally considered work that is outside of the member's current primary career track. Previous work in another career track may fulfill this requirement. Additionally, work within the same track may also fulfill the requirement if it was accomplished at a different organizational level.

DoD organizations have the discretion to determine what qualifies as a Developmental Assignment, so check with your supervisor or your organization's [FM Certification POC](#) for specific information.

The Developmental Assignment is documented using a Memorandum for Record signed by the Supervisor. A template can be found on FM Online under [Templates/Forms](#).

**17. If my deployment is outside of my normal area of work/expertise, can it count towards the 3-month Developmental Assignment requirement for Certification Levels 2 and 3?**

Yes, if the deployment consists of work in an FM subject area that is outside your primary career track or if in your Primary Track but at a different organizational level, it may count toward a Developmental Assignment. Be sure to check with your supervisor or your organization's [FM Certification POC](#) for specific information.

## Education/Training/Experience:

**1. What qualifies as a course in this program?**

A course is defined as a structured learning event that has at least one course objective and an agenda or an outline, to include a course syllabus. Course hours derived from courses that meet this criterion may be used to satisfy course hour requirements.

Mini-courses provided in conjunction with training conferences and symposia are now eligible for consideration for initial certification credit for the DoD FM Certification Program. DoD Components/organizations align mini-courses according to the criteria stipulated in the February 2014 memorandum, available [here](#). Attendees must complete and submit an evaluation form to the mini-course provider to earn credit toward initial certification requirements.

Workshops, seminars, or symposia (e.g. professional society events) that have not been approved as a mini-course are not considered courses, but may be used for CETs. Click [here](#) to learn what qualifies as a CET.

**2. Can a seminar/workshop/symposium count toward meeting my initial FM Certification requirements?**

No, they do not. To meet initial certification requirements, you must use courses and structured learning events that have at least one course objective and an agenda, outline, or syllabus, to satisfy initial course hour requirements for FM Certification. However, seminars, workshops, and symposiums may qualify for Continuous Education and Training hours, which are required for maintaining your certification. For more information see the [CET](#) section.

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Click [here](#) to learn more about what qualifies as a course.

**3. What qualifies as “experience” in this program and how do I document it inside the FM LMS?**

According to DoDI 1300.26, FM work experience is defined as “serving in a position for which the majority of the work is performing, supervising, or managing work of a fiscal, financial management, accounting, auditing, cost, or budgetary nature.” As documentation for this requirement, you may use the “Memorandum for Record” template located [here](#) or a document (e.g. SF50 or military personnel record) produced from the personnel data system of record (e.g. MILPDS, DCPDS) for your organization.

**4. Can course hours from academic courses (undergraduate or graduate level) be used to satisfy certification program requirements?**

Yes, financial management and leadership academic courses may be used to satisfy certification program requirements if the title is a close match to the approved academic matrices. If you have already completed your initial certification requirements and are currently taking academic courses, they may be counted as CETs (click [here](#) for additional information).

For a full explanation of how to use the academic matrices, use the following resources – and be sure to talk to your supervisor as you go.

[April Newsletter](#) (see page 3)  
[Practical Exercise](#)

Additionally, academic courses that meet Certification Level 3 requirements may also be used to meet requirements for Certification Level 2 and Certification Level 1. Essentially, if you have a Master’s level course, that course could be used to meet a competency requirement at Certification Level 1 or Certification Level 2 as well as Level 3. However, lower level courses cannot be used to satisfy a higher level requirement. (e.g., 100-200 courses cannot be used to meet Level 2 or Level 3 requirements).

**5. I attended an academic institution located outside the U.S. and its territories. Can I count my academic courses toward my certification?**

If you attended an academic institution outside the U.S. and its territories, you may use a foreign transcript as documentation of previously completed coursework. However, foreign transcripts with credential evaluation must first be reviewed by the Governing Body Secretary to determine which courses may be used to meet FM Certification competencies requirements.

For more information, click [here](#).

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6. **If a university numbers their master's level courses differently than what DoD requires, how do I overcome that? For example, my master's courses are 300-level courses, which is how my university (Golden Gate) labeled their masters courses for an MPA. Other universities around the country may label the same course at a 400-level. How do I obviate the requirement for academic credit (for level 3 certification) be a 400-level course?**

We have encountered a few graduate schools that do not use the course numbering process that we describe in the academic matrices. If you have a MPA transcript from Golden Gate University, all of the graduate-level courses on that transcript can be used for graduate credit courses, regardless of the course number. However, the transcript must clearly show that it is a graduate-level transcript. Each time that you use the graduate-level transcript as supporting documentation in the FM LMS, you should include a note in the Comment section of the FM LMS that tells the Supervisor that the transcript is a graduate-level transcript and all courses provide 400-level credit.

For a full explanation of how to use the academic matrices, use the following resources – and be sure to talk to your supervisor as you go.

[April Newsletter](#) (see page 3)  
[Practical Exercise](#)

7. **Can course hours gained from academic courses (from a university/college) be used to satisfy the "Other Required Courses" requirements? For example, can I use college courses such as Business Ethics PHI-328 to satisfy the course hours in Ethics, or is it mandatory to take the web-based training on the Learning Management System?**

No, academic courses may not be substituted for the "Other Required Courses". One of the program's goals is to develop standardized language across DoD financial management organizations in key areas such as Audit Readiness, Ethics, and Fiscal Law --- or in fundamental subjects such as Accounting or Budget as in DoD FM 101. Commercial or academic courses may share similar topics, but with the "Other Required Courses" requirement, we are creating a mechanism through which all DoD FMers will learn about these subjects as they apply to the unique DoD environment. We are not considering a change in this policy.

Please note that academic courses may be used (if properly aligned and approved) to satisfy other course hour requirements for initial certification, as well as Continuous Education and Training requirements (CETs) after you've earned your certification.

Visit [FM myLearn](#) and select the "Substitutions" tab on the left-hand side to find descriptions for courses that are approved substitutes for "Other Required Courses" in Audit Readiness, Fiscal Law and Ethics.

8. **Are unofficial transcripts accepted as "Achievement Documentation"?**

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Yes, unofficial transcripts are acceptable forms of documentation.

**9. I have taken prior financial management training that I think fulfills course hour requirements for initial certification. These courses are not in FM myLearn; who should I contact about getting credit for these course hours?**

Contact your organization's [FM Certification POC](#). To earn credit for financial management training that isn't already included in FM myLearn, follow the four steps outlined below to have your prior education and training considered for fulfillment.

1. Fill out the LMS Course Submission Template located [here](#).
2. Send the template to your Course Manager, along with the course syllabus.
3. The Course Manager will review it and submit to a Governing Body for review.
4. If your submission is approved, your course will be aligned to competencies and proficiency levels. After the course is properly aligned, it will eventually appear in the LMS for you to select.

**10. I have taken a lot of FM and leadership education and training in the past. Can I get credit for courses I took 20 years ago?**

Yes, regardless of how long ago you took an FM-related course, you may still use it to meet initial FM Certification requirements. You may not use past education and training to meet CET requirements once you have earned the initial certification.

Click [here](#) to view the Practical Exercise training video on how to earn credit for this education/training.

**11. I have completed courses which are aligned to a different level than what my position requires. Are those course hours of any value?**

If you are completing courses at the next higher level, and you have not completed initial course hour requirements for your level, then those courses will only count toward certification requirements in the future, if you are assigned to a position at the next level. When that happens, you may record those courses in the DoD FM LMS to satisfy requirements in your new position.

After you have completed initial certification requirements, course hours taken at a different level can be used to sustain certification count as CETs. Click [here](#) for more information.

**12. Can I take credit hours at a higher proficiency level (PL) than what's required for my certification and use them to fill the lower PL requirements?**

Generally, you will take courses at the specified PL. However, for the Alternate Track at Certification Level 2 and 3, and for the Leadership requirement at Level 3, you may take courses at the designated PL level or higher.

**13. I've already taken a Fiscal Law Course provided by my organization. Can I use this course as a substitution?**

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The DoD FM Certification recognizes that there may be other courses that provide Fiscal Law, Audit Readiness, or Ethics courses that satisfy mandatory course hour requirements. These courses may be used only if they have been recommended by your Component Functional Community Manager and approved by the OSD Functional Community Manager as approved substitutes. You may search for approved substitute courses on FM myLearn or within the DoD FM LMS course list for that achievement.

**14. I am a civilian with prior military experience in financial management. Will that experience count toward meeting the experience requirement for my certification level?**

Yes. Prior military experience in financial management counts toward your DoD FM experience requirement.

**15. If I retire from the military and become a government employee will my training, education, and/or experience count toward meeting certification requirements?**

Yes, you may use your FM and leadership-related education, training, and experience to meet FM Certification requirements.

Click [here](#) to view the Practical Exercise training video on how to earn credit for this education/training.

**16. As a previous contractor for a DoD FM office, can those years of experience count as DoD FM experience required for certification? What about experience in other parts of the federal government as a FM employee?**

Yes, if your work was performing, supervising, or managing services of a fiscal, financial management, accounting, auditing, cost, or budgetary nature within DoD, then it can be used as FM experience regardless of your organization or status.

To ensure you receive credit for this experience, your supervisor will have to provide a memorandum for record (MFR) to validate your FM experience. Click [here](#) to download the MFR.

**17. If I have FM experience outside the 05XX series, can I still get credit for that experience?**

Yes, if your work was performing, supervising, or managing services of a fiscal, financial management, accounting, auditing, cost, or budgetary nature within DoD, then it can be used for FM experience regardless of your organization or status.

To ensure you receive credit for this experience, your supervisor will have to provide a memorandum for record (MFR) to validate your FM experience. Click [here](#) to download the MFR.

## Acquisition (DAWIA):

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**1. I sit in a Defense Acquisition Workforce Improvement Act (DAWIA)-coded position. Will I be required to complete both position-based certifications?**

Yes, if you are assigned to a position that is coded DoD FM Certification and DAWIA Business-FM, Business-Cost Estimating, or Auditing, you must complete both the DoD FM Certification and the Acquisition Certification requirements. However, much of your Acquisition training can count toward FM Certification requirements and years of experience can be applied to both certifications.

The FM and Acquisition communities developed a pathway to certification that gives credit for Acquisition courses with FM and Leadership content requirements for DAWIA certified personnel in Business-Financial Management, Business-Cost Estimating, and Acquisition-Audit. The Senior FM Leadership Group approved members dual-coded at the same level and higher to use the reduced curricula in the FM LMS. Click [here](#) to view the reduced requirements for acquisition-coded financial managers.

**Note:** A Memorandum for Record (MFR) signed by a DACM can be used for documentation when ALL required acquisition training is complete, but the FM member does not have enough experience to obtain Acquisition Certification.

*Tip: Completing both certifications may require a time waiver for meeting FM Certification requirements; Certification Component Administrators are encouraged to provide favorable consideration to personnel in this situation for waivers for the two-year time requirement to achieve FM certification.*

**2. I was recently assigned to a new position that requires both DAWIA and FM certifications. Which one should I do first?**

FM members must complete Acquisition Certification requirements first in order to receive credit for reduced requirements. Upload your DAWIA certificate into the FM LMS first and then complete the reduced curriculum. See answer to question 1 above.

**3. Once I'm DAWIA and FM certified, will the continuing education/training hours that I take count for both certifications?**

Yes, click [here](#) for more details.

**4. Both the FM Certification and DAWIA require training in Fiscal Law. Do I have to complete both training requirements?**

For FM members who sit in a DAWIA Acquisition-Auditing-coded position and hold a current certification, Fiscal Law is required at all three levels. If you've completed a DAU-approved substitute for Fiscal Law then you may upload your completion certificate as a substitute.

For FM members who sit in a DAWIA Business-Cost Estimating or Business-Financial Management-coded position and hold a current certification, the Fiscal Law requirement is already met. The Fiscal Law courses from DAWIA Business-Cost Estimating and DAWIA

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Business-Financial Management will satisfy the Fiscal Law requirement for the FM Certification at all three levels.

**5. I'm a DAWIA level 3 certified FMer. My position is coded as a Level 2 for the DoD FM Certification. If my certifications do not match, can I still apply DAWIA training to DoD FM Certification requirements?**

The Senior FM Leadership Group approved members dual-coded at the same level and higher to use the reduced curricula in the FM LMS. Click [here](#) to view the reduced requirements for Acquisition-coded financial managers. There are many DAU courses that meet the DAWIA requirements that are listed in FM myLearn. You can use any of these courses to meet your FM requirements by recording them in the LMS as you would any other "external" course. Just follow the 3-step process: (1) record learning, (2) record documentation, and (3) request approval. For more information on the 3-step process, see the [LMS User Quick Guide](#). If you have other questions, be sure to review the step-by-step instructions found in the job aids.

## Course Search & Web-based Training:

**1. How do I search for courses using FM myLearn?**

[DoD FM myLearn](#) is the e-catalog of FM courses (DoD, Federal Non-DoD, and Commercial) aligned to all of the FM competencies. There are presently over 2,200 courses listed in the e-catalog to include both web-based and instructor-led courses. Each course has an information page describing the course content and competency alignment and POC information on how to enroll in the course. For commercial courses, you will need to go to the vendor website to find and enroll in the course. To find specific courses use the filters on the left-hand side of the FM myLearn homepage (which are cumulative). For example, you can select "Competency" and then sort by "Proficiency Level" and then by "Delivery Method". For leadership courses, select the "Leadership Competency" tab. For commercial courses, select the "Commercial" tab.

To reset the filters, select "Clear Filters" to start a new search. You can also search via keyword using the "keyword" search field. This can be further filtered using the filters above and/or including the component or subject area from the drop down menu under the search box if that information is known.

**2. Where can I find and take the OUSD(C)-developed web-based courses?**

The OUSD(C)-developed web-based courses are listed in FM myLearn like any course aligned to the Certification Program. To find them go to [FM myLearn](#). Click on the "OUSD(C) WBT" filter on the top left tab, then click on "WBT Course Listing".

The OUSD(C)-developed web-based courses can be launched in both the FM LMS (requires enrollment in the FM Certification Program) and from FM myLearn. They may be launched from FM myLearn by finding the course and clicking on the "take the web-based training course!" button in the top left corner of the course information sheet.





If you would like to take the course in the FM LMS, please refer to the job aid [“How to Find and Launch an Internal Course in the DoD FM LMS.”](#)

**3. Can I take courses from DoD organizations other than my own?**

Yes, FM myLearn is an e-catalog of all courses across DoD organizations aligned to FM and leadership competencies to date. As you search for courses in FM myLearn, be sure to check the course’s pre-requisites to see if you are eligible to take the course (i.e., some organizations have restrictions on external students).

**4. What do I do if my academic course isn't a 'close match' to a sample course in the Academic Matrix and also doesn't appear on the Academic Course Search?**

If your course is 'not a close match' to sample course titles in the Academic Matrix and doesn't appear in Academic Course Search results, we recommend contacting your organization’s Course Manager about submitting a [Course Submission Template](#) to request your academic course be reviewed for alignment to FM Certification requirements.

**5. How do I print a certificate for the web-based courses taken in the FM LMS or FM myLearn?**

The course certificates are system generated. If you took the course in [FM myLearn](#), go to the "OUSD(C) WBT" tab on the top left corner, click on "My WBT Training," then go to the specific course and print the certificate.

If you took the course in the FM LMS we recommend reviewing the following job aid ["How to Obtain a NASBA Certificate of Completion in the DoD FM LMS."](#) You must have completed the exam and course evaluation to be able to print a certificate.

**6. I took several courses in either the FM LMS or FM myLearn, and passed the exams, but was not forwarded to submit an evaluation nor can I print a certificate. What am I doing wrong?**

In this situation it is possible that you did not complete the “Post Results” box by entering your name and email address, then clicking “send”. If this does not resolve the issue, email [dodfmcertificationprogram@mail.mil](mailto:dodfmcertificationprogram@mail.mil).

## Financial Management Learning Management System (LMS):

**1. What is the FM LMS?**

The FM Learning Management System (LMS) is a web-based system where you will track your progress toward obtaining and sustaining FM Certification. It is also where your organization’s leadership will “administer” or monitor the program by approving certification approval requests or printing out reports to track your organization’s certification achievements.

**2. How do I get access to the DoD FM LMS?**

Once your supervisor notifies you that you are now included in the DoD FM Certification Program, you will receive an email containing a user name and PIN. This will allow you to





log on to the LMS for the first time. After that first log on, the system will be CAC-enabled, allowing you to log on without a user name and PIN. However, you need to maintain the user name and PIN as you are required to enter them when you submit achievements to your supervisor for approval. Also, supervisors will need to enter their user name/PIN when they approve your achievements in the LMS.

### 3. How do I find my User ID and/or reset my PIN?

Your User ID can be found by clicking on your name in top right corner once you are logged into the FM LMS (which is CAC-enabled, no password).

You will need to contact your [Certification POC](#) to reset your PIN which is only used to record and submit achievements.

### 4. Can I access the FM LMS from home?

The LMS functions best from your desktop computer at work or remotely from a government laptop. Some have accessed the LMS remotely through other devices such as the MOBIKEY, but have reported a loss of some functionality when attempting to take web-based courses remotely. When possible, we recommend you complete the web-based courses hosted on the LMS from your desktop computer.

*Tip: If you are having difficulty completing an action inside the FM LMS, contact FM LMS Help Desk for assistance.*

*Phone: 1-800-735-1236*

*Email: [icompasslms@gpstrategies.com](mailto:icompasslms@gpstrategies.com)*

### 5. Where can I find step-by-step instructions for navigating the Learning Management System?

FM Online provides detailed instructions for completing tasks within the Learning Management System. Job Aids for each role (User, Supervisor, Component Certification Authority, and Component Administrator) are provided [here](#).

### 6. What is the three-step process for completing an achievement in the FM LMS?

As you're learning to navigate the FM LMS, you will follow a three-step process to gain approval for completed DoD FM Certification requirements, or achievements. For step-by-step instructions on the three-step process, view the training video [Three-step Process in the DoD FM LMS](#).

- 1) Record Learning – Use the system to record completed courses aligned to DoD FM Certification requirements. You will record learning for one or more course(s) until the number of hours required for a certain competency is complete.
- 2) Record Documentation – Simply record learning for documentation and upload documentation (completion certificates or academic transcripts) for the courses

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recorded in step one. Make sure that you save your completion documentation as ONE PDF file per requirement.

Also note that you only need to provide documentation for courses that you are using to satisfy certification requirements. Please be aware, the FM LMS will not accept a PDF file larger than 800kb.

- 3) Request Achievement Approval – Once you’ve satisfied, or achieved, each certification requirement, submit that achievement for supervisor approval.

***Tip:** This three-step process will be repeated for each achievement documented in the FM LMS until you’ve met all the requirements for your level. Once you’ve completed all the requirements, or achievements, at your level, you’ll need to request approval of your overall certification level. The FM LMS will automatically route your certification to your supervisor, then the Approver Level 2 (A2), if appropriate, and finally your organization’s Component Certification Authority (CCA).*

**7. I have taken courses with hours aligned to Financial Stewardship, Audit Reporting and Audit Planning and Management. Why don’t these course hours show up in the FM LMS?**

The FM Certification Program uses 17 of the 23 FM Competencies. Financial Stewardship, Financial Management and Reporting Analysis, and Financial Reporting permeate every facet of financial management and so do not align to a specific certification level.

Audit Planning & Management, Audit Reporting, and Decision Support are not in certification course requirements because not every DoD FMer has a need to understand the complexities of the audit process.

If you take courses aligned to these competencies, they cannot be used to meet initial certification requirements, but they do qualify for CET hours.

**8. My certification submission was rejected in the quality assurance process and I received an email with several codes on it. What do the codes mean?**

Most submissions are rejected in the quality assurance process because either a requirement was not met and/or the documentation for a specific requirement was not correct and/or it contained Personally Identifiable Information (PII). The description for the codes in the email can be found on the job aid [“How to Read the Competency Acronym and Denial Comments in DoD FM LMS.”](#)

**9. How do I make corrections/deletions to my training/education in my FM LMS record?**  
Contact your [Component Administrator](#) to have that record corrected or deleted.

**10. What documentation do people need to validate training to be approved for loading in the LMS?**

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You will need to upload documentation that reflects your successful completion of training used to satisfy FM Certification requirements – meaning, you need some kind of “proof” validating completion. For example, documentation could include transcripts, certificates of completion, letters of completion, etc.

If you cannot obtain proper documentation, your supervisor may sign and submit a memorandum for record (MFR) in place of documentation. Click [here](#) to download the MFR. Please note that there is a sunset clause on the ability to use the MFR for documentation that expires after the initial two years of implementation.

***Tip:** To record documentation, upload documentation (completion certificates or academic transcripts) for the courses recorded in step one. Make sure that you save your completion documentation as ONE PDF file per requirement. Also note that you only need to provide documentation for courses that you are using to satisfy certification requirements. Please be aware, the FM LMS will not accept a PDF file larger than 800kb.*

#### **11. What constitutes Personal Information in the FM LMS?**

For a listing of common personal information that cannot be stored in the FM LMS and results in certification rejection during the audit process includes please see the [Personal Information slide](#).

#### **12. If my job position is aligned to Certification Level 1 or 2, and I have completed a course aligned to level 3, will that course be populated in my LMS profile for me to submit for approval?**

It depends. Since the FM LMS provides information unique to your certification requirements, you will only be able to view courses that meet requirements at your level. If a course is aligned to multiple levels, then it is populated in the FM LMS for all applicable levels, but you will only be able to view the course hours aligned to your curriculum, or requirements.

If the course is solely aligned to a level outside your required certification level, you will not see it appear in your FM LMS profile until you are assigned to a position at the higher level.

Click [here](#) for more information.

#### **13. I have completed an OUSD(C)-developed web-based course. I passed the test, but did not receive a course completion certificate. Where can I find that?**

The course certificates are system generated. If you took the course in the FM LMS we recommend reviewing the job aid "[How to Obtain a NASBA Certificate of Completion in the DoD FM LMS.](#)"

You must have completed the exam and course evaluation to be able to print a certificate.

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You must complete the course evaluation in order to be able to print out the certificate. For additional assistance, the job aid entitled [“How to Upload Documentation in the DoD FM LMS”](#) will walk you through how to upload your certificate to the FM LMS.

Other job aids are located [here](#).

**14. Component Administrators have a different “view” on their screen and in the LMS than their users when the administrator is not in an FM-coded position. How can administrators see what the user sees?**

The Component Administrators (CAs) have the ability to see exactly what the user sees with a feature called Proxy. In the learning management system, the CA navigates to “User” in the Admin tools and in the right side menu, click on “Launch Proxy”.

**15. Under what conditions can a supervisor deny my request for an achievement or certification?**

Supervisors may deny achievements if all requirements for the achievement are not met or if inadequate documentation was uploaded into the FM LMS. Documentation should be accurate, verifiable, and auditable and not contain any [Personally Identifiable Information \(PII\)](#). Supervisors must work with participants to explain why the achievement was denied and identify a path for approval.

*Reminder:* Supervisors do not approve requests for certification; they only recommend approval or disapproval to your organization’s Component Certification Authority.

**16. I have submitted the final request to have my certification report reviewed by my CCA for completion, but I haven’t received any feedback. Is there anything else that I must do?**

This question should be directed to your component. Follow up with them by email using the points of contact found on the [FM Certification POC](#) page.

**17. What happens to my training record in the FM LMS if I leave DoD and come back?**

If you leave the DoD or move to a position not requiring FM Certification within the DoD, your record in the DoD FM LMS, including completed web-based training and completed achievements, goes into an “inactive status” for a period of time no less than 5 years. If you move back into a position requiring FM Certification then your record is “reactivated” after an arrival transaction is completed by your gaining organization in the military or civilian personnel systems of record. Lastly, when you are awarded an FM Certification it is recorded in the appropriate Personnel Data System (e.g., DCPDS for DoD Civilians).

## Continuing Education and Training (CETs) Hours:

**1. How can I earn CET credits?**

There are several ways to earn CET credits once you have achieved certification. Remember, the purpose of the CET requirement is to ensure you are continuously sharpening your skills through education and training.





The first way to earn CETs is through the education and training you complete to sustain certification in any of the [DoD-recognized FM test-based certification programs](#). These credits can be simultaneously credited to your CET and Continuing Professional Education (CPE) requirements, on a unit-to-unit basis. In other words, if you are a CDFM or CGFM, etc. and you earn continuing education credit through these programs, those CPEs can also be counted for CETs on a unit-to-unit basis. This includes credits earned by attending FM or leadership-related workshops, seminars, and symposia sponsored by the respective association.

This same policy goes towards those of you who are included in the DAWIA program. Your Continuous Learning Points (CLPs) will count as CETs on a unit-for-unit basis. Click [here](#) for more information on Acquisition.

The second way you can earn CETs is by completing any course listed in the FM myLearn e-catalog. Each aligned course hour credit is equal to one CET hour.

Lastly, if you are taking academic courses, you may count financial management-related Continuing Education Units (CEU) credits toward CETs based on the following equation: one CEU equals 10 CETs. CEUs are granted by accredited academic organizations, so refer to your academic institution for additional information.

## 2. How do I document CETs?

While you do not have to upload documentation (i.e. completion certificates) for Continuing Education and Training requirements within the FM LMS, you do have to record them. Use the job aid entitled "[How to Record CETs in the DoD FM LMS](#)" to review the step-by-step process.

According to DoDI 1300.26 para 4.c.(5) "FM workforce members are responsible for recording achievement of CET achievements in their respective FM LMS accounts and for maintaining documentation of CET achievements." However, there is no requirement to upload the certificate. The member should maintain that for their own record.

## 3. Once I've achieved my certification, can I take other courses I find on FM myLearn to fulfill my CETs?

Yes, FM myLearn is an e-catalog that provides course information on hundreds of courses that can be used to satisfy Continuing Education and Training (CET) requirements. As you search for courses in [FM myLearn](#), be sure to check the course's pre-requisites to see if you are eligible to take the course (i.e., some organizations have restrictions on students).

## 4. Can I get retroactive credit for CETs?

No. Credit for CETs can only be granted by courses/activities completed after you've completed your initial FM Certification.

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**5. Do courses I am taking for my master's degree count toward CETs?**

Yes; if the courses are related to financial management or leadership and are completed after you earn your initial certification, they count toward CETs. One Continuing Education Unit (CEU) is equal to 10 CETs.

**6. As an auditor (job series 0511), I am already required to obtain 80 hours of training every two years. Will these Continuous Learning Points (CLPs) also count toward FM Certification Continuous Education and Training (CET) requirements?**

Yes. Education and training completed to sustain certification in any of the [DoD-recognized FM test-based certification programs](#) can be simultaneously credited to your CET and CLP requirements, on a unit-to-unit basis.

**7. My other certification uses "instructional hours" for Continuing Professional Education (CPE). These hours are quantified as only 50 minutes. Would that still count as a full CET hour for this program?**

As long as the CET/CPE hours for [DoD-recognized FM test-based certification programs](#) are at least 50 minutes long, you may count them toward your FM Certification as well on a unit-to-unit basis.

**8. Do I get Continuing Professional Education (CPE) credits for courses completed within the FM LMS (e.g., Ethics for Senior Management)?**

Certification courses\* launched from the DoD FM LMS meet the standards established by the National Association of State Boards of Accountancy (NASBA) and can be applied toward other certifications, such as Certified Public Accountant. Click [here](#) to view DoD-recognized FM test-based certification programs.

\*Certification courses provide initial credit for FM Certification or if certification has already been achieved may provide CETs. The web-based training focused on how to use the DoD FM LMS does not grant CPE credit.

***Tip:** To print your course completion certificate with the number of CPE credits earned, follow these steps:*

1. In the FM LMS, select "Reports"
2. Click "FM Course Completion Certificate"
3. Choose the preferred courses
4. Select the "Run Reports" buttons to the right to generate your certificate

## Test-based Certifications:

**1. I have a test-based certification in a financial management specialty. Will that training go toward fulfilling the competency requirements?**

Yes, as long as you have documentation or proof of completion and the training has been aligned to the FM competency requirements, the education or training you take in preparation for a DoD-approved FM certification (e.g., CDFM, CISA, CFE, etc.) may be





counted toward DoD FM Certification requirements – either as [CETs](#) or course hours, if the training qualifies as a [course](#).

Click [here](#) to view the Practical Exercise training video on how to earn credit for this education/training.

**2. How do professional certifications, like Certified Public Accountant (CPA), Certified Defense Financial Manager (CDFM), Certified Government Financial Manager (CGFM), etc., relate to mandatory requirements of FM Certification levels?**

With the exception of DAWIA certifications (see [Acquisition](#)), there is no overlap between certifications granted by professional associations and the DoD FM Certification Program.

However, classes you take for [DoD-recognized test-based certifications](#) may be aligned to the FM Certification competency requirements. If so, the training can be used to help meet your initial certification requirements.

Click [here](#) to view the Practical Exercise training video on how to earn credit for this education/training. Click [here](#) to view more information on earning CETs.

**3. I heard that test-based certifications (e.g., Certified Defense Financial Manager Certification (CDFM)) are requirements for Certification Levels 2 and 3. I do not have a test-based certification. Will this preclude me from being able to earn the DoD FM Certification?**

No, test-based certifications are not mandatory for earning the DoD FM Certification. However, they are recommended at Certification Levels 2 and 3 for career broadening. For a list of DoD-recognized test-based FM certifications, click [here](#).

## Waivers:

**1. Can I be grandfathered into the program?**

No, there is no grandfathering. However, education and training you have successfully completed in the past may satisfy certification requirements and any DoD FM experience may count towards the experience requirement for your level.

Click [here](#) to view the Practical Exercise training video on how to earn credit for this education/training.

**2. I do not have the minimum of two years DoD financial management experience as required by the certification. However, I have been in financial management in outside organizations for the required number of years. Is there a waiver policy for DoD financial management experience?**

No. The DoD FM Experience requirement of two years at each certification level cannot be waived. However, you will have two years to meet certification requirements once you are placed in your position, so by default everyone will meet the required two years of DoD experience.

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### 3. What is the process for course requirement waivers?

The only course waivers are for DoD FM 101 modules at Certification Level 1. The Component Certification Authority (CCA) has authority to waive up to 6 of the 12 modules (except for Audit Readiness).

The CCA may also choose not to waive any modules or to waive fewer than 6. These waivers are processed through the FM LMS and you may request them when you submit your request for certification in the FM LMS. Click [here](#) to view the job aid entitled "How to Record a Waiver in the DoD FM LMS," which details this process.

**NOTE:** Your CCA may require you to upload documentation to support your waiver request.

### 4. Is there a waiver or exemption of the certification program training for FM members who plan to retire before their two year period expires?

No. One of the certification's main goals is to provide a professional development framework for employees and to encourage continuous learning throughout the full life-cycle of your career, regardless of where you are your career path. Since one's circumstances can sometimes change, employees who think that they will retire within two years are still highly encouraged to begin working on the certification required by their position.

### 5. The DoD FM 101 course waiver provision allows up to a maximum of 6 modules to be waived (with the exception of the Audit Readiness module). If someone receives a waiver for X number of modules, does that mean their course hour requirement for earning the FM Certification Level 1 will be reduced by an equivalent number of course hours?

If a supervisor approves a waiver for some of the DoD FM 101 modules, the total number of course hours required to achieve certification are reduced accordingly.

### 6. Is there a time extension (waiver) process for employees who do not achieve certification within the requisite timeframe?

Yes, if you need additional time to complete your FM Certification, you may request a time extension (waiver) from your organization's Component Certification Authority (CCA). CCAs have the flexibility to grant time extensions in one-year increments if the employee has provided adequate justification for their request.

