

Assessment Agencies for Professional Qualifications Frequently Asked Questions

A. Accreditation

1. What are AAPQ and PQAA?

The Accreditation of Assessment Agencies for Professional Qualifications (AAPQ) is a scheme to take forward the alignment of professional qualifications under the Hong Kong Qualifications Framework (HKQF). Professional Qualifications Assessment Agency (PQAA) refers to an institution, organisation or other body who is appointed by the Secretary for Education (SED). An appointed PQAA is responsible for developing and operating Professional Qualifications for the industry, developing a robust assessment to assess individual and issuing QF-recognised Professional Qualifications to individual and register them in the Qualifications Register (QR).

Please refer to [HKCAAVQ website](#) for more details.

2. What are the major impacts to the learners after HKIB is accredited as PQAA?

The learners can be awarded the QF-recognised Professional Qualifications. The professional status of the Professional Qualifications holders can be further enhanced with the well-recognised Hong Kong Qualifications Framework (HKQF) standards.

3. What is the difference between Learning Programme Accreditation (LPA) and Accreditation of Assessment Agencies for Professional Qualifications (AAPQ)?

The training, assessment and certification process for both LPA and AAPQ are the same. The major difference is the recognition under the Qualifications Framework (QF) lies at the Programme Level or Professional Qualification Level. For LPA, learners will be awarded a QF-recognised Certificate/Diploma upon completion of the training and passing the assessment. For AAPQ, candidates will be awarded a QF-recognised Professional Qualifications upon completion of the training and passing the assessment as well as fulfilling HKIB's required working experience.

4. What are the benefits I can get from AAPQ?

There are numerous benefits not just to the candidates, but also to other stakeholders.

For candidates:

- A clear path to achieve professionalism and career development
- Enhance mobility within the industry with a strong and recognised professional qualification
- Provide more flexibility and a streamlined training journey
- Faster attainment of local professional qualification by overseas professionals via the cross-region/international mutual recognition

For employers:

- A common qualification benchmark
- A more efficient and streamlined training journey
- An effective use of training budget
- Fulfilment of regulatory expectations and requirements
- Increased recruitment efficiency

For banking industry/government/other stakeholders:

- A transparent set of professional standards for attracting local and international talent to the industry
- Aligned standards to support capacity building
- Higher competency of individual practitioners to ensure the quality and sustainability of talent pool
- Enhanced industry reputation locally and globally

5. Which HKIB’s Professional Qualifications are accredited and in what QF Levels are being pitched at under AAPQ?

There are 17 HKIB QF-recognised Professional Qualifications pitched at QF Levels 4 to 6. They are listed as below:

Professional Qualification	QF Level	Validity Period		QR Registration No.
		From	To	
Certified Banker (CB)	6	1 August 2020	31 July 2025	20/000543/L6
Certified Anti-Money Laundering Professional (CAMLPL)	5	1 August 2020	31 July 2025	20/000538/L5
Associate Anti-Money Laundering Professional (AAMLPL)	4	1 August 2020	31 July 2025	20/000535/L4
Associate Cybersecurity Professional (ACsP)	4	1 August 2020	31 July 2025	20/000537/L4
Certified Credit Risk Management Professional (Commercial Lending) (CCRP(CL))	6	1 August 2020	31 July 2025	20/000541/L6
Certified Credit Risk Management Professional (Credit Portfolio Management) (CCRP(CPM))	6	1 August 2020	31 July 2025	20/000542/L6
Associate Credit Risk Management Professional (ACRP)	5	1 August 2020	31 July 2025	20/000540/L5
Certified Retail Wealth Professional (CRWP)	5	1 August 2020	31 July 2025	20/000539/L5
Associate Retail Wealth Professional (ARWP)	4	1 August 2020	31 July 2025	20/000536/L4
Certified Operational Risk Management Professional (CORP)	5	1 November 2021	31 July 2025	21/001160/L5

Professional Qualification	QF Level	Validity Period		QR Registration No.
		From	To	
Associate Operational Risk Management Professional (AORP)	4	1 November 2021	31 July 2025	21/001159/L4
Certified Fintech Professional (Management) (CPFinT(M))	6	1 November 2022	31 July 2025	22/000867/L6
Certified Fintech Professional (Specialist - Artificial Intelligence and Big Data Stream) Certified Fintech Professional (CPFinT(S-AIBD))	6	1 November 2022	31 July 2025	22/000868/L6
Certified Fintech Professional (Specialist - Distributed Ledger Technology Stream) (CPFinT(S-DLT))	6	1 November 2022	31 July 2025	22/000869/L6
Certified Fintech Professional (Specialist - Open Banking and Application Programming Interface Stream) (CPFinT(S-OBAPI))	6	1 November 2022	31 July 2025	22/000870/L6
Certified Fintech Professional (Specialist - Regulatory Technology Stream) (CPFinT(S-RT))	6	1 November 2022	31 July 2025	22/000871/L6
Associate Fintech Professional (CPFinT(A))	5	12 September 2022	31 July 2025	22/000742/L5

6. How does AAPQ affect my existing learning pathway?

Your existing learning pathway remains unchanged.

7. How do the general public know I am a holder of a QF-recognised Professional Qualification or a non-QF-recognised Professional Qualification?

For those with a QF-recognised or a non-QF-recognised Professional Qualification, the general public can check the status on the Registers of Certified Individuals (CI) in the Membership page of the HKIB website.

8. How will the QF level be affected after AAPQ?

The QF Level of the 17 Professional Qualifications is benchmarked with the current relevant QF-recognised programmes (i.e. CB – QF Level 6). Thus, there is no change on the QF Level of the Professional Qualifications under AAPQ.

9. Why are CB (Stage I) and CB (Stage II) not accredited as QF-recognised Professional Qualifications?

It is the strategic decision for not pursuing the QF accreditation for CB (Stage I) and CB (Stage II) now with an aim at allowing more flexibility for learners to proceed the CB Professional Qualifications pathway to the CB Stage as holistic banker. HKIB will conduct the review regularly on its strategy related to the Professional Qualifications.

10. What are the roles of an appointed PQAA under the Qualifications Framework (QF)?

In accordance with [Guidance Notes of AAPQ by HKCAAVQ](#), the roles of the appointed PQAA are:

- To assess the knowledge, skills and experience acquired by individuals in relation to a profession or industry; and
- To issue the Professional Qualifications it has developed and operates in recognition of such assessed knowledge, skills and experience. The qualifications selected for accreditation would be recognised under the Hong Kong Qualifications Framework (HKQF) and registered in the Qualifications Register (QR).

11. Where can I obtain further information about AAPQ and PQAA?

For further details about the accreditation of Assessment Agencies for Professional Qualifications, please visit the website of HKCAAVQ at

https://www.hkcaavq.edu.hk/en/services/accreditation/other_accreditation_services_under_QF.

For further details about the recognition of Professional Qualifications under the HKQF, please visit the website of the Qualifications Framework (QF) at

<https://www.hkqf.gov.hk/en/rpq/index.html>.

B. Training

12. Is there any change in terms of programme structure (e.g. training contents, syllabus, learning hours, entry requirements, etc.) after HKIB is appointed as PQAA?

The programme structure remains unchanged under AAPQ. However, regular programme review will still be done for quality assurance purpose. Hence the programme structure may be adjusted whenever necessary.

C. Assessment

13. Do I need to complete training before attending the assessment after AAPQ?

The requirement of completion of training before attending the assessment remains unchanged. The objective of this requirement is to facilitate learners in acquiring sufficient professional knowledge and guidance from the trainers as well as with opportunities to share practical experience with other learners before attending the assessment.

14. Is there any change of the exemption policy under AAPQ?

Under AAPQ, the exemption policy of respective Professional Qualifications remains unchanged.

D. Certification

15. Will my existing non-QF-recognised Professional Qualifications be affected under AAPQ?

No, the existing non-QF-recognised Professional Qualifications remain valid and they are still being recognised by the Hong Kong Monetary Authority (HKMA).

16. Currently I am a non-QF-recognised Professional Qualification holder, how could I get a QF-recognised Professional Qualification after AAPQ?

If you are currently a holder of HKIB non-QF-recognised Professional Qualification, you are not required to attain the QF-recognised Professional Qualification. It is because both QF-recognised and non-QF-recognised Professional Qualifications are recognised by the HKMA and the Banking industry in Hong Kong.

However, if you would like to pursue for a “QF-recognised” Professional Qualification, you need to take the assessment under AAPQ and apply for the certification application again.

17. Is there any change of the certification application process under AAPQ?

The certification application process remains unchanged.

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