Scotland Excel and Improvement Service
Business Analysis Programme: Part 1 Business Analysis Unit and Professional Development Award in Decision Making and Innovation (SCQF Levels 8 & 9)

Scotland Excel and the Improvement Service have joined forces to deliver a Business Analysis Programme, adopting a work-based learning methodology.

The Business Analysis Programme has a broad scope focusing on the practical application of organisational analysis through to planning and implementing outcomes of the analysis. The programme will extend to managing projects and making informed decisions from the information available, including managing stakeholders across the organisation, with an awareness of the commercial aspects of analysis and innovation. All of these components will be considered from a local government context.

Part 1 of the programme will focus on understanding tools for business analysis and how to apply these. The second element will look at how to make proposals and decisions for innovation.

This programme is being created in response to a national shortage of business analysis expertise and expressions of interest from councils that are keen to upskill new or aspiring business analysts. The programme aligns learning with practical application through work-based projects.

What is a Business Analyst?

The term Business Analyst refers to a multitude of roles and specialisms. Its origins came from an IT role centred round the implementation of systems but the role has evolved over the last few decades to include business backgrounds and focuses on using tools and techniques to ensure change is implemented in a holistic approach.

Part 1: Business Analysis Programme	Credits	Location
Part 1 Analysing operations using business analysis tools (H66X 04)	5	Online
Part 2 PDA Decision making and innovation (G9CM 49)		
Decision making for managers (F5GG 36)	16	Online
Management: organisational innovation (J1BX 36)	8	Online

The Business Analysis Programme is intended to provide students with a broad range of skills which support change and innovation. The programme is a flexible career pathway and students can choose courses in line with individual and organisational requirements.

The other courses in the programme include:

- PDA Planning and implementing change (GM7E 49)
- PDA project management (G9CK 48)
- Leadership & management certificate level 5 (5C1V2)
- Leadership & management certificate level 6 (6C1V2)
- CIPS practitioner unit 5: effective negotiation

Each of the courses are accredited either by SQA and CMI or CIPS.
The programme is designed to provide a flexible career pathway from an entry to strategic level and students can select all courses or individual elements in line with individual and organisational requirements.

Why us?

Scotland Excel is the Centre of Procurement Expertise for Scotland's local government sector and is an established CMI Approved Centre and SQA Approved Centre delivering accredited courses through a work-based-learning methodology.

The Scotland Excel Academy Moodle digital platform enhances the learners' experience through interactive learning and easy access to knowledge.

The Improvement Service's purpose is to help councils and their partners to improve the health, quality of life and opportunities of all people in Scotland. We offer a range of support and we are committed to developing the skills and capacity across councils to meet the demands of service delivery.

Essential Information

Who is the course aimed at?

Council staff who are either new or aspiring business analysts or those whose current role involves business analysis but want to consolidate learning.

How will it be delivered?

Due to the current situation, we anticipate that the course will be a blend of virtual delivery (instead of face to face), work-based and online learning over a period of approximately eight months (which will include assignment completion after the final workshop). This will be continually monitored as restrictions are eased.

How is the course assessed?

Each unit within the programme will be assessed through a work-based-learning project relevant to the candidate's work environment.

Course dates

The dates of the workshops for the next cohort of the course are below. Attendance at each of the five dates is compulsory.

- 24th November 2026
- 1st December 2026
- 9th February 2027
- 17th February 2027
- 20th April 2027

Where will the course be delivered?

Due to the current situation, we anticipate that the course will be virtual teaching. If the restrictions are eased, then the course will run from Renfrewshire House in Paisley, subject to demand.

How much does it cost?

The cost of the course is set on the delivery location. Based upon delivery in Paisley or online, the cost per person will be £813 for local authority members of Scotland Excel; £895 for associate members and £976 other public sector candidates.

What qualification will I receive if I successfully complete?

On successful completion the candidates will receive the following professional qualifications:

1. SQA analysing organisations using business analysis tools unit at SCQF8
2. SQA PDA decision making and innovation at SCQF9

How much time will it take me?

Working on the basis 1 SCQF credit = 10 hours of effort, the number of learning hours for this course will be approximately 305 hours.

How do I book a place on the programme?

Register your place, express an interest, or request further information by contacting Laurie Anne Campbell, Academy Tutor at laurie.campbell@scotland-excel.org.uk or telephone 0141 488 6693.

General information about the programme, and the Scotland Excel Academy, can be found aby clicking the following link: Scotland Excel Academy