



Clear Path to Cash Professional



Syllabus

February 2024

1 Introduction

The Clear Path to Cash qualification is currently offered at Foundation level only. This syllabus is based on the following courses:

- The Clear Path To Cash Course – The technical side of the advisory services and introduction of the financial concepts that can be used with clients.
- The Pathfinder Course – The structural side of building an advisory services program from 'creating your offer' to executing it with clients.

The primary purpose of the syllabus is to provide a basis for certification of people involved with setting up financial advisory services using the Clear Path to Cash and Pathfinder courses.

It documents the learning outcomes related to the use of the Clear Path to Cash qualification and describes the scope of the requirements a candidate is expected to meet to demonstrate that these learning outcomes have been achieved.

The target audience for this document is:

- Exam Panel
- APMG Assessment Team

This syllabus informs the design of the exams and provides a more detailed breakdown of what the exams will assess. Details on the exam structure and content are documented in the Clear Path to Cash Foundation Design.

2 Foundation Qualification

2.1 Purpose of the Foundation Qualification

The purpose of the Foundation qualification is to measure whether a candidate has sufficient knowledge and understanding of the Clear Path to Cash course content to act as an informed advisor to identify and help correct the fundamental failures in financial management within small businesses.

2.2 Target Audience

This qualification is aimed at individuals who are financial advisors of small businesses, who require a working knowledge of the key principles of financial concepts related to the financial management of a company. It is also an introduction to how the financial advisor can build and execute an advisory services program.

2.3 High Level Performance Definition of a Successful Foundation Candidate

The candidate who meets this High Level Performance Definition should, as a minimum, be able to demonstrate understanding of the concepts, approaches and calculations outlined in the text, worksheets and slides of the courses.

For the Clear Path to Cash course, the candidate should specifically be able to demonstrate this understanding by being able to:

- Identify the fundamental failures in financial mis-management – why they happen and how a smart business owner can spot them coming and avoid catastrophe.
- Master the working capital cycle – avoid the trappings of accrual accounting.
- Calculate the drivers of increasing the speed of cash – the levers you can pull to move cash through the business faster.
- Understand how using the magic number (the financial gap) will keep you in business.

- Learn a step-by-step method of keeping your business plan and cash management plan in complete balance.
- Understand the basic difference between profit and cash and what the banker means when they say words like liquidity and solvency.
- Learn the 4 ways to make more money in a company, and the expense control rule that will keep your business alive.
- Discuss the most common ways business owners finance their company, structure debt, and prepare to exit.
- Learn the most missed step in forecasting growth - the impact to the balance sheet and how to use it to fund your future.
- Be introduced to a technique to find hidden cash opportunities within the company by creating a Cash Impact Map.

For the Pathfinder course the candidate should specifically be able to demonstrate this understanding by being able to:

- Build, price, and organize an advisory services offer.
- Develop the ideal client profile and create marketing messages that encourage curiosity, while delivering sales pitches that deliver value.
- Develop a scalable and repeatable client engagement experience from onboarding and training a client, to delivering the right advice at the right time.
- Learn a technique that creates 10x ROI for your clients and encourages them to move up the value chain in your service package offerings.

3 Assessment Model

Each learning outcome in the High Level Performance Definition requires the candidate to demonstrate specific knowledge and skills. For each learning outcome a number of learning outcome measures are identified which are evaluated in the examination, in accordance with the Examination Design, to confirm that the learning outcome has been achieved. These learning outcome measures are shown as syllabus topics and define the scope of the standard required to achieve the qualification.

A classification widely used when designing assessments for certification and education is the Bloom's Taxonomy of Educational Objectives. This classifies learning objectives into six ascending learning levels, each defining a higher degree of competencies and skills. (Bloom et al, 1956, Taxonomy of Educational Objectives).

APMG have incorporated this into a Learning Outcomes Assessment Model that is then used to develop each qualification's Assessment Model. The model provides a simple and systematic means for assessing and classifying the learning outcome measures. .

This structured approach helps to ensure:

- The appropriate level is identified for a qualification
- A clear delineation in learning level content between different qualifications
- Wording is standardized and syllabi are presented consistently across APMG's qualification portfolio
- Exam questions and papers are consistent in their design..

The Foundation qualification examines at levels 1 (recall) and 2 (understand). The Practitioner qualification tests at levels 2 (understand), 3 (apply) and 4 (analyse).

[This qualification examines at levels 1 \(recall\), 2 \(understand\) and 3 \(apply\).](#)

QUAL Assessment Model				
	1. Recall	2. Understand	3. Apply	4. Analyse
APMG Learning Level Definition	<i>remember previously learned information</i>	<i>grasp the meaning and make sense of information</i>	<i>use information to perform a skill or task</i>	<i>identify whether information has been used appropriately according to the rules and guidance</i>
Generic APMG Headers <i>For introducing the learning outcome measures (topics) in the Syllabus</i>	Recall terms and key facts about concepts, principles and procedures from the reference material	Understand key facts, concepts, principles and procedures from the reference material	Apply key facts, concepts, principles and procedures to a given scenario	Differentiate between appropriate and inappropriate use of the reference material in a given scenario
Qualification Example	Recall terms and key facts about concepts, and approaches relating to the Home Run Financial System, Forecasting and Dealing with your Banker	Understand the concepts, approaches and calculations relating to the Clear Path to Cash and Pathfinder materials	Apply particular formula and calculations relating to Mining your Business for Hidden Cash and the Fast Money Formula to a given scenario	N/A

4 Qualification Scope

The definition of scope for each qualification is presented in the syllabus tables at the end of this document. Each syllabus area is a unit of learning that relates to the reference material or training course module.

The following syllabus areas are identified.

Syllabus Area Code	Syllabus Area Title
HR	The Home Run Financial System
FM	Hidden Cash and the Fast Money Formula
FF	Forecasting the Future
PS	Pathfinder Steps

5 Syllabus Presentation

For each syllabus area the learning outcome measures are presented in order of learning level and are introduced by a standard header. There is only one header at each learning level for each syllabus area. The wording in this header is derived from the Assessment Model. Each measure is specific to a learning level.

The scope of each examination is shown by a tick in the respective column to the right of the topic description.

Practitioner qualification requirements are a summation of the Foundation and Practitioner learning outcome measures. All Foundation level requirements are required for Practitioner

level but are assumed to have been met and are not directly assessed again, although Foundation level knowledge and understanding will be used when demonstrating Practitioner application and analysis learning outcomes.

Each of the syllabus areas is presented in a similar format as follows:

Syllabus Area Code		Syllabus Area:	Foundation	Practitioner	Primary References
HR [2]		The Home Run Financial System Syllabus Area (HR) Theme [1]			
Level	Topic				
Recall the structure of the Home Run Financial System. [3]					
Specifically to recall:					
01 [4]	01 [5]	[6] The names of the six calculation areas of The Home Run Financial System	[7] ✓		[8] Don't be a DUMB Business Owner Ch 3 pg 39
01	02				

Key to the Syllabus Area table

1	Syllabus Area	Unit of learning, e.g. course module, key activity area or section of the reference guide.
2	Syllabus Area Code	A unique 2 character code identifying the syllabus area.
3	Learning Level Header	Header introducing the syllabus topics (<i>learning outcome measures</i>) for a given learning level.
4	Level	Learning level of the learning outcome measure.
5	Topic Reference	Number of the topic within the learning level.
6	Topic Description (<i>Learning Outcome Measure</i>)	Precise and specific description of what is required of the candidate to demonstrate that a learning outcome has been achieved.
7	Foundation/Practitioner	Shows at which qualification level the topic is assessed . Note: A measure is only applied at one qualification level.
8	Primary Reference	The main reference supporting the learning outcome measure.

6 Important Points

The following points about the use of the syllabus should be noted.

6.1 Clear Path to Cash References

The references provided should be considered to be indicative rather than comprehensive, i.e. there may be other valid references within the materials.

References are based primarily on the following materials, but the topics will also be covered in the worksheets, slides and other content provided on the course:

- *Don't be a DUMB Business Owner*
- *The 7-minute Conversation*
- *Pathfinder Build, Sell, Execute and Grow Slides*

7 Syllabus Exclusions

There are no syllabus Exclusions.

Syllabus Area Code		Syllabus Area:	Foundation	Practitioner	Primary References
HR		The Home Run Financial System Syllabus Area (HR) Theme			
Level	Topic				
Recall the structure of the Home Run Financial System					
Specifically to recall:					
01	01	The names of the six calculation areas of The Home Run Financial System	✓		Don't be a DUMB Business Owner Ch 3 pg 39
Understand the implications of the calculations of the Home Run Financial System					
Specifically to identify:					
02	01	What you can learn from the following elements in the Home Run Financial System: 1. Trends 2. Expense control	✓		The 7-min Conversation 1. Ch2 pg 15-26 2. Ch3 pg 36,37
02	02	What you can learn from the following elements in the Home Run Financial System: 1. Debt to Equity 2. EBITDA	✓		The 7-min Conversation 3. Ch4 pg 41 4. Ch5 pg 53
02	03	What you can learn from: 1. Mis-matched financing 2. Cash flow Activity Pattern	✓		The 7-min Conversation 1. Ch6 pg 57, 59 2. Ch7 pg 70
Apply the Home Run Financial System calculations to a scenario					
Specifically to:					
03	01	Calculate the Financial Doctor Diagnosis figures: 1. Current Ratio 2. Quick Ratio 3. Debt to Equity Ratio	✓		Don't be a DUMB Business Owner : 1. Ch5 pg 77 2. Ch5 pg 78 3. Ch5 pg 80
03	02	Calculate the Financial Doctor Diagnosis figures: 1. EBITDA figure 2. Profit Margins (Gross/Pre-tax) 3. Return on Assets	✓		Don't be a DUMB Business Owner : 1. Ch3 pg 53 2. Ch5 pg 82, 84 3. Ch5 pg 85

Syllabus Area Code FM		Syllabus Area: Hidden Cash and the Fast Money Formula Syllabus Area (FM) Theme	Foundation	Practitioner	Primary References
Level	Topic				
Recall the concepts in Mining Your Business For Hidden Cash and the Fast Money Formula					
Specifically to recall:					
01	01				
Understand the concepts in Mining Your Business For Hidden Cash and the Fast Money Formula					
Specifically to describe:					
02	01	Fast Money Formula: The theory behind and how to calculate (for both inventory and service based companies): 1. The key ratios of the cash conversion cycle 2. The Cash Gap (days)	✓		Don't be a DUMB Business Owner: 1. Ch5 pg 91-100 2. Ch9 pg 160-169
02	02	Fast Money Formula: The theory behind and how to calculate (for both inventory and service based companies): 1. How much money your company has (working capital) 2. How much money your company needs (working capital requirement) 3. The cash shortage or surplus	✓		Don't be a DUMB Business Owner: 1. Ch9 pg 170 2. Ch9 pg 171 3. Ch9 pg 174
02	03	Mining Your Business For Hidden Cash: The components of the concept: 1. Cash Generating Activities (Sales To Assets, Gross Profit Margin, Net Profit Margin) 2. Cash Conversion Activities (Inventory Turnover, Accounts Receivable Turnover, Accounts Payable Turnover)	✓		Don't be a DUMB Business Owner: 1. Ch7 pg 120-126 2. Ch7 pg 126-134 Ch9 pg 175
Apply Mining Your Business For Hidden Cash and the Fast Money Formula to a scenario					
Specifically to:					
03	01	Fast Money Formula: Calculate the Cash Gap (days) (for both inventory and service based companies)	✓		Don't be a DUMB Business Owner: Ch9 pg 165, 169
03	02	Fast Money Formula: Calculate the cash shortage or surplus (for both inventory and service based companies)	✓		Don't be a DUMB Business Owner: Ch9 pg 170-174
03	03	Mining Your Business For Hidden Cash: Identify any areas of improvement in your cash conversion cycle, including calculating the financial impact of not being average	✓		Don't be a DUMB Business Owner: Ch6 Pg 101-119

Syllabus Area Code		Syllabus Area: <i>Forecasting the Future Syllabus Area (FF) Theme</i>	Foundation	Practitioner	Primary References
FF					
Level	Topic				
Recall the concepts of Starting with the End in Mind and Dealing with your Banker					
Specifically to recall:					
01	01	The concepts related to 'Start With The End In Mind': <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Definition of transferrable value from a business owner's perspective 2. Definition of the transferrable value of a business from a potential buyer's perspective 3. The drivers of business that affect transferrable value 	✓		Don't be a DUMB Business Owner: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ch1 Pg 18-20 2. Ch1 Pg 18-20 3. Ch1 Pg 18-21, Ch12 Pg 241
01	02	How To Deal With Your Banker: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The complaints that bankers make about their clients 2. How to develop a better relationship with your banker 	✓		Don't be a DUMB Business Owner: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ch11 Pg 208-212 2. Ch11 Pg 221-222
Understand the concepts of Starting with the End in Mind, Forecasting By The Numbers, Dealing with your Banker, the Drivers of Business Value and the Deliberate Exit Strategy					
Specifically to explain:					
02	01	The key items to how to start building transferrable value ('Start With The End In Mind'): <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How to calculate retirement funding objectives 2. How to calculate an annual cash requirement to fund the transferrable value number to assess likelihood of achievement 3. Do not rely on the value of your company to finance your future unless you have to 4. "Run it like you're selling it." 	✓		Don't be a DUMB Business Owner: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ch2 Pg 26-30 2. Ch2 Pg 27-32 3. Ch2 Pg 30 4. Ch1 Pg 21-25
02	02	The five steps to forecast a company's financials when 'Forecasting By The Numbers': Build Transferrable Value - Start with the end in mind (covered in FF0201 so not re-tested in this line) <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Create a Income Statement - Watch the business in action 2. Build a Cash Budget - You can't spend profit 3. Forecast the balance sheet - It takes money to grow 4. Calculate sustainable growth rates - Growth is planned 	✓		Don't be a DUMB Business Owner: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ch10 Pg 183-8 2. Ch10 Pg188-193 3. Ch10 Pg 194-200 4. Ch10 Pg 200-206
02	03	How To Deal With Your Banker: The basics of credit, how to structure debt and apply for a loan	✓		Don't be a DUMB Business Owner: Ch11 Pg 213-220
02	04	How To Deal With Your Banker: The calculations used by bankers	✓		Don't be a DUMB Business Owner Ch11 Pg 216-7

Syllabus Area Code FF		Syllabus Area: <i>Forecasting the Future Syllabus Area (FF) Theme</i>	Foundation	Practitioner	Primary References
02	05	The Simple Valuation Formula: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The asset approach of valuing a company for buyers 2. The earnings approach of valuing a company for buyers 	✓		Don't be a DUMB Business Owner: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ch12 Pg 232-236 2. Ch12 Pg 237-240
02	06	The components of the Deliberate Exit Strategy: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What a person should consider during succession planning 2. What the proceeds of a sale of the company should cover 	✓		Don't be a DUMB Business Owner: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ch13 Pg 260-3 2. Ch13 Pg 237-240

Syllabus Area Code		Syllabus Area:	Foundation	Practitioner	Primary References
PS		Pathfinder Steps Syllabus Area (PS) Theme			
Level	Topic				
Recall the Pathfinder steps Specifically to recall:					
01	01				
Understand the key elements of the Pathfinder steps Specifically to identify:					
02	01	The activities in Pathfinder – Build: 1. How to identify and package tasks for your offer 2. How to price packages to ensure your costs are covered	✓		Pathfinder Build Slides: 1. Creating your Offer, Organize your Resources 2. Pricing your Offer
02	02	The activities in Pathfinder – Sell: 1. What is involved in creating your ideal avatar 2. What happens during a Triage and a Strategy call	✓		Pathfinder Sell Slides: 1. Create your ideal avatar 2. Marketing, The Sales Pitch
02	03	The activities in Pathfinder – Execute: What is involved in the 5 steps of a work session	✓		Pathfinder Execute Slides: Onboarding; Client Training; Behavioural Change
02	04	The activities in Pathfinder – Execute: What is involved in the onboarding process for a new client: Prepare, Share and Orientation	✓		Pathfinder Execute Slides: Onboarding; Client Training; Behavioural Change
02	05	The activities in Pathfinder – Grow: 1. What happens in the steps of the client journey 2. The use of the acronym A.U.R.A.	✓		Pathfinder Grow Slides