

Information Bulletin
for
Pre-Professional Assessment and Certification
in
Personal and Family Finance



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Assessment At A Glance

The specific content being assessed by the items on the assessment follows the test specifications outlined in this section of the bulletin. Please note the number of items on the assessment in each domain.

Domain	Weighting	Number of Items
1. Financial Responsibility and Decision Making	15%	11
2. Income and Careers	15%	10
3. Planning and Money Management	20%	14
4. Credit and Debt	20%	14
5. Risk Management and Insurance	15%	10
6. Saving and Investing	15%	11

Content Outline for Domains and Competencies

The following outline provides an overview of the content addressed within the domains and competencies. The outline is provided as a tool to be used for guidance in preparations for the assessment and is not intended to be totally inclusive. The numbered concepts listed under each competency are meant to be representative rather than prescriptive.

Domain 1: Financial Responsibility and Decision Making

Competency 1A: Take responsibility for personal and family financial decisions based on needs, wants, and values.

- 1.A.1 Goals
- 1.A.2 Priorities
- 1.A.3 Values
- 1.A.4 Wants
- 1.A.5 Needs

Competency 1B: Find and evaluate financial information from a variety of sources.

- 1.B.1 Financial information sources (i.e., professional trade journals, government websites, financial professionals, etc.)
- 1.B.2 Investment assistance sources
- 1.B.3 Certified public accountant
- 1.B.4 Credit counselor
- 1.B.5 Certified financial planner

Competency 1C: Summarize major consumer protection laws.

- 1.C.1 Food and Drug Administration
- 1.C.2 Government-provided consumer protection and services
- 1.C.3 Federal Trade Commission
- 1.C.4 Consumer Product Safety Commission
- 1.C.5 Federal Communications Commission
- 1.C.6 Better Business Bureau
- 1.C.7 Consumer Bill of Rights

Competency 1D: Make financial decisions by systematically considering alternatives, consequences, and the economy.

- 1.D.1 Budgeting decisions
- 1.D.2 Decision-making skills
- 1.D.3 Goal setting (long and short term)
- 1.D.4 Consumer decision making
- 1.D.5 Savings skills

Competency 1E: Develop communication strategies for addressing individual and family financial issues including needs, wants, and values.

- 1.E.1 Needs, wants, values
- 1.E.2 Ways to increase savings
- 1.E.3 Building trust regarding financial issues
- 1.E.4 Communicating effectively about money

Competency 1F: Control personal information.

- 1.F.1 Ways to protect identity
- 1.F.2 Identity theft
- 1.F.3 Safe and secure online shopping
- 1.F.4 Safety when using ATM, debit, and credit cards
- 1.F.5 Passwords and Personal Identification Numbers (PIN)
- 1.F.6 Steps to be taken if victim of fraud or identity theft

Domain 2: Income and Careers

Competency 2A: Identify the relationship of work or career goals as they relate to family goals.

- 2.A.1 Definition of a career vs. job
- 2.A.2 Career planning
- 2.A.3 Personal values
- 2.A.4 Personal goals
- 2.A.5 Family goals

Competency 2B: Explore employment options for making a living.

- 2.B.1 Ways to gain job experience
- 2.B.2 Steps to look for a job
- 2.B.3 Choosing a career
- 2.B.4 Employment options
- 2.B.5 Career plans and career paths
- 2.B.6 Interest inventory quizzes or assessments
- 2.B.7 Human capital development

Competency 2C: Analyze the effect of education and skills on employment.

- 2.C.1 Career clusters
- 2.C.2 Level of education's influence on employment and earnings
- 2.C.3 Value of education

Competency 2D: Analyze how employment choices and economic conditions affect income.

- 2.D.1 Cost of living expenses
- 2.D.2 Computing cost of living
- 2.D.3 Economic factors to consider (i.e., salary, benefits, location, etc.)
- 2.D.4 Effect of inflation on spending power
- 2.D.5 Considerations when selecting job

Competency 2E: Identify sources of personal income.

- 2.E.1 Types of income
- 2.E.2 Overtime pay
- 2.E.3 Salary
- 2.E.4 Commission
- 2.E.5 Tips
- 2.E.6 Pay period
- 2.E.7 Direct deposit
- 2.E.8 Payroll cards
- 2.E.9 Retirement options
- 2.E.10 Pay raises

Competency 2F: Describe factors affecting take-home pay.

- 2.F.1 Taxes (i.e., income, excise, sales, alternative minimum taxes)
- 2.F.2 IRS forms (i.e., Form 1040, 1040A, 1040EZ)
- 2.F.3 Net pay
- 2.F.4 Gross pay
- 2.F.5 Bonus
- 2.F.6 Deductions
- 2.F.7 Base salary
- 2.F.8 FICA
- 2.F.9 Medicare

Domain 3: Planning and Money Management

Competency 3A: Develop a plan for spending and saving based upon personal and family goals and values.

- 3.A.1 Developing a spending and saving plan (budget)
- 3.A.2 Short term goals
- 3.A.3 Emergency savings
- 3.A.4 Financial planning
- 3.A.5 Budget categories
- 3.A.6 Money management principles

Competency 3B: Develop a system for keeping and using financial records and legal documents.

- 3.B.1 Financial and legal documents
- 3.B.2 Keeping financial records (i.e., length of time, type of records)
- 3.B.3 Storage of important documents
- 3.B.4 Emergency plans for financial records

Competency 3C: Describe and analyze how to use different payments including banking services.

- 3.C.1 Advantages and disadvantages of checking accounts
- 3.C.2 Types of checking accounts
- 3.C.3 Calculating interest on savings
- 3.C.4 Electronic funds transfer (EFT)
- 3.C.5 Types of payment methods
- 3.C.6 Electronic banking
- 3.C.7 Payroll options (i.e., direct deposit, standard paychecks, payroll card)
- 3.C.8 Use and safety regarding ATM card
- 3.C.9 Use and safety regarding debit cards
- 3.C.10 Use and safety regarding credit cards
- 3.C.11 Lost or stolen cards (i.e., ATM, debit, or credit)

Competency 3D: Apply consumer skills to purchasing decisions.

- 3.D.1 Consumer protection
- 3.D.2 Impulse buying
- 3.D.3 Consumer letter of complaint
- 3.D.4 Settling disputes with manufacturer or seller
- 3.D.5 Sources of consumer information
- 3.D.6 Comparison shopping
- 3.D.7 Purchasing decisions

Competency 3E: Develop a personal or family financial plan.

- 3.E.1 Fixed vs. flexible expenses
- 3.E.2 Methods of money management
- 3.E.3 Financial planning methods
- 3.E.4 Wants vs. needs
- 3.E.5 Financial statements and net worth

Competency 3F: Examine the purpose and importance of estate and long-term financial planning.

- 3.F.1 Objectives of estate planning
- 3.F.2 Living will
- 3.F.3 Wills
- 3.F.4 Guardians
- 3.F.5 Trusts
- 3.F.6 Tax implications

Domain 4: Credit and Debt

Competency 4A: Identify personal and family goals related to credit and debt.

- 4.A.1 FICO scores
- 4.A.2 Credit management
- 4.A.3 Debt reduction strategies
- 4.A.4 Financial goals

Competency 4B: Outline responsibilities as related to obtaining and managing personal and family credit.

- 4.B.1 Shopping for credit
- 4.B.2 Credit worthiness
- 4.B.3 Credit card safety
- 4.B.4 Closing credit accounts
- 4.B.5 Debt-to-income ratio
- 4.B.6 Lenders and lenders
- 4.B.7 Paying off credit card debt

Competency 4C: Identify the costs and benefits of various types of credit.

- 4.C.1 Definition of credit
- 4.C.2 Advantages of using credit cards
- 4.C.3 Disadvantages of using credit cards
- 4.C.4 Credit card options
- 4.C.5 Credit card agreements
- 4.C.6 Annual percentage rate (APR)
- 4.C.7 Finance charges and grace periods
- 4.C.8 Schumer box
- 4.C.9 Annual fees
- 4.C.10 Pre-paid cards

Competency 4D: Compare types of loans used to finance a car, education expenses, and housing.

- 4.D.1 Shopping for auto loan
- 4.D.2 Calculating interest on loans
- 4.D.3 Formulas for calculating interest
- 4.D.4 Shopping for a home loan/mortgage
- 4.D.5 Loan sources (lending agencies)

Competency 4E: Explain the purpose of a credit record and identify borrowers' credit report rights.

- 4.E.1 Building a good credit rating
- 4.E.2 Credit reports
- 4.E.3 Credit scores
- 4.E.4 Credit reporting agencies

Competency 4F: Describe ways to avoid or correct debt problems.

- 4.F.1 Lost or stolen credit cards
- 4.F.2 Comparison of credit cards
- 4.F.3 Credit counseling agencies
- 4.F.4 Costs of using credit
- 4.F.5 Debt reduction strategies
- 4.F.6 Correcting information on credit reports

Competency 4G: Summarize major consumer credit laws.

- 4.G.1 Equal Credit Opportunity Act
- 4.G.2 Truth in Lending Act
- 4.G.3 Fair Credit Reporting Act
- 4.G.4 Fair and Accurate Credit Transactions Act (FACT Act)
- 4.G.5 Federal Trade Commission
- 4.G.6 Better Business Bureau

Domain 5: Risk Management and Insurance

Competency 5A: Identify common types of risks and basic risk management methods.

- 5.A.1 Types of risk
- 5.A.2 Deductibles
- 5.A.3 Premium
- 5.A.4 Health insurance
- 5.A.5 Worker's compensation
- 5.A.6 Unemployment insurance
- 5.A.7 Liability insurance
- 5.A.8 Life insurance

Competency 5B: Explain the purpose and importance of property and liability insurance protection as part of individual and family financial planning.

- 5.B.1 Comprehensive physical damage insurance
- 5.B.2 Liability insurance
- 5.B.3 Collision insurance
- 5.B.4 Deductibles
- 5.B.5 Renter's insurance
- 5.B.6 Homeowner's insurance
- 5.B.7 Credit life insurance

Competency 5C: Explain the purpose and importance of health, disability, and life insurance protection as part of individual and family financial planning.

- 5.C.1 Health insurance premiums
- 5.C.2 Life insurance
- 5.C.3 Death benefits of life insurance
- 5.C.4 Universal life insurance
- 5.C.5 Term life insurance
- 5.C.6 Cash value insurance
- 5.C.7 Major medical insurance
- 5.C.8 Co-payments
- 5.C.9 Beneficiaries
- 5.C.10 Dental and vision insurance

Domain 6: Saving and Investing

Competency 6A: Compare saving and investment options to meet various personal and family goals.

- 6.A.1 Treasury bills and notes
- 6.A.2 Certificates of deposit
- 6.A.3 Money market accounts
- 6.A.4 Mutual funds
- 6.A.5 Savings bonds
- 6.A.6 Diversified investment portfolio (i.e., asset allocation)
- 6.A.7 Inflation and inflation-adjusted returns
- 6.A.8 Principal
- 6.A.9 Compound vs. simple interest

Competency 6B: Discuss how saving and investment contributes to financial well-being and goal achievement.

- 6.B.1 Ways to achieve financial security
- 6.B.2 Liquidity of savings
- 6.B.3 Saving for retirement
- 6.B.4 Pay yourself first (PYF)
- 6.B.5 Risks associated with investments (high vs. low)

Competency 6C: Describe alternatives for researching, purchasing and utilizing saving and investment products.

- 6.C.1 Investor information
- 6.C.2 Dow Jones Industrial Average
- 6.C.3 Financial magazines and publications
- 6.C.4 National Association of Security Dealers Automated Quotations (NASDAQ)
- 6.C.5 Stock market and stock exchanges
- 6.C.6 Price/earnings ratio
- 6.C.7 Commissions
- 6.C.8 Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC)
- 6.C.9 Federal Reserve Bank
- 6.C.10 Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC)
- 6.C.11 Brokers
- 6.C.12 Calculating stock return

Competency 6D: Explain how interest rates, taxes and fees affect the return on savings and investments

- 6.D.1 Value of stock
- 6.D.2 Stock split
- 6.D.3 Dividends
- 6.D.4 Types of stock (i.e., growth, blue chip, etc.)
- 6.D.5 Bonds (i.e., corporate, U.S. savings, etc.)
- 6.D.6 Real estate investments
- 6.D.7 Investment fraud
- 6.D.8 Annual rate of return on investments
- 6.D.9 Annual rate of inflation

Competency 6E: Investigate how agencies that regulate financial markets protect consumers.

- 6.E.1 Federal Trade Commission (FTC)
- 6.E.2 Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC)
- 6.E.3 Equal Credit Opportunity Act
- 6.E.4 Securities and Exchange Commission
- 6.E.5 Better Business Bureau
- 6.E.6 Small Business Administration

Sample Assessment Items

A series of sample test items is provided below. These items are not intended to serve as a study mechanism, but to familiarize candidates with the format, style, and structure of the items that can be expected on the assessments. Always choose the one best answer.

1. A good place to learn what government agencies and departments serve consumer needs in your area is your _____. (Domain 1, Competency C)
 - A. U.S. congressperson
 - B. state governor's office
 - C. local city hall
 - D. local phone book

2. What is the primary purpose of a cover letter? (Domain 2, Competency A)
 - A. To convince the employer that the applicant should be hired
 - B. To interest the employer to schedule an interview with the applicant
 - C. To inform the employer of the name and qualifications of the applicant
 - D. To inform the employer of everything the applicant has accomplished

3. Which of the following is an example of a short-term goal? (Domain 3, Competency A)
 - A. Saving ten dollars a week for a year to purchase an item
 - B. Taking courses in high school to prepare for a chosen career
 - C. Planning to see a movie with a friend next Friday
 - D. Running every day for six months to get ready for a marathon

4. Sierra is learning how to determine the interest on her savings account. Which of the following ways of figuring interest in her savings will produce the **MOST** earnings? (Domain 3, Competency C)
 - A. Daily compounding
 - B. No compounding
 - C. Quarterly compounding
 - D. Monthly compounding

5. Which type of credit card is defined as an account which allows for a customer to make credit card purchases at a particular retailer such as The Buckle or Old Navy? (Domain 4, Competency B)
 - A. Bank credit card
 - B. Retail credit card
 - C. Entertainment credit card
 - D. Affinity credit card

6. Which of the following is a characteristic of non-installment credit? (Domain 4, Competency C)
 - a. Borrower must make a down payment before the loan can be given.
 - b. Borrower is allowed to borrow an unlimited amount of money without question.
 - c. Borrower does not have to apply for credit each time because credit is extended in advance.
 - d. Borrower must make equal payments which are always scheduled on a regular basis.

7. In insurance terminology, the policyholder is the _____. (Domain 5, Competency A)
 - A. beneficiary of the insurance policy
 - B. insurance company
 - C. insurance salesperson
 - D. person who bought insurance policy

8. John has a basic homeowner's insurance policy. Doug, his neighbor, slips and falls on John's driveway. Doug's expenses as a result of the fall are covered by _____. (Domain 5, Competency A)
 - A. John's homeowner's insurance policy
 - B. Doug's homeowner's insurance policy
 - C. John's insurance, only if he bought extra coverage
 - D. Doug's insurance, only if he obtains a police report

9. Which of the following statements **CORRECTLY** describes the safety of cash management tools? (Domain 6, Competency A)
 - A. They are not safe, because they are on the highest level of the financial risk pyramid.
 - B. They are safe, because they are protected by the U.S. government against loss.
 - C. They are safe, because there are no risks involved with saving or investing.
 - D. It would be safer to keep your money at home in a shoe box or under the mattress.

10. Amanda and Carl are a couple in their fifties who are excited about retiring soon. They are preparing their retirement portfolio. Their goal is to focus on stocks which typically pay cash dividends with consistent earnings and a low risk. They should focus on all of the following **EXCEPT** _____. (Domain 6, Competency B)
 - A. income stock
 - B. cyclical stock
 - C. blue-chip stock
 - D. countercyclical stock

Answer Key:

- | | |
|------|-------|
| 1. D | 6. C |
| 2. B | 7. D |
| 3. C | 8. A |
| 4. A | 9. B |
| 5. B | 10. B |