

## Meeting FPSB Ireland Experience Requirements for CFP® Certification

### A Practical Guide for Applicants



### Becoming a CFP Professional in Ireland

CFP certification signals to the public that a candidate has the practical experience necessary to deliver high-quality financial planning services, either directly or indirectly. To achieve certification in Ireland, candidates must meet rigorous standards including relevant, real-world experience aligned with **FPSB's Six-Step Financial Planning Process**. This guide explains what types of experience qualify, how to describe your role effectively, and how to ensure your work meets the certification criteria.

### What Experience is Required?

#### Total Required Experience

To qualify for CFP certification, you must complete:

**3 years** of full-time experience (or part-time equivalent) within the last **5 years**, made up of:

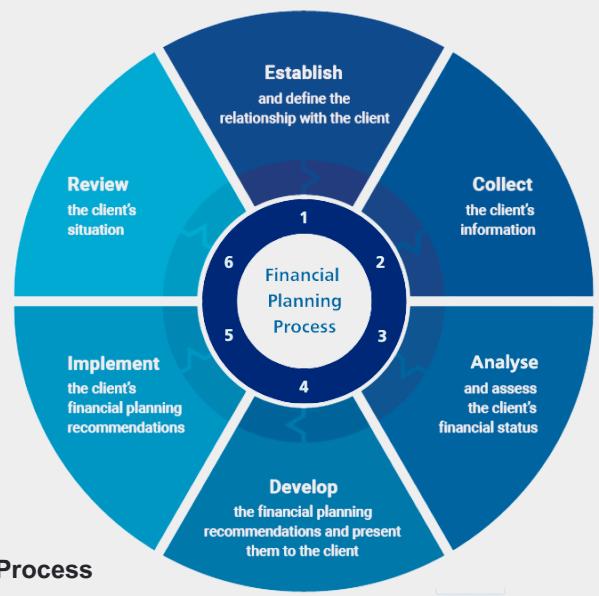
- **2 years of Appropriate Relevant Experience (ARE)**
- **1 year of Approved Practitioner Experience (APE)**

 *Full-time is defined as 38 hours per week*

*Part-time equivalent: 1,600 hours = 1 year of full-time experience*

Your experience must demonstrate:

- Practical application of knowledge, skills, and abilities as per **FPSB's Global Financial Planning Standards**
- Active engagement with all or parts of the **Six-Step Financial Planning Process**



### What Counts as Acceptable Experience?

#### Appropriate Relevant Experience (ARE)

**Min: 2 years**

ARE covers roles that involve applying **one or more** steps of the 6-step process. These roles typically support financial planners or the planning process, but must directly contribute to financial planning activities.

#### Examples include:

- Preparing client data and reports for advisers | **Step 2**
- Helping with insurance, investment and pension analysis | **Step 3**
- Contributing to the delivery of financial plans | **Step 4**
- Supporting client service and follow-up | **Step 6**

! Purely administrative or non-client-facing roles do not qualify.

#### Approved Practitioner Experience (APE)

**Min: 1 year**

APE covers roles where you apply **all six steps** of the process, typically in a senior or client facing capacity. You also qualify if you lead or manage planners who apply the process.

#### Examples include:

- Developing comprehensive end-to-end financial plans
- Advising clients and implementing tailored solutions
- Leading and mentoring financial planning teams to ensure quality and compliance

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#### Demonstrating Your Experience

##### Where Can You Gain Experience?

Eligible experience can be gained in a variety of financial services settings.

- Banks or credit unions
- Insurance companies
- Independent financial planning practices
- Financial advisory or wealth management firms

##### International Experience

Experience gained outside Ireland is acceptable if:

- It involves responsibilities comparable to the **Six-Step Financial Planning Process**.
- It demonstrates similar levels of decision-making and accountability.

Include clear examples and outcomes.

#### How to Effectively Describe Your Role

Your experience should align with FPSB's Six-Step Financial Planning Process. Many applicants give too little information. Use **clear, specific** examples and avoid simply stating job titles or listing employers.

##### Good Example

- Assessed client needs and gathered data on income, insurance, and pensions | **Steps 1 - 2**
- Developed recommendations for risk protection and long-term savings based on the analysis | **Steps 3 - 4**
- Participated in client meetings to present and refine plan | **Step 5**

##### Poor Example

Worked in XYZ firm.  
Provided financial planning.

#### Still Unsure if Your Experience Qualifies?

Here's how to get clarity:

- Reflect on your responsibilities through the lens of the **Financial Planning Six-Step Process**
- Use action verbs such as *advised, analysed, implemented, monitored* to clearly demonstrate your contributions
- Review Appendix 1 for practical examples
- Contact FPSB Ireland for guidance before submitting your application

#### Verification of Experience

FPSB Ireland may verify your experience through employer contact, documentation review and any other means it deems appropriate. Ensure your application is complete and specific to avoid delays.

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#### Appendix 1: Examples of Relevant Work Experience

##### Client-Facing Activities

Direct interaction with clients involving delivery of personal financial planning services.

##### Examples include:

Recommending tailored banking, credit, investment, and protection solutions.

Advising prospective clients on customised wealth and investment strategies.

Completing financial product applications and closing sales

Mentoring junior staff on tools like financial calculators and portfolio solutions.

Providing investment advice in line with compliance standards.

##### Financial Planning Support Activities

Indirect support for the financial planning process through research, planning assistance, or training.

##### Examples include:

Conducting research on tax planning, asset allocation, or cross-border issues.

Preparing agendas, follow-ups, and responding to client service needs.

Assisting in the preparation of financial plans under supervision.

Developing and updating planning tools, templates, and materials.

Delivering internal training and maintaining training content.

##### Supervisory Activities

Oversight and coaching of financial planners or advisory teams.

##### Examples include:

Managing advisor teams, including setting targets and performance reviews.

Training staff or partners on the firm's products and services.

Ensuring compliance with internal and external regulations.

Staying updated on industry changes and guiding team adaptation.

Identifying development needs and improving systems or processes.

##### Final Tip

Your journey to CFP® certification starts with real-world experience. Use this guide to document it with confidence. When describing your experience, focus on how your work advanced financial planning outcomes, which steps of the process you contributed to, and why your role mattered.