Enhanced Competency Framework on Operational Risk Management
(ECF-ORM)
Frequently Asked Questions

General

1. **Is it mandatory for Relevant Practitioners (RPs) to obtain the ECF certification?**

   While the ECF-ORM is not intended to be a mandatory licensing regime, Authorized Institutions (AIs) are encouraged to adopt the ECF-ORM as part of their overall efforts in supporting relevant employees' on-going professional development and appropriate measures to monitor and maintain the competence levels of their operational risk management staff.

2. **How to define a RP if a staff member is not performing all the key duties specified in the HKMA guidelines?**

   The key roles specified in Annex 1 of the HKMA's Guide to ECF-ORM serve as a general guide to assess whether a staff member falls within the scope of RPs. A staff member is not required to work full time in the operational risk management function or perform all the roles specified in the job description in order to be classified as a RP. AIs are expected to adopt a principles-based approach when determining whether a staff member with multiple job roles falls within the definition of RPs for the ECF-ORM by assessing the significance of the operational risk management role performed by the staff member. AIs are expected to justify their decisions made in this regard.

Grandfathering

3. **What relevant experience would be counted for grandfathering?**

   A RP may be grandfathered on a one-off basis based on his or her years of qualifying work experience and/or professional qualification. Such work experience need not be continuous. Please refer to the guidelines below for reference.
   a) Core Level via Path (i) or Path (ii):Path (i):
      • Possessing at least 3 years of relevant work experience on or before 30 June 2022 in operational risk management, business function risk and control gained from AIs and/or non-bank financial institutions, and/or internal audit (related to operational risk management and controls within an AI); and
      • Employed by an AI at the time of application.

   OR
   Path (ii):
      • Completion of one of the following training programmes:
         - Operation Risk Manager Certificate of the Professional Risk Managers' International Association (PRMIA); or
         - Professional Risk Manager of the PRMIA; or

- Certificate in Operational Risk Management of the Institute of Operational Risk (IOR), which is now a part of the Institute of Risk Management (IRM) Group; Possessing at least 2 years of relevant work experience on or before 30 June 2022 in operational risk management, business function risk and control gained from AIs and/or non-bank financial institutions, and/or internal audit (related to operational risk management and controls within an AI); and
- Employed by an AI at the time of application.

b) Professional Level via Path (i) or Path (ii):

Path (i):

- Possessing at least 8 years of relevant work experience on or before 30 June 2022 in operational risk management, business function risk and control gained from AIs and/or non-bank financial institutions, and/or internal audit (related to operational risk management and controls within an AI), of which at least 3 years must be gained from Professional Level job roles within an AI; and
- Employed by an AI at the time of application.

OR

Path (ii):

- Completion of HKIB's Postgraduate Diploma for Certified Banker (Operations Management Stream); and
- Possessing at least 5 years of relevant work experience on or before 30 June 2022 in operational risk management, business function risk and control gained from AIs and/or non-bank financial institutions, and/or internal audit (related to operational risk management and controls within an AI); and
- Employed by an AI at the time of application.

Applications for grandfathering are handled and assessed by HKIB.

4. **How does a RP know if he/she is eligible to apply for grandfathering?**

The grandfathering application requires the Human Resources Department (HR) of the concerned AI(s) to verify and endorse the relevant work experience reported by the RP (e.g. name of employer, job position, employment period, total number of years of experience in the relevant functions). An endorsement by the RP's current employer would indicate that he/she has met the eligibility criteria on relevant experience before it is passed to HKIB for processing.

Regarding information related to a RP's previous employment, the current employer is encouraged to provide necessary assistance to the RP in the application for grandfathering or certification (e.g. confirming whether such information is consistent with the curriculum vitae provided by the RP at the time of his/her job application). Applications without HR verification will not be accepted.

During the application review process, HKIB may request the RPs to provide employment records or additional information to substantiate the application for grandfathering.

5. **How does one complete the certification application after grandfathering has been granted?**

Upon confirmation from HKIB that approval for grandfathering has been granted, the RP may complete the "Certification Application Form" for the Associate Operational Risk Management Professional (AORP) / Certified Operational Risk Management Professional (CORP) certifications within 3 months after issuance of the grandfathering approval letter.

RPs can apply both grandfathering and certification at the same time, the certification application will only be proceeded if the grandfathering status is approved.

6. **Is there any cut-off date to apply for grandfathering?**

The one-off grandfathering arrangement for ECF-ORM ended on 30 September 2022.

7. **I have adequate years of relevant experience, but I have left the banking industry, am I eligible for grandfathering?**

Grandfathering is applicable for existing RPs who are performing operational risk management function and are employed by an AI in Hong Kong at the time of grandfathering application. For other individuals who have the relevant work experience but are not working in an AI in Hong Kong or those staff of an AI who are not performing operational risk management function during the grandfathering period, they may submit their applications to HKIB for grandfathering within three months from the date of joining the operational risk management function of an AI and becoming a RP. However, they should have met all the applicable grandfathering criteria on or before 30 June 2022 as prescribed in the response to Question 5 above.

8. **Would overseas work experience be recognised in a grandfathering application?**

In general, relevant overseas work experience in the operational risk management function from the banking industry and/or other related financial sectors is recognised for grandfathering and will be considered by HKIB on a case-by-case basis.

9. **Where can I obtain the Grandfathering Application Form?**

Please contact HKIB.

10. **Could I receive the result of grandfathering application for Core Level or Professional Level earlier than 60 days?**

It will take approximately 60 days under normal circumstances to process an application upon receipt of the completed application form and full set of supporting documents.

11. **Upon the commencement of the grandfathering application (i.e. 1 July 2021), I might not fulfil the minimum relevant work experience for the grandfathering application. However, I will be able to accumulate and fulfil such minimum work experience on or before the deadline (i.e. 30 June 2022), how and when should I submit my application?**

It is necessary for you to possess the minimum relevant work experience upon your submission of the grandfathering application. As long as you have fulfilled the minimum work experience on or before 30 June 2022 and submit the grandfathering application on or before 30 September 2022, you are still eligible for the grandfathering application.

12. **Is there any application fee for grandfathering?**

Yes, an application fee of HKD1,150 will be applied for each application.

13. **Does HKIB accept batch submissions of the application forms from Authorized Institutions (AIs)?**

Yes, AIs may submit the application forms of their RPs by batch together with one single payment for the total application fee. Please provide the details of a representative as the key contact person regarding the applications in a cover letter.

Training

14. **I don't have any operational risk management background, can I enrol for the programme?**

For ECF-ORM Core Level Programme, you don't need to have any operational risk management background but you should meet any one of the following entry requirements:

i. Be a student or graduate of an Associate Degree or a Higher Diploma in any disciplines; or
ii. Possess equivalent qualifications or above; or
iii. Be a mature applicant with 3 years of relevant banking experience with recommendations from employer

For ECF-ORM Professional Level Programme, you should meet any one of the following entry requirements:

i. Completion of the ECF-ORM Core Level Programme; or
ii. Be grandfathered from the ECF-ORM Core Level

15. **What documents do I need to submit for enrolment?**

Candidates are required to complete the following items for enrolment:

		Membership Application	Training Application	Examination Application
(i)	Complete the online application form on MyHKIB	✓	✓	✓
(ii)	Upload a copy of your identity card/passport	✓	✓	✓

(iii)	Upload relevant documents for Entry Qualification assessment (e.g. academic certificates/reference letters)	N/A	✓	N/A
(iv)	Settle payment by credit card / Alipay / WeChat Pay	✓	✓	✓

Applicants can submit the application via MyHKIB.

16. How can I know if I have been successfully enrolled in?

An email will be sent to you confirming the class details at least five working days prior to the training commencement date.

17. What are the award titles to be given to candidates once they have completed the training and passed the respective examination?

For Core Level, "Advanced Certificate for ECF on Operational Risk Management (ORM)" will be awarded to candidates who have successfully completed the trainings and passed the examinations of all Core Level modules (Modules 1, 2 and 3). RPs who perform key roles specified in the "HKMA's Guide to ECF-ORM Annex 1" attaining the "Advanced Certificate for ECF on Operational Risk Management (ORM)" may apply to HKIB for certification as an "Associate Operational Risk Management Professional" (AORP).

For Professional Level, "Professional Certificate for ECF on Operational Risk Management (ORM)" will be awarded to candidates who have successfully completed the training and passed the examination of Professional Level programme (Module 4). RPs who have successfully attained "Professional Certificate for ECF on Operational Risk Management (ORM)" and have at least five years of relevant work experience specified in the "HKMA's Guide to ECF-ORM Annex 1" may apply to HKIB for certification as a "Certified Operational Risk Management Professional" (CORP). For details, please refer to HKIB website.

18. Can I apply for module exemption if I possess other similar qualification(s)?

According to the "HKMA Guide to ECF-ORM", below are the exemption criteria.

Module	Eligibility for Exemption
Module 1	RP who has passed the following related training programme(s): • Certification in Risk Management Assurance of the Institute of Internal Auditors; or • Bachelor's or higher degree in law; or • Professional Ethics and Compliance module under the AdvancedDiploma for Certified Banker (Stage I) of HKIB; or • Certified Professional Risk Manager of the Asia Risk ManagementInstitute (ARIMI); or • Certified Public Accountant of the Hong Kong Institute of CertifiedPublic Accountants (HKICPA); • Full member of Association of Chartered Certified Accountants (ACCA);or • Members of overseas accountancy bodies which are eligible for full exemption from the qualification programme for membership admission at the HKICPA under the HKICPA's reciprocal membership and mutual recognition agreements (as listed on its website)
Module 2	• Nil
Module 3	RP who has passed the following related training programme(s): • Operational Risk Manager Certificate of the Professional RiskManagers' International Association (PRMIA); or • Professional Risk Manager of the PRMIA; or • Certificate in Operational Risk Management of the Institute of Operational Risk (IOR), which is now a part of the Institute of Risk • Management (IRM) Group
Module 4	• Nil

Eligible candidates may submit the "Exemption Application Form" together with the relevant documentary evidence for his/her qualifications (i.e. examination result slip, certificates, official transcripts, etc.)

If learners would like to apply for exemption on Module1 and/or Module 3 with other equivalent academic/professional qualifications in operational risk management, he/ she will need to provide detailed information on such qualifications (e.g. training course syllabus, examination syllabus) and HKIB will review the application on a case-by-case basis.

Exemption results will normally be provided in writing within 60 days after receiving the COMPLETED application form and all supporting documents. If further assessment is needed due to unexpected circumstances, separate notifications will be sent. The decision of HKIB is final and cannot be appealed.

For the exemption application, an application fee will be applied.

- Application fee per application form: HKD200
- Exemption fee per module: HKD930

The application fee is non-refundable. The exemption fee will not be charged if the application is unsuccessful. Only successful applications will be charged the exemption fee.

19. Is there any specified sequence for taking individual module of ECF-ORM Core Level programme? Learners must first complete the training before attempting the examination of respective modules. However, there is no specified sequence for them to take the modules under the ECF-ORM Core Level programme.

20. What is the attendance requirement?

To facilitate the learning process for learners, they are expected to have full attendance before taking the examination. For records purposes, learners are also required to sign-in and sign-out on the attendance sheet at every training session.

21. Can I obtain the training material before the training?

For Module 1 & Module 2, a digital version of training material (i.e. Study Guide and PPT Slides) will be provided before the training commencement. Printed version will only be available at an additional cost of HKD600 (including delivery fee) on request by learners. For Module 3 & Module 4, only a digital version of PPT Slides will be provided before the training commencement. Printed version will be available at an additional cost of HKD600 (including delivery fee) on request by learners. In addition, learners have to purchase two reference books by their own as a part of the essential readings.

22. Is there any arrangement if I am absent from a training session?

For any enquiries regarding the content of the class, you can seek support from the trainers through HKIB.

23. What should I do if I need to change the training date due to some unexpected circumstances?

Generally, any change of the training date is NOT allowed. However, if you are sick on the training date and cannot attend the training, you should inform the Institute and provide a supporting document (e.g. sick leave certificate) for our reference. You may be permitted to attend the next subsequent training, subject to the availability of seats.

24. Can I apply for a refund if I withdraw the training application?

Once the training application is confirmed, all fees are non-refundable and non-transferrable.

25. Can I apply for training after the application deadline?

Late training enrolment will be accepted after the stipulated application deadline up to 7 days before course commencement to allow us to administer the application. A late entry fee of HKD200 (in addition to the training fee) will apply.

26. What language will be used for training and the study guide?

The study materials of the ECF-ORM are offered in English only. Trainers may conduct the classesin either English or Cantonese.

Examination

27. Is there a limit on the number of attempts for the examinations?

There is no limit on the number of times one can take the training and/or examinations. Nonetheless, the completion period of "Advanced Certificate for ECF on Operational Risk Management" and "Professional Certificate for ECF on Operational Risk Management" is 8 years per programme from the year in which the first module was completed.

28. Can the learner enrol in the examination without attending the training programme?

All learners are required to complete the training of the relevant modules before they are eligible for taking the examination.

29. How will I know if my examination application has been accepted?

Once the COMPLETED form has been submitted, applicants will receive an acknowledgement email. An "Examination Attendance Notice" will also be sent 2 weeks before the examination.

30. When can the candidate obtain the examination results?

Candidates may check their examination results online through HKIB online platform. Candidates will receive an email notification once the examination results are available.. Results will be released within 4 weeks from the examination date for MC-type examinations, and aound8 weeks from the examination date of the last module in each examination diet for other types of examinations. The onlineexamination results will be removed one month after they are released.

Candidates will receive their results slip by e-mail within two weeks after the examination result is released through HKIB online platform.

31. Can the candidate change the examination date?

In general, any change of examination date will NOT be allowed. However, special arrangements will be considered for exceptional circumstances (e.g. sick leave). Candidates should inform the Institute and provide a supporting document (e.g. sick leave certificate) for our reference. The candidate may be permitted to sit the next subsequent examination, subject to the availability of

seats. HKIB will review this on a case-by-case basis.

32. How can the candidate appeal against his/her examination results?

By submitting a written request via email to exam@hkib.org, candidates may request a rechecking or remarking of their examination scripts within ONE MONTH after the issue of the examination results. Please note that there is a rechecking fee of HKD500 per subject and remarking fee of HKD1,700 per module. Rechecking is only applied to the type of MCQ examination while remarking is applied to other types of examination.

Certification

33. Are the AORP / CORP certifications available to Operational Risk Management practitioners currently not working in banks?

AORP / CORP certifications will only be available for RPs who are currently working in the operational risk management function of an AI. For candidates who have met other conditions for certification but are not currently working at an AI, they may submit the certification application to HKIB within three months from the date of joining the operational risk management function of an AI and becoming a RP.

34. What are the requirements for ECF-ORM certification?

Upon attaining the relevant ECF-ORM professional award and fulfilling the minimum relevant work experience requirement, RPs may apply for certification as AORP or CORP.

The requirements for ECF-ORM certification are as follows:

Professional Qualifications	Requirements
(a) AORP	(i) Successful completion of the Core Level programme; (ii) RP who performs key roles specified in Annex 1 of the HKMA's Guide to ECF-ORM
(b) CORP	(i) Core Level certification; (ii) Successful completion of Professional Level programme; (iii) Five-year relevant experience in any of the functions as specified in Annex 1 of the HKMA's Guide to ECF-ORM The five-year relevant work experience required for CORP certification should be accumulated within the ten years immediately prior to the date of application for certification, but does not need to be continuous.

Remarks:

RPs who have been grandfathered ECF-ORM Core Level or Professional Level should refer to Q5 on certification application.

35. How long does it take to process an application for the AORP/ CORP certification?

It will take approximately 60 days under normal circumstances to process an application upon receipt of the completed application form and full set of supporting documents.

36. If there is a change of job or industry, and/or personal information after being certified as AORP/ CORP, shall I inform HKIB?

AORP / CORP holders should notify HKIB of any change of job or industry, and/or personal information upon renewal of their AORP/ CORP certifications. This would serve to re-confirm the status of a qualified RP.

All current Individual Members are obliged to maintain an updated profile with HKIB.

37. What are the relevant job roles for candidates to be considered as Relevant Practitioners?

As specified in the "HKMA's Guide to ECF-ORM", it is aimed at RPs performing two different job roles within the operational risk management function (i.e. Role 1 – Operational Risk Management, Role 2 – Business Function Risk and Control). For details of the job roles and tasks, please refer to Annex 1 of the "HKMA's Guide to ECF-ORM".

38. When should the RP apply for AORP/ CORP certification?

Pathway	Application Deadline
(A) By completion of the training programme and examination	Within 3 months after issuance of the examination result letter
(B) Grandfathered based on work experience	Within 3 months after issuance of the grandfathering approval letter

After the application deadline, RPs who do not submit their AORP/ CORP certification application must take the relevant training programme and pass the examination to recommence the eligibility to apply for the AORP/ CORP professional qualification.

39. Can I apply for AORP/ CORP professional qualification(s) if I have completed the training programme(s) and examination(s), but I am not currently a Relevant Practitioner?

If you have completed the training programme(s) and examination(s) at the Core/Professional Level but are not currently a Relevant Practitioner, you cannot apply for the professional qualification(s) this moment.

However, you may submit your application to HKIB for professional qualification(s) within THREE months of joining the ORM function of an Authorized Institution.

40. **I obtained AORP/ CORP in August this year. When and how will I be notified to renew my AORP/ CORP certification?**

   AORP/ CORP certification is subject to annual renewal on a calendar year basis from 1 January to 31 December. Irrespective of the date of your first certification as AORP/ CORP with HKIB, your certification will expire on 31 December of the same year. You are required to renew your AORP/ CORP certification annually and a renewal notice will be emailed to all AORP/ CORP holders in December.

   However, if you fail to renew the certification before 31 January of each calendar year, your certification will be suspended, and your name and status information will not appear on the Certified Individuals (CI) Register published on HKIB website. As a result, you will not be allowed to include the professional qualification on your name card or CV. Default or Resigned Members ("Former Members") who have ceased to be a member of the Institute may apply to reinstate their HKIB membership by paying the current year's subscription plus the re-registration fee ("Reinstatement Fee"). For details, please refer to HKIB Member's Handbook.

Continuing Professional Development (CPD)

41. **What is the Continuing Professional Development (CPD) requirement for both Core Level and Professional Level certification holders?**

   AORP/ CORP holders are required to complete a minimum of 12 verifiable CPD hours for each calendar year (ending 31 December) of which at least 6 CPD hours must be earned from activities related to the topics of compliance, legal and regulatory requirements, risk management and ethics, in order to maintain their certification. The CPD requirements will be waived for the first calendar year (ending 31 December) of certification.

42. **What if a RP fails to meet the annual CPD requirements?**

   Failure to comply with the annual CPD requirements will result in suspension of professional qualification(s) during which the RP concerned must stop using the professional qualification(s) in all business and social contexts, for instance, on name card and in personal profile, until the necessary documents confirming the fulfilment of CPD requirements are submitted. While a RP's professional qualification(s) is/are being suspended, his/her name and status information willnot appear on the Register of Certified Individuals published on HKIB's website.

   For cases where there are special reasons to justify the failure to meet the annual CPD requirements, for example, due to an extended sick leave, HKIB may consider reinstating the RP's AORP/ CORP certification on a case-by-case basis.

43. If the AORP/ CORP holder works for another AI within a calendar year, could he/she combine the CPD hours he/she has previously earned?

AORP/ CORP holders can combine the CPD hours earned while working at different AIs.

44. Do CPD requirements of the AORP/ CORP certifications renewal run on a calendar year basis?

Yes. CPD requirements of the AORP/ CORP certifications run on a calendar year basis, i.e. 1 January to 31 December. AORP / CORP holders will generally be notified to renew their certifications in December of each calendar year.

45. Do AORP/ CORP holders need to provide supporting documents when submitting an application for the AORP/ CORP certification renewal?

No, it is not necessary to provide supporting documents when submitting an application for the AORP/ CORP certification renewal. However, the AORP/ CORP holders/ HR of AIs must keep records of the completion of relevant programmes and CPD activities undertaken by a AORP / CORP holder. HKIB reserves the right to request further documentation for confirmation purposes.

46. What are eligible CPD training topics for AORP / CORP holders meeting the annual CPD requirements?

Examples of appropriate training topics include:
a) compliance, code of conduct, professional ethics or risk management
b) banking and financial knowledge
c) economics
d) accounting
e) legal principles
f) business and people management
g) language and information technology
h) subject areas covered in HKIB's professional examination

The list of CPD activities and training topics are subject to HKIB's review from time to time. For details, please refer to HKIB's website (http://www.hkib.org/).

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