

Make sure your financial advisor is moving in the right direction.



A New Standard  
for Investment Advice

**CIMA**<sup>®</sup>

*CERTIFIED INVESTMENT  
MANAGEMENT ANALYST<sup>SM</sup>*



ANSI Accredited Program  
PERSONNEL CERTIFICATION  
#1005  
CIMA<sup>®</sup> Certification  
Accredited

[www.IMCA.ORG](http://www.IMCA.ORG)

CIMA<sup>®</sup> — CERTIFIED INVESTMENT MANAGEMENT ANALYST<sup>SM</sup>

# What is CIMA Certification?

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Investment Management Consultants Association offers the only financial services credential accredited by the American National Standards Institute: The Certified Investment Management Analyst (CIMA) certification.\*

The financial services industry is highly regulated. Financial services companies exercise a great deal of oversight of their professional advisor workforce. Yet today's clients expect a level of knowledge, expertise, and care from their advisor or consultant that is above and beyond what's minimally required—a new standard of investment advice.

**CIMA-certified advisors have voluntarily submitted themselves to a process of certification in the field of investment management consulting.** CIMA certificants have successfully met initial and ongoing standards to provide objective investment advice and guidance to individuals and institutions. CIMA-certified professionals apply investment theory and integrate a complex body of investment knowledge systematically and ethically to assist clients in making prudent investment decisions.

At Investment Management Consultants Association, we practice what we preach. There are dozens of professional certification programs in the United States, but only CIMA certification has undertaken a rigorous examination of its processes and validity and met an international standard (ISO 17024) for personnel certification.

*\* As of September 2011, CIMA certification was the first, and currently the only, financial services designation in the United States to earn accreditation under an international personnel certification standard (ISO 17024).*

# Who should hire a CIMA Certificant?

CIMA professionals provide objective investment advice and guidance to individuals and institutions. CIMA certificants meet qualification standards to manage the investments of a variety of individual and institutional clients:

- **Individuals and families**
- **Nonprofit endowments/foundations**
- **Retirement plans and other institutional organizations**
- **Taft-Hartley plans**

Since 1988, IMCA has administered the CIMA certification to experienced investment consultants who successfully complete the experience, education, examination, and ethics requirements of the certification program.

## What does ANSI Accreditation of CIMA Certification mean for you?

- ANSI accreditation confirms that the CIMA certification process consistently distinguishes those who meet a level of competency and skills as an investment management professional from those who do not.
- ANSI accreditation recognizes CIMA certification as one of the few willing or able to undergo rigorous examination of its processes and validity.
- ANSI exists in part to help assure the safety and health of consumers like you.

CIMA  
CERTIFIED INVESTMENT MANAGEMENT ANALYST  
THE BODY OF KNOWLEDGE



## What is required to earn CIMA Certification?

Every CIMA certificant successfully completed the "four Es"—experience, education, examination, and ethics:

- Demonstrated at least three years of **experience** in investment management consulting or financial services.
- Passed a background check and qualification **examination**.
- Completed an **educational** program from a top-25 business school.
- Successfully passed a comprehensive certification **examination**.
- Agreed to adhere to an **ethical code** of professional responsibility and to complete 40 hours of continuing education every two years.

## What does CIMA Certification mean for you?

It means that when you work with a CIMA professional, you're gaining the expertise of someone who has voluntarily committed to attaining competence as an advanced investment advisor or consultant. What's more, CIMA professionals offer the skills and strategies to guide you through complex financial challenges.

**CIMA certification contributes to the integrity, competence, and knowledge of investment and wealth management professionals.**

# What should you consider when selecting an advisor?

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**Appropriate Credentialing**—Does your advisor hold relevant credentials that require the “four Es”? There are hundreds of credentials and designations available, all with varying degrees of credibility. Make sure to do your homework.

**Background**—Referral through trusted sources is one of the best ways to find an advisor for your situation. IMCA’s website provides a list of CIMA professionals in your area. Visit [InvestmentHelp.org](http://InvestmentHelp.org) for more information.

**Fees**—You should know exactly how your advisor will be compensated. CIMA professionals fully disclose to clients all services provided and compensation received as required by the IMCA *Code of Professional Responsibility*.

**Chemistry**—Selecting an advisor is a personal choice, like selecting a doctor, and you should feel at ease and comfortable with the individual you choose.

## A Higher Standard

In today's increasingly complex and volatile financial world, it is important to work with an advisor who is competent and cares enough about helping clients to voluntarily earn advanced certification.

# What should you ask about a certification?

## Who administers the credentialing program and why?

Economic motives can seep into a for-profit's certification process. IMCA, as a not-for-profit association, administers CIMA certification to fulfill its mission in an unbiased, fair, objective manner.

## Do the credentials have requirements for experience, education, ethics, and a rigorous examination?

The "four Es"—experience, education, examination, and ethics—are requirements of most legitimate financial services credentials. CIMA certificants meet the "four Es."

## Is there an independent disciplinary process if certificants act unethically or fail to update their knowledge?

A disciplinary process helps protect consumers and investors like you from fraudulent activity. CIMA certificants lose the certification if they have acted unethically or fail to meet recertification requirements.

## What are the continuing competency requirements?

Most serious certification programs require significant, ongoing education to ensure that individuals maintain levels of knowledge and competency. CIMA certification requires 40 hours of continuing education every two years, including ethics hours.

## Who certifies the certifier?

The certifying body should be willing to submit to outside review. Just like reliable professionals in any field are certified, credible certification programs are accredited by independent third parties like the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) or the National Commission for Certifying Agencies (NCCA).

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### **IMCA**<sup>®</sup>

Investment Management Consultants Association Inc.  
was established in 1985 to deliver the premier investment  
consulting and wealth management credentials and  
world-class educational offerings.

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