

DIPLOMA IN EMPLOYEE SHARE OWNERSHIP STUDIES

Course rationale

The employee share plan industry is becoming ever more complex and specialised. There was a growing need for a recognised course to give trainees the detailed background to employee share schemes and their potential impact on corporate and employee behaviour.

Planning, introducing and managing employee share ownership schemes demands a high degree of professionalism. Share plan professionals must know and understand the core disciplines of equity pay compensation and these form the basis of the four course modules:

- The origins and applications of employee share ownership
- How to install, administer and operate share schemes
- The legal environment
- The taxation of share schemes

Course structure

The expertise of leading practitioners has been recreated online to bring the full perspective of employee ownership to home or office.

The Esop Institute's Diploma in Employee Share Ownership Studies is a distance-learning course designed specially for the benefits of online learning. This gives the flexibility for students to fit their studies into their hectic work schedules and work at a pace that suits them. Employers can incorporate it into training schemes with ease.

The diploma is module based consisting of four self-standing modules which can be taken singly, to provide training in specific areas, or as a group to gain a diploma in employee share ownership studies. Each module has been written and updated by an expert and approved by a college of experts.

Students follow a structured self-study programme, which comprises a mix of reading and finding out at work, together with weekly self-test exercises. Assessment is by a mixture of coursework, worth 30 per cent (typically a short essay or report, submitted on-line, to a deadline) and examination, worth 70 per cent.

The modules

Introduction to employee share schemes

Costs and benefits to staff and employers of introducing employee share schemes, historical and comparative background, basic information on nature of schemes.

How do employee share schemes work in practice?

Trust deeds and plan rules; process from drafting scheme to implementation and system development; communication and launch activities; reporting; maturity and retention issues.

UK legal (non-tax) considerations

Legal framework, corporate governance of schemes, duties of care, data protection, potential pitfalls, EU directives, takeover and merger situations.

Taxation

Tax benefits to scheme members, corporation tax implications, onshore and offshore trusts, approved and unapproved schemes.

The facilities

A dedicated website delivers the course to registered students.

Students receive a security key to their own course page/s where they have access to the course materials and other facilities including:

- Weekly blocks of screen based learning materials of the current module syllabus
- Access to Frequently Asked Questions
- Assessment of assignment and exams – including time stamped on-line submission of course work, post-marking feedback and grades
- Recommended learning materials
- Forums – news, technical support and course discussions
- Live chat room to discuss issues with other course participants in real time
- Calendar with key course dates – this can also be used for personal schedules
- A “dialogue” facility to communicate with other course participants or the Institute’s staff either as a group or one to one

The students’ pages are secure so only they have access to their grades, personal calendar entries and dialogues.

What students will gain from the course

- The ability to articulate the main equity pay plan issues
- Knowledge of when to seek professional help and for what reasons
- The ability to brief clients in general terms
- The ability to work with employee share plan delivery teams

The Diploma will not only help careers but confidence at work every day.