



ACCREDITED  
FINANCIAL  
PLANNING FIRM™



# Setting the standard in financial planning

We uphold the highest standards of professionalism in financial planning through our CISI Accredited Financial Planning Firms™ (AFPFs). At the heart of this accreditation are Certified Financial Planner™ (CFP) professionals, who have met rigorous standards with a client centric advice process. While CISI qualifications set a benchmark of excellence, our accreditation enables firms to gain distinguished recognition. Through this programme, we aim to:

Help consumers identify firms which focus on providing a full and effective financial planning service



Establish CISI Accredited Financial Planning Firms™ as leaders in the profession



Build a community of financial planning businesses which consistently demonstrate excellence in professional standards and service in financial planning



Actively support the development of these firms and drive the financial planning profession forward



# How accreditation supports your firm and the profession

## REACH THE CONSUMER

We work actively to promote our AFPFs by engaging consumers and using our find a financial planner website, [cisi.org/wayfinder](https://cisi.org/wayfinder). We do this through marketing campaigns and media engagement, including our annual UK Financial Planning Week. We also provide support and materials to help firms to promote themselves.

## BESPOKE IN-PERSON WORKSHOPS

We host bespoke workshops exclusively for AFPFs to support upholding best practice in the profession. We focus on delivering value by looking at trends, strategies, common challenges and regulatory changes shaping the sector. The session also encourages peer-to-peer learning, with the exchange of successful strategies, insights, and more.

## DEVELOP THE PROFESSION

By bringing together leading firms, we have a community that understands the value of professionalism and of providing a true financial planning experience. This also serves as a forum for best practice and networking, where ideas and experiences can be shared.

## BRAND AWARENESS

Align your brand with excellence in financial planning and promote your status by using the AFPF name and logo across brand materials. We support you to achieve further recognition from consumers and the profession with national campaigns, and we spotlight firm stories on our social channels, and in our magazine, *The Review*, helping to boost reach.

## SET THE STANDARD

International involvement with global body Financial Planning Standards Board (FPSB), as well as listening to feedback from our financial planning professional forum and our CISI AFPFs helps us to capture trends and take action to lead the profession forward.

## CISI ACCREDITED FINANCIAL PLANNING FIRMS™ CONFERENCE

We currently host an annual CISI AFPF conference with content built on your suggestions. As a CISI AFPF, you along with your staff will be given the opportunity to attend this exclusive event and gain valuable knowledge and insight into how other CISI AFPFs operate as well as countless opportunities to network.



“Achieving CISI Accredited Financial Planning Firm™ status with CISI was a process that allowed us to benchmark ourselves against the best of our financial planning peers. Having achieved it, we can demonstrate that we are in the top 1% of financial planning firms in the UK in terms of financial planning process quality. We also get access to a fantastic network of similar businesses who are happy to share experiences, knowledge and practice”

*Alasdair Walker CFP™ Chartered FCSI (Financial Planning)  
Managing Director, Optimum Path Financial Planning*

# How to become a CISI Accredited Financial Planning Firm™

## OUR CRITERIA

Our criteria identifies firms ready to achieve this accreditation, and we firms are required to demonstrate they meet this criteria annually. This ensures we recognise firms that offer a consistently high level of service, which consumers can understand and trust.

Your firm must have a defined process for financial planning which meets the FPSB's 'six-steps' definition, and is a base part of your service to clients:



## QUALIFIED STAFF

- ✓ On application, at least 50% of the firm's FCA registered advisers must be qualified as a CFP™ professional or Chartered Financial Planner (with AF5) or hold the CII Level 6 Advanced Diploma.
- ✓ At least one director/partner or the person responsible for the advice process must be a current CFP™ professional.
- ✓ All advisers directly providing the financial planning service to clients on the firm's behalf will have been tested on their financial planning skills at an advanced level or will be mentored/supervised by such an adviser.
- ✓ All advisers will be members of a relevant professional body and agree to abide by that body's Code of Conduct.

## OUR REQUIREMENTS

To become a CISI Accredited Financial Planning Firm™ you must be able to demonstrate that providing a financial planning service is core to your business. The firm must demonstrate the following:

- ✓ A full financial planning service, including cashflow modelling, is offered by default.
- ✓ The financial planning proposition is clearly communicated and promoted to clients in marketing materials.
- ✓ Policies and procedures are consistent with the CISI's Code of Conduct.
- ✓ A clear and consistent fee structure.
- ✓ An understandable and visible investment philosophy.
- ✓ All staff are aware of the financial planning service and how it differs from financial advice.
- ✓ Firms provide financial planning and advisory activities on an independent basis.
- ✓ The firm must have been trading for a minimum of three years.
- ✓ The firm must conduct its financial planning and advisory activities on an independent basis.

Firms will need to complete an application form to apply, available at [cisi.org/afpf](http://cisi.org/afpf).

## ANNUAL FEES

A fee is payable by the CISI Accredited Financial Planning Firm™ to the CISI upon acceptance of application, and annually thereafter upon renewal.

A fee of £750 per firm applies, plus £25 per FCA registered adviser (where individual is a CISI member) or £75 per FCA registered adviser (where individual is non-CISI member).

Uphold high standards in financial planning, contact us to talk through your journey to becoming a CISI Accredited Financial Planning Firm™



[financial.planning@cisi.org](mailto:financial.planning@cisi.org)



+44 20 7645 0777

