2024 CURRICULUM

COURSE GUIDE

SUSTAINABLE INVESTMENT ADVICE

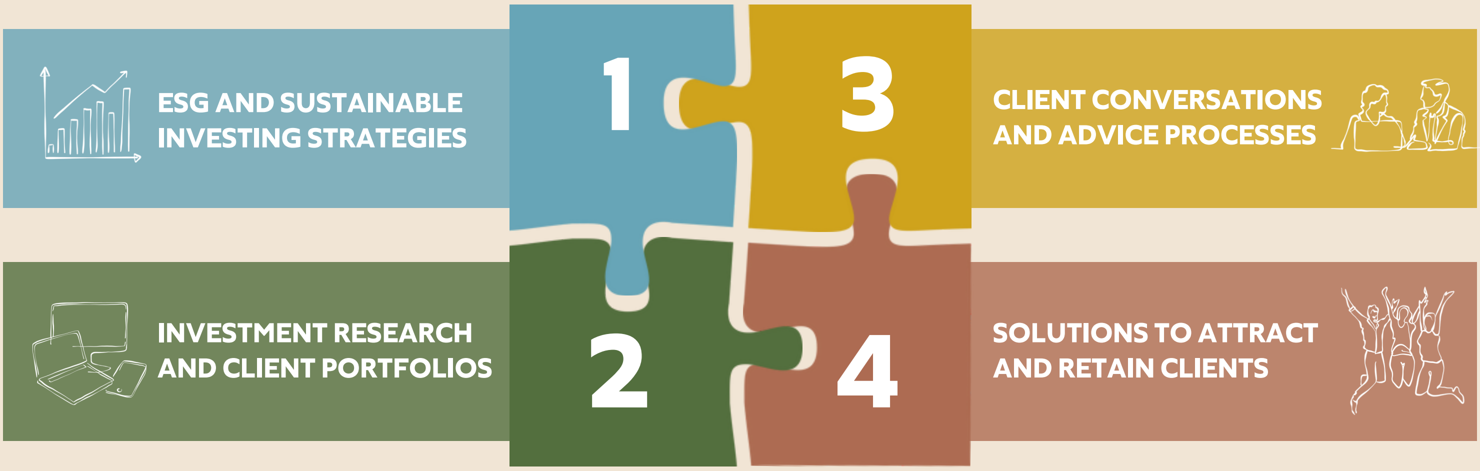
WELCOME!

Ready to start learning?

Sustainable Investment Advice will help you master values-based advice, navigate ESG complexities with confidence, and elevate your practice to meet the future of finance.

Designed for Australian and New Zealand financial advisers, this course equips you with the knowledge, skills, and tools to research and advise clients with ethical values and sustainable investing objectives.

Alexandra Brown



FOUR LEARNING PILLARS

Streamlined integration

Sustainable Investment Advice (SIA) covers four effective learning pillars equipped with tools, templates and checklists to streamline the integration into your existing processes.

There are three key areas an adviser needs to get across to deliver quality sustainable investment advice. One, is a solid understanding of ESG and ethical issues to enable connected and confident discussions with clients. Two, knowing the investment market with the skills to evaluate aligned products and provide the best solution for clients. And three, is implementation; bringing these two areas into existing advice processes and fact finds.

The SIA course goes one step further, and helps you quickly build the business, marketing, and communication assets, to attract new customers and nurture existing clients.

COURSE SCHEDULE

MODULE #	PILLAR#	WHAT WE COVER
1	1,4	ESG and sustainable investment advice
2	1	Market drivers and sustainability trends
3	1,3	Nature and climate change risks and opportunities
4	1,2,3	ESG issues for adviser and client readiness
5	1,2	Sustainable investment strategies
6	1,2,3	Engagement and shareholder advocacy
7	2,3	Research, compare and recommend
8	3,4	Client communications and advice solutions
BONUS	4	Attract and retain clients

PILLARS
1: ESG and sustainable investing strategies
2: Investment research and client portfolios
3: Client conversations and advice processes
4: Solutions to attract and retain clients

MODULE 1

Summary

A tailored introduction to sustainable investing for financial advisers in Australia and New Zealand, covering ESG fundamentals, the spectrum of sustainable investment strategies, and the interplay of performance, risk, diversification, and ethics. By examining real-life case studies, advisers gain practical insights into the application of ESG issues and themes in investing principles. This module helps advisers articulate their personal motivations for offering values-based advice, fostering the development of a robust sustainable investment philosophy.

Learning outcomes

ESG and sustainable investment advice

- Understand the core principles of sustainable and ethical investing.
- Gain knowledge of ESG factors and their significance in investment decision-making.
- Explore a range of sustainable investment strategies and their applications.
- Learn the importance of balancing divestment and diversification in values-aligned portfolios.
- Analyse the relationship between sustainable investing, performance, and risk.
- Identify personal motivations and begin defining a clear sustainable investment philosophy.

MODULE 2

Summary

This module unpacks the intricate web of consumer demand, regulatory pressures, and global sustainability challenges that are shaping the landscape of investment today. It offers a comprehensive exploration into the factors propelling the growth of sustainable investing in Australia, New Zealand and globally. By examining everything from the regulatory environment to the impact of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), advisers are equipped with the knowledge to navigate and leverage these trends for more informed, sustainable investment strategies.

Learning outcomes

Market drivers and sustainability trends

- Understand the fundamental market drivers that are accelerating the adoption of sustainable investing practices.
- Recognise the influence of consumer demand and how it shapes investment products and services.
- Identify global sustainability challenges and opportunities, understanding their implications for investment strategies.
- Navigate the regulatory environments in Australia and New Zealand that impact sustainable investment advice.
- Leverage the Sustainable Development Goals as a framework for aligning investment decisions with global sustainability targets.
- Build confidence in addressing common objections to sustainable investing, using informed responses and evidence-based reasoning.

MODULE 3

Summary

A comprehensive look into the critical issues of climate change and nature loss, focusing on the importance of scientific, regulatory, and market-driven aspects. Advisers are equipped with the knowledge to navigate the complex landscape of biodiversity, climate change, and environmental risks and opportunities, underscoring the need for informed investment strategies. Special attention is given to practical methods for integrating these climate and nature considerations into client portfolios, with a strong focus on the unique contexts of Australia and New Zealand.

Learning outcomes

Nature and climate change risks and opportunities

- Understand the science of climate change and the role of greenhouse gas emissions in influencing investment landscapes.
- Recognise the importance of biodiversity and ecosystem services in sustaining economic and environmental health.
- Employ tools and frameworks to assess climate change and nature-related risks and exposure within investment portfolios.
- Stay informed on global and regional regulations that impact investment decisions, with a focus on disclosure requirements.
- Address common objections to renewable energy, including discussions on environmental trade-offs and the nuclear debate.
- Identify and explore investment opportunities that support climate change mitigation, nature protection, and deliver financial returns.

MODULE 4

Summary

A succinct exploration into the key ESG issues advisers need to be aware of when guiding their clients in sustainable investment. Spanning environmental, social, and governance themes, it covers a broad spectrum of topics from deforestation and animal welfare to modern slavery and greenwashing. Advisers are equipped with the knowledge to identify and evaluate ESG investment themes, and the confidence to meaningfully discuss ESG issues with clients.

Learning outcomes

ESG issues for adviser and client readiness

- Understand the foundational principles of ESG and utilise a range of tools to conduct thorough analysis on ESG issues.
- Identify key environmental issues such as deforestation, pollution, and the impacts of industries like palm oil production.
- Navigate social themes including human rights, diversity, and gender lens investing, and the ethical implications of investing in harmful sectors such as tobacco, alcohol, and gambling.
- Assess governance factors, including corporate ethics, executive remuneration, and tax fairness, in making investment decisions.
- Recognise and protect your clients from greenwashing by evaluating the authenticity of companies' and funds' ESG claims.
- Engage in meaningful dialogues with clients about ESG issues, aligning their investments with their ethical values and financial goals.

MODULE 5

Summary

Diving into the realm of sustainable investment techniques, this module equips financial advisers with the knowledge and tools to evaluate investment products and ethical charters. Strategies covered include ESG integration, negative and positive screening, corporate engagement, sustainability-themed investing, and impact investing. Advisers will gain a deep understanding of these techniques, their application, and the potential they hold for reshaping the investment landscape, plus the importance of aligning these strategies with clients' sustainability objectives.

Learning outcomes

Sustainable investment strategies

- Understand the foundational concepts and significance of ESG integration and sustainable investing strategies utilised by fund managers.
- Learn about the application of negative and norms-based screening to align investments with social and environmental standards.
- Understand the importance of corporate engagement and shareholder action in advocating for better ESG performance.
- Identify and evaluate positively screened and best-in-class investment opportunities.
- Explore sustainability-themed investing and its potential for contributing positively towards people and planet.
- Assess impact investing and its role in generating measurable social and environmental benefits alongside financial returns.

MODULE 6

Summary

A comprehensive exploration of topics such as proxy voting, corporate engagement, shareholder advocacy, and stewardship. Advisers are shown how to effectively advocate for sustainability on behalf of clients, and also alongside clients through utilising platforms like ACCR and Market Forces. This module helps advisers identify and discern strong ESG commitments and engagement policies from fund managers, and engage with product providers to ensure investments align with clients' sustainability goals. Detailed case studies provide practical examples of how informed and coordinated action can have a positive impact on corporate practices.

Learning outcomes

Engagement and shareholder advocacy

- Understand the principles and importance of engagement, active ownership, and shareholder advocacy in sustainable investing.
- Learn strategies for effectively communicating clients' ethical and sustainability priorities to fund managers.
- Gain insights into the process and impact of proxy voting on corporate sustainability practices, and how to leverage organisations like ACCR and Market Forces for client shareholder advocacy.
- Develop skills in advising clients on how to use their investment and ownership rights to advocate for corporate responsibility.
- Identify and evaluate fund managers with strong ESG commitments, engagement policies, and transparent voting disclosure.
- Recognise the role of collective action and collaboration among investors to amplify the impact of engagement efforts.

MODULE 7

Summary

This module delves into the critical aspects of researching, comparing, and recommending sustainable investments, equipping advisers with the skills to make informed decisions that align with their clients' values. From understanding ESG ratings and analysing investments, to constructing diverse portfolios and identifying greenwashing, this module covers a broad spectrum of essential topics in sustainable investment advice. Real-world case studies offer tangible insights into how advisers can develop well-constructed sustainable portfolios that align with both strategic goals and client values.

Learning outcomes

Research, compare and recommend

- Gain proficiency in using ESG and impact rating systems to assess the sustainability credentials and ESG performance of investments.
- Identify and evaluate ethical charters, screening thresholds, and process disclosures in assessing a fund's ESG commitment.
- Develop skills to effectively navigate greenwashing and conduct thorough due diligence.
- Recognise the significance of third-party certifications and collaborative initiatives in verifying sustainability claims.
- Employ tools to construct diversified portfolios that meet various ethical and sustainability preferences.
- Foster a deeper understanding of how sustainable investment strategies can be integrated into portfolio construction to achieve financial and values-based objectives.

MODULE 8

Summary

Tailored strategies for advisers to engage clients effectively, from initial conversations and fact finds about values, to ongoing education and portfolio alignment. This module offers practical tools for leveraging positive impact stories, constructing articulate communications, and attracting new clients interested in values-based advice. It highlights the role of certifications and professional memberships in establishing credibility. As the final module, this brings everything together for advisers to implement sustainable investment advice confidently, strategically, and focused on the best client outcomes.

Learning outcomes

Client communications and advice solutions

- Construct and utilise effective questionnaires to proactively discuss your clients' ethical and sustainability preferences, and confidently participate in conversations about sustainable investing.
- Utilise positive impact stories to demonstrate the tangible benefits and real-world impact of values-aligned investments.
- Acquire techniques for attracting new clients interested in ethical and sustainable investing, enhancing your value proposition.
- Implement best practices for onboarding clients and providing ongoing education around sustainability and ESG issues.
- Articulate and refine a personal or firm-wide sustainable investment philosophy to guide practice and client interactions.
- Understand the importance of professional memberships and certifications for personal development and practice credibility.
- Enhance client relationships, loyalty, and satisfaction by aligning investment strategies with their ethical and sustainability goals.

Sustainable Investment Advice maximises your ability to attract and retain clients by delivering business, marketing, and communication assets you can tailor for your advice practice. The following templates, guides and swipe files are a selection of the customisable resources you will find in the Bonus Module.

The SIA course is not just about teaching you what you need to know, it is about supporting you in the streamlined integration of your improved skills, and helping you communicate and promote yourself as a sustainable investment specialist adviser.

Bonus 1	Guide: Enhancing your email signature for marketing and inclusivity
Bonus 2	Launch Plan: Prepare your colleagues, clients, and communications for sustainable investment offerings
Bonus 3	Guide: Highlighting your sustainable investment advice services on your website
Bonus 4	Template: Sustainable investment newsletter and content ideas

COURSE DETAILS

Enrolment

Enrol any time. Course starts June 2024. Find out more at www.ethicalinvestgroup.com/sia

Commitment

Complete the course in just two days or at-your-own pace. Approximately 10 hours of video plus suggested readings.

Investment

$750 USD (+ GST for Australian participants) with multiple payment options available.

Access

Retain access to all course materials and resources for the life of the course including all future updates to core content.

Certification

Approximately 10 hours of CPD/CE. Receive digital verification badges for each module plus a certificate of completion.

REACH OUT!

Get in touch with Alexandra Brown to discuss if the Sustainable Investment Advice course is the right fit for you, your team, or your dealer group.

Special group pricing available | Contact us for group enrolment options

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April 2024 | Course structure and the curriculum is subject to change at any time and without notice.