

Frequently Asked Questions

Q. I have feedback on the IFA's website

A: Contact the National Office by emailing info@ifa.org.nz or phoning toll free 0800 404 422. Please also refer compliments to the Compliments and Complaints: Compliments section of IFAs website, www.ifa.org.nz.

Q. What should I expect from a financial adviser?

A: You should expect your financial adviser to deal with you and your affairs in an open, honest and professional manner. The role of a financial adviser is to recommend financial products and strategies that best suit your needs and personal circumstances from a myriad of options.

Q. Can I expect immediate results from my investments?

A: Too many clients approach financial advisers believing they will become instantly rich by taking their advice. This is not a practical or viable objective. A good adviser will maximize your financial security given the resources you have. They should also provide a level of discipline which many people lack in their financial affairs.

Q. How do I select a financial adviser?

A: It is essential to select carefully. Choose someone you personally like. You will have to be open and honest with them about intimate aspects of your life, so having an adviser you are comfortable and at ease with is very important.

It is a good idea to shop around and compare two or three different advisers before making your decision. Asking plenty of questions will assist with your decision-making.

For a list of IFA members see the [Find An Adviser](#) section of the website.

Q. What questions should I ask a financial adviser to assess their competence and ability?

A: Ask a prospective adviser:

1. Do you subscribe to and are you bound by Code of Ethics and/or Practice Standards?
2. What relevant education programmes have you completed and what qualifications do you hold?
3. What relevant and practical experience do you have in your field of financial advice?

Call the IFA toll free on 0800 404 422 to find out if a prospective adviser is a current and paid up member of the IFA - or check the [Find An Adviser](#) section on our website.

Q. How can I feel confident that my financial adviser is managing my funds competently?

A: The adviser should have a clear agreement from you before proceeding with investments.

Get a good plan - don't invest large sums of money without a written plan that you feel comfortable with.

Check for the danger signs - specifically inflated promises, returns that seem too good to be true (they probably are), putting all your eggs in one basket, an unbalanced plan, high fees, no prospectus ... and anything else that makes you feel uncomfortable!

Keep an eye on your investments or policy - watch for changes that might affect you. And when you are comfortable with the advice, act on it - otherwise what's the point in having sought it?

Q. How can I tell if I am getting truly impartial advice?

A: IFA members adhere to Code of Ethics and Practice Standards that require them to provide a written disclosure statement to you. The disclosure statement must disclose any conflict of interest that could impair the members' independence and objectivity as an adviser. The IFA believes in complete transparency to clients.

Q. What is a CFP^{CM} Practitioner?

A: The CERTIFIED FINANCIAL PLANNER^{CM} or CFP^{CM} mark is the financial planning designation recognised internationally as the highest credential for financial planning worldwide. CFP^{CM} practitioners have complied with a stringent set of eligibility criteria laid down and regularly tested by the international body that controls the CFP^{CM} mark. CFP^{CM} practitioners are required to pursue a broad based continuing education programme which ensures their ability to continue to meet their clients' needs.

Q. What is a CLU?

A: Chartered Life Underwriter or CLU is a professional designation internationally recognised as one of the most credible credentials for insurance advisers. CLU practitioners are required to pursue a broad based education programme which ensures their ability to continue to meet their clients' needs.

Q. Can I get free advice from a financial adviser?

A: Sometimes advisers provide a free introductory consultation, but you do need to clarify this when you make your first appointment. Generally there are two ways financial advisers are paid:

- Fees in payment of service offered
- Commissions for products purchased.

Q. Do I have to start paying fees at my first meeting with a financial adviser?

A: Sometimes advisers provide a free introductory consultation, but you do need to clarify this when you make your initial appointment. Thereafter your adviser will explain and agree with you in writing how they will be paid for the services they will provide for you.

Q. How can I find an IFA member?

A: Click on the [Find An Adviser](#) link on the left menu bar of the website. From here you can narrow your search to a Region, or from a Region to a City. Alternatively you can contact the National Office on 0800 404 422 and request an appropriate list of members in your area.

Q. How can I make a complaint against my adviser?

A: In the first instance you need to find out if the adviser is a current member of the IFA by phoning 0800 404 422 or checking on the [Find An Adviser](#) section of the website. If the adviser is a member of the IFA, the National Office can provide you with a copy of the Code of Ethics and Practice Standards documents so that you can ascertain whether a rule or rules have been breached. The National Office will also provide you with a copy of the Complaints Procedure and Complaints Form. Alternatively these documents and forms can be downloaded from the [Compliments and Complaints : Complaints Procedure](#) section of the website.

Please note:

- The IFA's complaints process does NOT provide for monetary compensation as it is a disciplinary process only.
- The IFA is unable to process complaints against advisers who are not current members of the IFA.

You may be able to get assistance elsewhere from one of the following organisations:

- **Insurance and Savings Ombudsman:** phone 04 499 7612 / 0800 888 202
The Ombudsman considers complaints about insurance and savings services provided by life, medical or personal insurance or savings organisations who are members of ISI.
- **Insurance Council of New Zealand:** phone 04 472 5230, Email incz@incz.co.nz
An industry organisation which represents fire and general insurers in New Zealand.
- **Life Brokers Association (LBA):** Phone 0800 LIFEBROKER (0800 543 327)
- **Professional Advisers Association (PAA):** Phone 0800 ASK PAA (0800 275 722)

Q. I am interested in becoming a member of the IFA. How do I join?

A:

- If you are involved in the process of providing financial advice such as investment advice, insurance advice and/or financial planning you can apply for Practitioner Membership. (See below for information required to accompany your application)
- If you are not involved in the process of providing financial advice, but are employed in the industry, you can join as an Affiliate Member (non-practitioner). Non-practitioner members are not required to complete the mentoring programme.

All membership application forms can be downloaded from the [Become a Member: Application Forms](#) section of this website.

Q. What information do I need to provide with my application for Practitioner Membership?

A:

- Application form for Practitioner Membership
- Application Fee of \$140.63 (incl GST)
- Credit Report from Veda Advantage (formally Baycorp)
- Mentor Arrangement Form
- Professional Indemnity Insurance certificate
- Copy of any relevant education certificates

Please note:

- If you have not yet arranged your Professional Indemnity Insurance, you may wish to join the IFA's Professional Indemnity programme through Aon New Zealand. Contact details for Aon are listed in the application form.
- Incomplete applications can be subject to significant delays.
- If you need help with your forms please contact National Office 0800 40 44 22 and speak with the Administration Secretary or Compliance Manager.

Q. What information do I need to provide with my application for Affiliate Membership?

A:

- Application form for Affiliate Membership
- Application Fee of \$140.63 (incl GST)

Q. What are the membership fees?

A:

Application fee	\$140.63 incl GST	All applications
Annual membership subscription	\$534.38 incl GST	Affiliate Members
Annual membership subscription	\$478.13 incl GST	Provisional Members
Annual membership subscription	\$646.88 incl GST	General Members
Annual CFP ^{CM} License fee	Approx \$60.00 GST exempt	CFP ^{CM} practitioners (fee may vary due to exchange rate)

Q. What are the steps to becoming a CFP^{CM} Practitioner or CLU?

A: Please refer to the IFA's Professional Development Pathway located under the [Become a Member: Professional Development Pathway](#) section of the website.

Q. What are the benefits of belonging to the IFA?

A: The IFA aims to be the pre-eminent body for financial advisers. The IFA has over 1,400 members with twelve local branches offering members professional development programmes and networking opportunities.

The IFA provides a wide range of services to members to help you achieve professional success.

The IFA:

- builds public awareness
- provides member education, training and information
- develops and enforces high ethical standards for members
- represents Institute views to Government, media and key stakeholders
- offers professional development and social activities
- offers member discounts on Institute activities
- provides on-line access to the Institute's website
- offers the public a referral service to members through the website

For more detailed information refer to the [Become A Member: Benefits of Membership](#) section of the website.

Q. I am a student and I need statistical information about the financial advisory sector.

A: Check out Kiwi Career web site www.kiwicareers.govt.nz industry overviews. The Statistics Department also has relevant data on their website www.stats.govt.nz.

Q. I am a financial adviser overseas. If I come to New Zealand will my qualifications count for anything?

A: Yes, this is possible. The IFA considers each such application on an individual basis. For further information please see our document [Information for Overseas Advisers](#) (PDF).