

EDUCATION COMMITTEE OF THE SOCIETY OF ACTUARIES (SOA)

INTRODUCTORY STUDY NOTE

EXAM SESSION: SPRING 2018

EXAM: QUANTITATIVE FINANCE AND INVESTMENT—CORE

DATE & TIME: Wednesday, April 25, 2018; 8:30 a.m. – 11:45 a.m. and 1:30 p.m. – 3:45 p.m.

1. The examination will consist of five hours of written answer questions. A read-through time will be given prior to the start of the exam, 15 minutes in the morning session and 15 minutes in the afternoon session. No writing is allowed during the read-through time.
2. The following link shows a recommended FSA module/exam sequence for each track:
<http://www.soa.org/Education/Exam-Reg/edu-new-fsa-recommended.aspx>

This order is NOT mandated. Each candidate will determine the appropriate sequence based on factors including readiness to sit for an exam, exam administration schedules, or study time available. However, the Education committees believe that these recommendations provide the most effective guide for candidate success. An examination/module may assume familiarity with material that is covered in any requirement that is recommended to come before that examination or module.
3. The Syllabus material includes textbooks, online readings, and the study notes listed in the Appendix. The Appendix also may contain additional important information regarding this exam. A complete listing of the Syllabus and Learning Objectives is located in this exam's home page on the SOA Web site. Study notes listed with an asterisk (*) will also be included in the Revision set of study notes.
4. Several book distributors carry some or all of the textbooks for the Society of Actuaries exams. A list appears on the SOA Web site: <http://www.soa.org/education/exam-reg/resources/edu-txt-manuals.aspx>.
5. Any changes in the Syllabus for this exam will be published under "Updates" in this exam's home page on the SOA Web site.
6. Past exams, solutions and case studies are available at: <http://www.soa.org/education/exam-reg/syllabus-study-materials/edu-multiple-choice-exam.aspx>
7. There is no case study for this exam.
8. The candidate should be very familiar with the Learning Objectives. These Learning Objectives are the first ingredient in developing the syllabus and also guide the examination committee when writing questions. The Learning Objectives set out the cognitive level needed to pass this exam. You will notice that the candidates are expected to "analyze," "explain," "calculate," "describe," "apply," etc. While studying the syllabus material, candidates may want to refer back to the Learning Objectives to remain focused on the goals of the exam.

9. The examination questions for this exam will be based on the required readings for this exam. If a conflict exists (in definitions, terminology, etc.) between the readings for this exam and the readings for other exams, the questions should be answered on the basis of the readings for this exam.
10. Candidates may ONLY use these battery or solar-powered Texas Instruments models: BA-35, BA II Plus*, BAII Plus Professional*, TI-30Xa, TI-30X II* (IIS solar or IIB battery), and TI-30X MultiView* (XS solar or XB battery). Candidates may use more than one of the approved calculators during the examination.

Calculator instructions may not be brought into the exam room. During the exam, the calculator must be removed from its carrying case so the supervisor can confirm that it is an approved model. Candidates using a calculator other than the approved models will have their exams disqualified.

Candidates can purchase calculators directly from: Texas Instruments, Attn: Order Entry, PO Box 650311, Mail Station 3962, Dallas, TX 75265, phone 800/842-2737 or <http://epsstore.ti.com>.

The memory of the **BA II Plus, **BA II Plus Professional**, **TI-30X II** and **TI-30X MultiView** calculators will need to be cleared by the examination supervisor upon the candidate's entrance to the examination room.*

11. A list of various seminars/workshops and study manuals appears on the SOA Web site <http://www.soa.org/education/exam-reg/resources/edu-sem-workshops.aspx> and <http://www.soa.org/education/exam-reg/resources/edu-txt-manuals.aspx>. These seminars/workshops and study manuals do not reflect any official interpretation, opinion, or endorsement of the Society of Actuaries or its Education Committee.

Please note that the Education Committee expects candidates to read the material cited in the *Syllabus* and to use other material as a complement to the primary sources rather than a substitution for them.

12. The Society of Actuaries provides study notes to persons preparing for this examination. They are intended to acquaint candidates with some of the theoretical and practical considerations involved in the various subjects. While varying opinions are presented where appropriate, limits on the length of the material and other considerations sometimes prevent the inclusion of all possible opinions. These study notes do not, however, represent any official opinion, interpretation or endorsement of the Society of Actuaries. The Society is grateful to the authors for their contributions in preparing study notes.

The American Academy of Actuaries, the Canadian Institute of Actuaries, the Conference of Consulting Actuaries, and the Society of Actuaries jointly sponsor various examinations administered by the Society of Actuaries.

APPENDIX

Study notes for this exam

Code	Title
QFIC-102-13	Current Issues: Options—What Does an Option Pricing Model Tell Us About Option Prices?
QFIC-103-13	How to Use the Holes in Black-Scholes
QFIC-104-13	<i>The Known, the Unknown, and the Unknowable in Financial Risk Management: Measurement and Theory Advancing Practice</i> , Chapter 3
QFIC-108-13	Managing Your Advisor: A Guide to Getting the Most Out of the Portfolio Management Process
QFIC-109-15	Chapter 9 of <i>Risk Management and Financial Institutions</i> , 2 nd Edition
QFIC-110-15	Liquidity as an Investment Style
QFIC-111-16	Stop Playing with Your Optimizer
QFIC-112-16	Risk Factors as Building Blocks for Portfolio Diversification: The Chemistry of Asset Allocation
QFIC-113-17	<i>Frequently Asked Questions in Quantitative Finance</i> , 2 nd Edition, Chapter 2, pages 103–105, 109–115, 155–161 and 248–249
QFIC-114-17	<i>Frequently Asked Questions in Quantitative Finance</i> , 2 nd Edition, Chapter 2, pages 162–173 and 223–225
QFIC-115-17	Which Free Lunch Would You Like Today, Sir?
QFIC-116-17	Low Yield Curves and Absolute/Normal Volatilities
QFIC-117-17	High-Yield Bond Market Primer

The following additional information applies to this exam:

1. ERRATA:

- Study Note QFIC-104-13, Chapter 3, “Mild and Wild Randomness”
Page 52, second paragraph, first sentence, the number 16 should be 18.
- *An Introduction to the Mathematics of Financial Derivatives*, Hirsa and Neftci
[ERRATA](#)

2. Exam booklets in both the morning and afternoon will include a cumulative normal distribution table identical to the one posted on the syllabus page of the Web site.

A formula package will also be available for this exam. It will be posted on the syllabus page of the Web site.

Morning and afternoon exam booklets will include a formula package identical to the one posted on the syllabus page. The exam committee felt that by providing many key formulas, candidates would be able to focus more of their exam preparation time on the application of the formulas and concepts to demonstrate their understanding of the syllabus material and less time on the memorization of the formulas. The formula package was developed sequentially by reviewing the syllabus material for each major syllabus topic. Candidates should be able to follow the flow of the formula package easily. We recommend that candidates use the formula package concurrently with the syllabus material. Not every formula in the syllabus is in the formula package. **Candidates are responsible for all formulas on the syllabus, including those not on the formula sheet.** In general, formulas not in the package are either relatively fundamental or uncomplicated, or are part of the derivative of formulas that are in the package.

Candidates should carefully observe the sometimes-subtle differences in formulas and their application to slightly different situations. For example, there are several versions of the Black-Scholes-Merton Option Pricing formula to differentiate between instruments paying dividends, tied to an index, etc. Candidates will be expected to recognize the correct formula to apply in a specific situation of an exam question.

Candidates will note that the formula package does not provide names or definitions of all the formulas or symbols used. With the wide variety of references and authors of the syllabus, candidates should recognize that the letter conventions and use of symbols may vary from one part of the syllabus to another and thus from one formula to another.

We trust that you will find the inclusion of the formula package to be a valuable study aide that will allow for more of your preparation time to be spent on mastering the learning objectives provided as part of this study note.