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Press Release

Launch of first nationally recognised and accredited money and debt advice training

The Consumer Credit Counselling Service (CCCS), the UK's leading debt charity, and the Institute of Credit Management (ICM) are delighted to announce the addition by the Office of the Qualifications and Examinations Regulator (Ofqual) of three money and debt advice units to the ICM's Diploma in Credit Management and Diploma in Money and Debt Advice.

The unit awards, developed by CCCS, are General Money and Debt Advice, Debt Prioritisation and Collections Process Advice, and County Court Procedures and Enforcement Advice. They will form part of the first nationally regulated Diplomas in Money and Debt Advice which CCCS is creating. The diplomas are due to be accredited on the Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF) in June.

CCCS runs a range of training programmes which give people and organisations the skills and knowledge to provide money and debt advice. Courses include dealing with debt and personal money management, which train people in giving practical and effective advice to individuals in financial difficulty as well as more specialist courses in bankruptcy, Individual Voluntary Arrangements (IVA), Debt Relief Orders (DRO) and County Court procedures.

Lesley Cheeseman, Head of Training and Development at the CCCS, says: "We are using our vast experience of creating training materials for all our employees, including counsellors, to create the diplomas.

"At a time when money and debt advice has never been so in demand, the diploma will fill a vacuum in professional debt advice qualifications."

Debbie Tuckwood, Head of Education at the ICM, adds: "CCCS have designed a flexible, credit-based qualification which will be on the Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF) and available for all who work in the area of money and debt advice. Each unit is individually certificated to allow the achievement of a single unit award or learners could build credit for an ICM Diploma.

"CCCS should be commended for their professional approach to employee development."

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Notes for editors:

1. Details of upcoming CCCS Training can be found at www.cccs.co.uk/Training.aspx
2. CCCS operates a dedicated free-phone helpline (0800 138 1111), open 8am to 8pm, Monday to Friday.
3. CCCS operates *Debt Remedy*, an online counselling service available round the clock at www.cccs.co.uk for those who prefer an anonymous option.
4. CCCS's ethos is to help the "can't pays", not the "won't pays", and does not condone debt avoidance. CCCS always aims to help its clients pay back what they owe, in a realistic timescale and manner that is suited to each individual's situation.
5. CCCS is self-funding. Lenders share with the charity the benefit they receive from its operation, making a donation from the money repaid to them. This allows CCCS to retain its independence and ensure that its advice is always in the best interest of the client. CCCS aims to separate the "can't pays" from the "won't pays".