Financial Analysis Certificate Master Classes

**An extension to Australia's premier Excel course
for finance professionals**

A series of one and two-day master classes focusing on advanced modelling and analytical tasks. Most of these courses are open to all Excel users. They have been designed as companion master classes and extensions of the core knowledge and skills presented in the Financial Analysis Certificate (FAC).

This series delves more deeply into specific subject areas or builds greater expertise in those areas than is suitable in the FAC. It also addresses the desire from many of our past students to provide ongoing training & support in a format that they appreciate.

Modes of Study

- In class mode: 16 hours over two days – now in all capital cities
- Private offerings also available

Key Outcomes

- Gain advanced skills in key subject areas, such as advanced modelling, advanced reports & dashboards;
- 16 hours of continuing professional education per session for accountants;
- Develop advanced sensitivities;
- Develop advanced & dynamic reporting tools;
- Learn how to harness Power Query, PowerPivot and Power View/3D Maps.

Each Session Delivers

- Core knowledge for the specialised subject area;
- Re-usable examples demonstrating proven methodologies;
- Guidance on how to avoid real-world problems;
- Advanced techniques to extend the power of formulas without needless complexity;
- Access to online support and some extended content available through the online student portal.

Who Benefits

- Those who have previously completed the Financial Analysis Certificate looking to extend their knowledge.
- Other candidates who have suitable knowledge and experience wishing to gain these advanced skills.

Benefits for the Employer

- Practical pathways for staff to enhance their modelling and analytical skills;
- Access to proven and effective strategies for advanced model building & report writing;
- Ongoing training and continuing professional education opportunities for staff.

Currently Available Master Classes

The following master classes are currently available in this series, more will be added soon.

	Master Class	Duration
Master Class 1	Advanced Financial Modelling Master Class	2 days
Master Class 2	Business Intelligence Tools in Excel Master Class	2 days
Master Class 3	Charting & Dashboarding Master Class	2 days

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Detailed Course Outlines

Advanced Financial Modelling Master Class (2 Days)

This master class is designed to develop the participants skills in building powerful and flexible models whilst keeping the models transparent and the complexity inherent in these tasks under control. It demonstrates practical methods for handling simple through intermediate to very complex scenario data sets. Balancing three-way models, handling non-circular interest calculations and building in timing for cash flows is demonstrated. Methods to manage and control calendar-based triggers and apportionment of costs and revenue are demonstrated.

In a series of workshops, critical tasks in building and managing models, building-in sensitivity and handling risk and error-checking are demonstrated. Basic techniques for building in Monte Carlo analysis are demonstrated, and the commercial tools available are reviewed for handling it more robustly.   Solver is demonstrated with practical guidance on how and when it may be implemented and used.

This master class is intended for those who have previously completed the Financial Analysis Certificate. It builds on materials, techniques and methodologies introduced and taught in that course. Whilst revision and some re-iteration is included on key techniques, completion of the FAC is a pre-requisite to avoid needless overlap and repetition of content already well-rehearsed in the FAC. Some pre-reading and self-study based on that course will be expected.

Sample Applications

- Multi-scenario high-level model with a small set of individual assumptions
- Multi-scenario table-driven model, with assumptions varying by period & operating area, for each scenario
- Model using solver to optimise values for some assumptions, including timing for capex
- Three-way models, discounted cash flow only models

Sensitivity Tools

- Data tables revisited
- One & two-dimensional data tables & tables for scenario sets
- Building data tables on worksheets other than the assumptions (input) worksheet
- Goal seeking
- Using solver to optimise multiple assumptions, given a set of constraints

Modelling Concepts / Methodologies

- Effectively wiring three-way models
- Dynamically allocating free cash

- Forecasting functions
- Apportioning costs based on an S-Curve instead of linear apportionment
- Monte Carlo techniques – basic Excel implementations and a review of commercially available tools
- Removing the circularity implied in interest and cash balance calculations
- Building-in timing-based triggers and apportioning costs & revenue between periods
- Handling conditionality without making formulas overly complex
- Model segmentation
- Deriving balance sheet & cash flow movements from profit & loss
- Setting up consolidations of boilerplate components
- Building-in consolidation filters
- Interface design
- Error-checking
- Presenting scenario results in high-level charts
- Documentation and review

Business Intelligence Tools in Excel Master Class (2 Days)

This master class is designed to introduce and demonstrate the business intelligence tools built into Excel. In a series of workshops, the newer ETL (Extract, Transform and Load) tools introduced into recent versions of Excel are demonstrated, starting with less challenging data, a set of analytical reports is built.

As the exercises develop, more complex and difficult data sources are combined into the reporting tasks and the features of Power Query are demonstrated in taming poorly structured and formatted legacy data sources.

Once the data is imported into Excel, the new Data Model, DAX data analysis language and the features of Power Pivot are demonstrated to prepare the data for a set of detailed reports and executive summaries.

Finally, the presentation tools, Power View and 3D Maps are demonstrated and the use of new filtering tools introduced in Excel 2010 and upgraded and extended in more recent version, are demonstrated to provide user-friendly and powerful reporting tools.

Sample Applications

- Data consolidation and reporting
- Period-end sample, consuming multiple data sets from ERP, HR and manufacturing
- Web-sourced data samples
- Complex ETL samples demonstrating powerful data-cleansing methodologies
- Reports and executive summaries

Tables

- What are tables, and what are tables good for
- Tools and features for working with tables
- Alternative notation used in table-referencing formulas
- Creating / removing tables
- Naming tables

Advanced PivotTables

- Calculated fields
- Calculated items
- Changing field view
- Extracting data from PivotTables (2 methods)
- Using slicers & timelines to filter data

Add-ins

- How & when to install PowerPivot & Power View add-ins (2010 / 2013)
- Enabling / disabling add-ins

Power Pivot (2010+)

- About Power Pivot
- About the Data Model
- Linking tables in the Data Model
- Using DAX (Data Analysis Expressions)
- Key DAX functions, such as HASONEVALUE, BLANK, IF etc
- Improving data analysis by using DAX rather than worksheet formulas
- Working with hierarchies
- Creating and managing Measures
- Creating and managing KPIs
- Utilising Measures & KPIs

Power Query (2013+)

- About Power Query
- How Power Query vastly simplifies and streamlines ETL
- Data Sources
- Using Power Query Formula Language (aka M)
- Creating & Editing queries

Power View/3D Maps (Excel 2013 or 2016 required)

- Working with Power View / 3D Maps
- Selecting and customising visualisations
- Working with maps
- Publishing including Office 365
- Building compelling presentations

Charting & Dashboarding Master Class (2 Days)

This master class is designed to develop the participants skills in building powerful and flexible reports including charts and dashboards. It has evolved from a previously popular course, the Charting Master Class, which was just getting too full for one day!

The master class starts by covering a lot of fundamental knowledge on charts which many users just don't know, but which makes working with the charting engine in Excel much easier and opens the door to many powerful tricks to present very effective charts to summarise data and aid in management and decision making.

Part of the skill set here is in managing and arranging data effectively and taking advantage of the powerful data functions in Excel, as well as some of the newer features introduced since Excel 2007. With the introduction of Excel 2016, Microsoft has added a number of oft-requested charts to the system, and some issues and tricks with these will also be covered.

Sample Applications

- Waterfall / Bridge charts using simple, filtered and dynamic data sources
- Charts with user selectable or dynamically determined benchmarks
- Dashboards with user selected contents (charts and tables displayed selected from drop-down)
- Dashboard including end-user selections to allow drill-down on data

Interface Design

- Building selection criteria based on in-cell drop-down lists & subsidiary drop-down lists dependant on choices in higher-level lists
- Use of slicers to assist user selection of report data
- Building flexible date-range selections
- Use of controls to allow selection on more than one worksheet & in chart sheets
- Conditional formatting for dashboard elements
- Use of styles for consistent appearance

Dashboards

- Alignment and formatting options to build well-designed dashboards & reports
- Excel features available for dashboard design
- Controlling page layout & presentation

Charting Features

- Building charts based on dynamic ranges (2 methods)
- Building waterfall & bridge charts
- Building charts with dynamic scales
- Building charts with dynamic titles & labelling
- Working with two-axis charts
- Key chart settings
- Tricks to solve common issues with the standard chart layout / labelling
- Keyboard shortcuts and key ribbon controls to simplify working with charts

Data Analysis Features

- Using PivotTables to summarise data
- Extracting data from PivotTables (2 methods)
- Charting data in PivotTables
- Setting up criteria formulas for data selection
- Use of various summary functions & formulas
- Building effective lookup formulas to locate & retrieve reporting data
- Use of array formulas for data summary
- Use of Data Tables for data summary
- Impact of filtering & sorting on reports
- Sorting data by formula
- Working with ranked data
- Cross-checking totals & verifying report completeness

Excel Version

- The course materials are compatible with all versions of Excel from Excel 2010, and version specific instructions are given where required. However, note that some features demonstrated and utilised in the courses may only be available in later versions of Excel.
- Public courses are presented using Excel 2016. On student PCs, any version from Excel 2010 onwards may be used, but we would recommend Excel 2013 or later.
- On the Macintosh, Excel 2016 is fully supported, except for Master Class 2: Business Intelligence Tools in Excel, which relies on features not supported in Excel.

Course Materials

- The course materials vary depending upon the subject matter and technical references required, but each workshop's manual includes at least 30-40 pages of material per day of instruction, plus access to some further content online.
- A full set of blank and worked sample workbooks as well as a number of reference documents are available for download from the online student support portal.

Public Courses

Public offerings of the Financial Analysis Certificate Master Classes are available in all capital cities. For details, visit our web site (www.clarksonitt.com/calendar) or call +61 (0) 417-777-750.

Private Courses

In-house offerings of the Financial Analysis Certificate Master Classes can be arranged anywhere in Australia & we can assist with the hire of suitable training facilities where those are not available in-house. This would prove economical where a number of staff have previously completed the Financial Analysis Certificate or had attained an equivalent skill level. Requirements for facilities are discussed on our web site. For a quotation or to discuss your particular needs, call +61 (0) 417-777-750.

About the Course Author and Lead Presenter

Following an early career in both public and commercial accounting, James Clarkson has more than twenty-five years' experience as a presenter of professional programs and more than thirty consulting & model building for corporate clients.

He has gained wide experience in model & analytical report design & development and also has wide experience in application development using Microsoft Office (especially Excel), Visual Basic & Visual Basic for Applications (VBA).

He is an outstanding educator, having presented to more than 7,500 students in long-format multi-day courses and thousands more in short courses over more than 25 years.

He has a demonstrated ability to clearly explain difficult and technical subjects and consistently rates above 90% for satisfaction across a number of measures on student evaluations.

Financial Analysis Certificate

The Financial Analysis Certificate is our premier modelling & analysis course. It is a multiday course of 48 hours duration and covers all the fundamentals and modelling and analysis tasks to an advanced level. It is a prerequisite for attendance at some of the Master Classes. Public offerings are available in all capital cities of Australia and it is also available for in-house presentation.

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