

Unit 1

Introduction to the financial services environment and products

After studying this unit, you will be able to demonstrate an understanding of:

- ◆ the purpose and structure of the UK financial services industry;
- ◆ the main financial asset classes and their characteristics, covering past performance, risk and return;
- ◆ the main financial services product types and their functions;
- ◆ the main financial advice areas;
- ◆ the process of giving financial advice, including the importance of regular reviews of the consumer's circumstances;
- ◆ the basic legal concepts relevant to financial advice;
- ◆ the UK taxation and social security systems and how they affect personal financial circumstances;
- ◆ the impact of inflation, interest rate volatility and other relevant socio-economic factors on personal financial plans.

