



**STSA** 

## **STSA Documentary Credit Specialist**

NOVEMBER 2017



## Introduction

The Lake Geneva Region is an internationally recognised centre of expertise for commodity trading. More than 300 companies employing over 10'000 people benefit every day from being at the heart of this unique hub.

In this vibrant and professional environment, training is becoming all the more a prerequisite. Experts responsible for logistics and operations are key players in the industry's success. With increased international competition and challenges facing the commodity trading activity, education & training has become a critical asset to succeed in today's industry.

*STSA views training more than ever as prerequisite for a career in the commodity trading industry.*

Due to the success of the STSA Operator's Certificate, it has become evident to the Association to further develop its educational programmes offered, in order to cover other strategic positions as well. In this context and based on its unique expertise in education and training, STSA (Swiss Trading and Shipping Association) has been mandated by its members to launch a new training programme for Trade Finance Officers. This new programme has been designed by a working group of experts directly active in Trade Finance Departments within renowned commodity trading companies and in within major banks active in trade finance. This first part is designed more for juniors Officers whereas the second part will be focussing more on experienced candidates.

### **About STSA**

STSA was created as GTSA in 2006 by the main actors of the Commodity Trading community in Geneva. In 2008 it extended its reach to the Lake Geneva Region. In 2014, it became STSA – one national Association for Trading and Shipping in Switzerland – overseen the regional chapter of Zug and Lugano, and representing more than 170 members encompassing large, medium and small entities. The Association has become a renowned for organising educational programs such as the Master of Arts in International Trading, Commodity Finance and Shipping, and the Diploma in Advanced Studies in Commodity Trading. Both programmes have been created in partnership with the University of Geneva and have been running since 2008 with an increasing level of recognition. Accordingly, the Association organises other successful professional programmes such as the STSA Operator's Certificate and the Commodity trading fundamentals course.



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**NOVEMBER 2017**

## Objectives

Our main goals are:

- to meet the requirements of commodity trading companies and banks active in Trade Finance by offering them a specific training programme
- to improve the knowledge and understanding of complex issues associated with documentary best practice
- to accelerate the training process for junior Documentary Credit Officers and Trade Operation Officers
- to leverage skills of young professionals in their career in the commodity trading and banking industry

More specifically, this programme aims to give participants a solid understanding of:

- The role as a “Spécialiste en Technique Documentaire” or « Documentary Credit Specialist »
- The parties to documentary credit transactions and their roles and obligations
- The specific terminology
- The Contracts
- The Documents (invoices, Certificates of Origin, LOI, B/L, SWB, RWB, CMR, etc.)
- The Credit lines
- The different types of securities (guarantees, LCs, cash collection, etc.)
- The instruments of communication (swift, telex, Trafec, etc.)
- The Guarantees
- Documentary credits – types, characteristics and uses
- Rules and trade terms, including UCP 600, Incoterms 2010 (ISP98, ISBP 745 and URR 725)
- Risk issues, including types of risks, control and possible mitigations

Overall, the programme allows participants to understand the trade life cycle from a risk management perspective. The programme has been designed with a hands-on approach in order to give participants the best and quickest possible grip of the diverse procedures required in financial instrument operations.

The modules will take place twice a week, Tuesday and Thursday evenings to give participants enough time to absorb and eventually practise what has been learnt during the programme.



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**NOVEMBER 2017**

## Who should attend?

- Junior Trade Finance Officers and Documentary Credit Officers in the early stages of their career in a commodity trading company or in a bank who want to accelerate their training process and fully grasp all angles of this complex profession which is in constant evolution.
- Young professionals considering a career change and interested in moving into the commodity sector.
- Fresh graduates seeking to acquire new skills and speed up their recruitment process.

Kindly note that STSA will not be able to assist or neither be involved in any job searching processes for any of its programme participants. The certificate does not guarantee employment, although it might increase employability.

## Teaching Format

The Certificate consists out of 5 modules of 4 hours each, divided into two evenings of 2 hours. The programme is taught for some modules in English and for some others in French.

Some pre-reading, preparation, case studies or homework may be required based upon the teachers recommendations and will be communicated upon acceptance to the course.

The lectures are given by industry experts from the commodity trading and banking sectors, with inputs from guest speakers to give further depth and varying perspectives.

## Evaluation

The award of the Spécialiste en Technique Documentaire's Certificate is based on attendance and successful completion of exams. However, your full commitment and engagement will be required to obtain the Certificate.

Each module is subject to an evaluation. The candidates are required to attend and participate in a minimum of 80% of the programme sessions in order to obtain the Certificate. Any absences must be appropriately justified.

An overall average of 4.0 (out of 6) must be achieved in order to graduate, and no more than one mark between 3.0 and 4.0 will be accepted. A mark lower than 3.0 will automatically disqualify the participant from obtaining

*We understand that participants often have demanding professional and family obligations; however, to obtain the certificate successfully you will need to be fully engaged.*



the Certificate. The participant may re-take the failed module/course during the following intake at his/her cost. Only one opportunity to retake the module will be given. If the participant fails more than 2 modules in one session he will be automatically disqualified. Any participant caught cheating or plagiarising will be automatically disqualified without appeal.

All exams and assignments must be completed in English or in French.

## Practical Information

### Location:

Courses will take place at:

### FER – Fédération des Entreprises Romandes

98, rue de Saint-Jean

1201 Geneva

### Schedule:

4 hours per week on Tuesday and Thursday evenings from 6.00pm to 8.00pm.

Detailed schedule to come.

## Fees

### For STSA members

CHF 2'400 (includes 5 modules)

### For non STSA members

CHF 2'900 (includes 5 modules)

### Multi booking

A discount of 10% will be applied for 3 or more bookings from the same company in the same intake.

### Instalments

After acceptance of an admission, a deposit of CHF 900 will be requested to secure your place on the programme and confirm enrolment. In case of withdrawal, no refund of the deposit will be paid.

The balance must be paid at least 20 days before the course starts.

### Cancellation and substitution policy

No refund whatsoever will be made for cancellations received 10 days or less before the course start date, however participants can be substituted by an acceptable candidate if the organisers receive prior notification.



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**NOVEMBER 2017**

## How to apply?

Applications **must** include the following documents:

- 1) Motivation letter in English or in French;
- 2) Application form completed and **signed**;
- 3) Your updated resume in English or in French;
- 4) 1 passport picture.

Applications and all supporting documents must be submitted **electronically via STSA's website** (<https://stsa.swiss/training/education>).

**Admission criteria:**

- 1) Good command of both spoken and written English and French as the program is taught for some modules in French and for some others in English.
- 2) Being fully proficient with Microsoft Office.

Acceptance or refusal of applications are at the sole discretion of STSA. Late applications may be considered subject to availability.

You will be notified via e-mail if you have been accepted on the course.

A maximum of 20 participants will be accepted per intake.





## FAQ

### **Can I be accepted even if I do not have any particular certification?**

No certification as such is requested but a strong motivation and a good command of the English language are necessary.

### **Can you help me to acquire a work permit?**

Unfortunately no. This is an educational programme and STSA is not able to provide this kind of service.

### **Do I need to take my laptop to class?**

It is a personal choice whether or not to bring a laptop to class, but it may be requested by some teachers.

### **Will you help me to find a job?**

No. The purpose of the Certificate is for the participants to grow professionally and attain competences in documentary credit. It is not STSA's purpose or objective to assist the participants in finding a job.

### **When I obtain my Certificate will I be accepted to pursue the Master or the Diploma also set up by STSA?**

While the Certificate and the above mentioned programmes may have some professors and/or guest speakers in common, these are totally different programmes. Acceptance for the Master or Diploma is bound by their specific set of rules.

### **Can I meet STSA representatives' before the courses?**

Yes if necessary, but it would be preferable to schedule any such meeting in advance.

### **What happens if I cannot attend one course?**

It will be your responsibility to obtain the presentations and the notes taken during the course from another student and to coordinate with the trainer responsible for the module to pass the exam.

Under no circumstances can courses be recorded.



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