

# Association of Democratic Services Officers



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Democratic Services  
Officers

# Welcome and Introductions





**Michelle Beaumont - ADSO Qualifications Manager**



## Sarah Papper - Learning & Development Officer South West Councils



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**Hans Rijs - Director of International relations, IIMC**



# ADSO Board

Formally launched at its first national conference held on 14 October 2009 and now has over **1,300 members**



John Austin  
ADSO Chair



Peter Sass  
ADSO Vice-Chair



Mark Towers  
Company Secretary



Colin Copus  
Non-Executive Director



Matthew Hall  
Director of Business Strategy and  
Development



Susan Biddle  
Director of Training



Joanna Boaler  
Director of Communications



Carl Whistlecraft  
Non-Executive Director



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# ADSO Board

## Their founding vision:

- To be a nationally recognised professional association, regarded as such by central government, our members and our partners;
- To represent, promote and develop excellent democratic services, for the benefit of all those working within the sector and those we support.



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# Overview of Programmes

## The Certificate in Democratic Knowledge and The Diploma in Local Democracy

The screenshot displays the ADSO website's navigation bar with the following items: Home, About Us, Jobs, ADSO Regions, Training, News & Events, Members Area, and ADSO Sponsors. The 'Training' menu is expanded, listing: Training courses, ADSO Certificate in Democratic Services Knowledge, Diploma in Local Democracy, Bursaries, Become an ADSO Assessor, and Webinar Programme. A featured article titled 'ADSO Conference and Awards' is visible with a 'Read More' button. Below the navigation, there are three images: a panel discussion with three men, hands sorting through certificates, and a woman speaking at a podium.



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## Certificate Assignment Titles and Corresponding Training Courses

<b>Course Title</b>	<b>Related Certificate Module</b>
<b>Becoming a DSO</b>	No direct link but may help with <b>Module 1</b> : Understand your own Authority and its Working Environment and a good course to signpost to for those new in post prior to starting on programme.
<b>Structures and Functions</b>	<b>Module 2</b> The Structure and Functions of Local Government
<b>Law and Practice of Local Government</b>	<b>Module 3</b> : The Law and Practice of Decision Making in Local Government
<b>Council and its Governance Arrangements</b>	<b>Module 4</b> : Role of Council and its Governance Arrangements
<b>Meetings Procedures*</b>	<b>Module 5</b> : Managing and Effectively Supporting Meetings
<b>Working in a Political Environment</b>	<b>Module 6</b> : Members and officers in local government
<b>Ethics and Standards</b>	<b>Module 6</b> : Members and officers in local government
<b>Overview and Scrutiny</b>	<b>Module 7</b> : Overview and Scrutiny in Local Government



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**Learners can access two free places during their time on the ADSO Certificate (\*not included)**

## Certificate – Timeframe and submission timetable

**18 Months**

**March 2024**

**September 2025**

<b>29 Apr 24</b>	<b>15 Jul 24</b>	<b>30 Sep 24</b>	<b>16 Dec 24</b>	<b>10 Mar 25</b>	<b>26 May 25</b>	<b>11 Aug 25</b>
<b>M1</b>	<b>M2</b>	<b>M3</b>	<b>M4</b>	<b>M5</b>	<b>M6</b>	<b>M7</b>

Word count is 3,000 – 3,500 per assignment



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## Certificate - Costs

### **Current cost**

ADSO members £1,200 + VAT

Non ADSO member  
£1,530 + VAT

### **Bursaries**





A limited number of bursaries are available to ADSO members for all or part of the cost

Information on how to apply can be found on the ADSO website

**Submission deadlines apply**



## ADSO Certificate Entry Requirements

-  **At least 6 - 9 months in a Democratic Services role**
-  **A formal expression of interest detailing why you want to complete the certificate**
-  **Identify a workplace mentor to support you through the programme**
-  **Commitment - including giving up own time to study**



# Certificate Format and Assessment



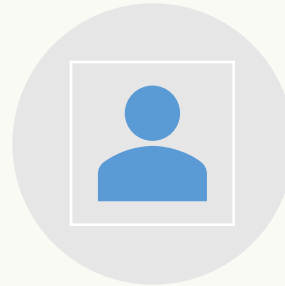
**Distance learning**



**No formal taught sessions**



**Self-directed study**

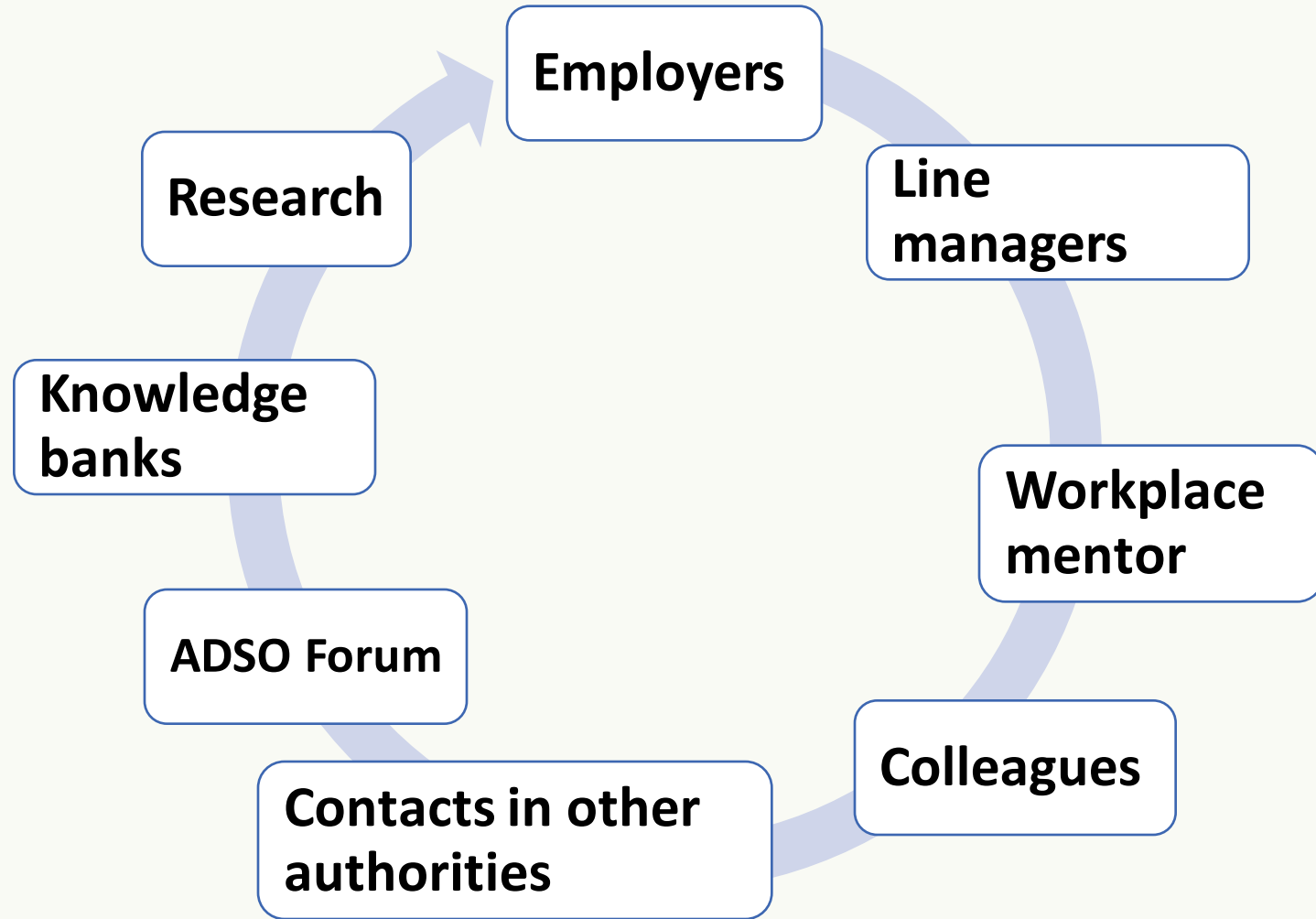


**Assigned assessor to guide you through each module**

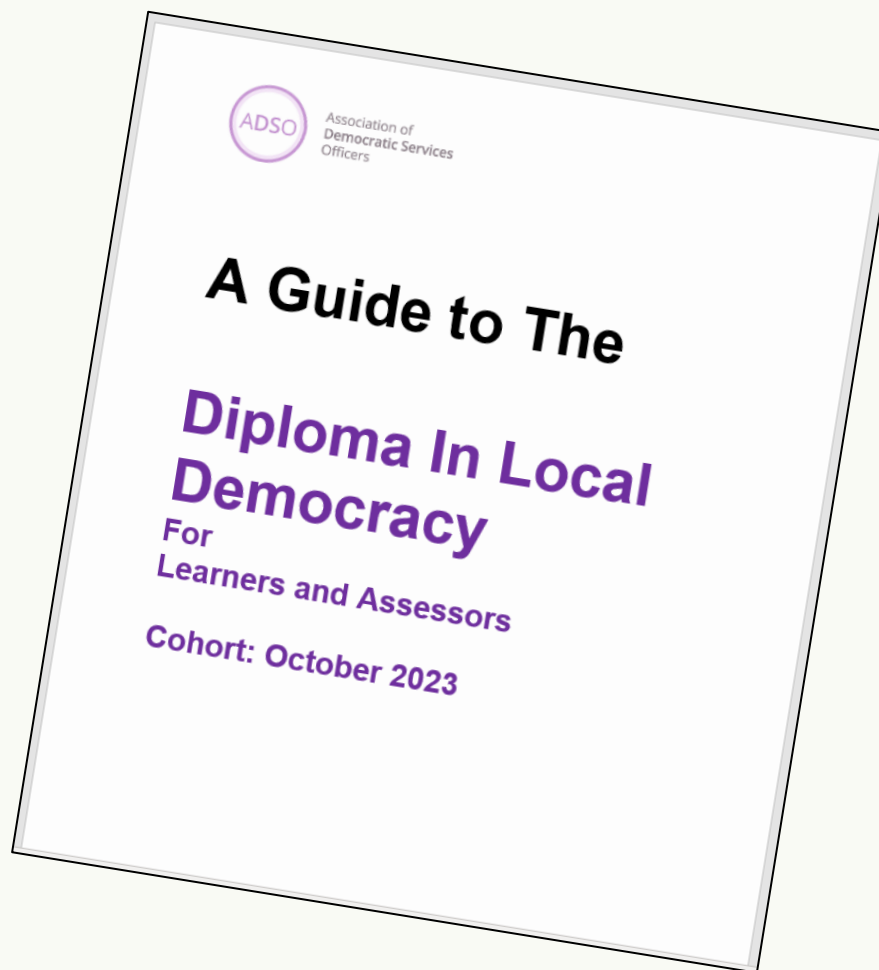


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# Resources



# Overview of Diploma in Local Democracy



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# Diploma – Timeframe and submission timetable

**24 Months**

**Oct 2023**



**Oct 2025**

<b>4 Dec 23</b>	<b>19 Feb 24</b>	<b>6 May 24</b>	<b>22 Jul 24</b>	<b>4 Nov 24</b>	<b>21 Jul 25</b>	<b>29 Sept 25</b>
<b>M1</b>	<b>M2</b>	<b>M3</b>	<b>M4</b>	<b>M5</b>	<b>M6</b>	<b>M7</b>
<b>Foundation stage</b>				<b>Research Planning</b>	<b>Dissertation</b>	<b>Reflective Learning and Evaluation</b>
<b>3000-3500 words</b>	<b>3000-3500 words</b>	<b>3000-3500 words</b>	<b>3000-3500 words</b>	<b>3000-3500 words</b>	<b>12000-14000 words</b>	<b>2500-3000 words</b>



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## Diploma - Costs

### **Current cost**

ADSO members £1550  
+ VAT

Non ADSO member  
£1880 + VAT





### **Bursaries**

A limited number of  
bursaries are available  
to ADSO members for  
all or part of the cost

Information on how to  
apply can be found on  
the ADSO website  
**Submission deadlines  
apply!**



## Diploma Entry Requirements

-  **At least 5 years' experience in a relevant DS role**
-  **A formal expression of interest detailing why you want to complete the Diploma**
-  **Identify a workplace mentor to support you through the programme**
-  **Commitment - including giving up own time to study**



# Diploma Format and Assessment



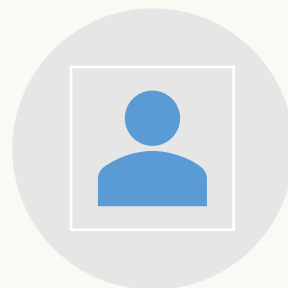
**Distance learning**



**No formal taught sessions**



**Self-directed study**



**Assigned assessor to guide you through each module**



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## Future Development

### Many of our previous learners have gone on to become assessors because...

- It cements the knowledge you have gained from completing the programme
- It allows you to keep up to date with any changes
- You learn from your learners! They have ideas, their authorities work in different ways, and they sometimes find some useful sources of information
- You build your own professional network
- You can practice your mentoring skills
- You have access to other assessors and support from ADSO / SWC
- You are paid per assignment – this is not usually why assessors become assessors, but who doesn't like a little extra to justify that new pair of running shoes! 😊
- You had a great assessor and want to provide that same support to another learner



## Registering your Formal Expression of Interest

For the **Certificate** programme, email [sarah.papper@swcouncils.gov.uk](mailto:sarah.papper@swcouncils.gov.uk) with the following information:

- Application form
- Bursary application if applicable

For the **Diploma** programme by email [sue.crosland@swcouncils.gov.uk](mailto:sue.crosland@swcouncils.gov.uk) with the following information:

- Application form
- Bursary application if applicable



**Hans Rijs**

**Vereniging Van Griffiers (Association of Clerks)**

**International Institute of Municipal Clerks (IIMC)**

**To cover:**

- How learners could access the information they need on local government in another country (the Netherlands) - with signposting to useful documents and contacts - and perhaps ways in which VVG could help learners with this (could talk about recent conference in Amsterdam)
- Any other helpful learning / resources that may be applicable



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# Questions?



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