

10th February 2023

NEWS RELEASE

Institute welcomes UK regulator's emphasis on education and training issues around ESG.

The Chartered Banker Institute (the Institute) is delighted to see education and training issues moving up the regulatory agenda in the UK, as highlighted in a new FCA Discussion Paper ([DP23/1](#)) published today, aimed at enabling finance to deliver on its potential to drive positive sustainable change.

Addressing training and competence in firms, the FCA recognises the need for genuine capability-building across the financial sector, including staff training on climate change and net zero and sustainability more broadly, identifying the PRB Academy as a good example of a UK and global initiative in this area. The Academy aims to support banks' alignment with the objectives of the UN Sustainable Development Goals and the Paris Agreement and was founded through a partnership between the United Nations Environment Programme Finance Initiative (UNEP FI), The Chartered Banker Institute, and the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ).

We believe there is a clear link between purpose, culture and education in firms and the just transition (moving to a more sustainable economy that is fair to everyone), so ensuring that finance professionals have the knowledge and skills required to support decision-making and understand the financial and sustainability outcomes these lead to is essential. As is building firms' capacities, capabilities and cultures to support the fast-growing and constantly evolving ESG sector.

The DP also includes a collection of 10 commissioned articles from experts with relevant and interesting perspectives on firms' sustainability-related governance, incentives, competence and stewardship arrangements. Writing about competence, Simon Thompson, the Institute's CEO and Chair of the Green Finance Education Charter (composed of 14 leading professional bodies representing nearly 1 million finance professionals), explains that Green Finance Education Charter signatories have all incorporated ESG into professional and CPD programmes and stresses the importance of avoiding

The Institute is proud to be a part of the Chartered Body Alliance



inadvertent greenwashing by firms by not allowing them to self-certify their ESG training and competence.

Simon Thompson, Chief Executive of the Chartered Banker Institute commented: *“I am very encouraged to see two key initiatives that the Institute is playing a key role in, the PRB Academy and the Green Finance Education Charter is highlighted by the FCA in their latest Discussion Paper.*

In my article, I feature the growing problem of competence greenwashing, which is as serious a threat to the integrity and future growth of ESG as greenwashing itself. I believe there is an opportunity to address this through regulatory levers both in the UK and internationally, however, by ensuring that firms are no longer allowed to ‘mark their own homework’ by certifying the ESG competence of their staff themselves. Collectively the UK’s professional bodies have the appetite, expertise, and resources to support this endeavor and I encourage all our members and their employers to read and engage with the DP”

Ends

NOTES TO EDITORS

About the Chartered Banker Institute

The Chartered Banker Institute (“the Institute”) is the oldest professional banking institute in the world. The Institute was founded in 1875, operates globally, with over 33,000 members in over 100 different countries and nearly 1,000 financial institutions worldwide. The Institute has driven an agenda of ethical professionalism throughout its existence; promoting professional standards for bankers, providing professional qualifications for retail, commercial and private bankers, and offering professional membership to qualified individuals. For more information, please visit www.charteredbanker.com

About the PRB Academy

This unique education and training programme supports banks worldwide on their journey to align their professional practice, strategies, operations and decision-making with the objectives of the UN Sustainable Development Goals and the Paris Agreement.

The Academy was founded through a partnership between the United Nations Environment Programme Finance Initiative (UNEP FI), The Chartered Banker

Institute, and the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH. For more information, please visit www.prbacademy.com

About the Green Finance Education Charter

Announced in the UK Government's 2019 Green Finance Strategy, and launched in June 2020, the [Green Finance Education Charter \(GFEC\)](#) is a world first. The Charter is designed to build the capacity and capability of the green and sustainable finance sector in the UK and internationally. The GFEC currently comprises 14 professional bodies, representing around 1 million finance professionals. Individually and collectively GFEC member bodies play critical roles in setting and embedding professional, technical and market standards and norms in UK and global finance.

For further information contact:

Matthew Ball, Head of Public Affairs, Chartered Banker Institute
Tel: +44 (0) 7720 684226
E-mail: matthew.ball@charteredbanker.com