AGRC Certificate in ESG Principles & Standards - Syllabus

About the Association of Governance, Risk & Compliance (AGRC)

AGRC is a non-profit global professional accreditation & certification organization & networking platform. AGRC aims to facilitate the exchange of knowledge & sharing of experiences among Compliance, Risk & Governance professionals (GRC) with the goal of growing its community to ensure multi-jurisdictional regulatory compliance in the financial services & exchange values, experiences, expertise & professional opportunities.

Aim of the Certification

The AGRC Certificate in ESG provides participants with a thorough understanding of a topic that has gained increasing significance and attention amongst corporations, regulators, and researchers. At the same, the Certificate offers guidance as to how corporations can best prepare to comply with their reporting requirements under the growing number of ESG-related regulations.

Certificate & Training Hours

The recommended number of learning and training hours is 12 to 20. This does not include additional time studying, revising, and preparing for the exam. A candidate should expect to spend an additional 15 hours of studying time to pass the exam, depending on prior knowledge and/or work experience.

Exam Information

Type of Exam	Multiple-choice questions (MCQs)
Number of Questions	40 questions
Passing Grade or Mark	70/100
Exam Duration	60 minutes
Method of Delivery	Computer-Based

Learning Objectives - Bloom Level

Based on **Bloom's Taxonomy**, AGRC's certificates prepares students to acquire knowledge that covers Bloom Levels 1, 2 and 3.

- **Level 1 - Remember:** Recall facts related to ESG and be able to define the main concepts involved in the ESG sector.
- **Level 2 - Understand:** Explain, describe, identify, and discuss the main ideas or concepts pertaining to ESG.
- **Level 3 - Apply:** Use, apply and implement the information acquired to new scenarios, and solve problems or meet challenges related to ESG reporting, investing, compliance, etc.

Certificate Content

Chapter 1: An Ethical Approach: Stakeholder Theory (2 Hours)

Learning Objectives

The students will be able to do the following upon completion of this section:

- ✓ Review relevant definitions of the term 'ethics' and how it is used in the corporate world.
- ✓ Assess the difference between legal and ethical.
- ✓ Discuss what constitutes an ethical dilemma.
- ✓ Consider the different possible choices and outcomes of an ethical dilemma case.
- ✓ Examine the stakeholder theory and how it compares to the notion of 'shareholder supremacy.'

1 Introduction – An Ethical Approach: Stakeholder Theory

1.1 Learning Objectives
1.2 Business Ethics
1.3 Stakeholder Theory
1.4 Learning Outcomes
1.5 End of Chapter Questions

Chapter 2: CSR – ESG – Sustainability (2 Hours)

Learning Objectives

The students will be able to do the following upon completion of this section:

- ✓ Review the term Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and the main definitions available.
- ✓ Examine the term Environmental Social Governance (ESG) and how this differs from CSR.
- ✓ Assess the importance of non-financial performance.
- ✓ Discuss the term 'sustainability' and its relevance to business.
- ✓ Review the UN Sustainable Goals.

2 CSR – ESG – Sustainability

2.1 Learning Outcomes
2.2 Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)
2.3 Environmental Social Governance (ESG)
2.4 Sustainability
2.5 Learning Outcomes
2.6 End of Chapter Questions

Chapter 3: Reviewing the Three Pillars (2 Hours)

Learning Objectives

The students will be able to do the following upon completion of this section:

- ✓ Separately review the three pillars of ESG.
- ✓ Assess the background for each ESG pillar.
- ✓ Examine how the three pillars can be best defined.
- ✓ Consider examples of ESG considerations.

3 ESG: Reviewing the Three Pillars

3.1 Learning Objectives
3.2 Environmental Pillar
3.3 Social Pillar
3.4 Governance Pillar
3.5 Examples of ESG Considerations
3.6 Learning Outcomes
3.7 End of Chapter Questions

Chapter 4: Green Finance (2 Hours)

Learning Objectives

The students will be able to do the following upon completion of this section:

- ✓ Review the main definitions relevant with Green Finance.
- ✓ Examine the dimensions of Green Finance.
- ✓ Assess the principles for responsible banking, investment, and insurance.
- ✓ Discuss how Green Finance is related to ESG.

4 Green Finance

4.1 Learning Objectives
4.2 Defining Green Finance
4.3 Principles of Responsible Banking, Investment, and Insurance
4.4 Learning Outcomes
4.5 End of Chapter Questions

Chapter 5: The Business Case for CSR, ESG, and Sustainability (2 Hours)

Learning Objectives

The students will be able to do the following upon completion of this section:

- ✓ Assess the impact of incorporating CSR and ESG in the business strategy.
- ✓ Discuss case studies of corporations that have followed CSR and ESG policies aligned with sustainability principles.
- ✓ Consider the difficulties of integrating ESG into business.

5 The Business Case for CSR, ESG, and Sustainability

5.1 Learning Objectives
5.2 Beneficial Impact of ESG
5.3 Challenges in Integrating ESG
5.4 Learning Outcomes
5.5 End of Chapter Questions

Chapter 6: Global Initiatives and Regulations (2 Hours)

Learning Objectives

The students will be able to do the following upon completion of this section:

- ✓ Review the applicable legal and regulatory framework related to ESG.
- ✓ Examine how ESG regulations and requirements have developed over the years.
- ✓ Assess the key challenges that firms will be facing in the coming years and how these may differ depending on the jurisdiction(s) they operate in.

6 Global Initiatives and Regulations

6.1 Learning Objectives
6.2 The Paris Agreement
6.3 Developments at the European Level
- 6.3.1 European Green Deal
- 6.3.2 European Commission Action Plan
- 6.3.3 Key EU Regulations and Directives

6.4 Developments in the UK
- 6.4.1 Green Finance Strategy
- 6.4.2 Sustainability Disclosure Requirements (SDR)
- 6.4.3 UK Green Taxonomy

6.5 Learning Outcomes
6.6 End of Chapter Questions

Chapter 7: ESG Reporting Standards and Frameworks (2 Hours)

Learning Objectives

The students will be able to do the following upon completion of this section:

- ✓ Review the purpose of reporting standards and frameworks.
- ✓ Examine which are considered key Reporting Bodies.
- ✓ Assess the importance of including the other pillars of ESG beyond Environment.

7 ESG Reporting Standards and Frameworks

7.1 Learning Objectives
7.2 Key Reporting Standards and Frameworks
7.3 Beyond climate change
7.4 Learning Outcomes
7.5 End of Chapter Questions

Chapter 8: ESG Investing Strategies (2 Hours)

Learning Objectives

The students will be able to do the following upon completion of this section:

- ✓ Review the investing strategies identified by the European Sustainable Investment Forum.

8 ESG Investing Strategies

8.1 Learning Outcomes
8.2 The Seven ESG Investing Strategies of Eurosif
8.3 Learning Outcomes
8.4 End of Chapter Questions

Chapter 9: The Push for ESG into the Future (2 Hours)

The students will be able to do the following upon completion of this section:

- ✓ Review the relevant actors that both affect and are affected by ESG-related developments.
- ✓ Assess the challenges and opportunities of financial institutions and how they need to move forward.
- ✓ Discuss practical ways in which firms can better embrace ESG.

9 The Push for ESG into the Future

9.1 Learning Objectives
9.2 Review of Relevant Actors
9.3 How Can Firms Embrace ESG
9.4 Learning Outcomes
9.5 End of Chapter Questions

Chapter 10: Acronyms and Practice Questions