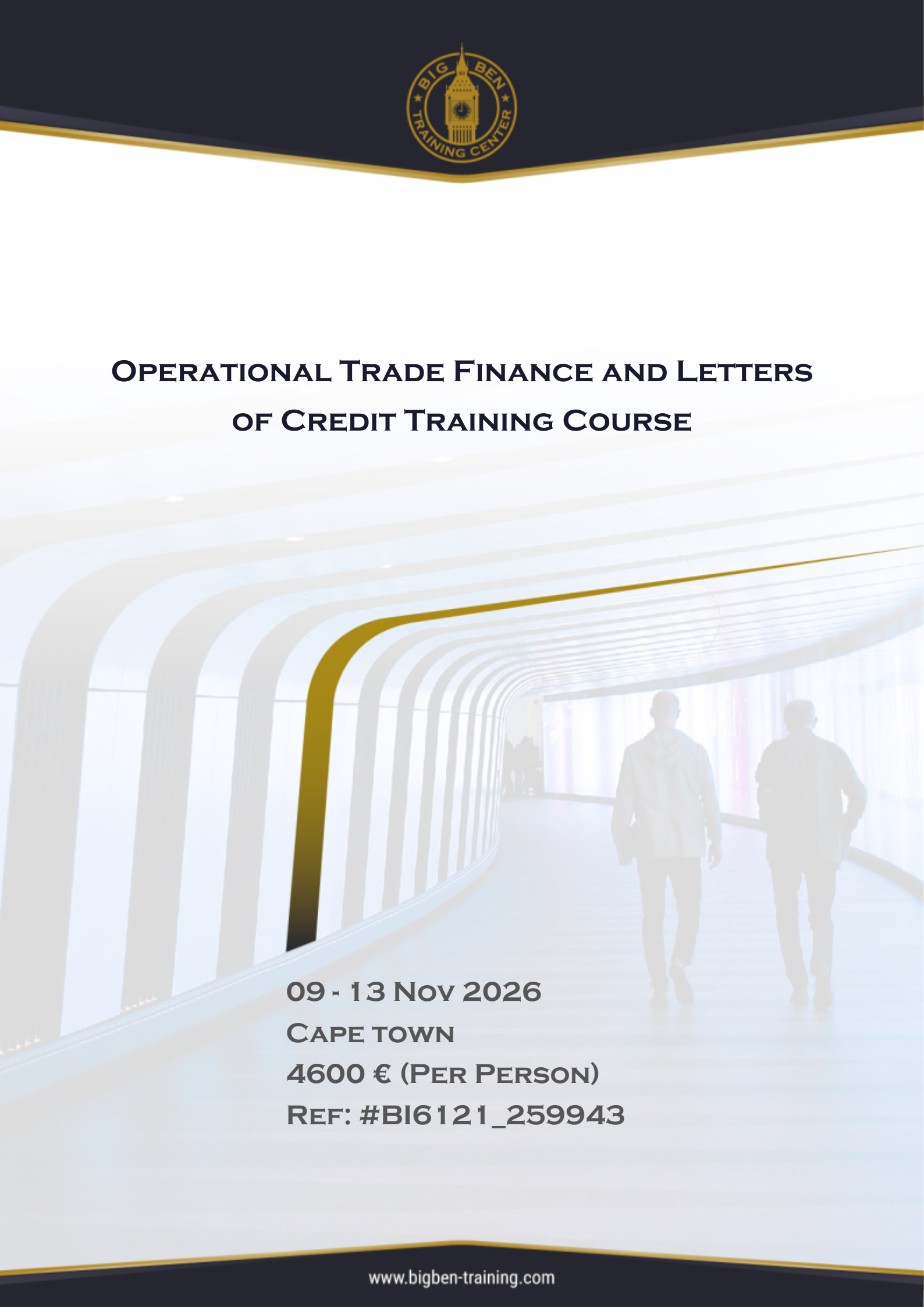
Operational Trade Finance and Letters of Credit Training Course



09 - 13 Nov 2026

Cape town

4600 € (Per Person)

Ref: #BI6121_259943

Course Introduction / Overview:

This comprehensive course provides an in-depth exploration of the operational mechanics of trade finance, with a specialized focus on Letters of Credit (LCs). In today's global marketplace, a robust understanding of international trade payment instruments is crucial for mitigating risks and ensuring smooth transactions. This program is designed to move beyond theoretical knowledge into the practical application of universally accepted rules and practices, primarily the Uniform Customs and Practice for Documentary Credits (UCP 600) and the International Standard Banking Practice (ISBP 745). As emphasized by trade finance expert Dr. Gary Collyer, mastery of these standards is non-negotiable for professionals in the field. Participants will dissect the entire LC lifecycle, from issuance and advising to document examination and settlement. The curriculum, inspired by foundational texts like "The Guide to Documentary Credits", is structured to build confidence in handling complex trade documentation and resolving discrepancies effectively. BIG BEN Training Center has developed this course to empower professionals with the skills to navigate the intricate landscape of trade finance, reduce operational errors, and add significant value to their organizations by securing international trade flows. This is an essential training for anyone involved in the import-export ecosystem seeking operational excellence.

Target Audience / This training course is suitable for:

- Trade Finance and Letters of Credit Department Staff.
- Import and Export Operations Managers.
- Corporate Treasury and Finance Professionals.
- Relationship Managers in Corporate and Commercial Banking.
- Credit Analysts and Risk Managers.
- Compliance and Audit Officers.
- Logistics and Supply Chain Managers.
- Legal Counsels involved in international trade.
- Procurement and Sourcing Specialists.

Target Sectors and Industries:

- Banking and Financial Services.
- International Trading and Commodity Houses.
- Manufacturing and Engineering.
- Shipping, Freight Forwarding, and Logistics.
- Oil and Gas Sector.
- Pharmaceutical and Healthcare Industries.
- Retail and Consumer Goods.
- Governmental bodies, export credit agencies, and trade promotion organizations.

Target Organizations Departments:

- Trade Finance Operations.
- Corporate Banking.
- Credit and Risk Management.
- Legal and Compliance.
- International Business Development.
- Procurement and Supply Chain Management.
- Treasury and Finance.
- Internal Audit.

Course Offerings:

By the end of this course, the participants will have able to:

- Interpret and apply the rules of UCP 600 and ISBP 745 with precision.
- Structure various types of Letters of Credit to meet specific trade requirements.
- Examine trade documents for compliance and identify common discrepancies.
- Mitigate financial, operational, and legal risks in trade finance transactions.
- Manage the complete lifecycle of a documentary credit from issuance to payment.
- Differentiate between various trade finance instruments like LCs, SBLCs, and Bank Guarantees.
- Analyze complex real-world case studies to enhance problem-solving skills.
- Understand the roles and responsibilities of all parties in an LC transaction.
- Prepare for the future of trade finance, including digitalization and new technologies.

Course Methodology:

The training methodology at BIG BEN Training Center is designed to be highly interactive, practical, and engaging, ensuring that participants can immediately apply their learning in a professional context. We move beyond traditional lectures to foster an environment of experiential learning. The course heavily relies on real-world case studies, where participants will analyze actual trade scenarios and discrepant document presentations to develop critical thinking and decision-making skills. Interactive group discussions and workshops encourage the sharing of experiences and collaborative problem-solving. Practical exercises, including hands-on document checking simulations, are a core component of the training, allowing participants to practice applying UCP 600 and ISBP 745 rules in a controlled setting. Our expert instructors facilitate sessions with a blend of presentations, Q&A segments, and role-playing activities that simulate negotiations between importers, exporters, and banks. Continuous feedback is provided throughout the course to reinforce learning and address individual queries. This immersive approach ensures a deep and lasting understanding of trade finance operations, equipping participants with both the knowledge and the confidence to excel.

Course Agenda (Course Units):

Unit One: Foundations of International Trade and Finance

- Introduction to the Global Trade Landscape.
- Key Principles of International Trade Finance.
- Major Payment Methods in International Trade (Open Account, Collections, LCs).
- Understanding Incoterms 2020 and their Impact on Trade Finance.
- The Role of Banks and Financial Institutions in Trade.
- Introduction to the ICC and its Governing Rules.
- Risk Assessment in International Trade Transactions.

Unit Two: Mastering Documentary Credits and UCP 600

- Defining Documentary Credits (Letters of Credit).
- Parties to an LC and their Roles and Responsibilities.
- The Principle of Autonomy and Strict Compliance.
- Detailed Article-by-Article Analysis of UCP 600.
- Types of LCs (Irrevocable, Confirmed, Revolving, Red Clause).
- The Complete LC Lifecycle from Application to Settlement.
- Understanding SWIFT Messages in LC Transactions (MT700 series).

Unit Three: Document Examination under ISBP 745

- The Role and Importance of ISBP 745.
- General Principles of Document Examination.
- Detailed Examination of Core Documents: Commercial Invoice.
- Detailed Examination of Transport Documents: Bill of Lading, Air Waybill, etc.
- Detailed Examination of Insurance Documents and Certificates of Origin.
- Practical Workshop on Identifying Discrepancies.
- Drafting and Communicating a Notice of Refusal.

Unit Four: Advanced LC Structures and Risk Management

- Standby Letters of Credit (SBLC) and their Uses.
- Transferable and Back-to-Back Letters of Credit.
- Assignment of Proceeds versus Transfer.
- Managing Discrepancies: Waivers and Negotiations.
- Identifying and Mitigating Fraud in Trade Finance.
- Understanding Sanctions, AML, and Compliance Risks.
- The Role of the Confirming Bank and Silent Confirmations.

Unit Five: Specialized Trade Instruments and Future Trends

- Documentary Collections and the URC 522 Rules.
- Bank Guarantees versus Standby LCs.
- Introduction to Supply Chain Finance and Forfaiting.
- The Impact of Technology on Trade Finance.
- Introduction to Digitalization: eUCP and Electronic Documents.
- The Role of Blockchain and Distributed Ledger Technology in Trade.
- Course Review, Key Takeaways, and Final Q&A Session.

FAQ:

Qualifications required for registering to this course?

There are no requirements.

How long is each daily session, and what is the total number of training hours for the course?

This training course spans five days, with daily sessions ranging between 4 to 5 hours, including breaks and interactive activities, bringing the total duration to 20 - 25 training hours.

Something to think about:

In an era of increasing digitalization and blockchain technology, how might the traditional roles of correspondent and confirming banks in letters of credit transactions evolve to maintain relevance and add value?

What unique qualities does this course offer compared to other courses?

This course distinguishes itself through its unwavering focus on the practical, operational aspects of trade finance, rather than purely theoretical instruction. While many programs cover the basics of UCP 600, this training dedicates significant time to the meticulous application of ISBP 745, using real-world, anonymized examples of both compliant and discrepant documents for hands-on examination workshops. This provides participants with a rare opportunity to develop the critical skill of document checking in a guided, risk-free environment. Furthermore, the curriculum is not static; it includes a forward-looking module on the digitalization of trade, exploring the implications of technologies like blockchain and the eUCP rules, ensuring participants are prepared for the future of the industry. The course structure is built upon a foundation of interactive case studies that challenge participants to solve complex trade finance problems, moving beyond simple memorization of rules. The expertise of our instructors, who are seasoned trade finance practitioners, ensures that every session is enriched with practical insights, cautionary tales, and best-practice advice that cannot be found in textbooks alone.