



## ASISA Academy Newsflash – April 2020

As our country headed into lockdown on Friday, 27 March, the ASISA Academy team reflected on how we could make the content of all our [courses](#) accessible online in focused, short workshops. The concept of a Sprint was born. Instead of spending full days in our physical classroom, delegates will be able to participate in an engaging 2-hour online workshop with one of our expert presenters on specific topics.

Until now, our minimum number to run a physical course has been 10 people. With the Sprints we have reduced that minimum number to 5 so it is much easier to gather a group of colleagues interested in a particular topic and take control of your learning with the Academy.

We are ready to deliver the [Investment Sprint series](#), which currently consists of the following 2-hour online learning sessions:

- Introduction to the SA savings and investment sector
- Investment management business overview
- Investment products and structures
- Fundamentals of retirement funds and life insurance
- The investments governance landscape
- Investment management ethics
- Fundamentals of equities portfolio management
- Fundamentals of equities trading
- Fundamentals of interest bearing assets
- Fundamentals of other asset classes
- Fundamentals of pricing and unitisation
- Investment performance overview
- Responsible investing
- Investment management fees and costs in the context of retirement funds

For more information on our Sprints, please email [learn@asisaacademy.org.za](mailto:learn@asisaacademy.org.za)

### Interning during lockdown

At the start of lockdown in March I was concerned about how this would impact on our young interns on the ASISA Academy Independent Financial Advisor (IFA) [Internship Programme](#). The 37 graduates had completed their two-week work readiness course with the ASISA Academy in February and joined their host practices in Cape Town, Johannesburg, Durban, Port Elizabeth, East London and Bloemfontein on Monday, 2 March. Adapting to the workplace fresh from university is a big challenge for most young people, but having to connect remotely with a team you hardly know requires grit. Equally, trying to integrate a new intern into an existing team is not easy for the IFA practices.

Judging from the feedback received from the interns and their mentors as well as the IFA host practices it seems that extraordinary resilience is being shown in these challenging times. I would like to commend everyone involved for their can-do attitudes and for finding creative ways to make it work.

## Two IFA interns share their perspectives

Working from home during lockdown is no easy feat for a new intern, but Nompumelelo Makhanya and Cliff Mathikhi seem to have it under control. Nompumelelo (21) is interning with Lifestyle and Wealth Management in Johannesburg and Cliff (24) is with Wealth Associates CBS Financial Planning in Bloemfontein.



*Nompumelelo Makhanya working from home*

Nompumelelo comes from Witbank, Mpumalanga. She has a Bachelor of Commerce Degree in Finance from the University of Johannesburg (UJ) and is working towards obtaining her Honours Degree in Financial Planning at UJ.

She was introduced to the world of finance by her mother who worked at a bank. "I just fell in love with the idea of dealing with finances and money."

According to Nompumelelo, lockdown is just another hurdle that has to be overcome.

"There is still interaction with the company through meetings on Skype and I sometimes join Zoom meetings on discussions of different funds. I am extremely excited to be at Lifestyle and Wealth Management and I look forward to expanding my knowledge and skills over time."



*Cliff Mathikhi working from home*

Cliff was born in Limpopo Province, but grew up in Johannesburg. He moved to Bloemfontein to study at the University of the Free State where he graduated with a BSc majoring in Statistics and Economics in 2018. In 2019, he enrolled for a BCom Hons in Financial Economics and Investment Management, which he is hoping to complete this year.

According to Cliff, interning from home has been a tough adjustment, but frequent communication with his supervisor is helping him stay connected and productive.

*"My experience with ASISA Academy has been amazing. The two-week crash course we had to take in February prepared us very well for the workplace. However, with the rise of Covid-19 we had to resort to working from home. I had the luck of working with a company that takes care of its employees and provided us with the necessary equipment to help us continue doing our work from home."*

#### **IFA host practice perspectives**

Below is some of the heartwarming feedback received from host practices regarding their interactions with their new interns:

*"We have Skype meetings twice a week and Mpumie has joined all of them. She also listens to a number of the webcasts/ Zooms, etc. that the various institutions offer. Mpumie turned 21 during the lock down and we all made a big fuss on our WhatsApp group with a reminder that we would be celebrating in due course."*

*"Though working from home has been challenging for Lebo, who still had to get used to working life in general, she is always available and eager to do any task assigned to her and completes the tasks on time. She is enthusiastic as she seems to enjoy doing each and every task assigned to her. She is a bright young lady who is eager to learn no matter what the circumstances. She is always positive."*

*"I can say, I am extremely proud and impressed in the way Asanda has handled the situation and conducted herself. She has immersed herself into the tasks given and is making herself an integral part of the team. She has become a real team player."*

*"We have been training our interns via Google hangouts and we have a daily session with them to check in and help them with their queries. Precious and Zeus are on par with each other in terms of growing regarding the training they have been receiving and the work allocation. They have started with servicing tasks which are allocated to them on a daily basis. With the basic knowledge they have received during training, they have tackled their tasks to the best of their ability."*

## IMACS@TSiBA goes online

We have been able to transition the 2019 IMACS@TSiBA candidates to an online learning environment. These students are currently enrolled in the second part of their elective in Investment Management Administration and Client Servicing (IMACS) at the ASISA Academy. In order to qualify for their sixteen-week internship with sponsoring ASISA member companies towards the completion of their BBA degrees later this year, these students are required to pass their mid-year exams as well as the Academy's IMACS courses.

Using the Academy's existing online learning platform, we have created a data free site specifically for our IMACS@TSiBA students to continue their learning from home. The site, which operates on a reverse-billing system, enables our students to access their course materials and upload their tasks using their cellphones at no cost to themselves. Anton Berkovitz, the ASISA Academy programme champion has remained in touch with these students via a WhatsApp chat group and is providing classes online via Zoom.

## CFA Investment Foundation Certificate for Sanlam Graduate employees

The Sanlam Investment Group has rapidly embraced online learning and in April ASISA Academy programme champion, Anton Berkovitz, delivered his second online class to help prepare Sanlam Investment Group's newest graduate employees for the CFA Investment Foundations Certificate Exam.

## Learning scheduled for May

- Our first two Sprints, 1) Introduction to the SA savings and investment sector and 2) Investment management business overview are scheduled for 19 and 20 May respectively. [Click here](#) for our Investment Sprints brochure.
- The ASISA Academy Retirement Fund Trustee Education ([RFTE](#)) Programme resumes in May, in an exciting online format.
- The UCT Collective Investment Schemes ([CIS](#)) Short Course which was scheduled to run in Johannesburg 13 – 19 May will now be offered online as a series of half-day sessions spread over a number of weeks.
- A bespoke online version of the [Equity Analysts' Bootcamp](#) will be presented to Old Mutual towards the end of May.

For more information on the above online courses, please contact [learn@asisaacademy.org.za](mailto:learn@asisaacademy.org.za)

## In closing

I am proud of the solutions that the ASISA Academy team has come up with and implemented in such a short period of time to ensure that COVID-19 does not get in the way of learning. I believe that these solutions will strengthen the Academy as a learning institution for the future.

Please feel free to contact us with suggestions or questions. We can tailor the content of any of our learning programmes into online sessions that will meet your needs.

Please also visit our [website](#) for more information and like our [Facebook page](#) for regular updates. You are also welcome to interact with us on [LinkedIn](#).

Best wishes  
Alicia Davids  
ASISA Academy CEO