



Documentary Credit Beginner Certificate

March – May 2026

PRESENTATION

Switzerland is an internationally recognised centre of expertise for commodity trading. The 550+ companies based in Switzerland, located in a unique trading hub, account for over 35'000 direct jobs.

In this vibrant and professional environment, training is becoming all the more a prerequisite. Experts responsible for logistics and operations are key players in the industry's success. With increased international competition and challenges faced by the commodity trading activity, education & training have become a critical asset to succeed in today's industry.

For a long time, Documentary Credits have been and remain key financial instruments underpinning the international trade. Whether it is for the buyer or the exporter, these instruments bring security, reliability and efficiency while allowing the banks involved to hold a decisive role in the transaction cycle.

In a daily basis, the Documentary Credit Officer is at the forefront of individual transaction financial executions. Whether working with a Bank or in Trade Finance, Import / Export, Procurement Department, a good technical understanding of Documentary Credit and other instruments will be a key success factor within the international trade workspace.

This program is constituted of 5 modules, 4 of which are common with Operator's Certificate course as they are fundamentals for junior Credit Officers. The Operator Certificate has been designed by a working group of experts directly active in renowned commodity trading companies and within major banks active in trade finance.

"Education contributes to raising awareness about all the processes and operations involved in commodities trading and provide participants with an in-depth understanding of the challenges faced in daily activities."

Florence Schürch, Secretary General, SUISSENÉGOCE

AUDIENCE

- Junior Trade Finance Officers and Documentary Credit Officers in the early stages of their career in a commodity trading company or in a bank who want to accelerate their training process and fully grasp all angles of this complex profession which is in constant evolution.
- Young professionals considering a career change and interested in moving into the commodity sector (banks active in Trade Finance or trading companies).
- Fresh graduates seeking to acquire new skills and speed up their recruitment process.

OBJECTIVES

Our main goals include meeting the requirements of commodity trading companies and banks active in Trade Finance by offering them a specific training programme to accelerate the training process for their junior Documentary Credit and Trade Finance Officers.

This practice-oriented Certificate aims at enabling the participants to:

- Acquire a good understanding of the techniques and their implementation.
- Develop a mindset and practical toolbox which should contribute to add value to their intervention beyond the execution level.

More specifically, this programme aims to give participants a solid understanding of:

- The parties to documentary credit transactions and their roles and obligations
- The specific terminology
- The Contracts
- The Documents (invoices, Certificates of Origin, LOI, B/L, SWB, RWB, CMR, etc.)
- The Credit lines
- The different types of securities (guarantees, LCs, cash collection, etc.)
- The instruments of communication (swift, telex, Trafec, etc.)
- The Guarantees
- Documentary credits – types, characteristics and uses
- Rules and trade terms, including UCP 600, Incoterms 2020 (ISP98, ISBP 745 and URR 725)
- Risk issues, including types of risks, control and possible mitigations.

We expect that, through this training, participants will ultimately be best placed to rapidly gain in experience, making the most out of the various real-life cases that they will be confronted with.

PROGRAMME

Module 1: Introduction into Commodity

06 & 07.03.2026

Trading, Documents & INCOTERMS

- Presentation of the Commodity Industry
- Documents used in the Commodity Industry
- Terms used in the Commodity Industry
- Introduction to ICC Incoterms
- Basics of Hedging

Module 2: Introduction to Trade Finance

27 & 28.03.2026

Financial Instruments & Introduction to Hedging

- Introduction to Trade Finance from the bank side
- Introduction to Trade Finance from the trading company side
- Hedging
- Documentary credits, stand-by L/Cs, prepayments
- Guarantees, bid and performance bonds
- Documentary collections
- Transferable L/Cs, back-to-back L/Cs
- Red-clause L/Cs, revolving L/Cs
- Letters of indemnity
- Compliance
- Treasury

Module 3: LC and other Payment Terms

24 & 25.04.2026

In person attendance is mandatory

- Payment methods in Letters of Credit (by acceptance, deferred, negotiation, etc.)
- Presentation of ISBP (International Standard Banking Practices)
- Overview of the UCP Rules
- Documentary Collection and URC rules
- The L/C step-by-step

Module 4: Trading Contracts

01 & 02.05.2026

- What is a Contract?
- Why Do We Use Contracts?
- Contract Formation: Offer and Acceptance
- Contract Negotiation & Management: Best Practices
- Trade Contract Stakeholders
- GTCs and Standard Contracts
- Main Contract Terms.

- Graded in-class exercise – in person

TEACHING FORMAT

The Certificate is composed of 5 modules all taught in English. The modules take place on Friday evenings and Saturday mornings, so as not to interfere with the professional activity of the participants, and to give them enough time to assimilate and eventually practice what has been learnt in class.

Some pre-reading, preparation, case studies or homework may be required, depending on the teachers' recommendations and will be communicated upon admission to the course.

The lectures are given by industry experts from the commodity trading and banking sectors, with inputs from guest speakers to give further depth and various perspectives.

Participants are stimulated to actively contribute to the programme. Their background and professional experience constitute a valuable asset and ensure transversal knowledge sharing.

"We understand that participants often have demanding professional and family obligations; however, to successfully obtain the certificate, you will need to be fully engaged and ready to face significant preparation work."

Serge Claus, Education Manager, SUISSENÉGOCE

ATTENDANCE

Attendance and satisfactory exam results will enable participants to receive the Documentary Credit Beginner Certificate. SUISSENÉGOCE understands that participants often have demanding professional and family obligations; however, to obtain the certificate you will need to be fully committed, prepare each module as it may be required by the lectures, attend and participate in a minimum of 80% of the programme sessions in order to obtain the Certificate. **Any absences must be appropriately justified.**

The Certificate is designed for in-person attendance, promoting transversal knowledge sharing and interaction with the other participants. On-line attendance could be made available for participants living and working in the German or Italian part of Switzerland, or abroad. They will still need to attend in-person for certain modules as mentioned on the programme.

For participants living and working in the French part of Switzerland, **you are expected to attend all modules in-person**. Attending online will only be granted for exceptional reasons such as business-related trips and must be requested at least 1 week in advance and substantiating documents (e.g. note from the employer) may be requested.

EVALUATION

The award of the Documentary Credit Officer Certificate is based on attendance and successful completion of exams. However, your full commitment and engagement will be required to obtain the Certificate.

Each module is subject to an evaluation. The candidates are required to attend and participate in a minimum of 80% of the programme sessions in order to obtain the Certificate. Any absences must be appropriately justified.

An overall average of 4.0 (out of 6) must be achieved in order to graduate, and no more than one mark between 3.0 and 4.0 will be accepted. A mark lower than 3.0 will automatically disqualify the participant from obtaining the Certificate. The participant may re-take the failed module/course during the following intake at his/her cost. Only one opportunity to retake the module will be given. If the participant fails more than 1 module in one session he/she will be automatically disqualified.

Any participant caught cheating or plagiarising will be automatically disqualified without appeal.

All exams and assignments must be completed in English.

INFORMATION

Course Schedule and Location:

8 hours per week on Friday evenings from 6.30pm to 9.30pm and Saturday mornings from 8.30am to 13.30pm.

SUISSENÉGOCE Academy, 11 rue de Chantepoulet, 1201 Geneva

On-line attendance could be made available for participants living and working in the German or Italian part of Switzerland, or abroad.

Application

Applications **must** include the following documents:

- 1) Motivation letter in English;
- 2) Application form duly completed;
- 3) Your updated resume in English;

Applications and all supporting documents must be submitted **electronically via SUISSENÉGOCE's website** (<https://suissenegoce.ch/education>).

Admission criteria:

A maximum of 20 participants will be accepted per intake.

- 1) Good command of spoken and written English is necessary as the programme is taught in English. French an asset.
- 2) Being fully proficient with Microsoft Office.

Acceptance or refusal of applications are at the sole discretion of SUISSENÉGOCE.

Late applications may be considered depending on available slots.

You will be notified via e-mail if you have been accepted to attend the course.

Tuition Fees

For SUISSENÉGOCE members
CHF 3'600 (includes 4 modules)

For non SUISSENÉGOCE members
CHF 4'600 (includes 4 modules)

Multi booking

A discount of 10% will be applied for 3 or more bookings from the same company in the same intake.

Instalments

After acceptance of an application, a deposit of CHF 900 will be requested to secure your place on the programme and confirm enrolment. In case of withdrawal, no refund of this deposit will be provided.

The balance must be paid at least 20 days before the course starts.

Cancellation and substitution policy

No refund whatsoever will be made for cancellations received 10 days or less before the course start date. Participants can however be substituted by an acceptable candidate if the organisers receive prior notification.

Force Majeure

In case a force majeure (pandemic and/or forced confinement imposed by any governmental authority) would prevent SUISSENÉGOCE Academy to conduct in-person teaching in the classroom, the following situations may occur:

- In the event that the programme has not started, it may be postponed to a later date. In this case, the course participant will be offered the possibility to maintain his registration and attend the course at the later date or to be reimbursed for the amount(s) paid. SUISSENÉGOCE Academy shall notify the course participant in writing thereof.
- In the event that the programme has started, the remaining modules will be maintained but may be conducted via an online platform. This solution only applies if there is no other possibility to follow the course in situ. In this case, the participant shall not be entitled to any reimbursement of any kind.

FAQ

Can I be accepted even if I do not have any particular certification?

No certification as such is requested but a strong motivation and a good command of the English language are necessary.

Can you help me acquire a work permit?

Unfortunately no. This is an educational programme and SUISSENÉGOCE does not provide this kind of service.

Do I need to take my laptop to class?

Presentations and documents will be uploaded on the SUISSENÉGOCE Academy learning platform and you will need an electronic device to view them. It can be a tablet or a computer.

Will you help me find a job?

No. The purpose of the Certificate is for the participants to grow professionally and attain competences in documentary credit. It is not SUISSENÉGOCE's purpose or objective to assist the participants in finding a job.

Nevertheless, participants of SUISSENÉGOCE classes considerably enhance their employability and several employers look for their juniors within the SUISSENÉGOCE's alumni pool.

When I obtain my Certificate, will I be accepted to pursue the Master or the Diploma also set up by SUISSENÉGOCE?

No, acceptance for the Master or Diploma is subject to a specific set of rules set by the University of Geneva.

However, many participants of SUISSENÉGOCE programmes have decided to further develop their skills by following additional SUISSENÉGOCE classes or academic programmes offered by the University of Geneva (DAS in Commodity Trading or Master of Science in Commodity Trading).

Can I meet SUISSENÉGOCE representatives before the courses?

Yes if necessary, but it would be preferable to schedule any such meeting in advance.

What happens if I cannot attend one course?

It will be your responsibility to obtain the presentations and the notes taken during the course from another student and to coordinate with the trainer responsible for the module to pass the exam.

Under no circumstances can courses be recorded.

ABOUT SUISENÉGOCE

GTSA, the Geneva-based maritime trade and chartering association, was founded in 2006. In 2014, GTSA became national and took the name STSA to offer a greater representation of the industry on a national level. STSA encompasses the three regional associations (GTSA, ZCA in Zug and LCTA in Ticino) and consists of more than 210 member companies and institutions, as well as around 100 experts involved in the association's various working groups.

Today, our association is known as SUISENÉGOCE and has a new logo. A new image that highlights the transformation of the industry as a whole: the commodity trading industry will be communicating with Swiss citizens and engaging in public debate. The different colours of our logo represent the different commodities: green and brown for agricultural products, grey and dark blue for energy, metals & minerals, and light blue for maritime transport, which is of prime importance for all commodities.

The Association has become renowned for its successful professional programmes such as the Operator's Certificate and the Commodity Trading Fundamentals. To respond to the industry's request, SUISENÉGOCE has recently put in place three innovative certificates: SUISENÉGOCE the Commodity Trading Risk Analyst, the Documentary Credit Officer and the Commodities Sustainability Fundamentals (ESG) Certificate.

In parallel, SUISENÉGOCE also organises educational programmes such as the Master of Science in Commodity Trading, and the Diploma in Advanced Studies in Commodity Trading. Both programmes have been created in partnership with the University of Geneva and have been running since 2008 with an increasing level of recognition.

In 2025, SUISENÉGOCE Academy has been awarded the eduQua Label for the third time. The first Swiss federal qualification providing quality assurance for continuing education and training. This certification is a mark of recognition of the high quality of SUISENÉGOCE Academy's education and training programmes. It was obtained after an in-depth evaluation process and an in-house audit, to ensure that our methods are fully transparent and in accordance with its standards.

SUISENÉGOCE Academy

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