

I am a 47-year-old adviser with 3 young kids. I have been a financial adviser for nearly 15 years, working for various organisations. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] I have previously completed a Bachelor of Arts and an Advanced Diploma of Financial Services.

To say the last few years have been hard is an understatement. Having your livelihood put under a microscope of a taxpayer funded role commission is not enjoyable. I love my job, and the clients I represent, I have also never had a blemish against my name. Yet to have the worst of the worst examples of poor financial planning dragged through the courts and subsequently the media had the effect of painting all financial planners as crooks and eroded a lot of trust in the profession.

I understand that this process had to occur to weed out the 'bad apples' from the profession yet wanted to highlight just how much stress the profession has been through. For me personally this has resulted in a great deal of anxiety. I know I'm not alone with my anxiety and I'm aware of several of my colleagues who have also felt this stress and are suffering with their own mental health issues. I also believe that this process of change in the profession has led to a few suicides.

Although, the last few years had to occur to clean up the profession. I certainly did not enjoy the process at all, yet I was happy to throw myself behind the outcomes. Part of this was to undertake formal education to align with the current existing adviser requirements. My pathway included 5 subjects which needed to be completed to attain my graduate diploma. I am proud to say I have completed three and am halfway through my fourth. This has been at my own expense and has cost me a lot of time, which could have been spent with my young family or growing my business.

In the next 6 months I will attain my Grad Dip. Again, I have not enjoyed the process but can clearly see the benefits personally and for the profession of attaining this level of education. It will help gaining back trust in the profession and hopefully avoid the financial planning scandals that have plagued the past.

I now believe that gaining this level of education is essential to ensure professionalisation of financial planners is maintained and more importantly, improved. I don't believe winding back the commission's proposals by giving a ten-year exemption relating to experience is in the interests of the profession.

I believe a better outcome to recognize advisers regarding their tenure and exemplary record over ten years, would be to give further credits towards attaining their Graduate Diploma. This would be by providing one or two subjects exclusion towards achieving the diploma. I don't believe providing a full exemption to attaining the Graduate Diploma is a good outcome for the profession.



