

Diamond Diploma

A comprehensive understanding of diamonds and diamond grading is essential for the buying, selling and trading of diamond. One of the most valuable diamond qualifications worldwide, our Diploma will give you a comprehensive understanding of diamonds and how the diamond market operates. You will study the properties of diamond, the factors affecting a diamond's appearance and properties, learn about diamond grading, the 4Cs (carat weight, colour, clarity and cut) and the other factors that influence value, as well as how to identify and recognise imitations, synthetics and treatments.

Incipient cleavage in diamond. Photo Pat Daly.

Careers

Our graduates go on to successful careers in a number of areas in the trade, such as buying, selling, auctioning or valuing diamonds and diamond-set jewellery.

Diamond Diploma graduates must apply for Membership of Gem-A in order to continue to use the letters DGA after their name — a sign of excellence in the trade.

Further study

- **Gemmology Foundation**
- **Gemmology Diploma**, leading to eligibility for FGA Membership status
- **BSc in Gemmology & Jewellery Studies** (requires successful completion of Gemmology Foundation, Gemmology Diploma and Diamond Diploma)

Graduates of the Diamond Diploma course can apply for Diamond Membership of Gem-A, allowing them to use the letters DGA after their name. DGA Membership status conveys a student's knowledge, integrity, membership of a professional body and commitment to professional development.

At a glance

Course level

Ofqual level 5

Study options

On-site • ODL • ATC

Qualification

Gem-A Level 5 Diploma in Gem Diamond

(Graduates become eligible to apply for Diamond Membership of Gem-A, allowing them to use DGA Membership status)

Entry requirements

English qualification, e.g. IELTS Academic (Level 7) or TOEFL (score of 95-120)*

** Applies to on-site and ODL study. Only required if English is not your first language.*

Assessment

Theory component:

- **Assessed coursework**
Four online assessments plus a written project.
- **Examination**
One theory examination and one practical examination.

Practical component:

- For on-site/ATC students this will be covered as part of your course tuition. For ODL students this can be completed by attending the Diamond Diploma lab class — completion essential.

Course content

The Diamond Diploma course covers:

- The ethical, social, economic and environmental implications of diamonds.
- How to accurately grade a diamond according to colour and clarity, and other factors affecting the value.
- How to recognise and describe the structure of a diamond and how this relates to its physical and optical properties.
- The different diamond types and colour mechanisms occurring within diamonds.
- How to recognise and distinguish between natural, treated and synthetic diamonds, and to compare and identify a diamond and its simulants.
- How to make, record, sketch and communicate reliable and valid observations of rough diamond crystals.
- The geological processes involved in diamond formation and how occurrence and locality affect the mining and recovery of diamonds.
- The cutting of a diamond, including the history of diamond cutting and style.
- Describing the diamond grading process, the various systems used and how grading affects the value of a diamond.

Course materials

Students receive:

- Fully illustrated Diamond Diploma course notes
- Diamond grading manual
- Diamond practical workbook
- Set of diamond simulants
- Portable diamond instrument kit, containing 10× loupe, thermal tester, diamond estimator gauge, tweezers, stone cloth, long-wave UK key ring and zip case.
- Diamond crystal model.



Diamond Diploma lab class (ODL students only)

All ODL Diamond Diploma students are required to attend the Diamond Diploma lab class (also known as the Diamond Grading and Identification course). It is important that all students gain experience and guidance in the practical aspects of diamond observation, identification and grading.

The lab class will consist of practical tuition over several days, with a practical examination on the final day of the class. Students can attend a lab class as part of the course in the UK (which will include the exam).

You will need to bring your diamond instrument kit, diamond grading manual and diamond workbook to the lab class.

The lab class will cover:

- How to handle a range of rough and polished diamonds.
- The correct lighting and observation techniques for consistent diamond grading.
- How to grade diamonds for cut, polish, symmetry and proportions in relation to international tolerances.
- How to colour and clarity grade to internationally-recognised standards.
- Weight estimation of mounted diamonds with an understanding of the limitations of grading diamonds in jewellery.
- Identification of a diamond and how to differentiate it from its simulants, including synthetic moissanite, glass and CZ, etc.
- Detection and identification of clarity enhancement treatments, such as laser drilling and fracture filling.

“Having studied the Diamond Diploma, I am far more confident when buying diamonds to use in my designs. The course notes and instruments are excellent and the depth of knowledge of the tutors combined with their enthusiasm for the subject is inspiring. ODL allowed me the flexibility to study around my work whilst having the reassurance that my tutor was there to answer any questions and support me throughout the course.”

Sally Spencer, Diamond Diploma (ODL) student