FAQs

1. How does this course differ from i3BAR/ i2VSA, how do I choose which to take?

Comparison of courses	i2VSA Visual Analytics and Dashboards	i3BAR Business Analytics and Reporting	i4DABI Data Analytics and Business Intelligence
Core focus	Visual design for analysis, reporting and dashboards. Telling stories with data using standard and more advanced visual techniques.	Saving reporting time by building automation from source to report using traditional Excel techniques. Building reports and charts that are interactive with buttons, sliders, selection boxes and macros.	Using advanced Excel and Power BI analytics techniques; Power Query, Power Pivot data models, DAX, Power Pivot Charts and dashboards, OLAP tools etc. Enabling large data sets (memory not row limited), connection to multiple diverse data sets and multiple files from folders, data model design, drill down, analysis across multiple dimensions, comparison across data with different granularity (eg budget vs actuals). Applying the same techniques to Power BI – understanding how it differs from Excel and why/ how you might use each/ both.
Training can be applied to	Models, reports, dashboards in Excel and design ideas to Power BI and other Business Intelligence tools.	Analytics, reporting and dashboards in Excel.	Analytics, reporting and dashboards in Excel and Power BI.
Coverage of visual and dashboard design	Core focus, covered in depth – from the problems of what data is needed for actionable information to choice of techniques and how to group and structure them to create dashboards.	Introduction to some visual techniques, main focus is on model building and automation.	Introduction to key principles of data visualisation. Creating an analytical dashboard using Power Pivot techniques. Moving beyond Power Pivot tables for more free format reporting using OLAP tools.
Model design and methodology for building models	Covers building advanced visual techniques in Excel. Model design and building is intended to be covered by the i3BAR course.	Covers the i3BAR methodology for model design and building which has been developed and refined over several years. Models use traditional Excel worksheets and formulae.	Covers good practice for designing and building models using Power Query and Power Pivot data models. Applicable to Excel and Power BI desktop.
Prerequisites to take the course	None	Some prior experience working with Excel formulae and with stringing/ fixing formulae	No prerequisites to take the course – but some may find parts (eg introduction to DAX coding) quite technical

		(using $) would be an advantage but is not essential. Pre course learning is included in the course to practice core formulae and stringing/ fixing etc and is recommended to be completed ahead of the course.	and the techniques very different to their experience with traditional Excel formulae and worksheets. Alternative approaches and techniques to avoid using more technical elements will be explained.
Who is this course ideally suited for?	Anyone responsible for designing information reports and dashboards	Anyone who wants a methodology for interactive reporting and fast data updates using traditional Excel techniques.	Anyone who wants to use more advanced tools and techniques in Excel (and Power BI) for data analytics. Especially if they work with large data sets, to analyse across multiple dimensions and for connection and rapid data updates from multiple/ diverse data sources.

2. If I've already done i3BAR, why should I take the new i4DABI course?

i3BAR remains a proven method for data modelling and working in Excel worksheets. The new i4DABI course adds some very powerful additional capability and strengths:

- Ability to connect and extract data from diverse data sources more easily
- Ability to transform the source data as it is loaded reducing the amount of logic blocks to be built and maintained
- Scalable for large data sets in terms of raw data (limited by memory not the rows in an Excel worksheet), in terms of model building as transformations/ formulae are written once to work on whole fields/ columns rather than being copied down across every row, and in terms of ability to drill down into data and analyse easily across many dimensions/ factors
- Models can be more reliable and easier to maintain as there are less formulae and table connections can be checked visually
- Teaches techniques and principles of database design that are relevant to business intelligence and wider analytics work
- Techniques are transferrable to Power BI, so you are also learning to use Power BI

3. Is i3BAR still relevant/ useful?

Because i3BAR is so good at building interactive models in Excel worksheets that can follow any format the user wants, it offers a lot of flexibility in reporting that tabular Power Pivot tables (like normal pivot tables but connected to the Power Pivot internal data model) don't have. Although the i4DABI course teaches a technique using OLAP tools to break out of the limitations of tabular layouts from Power Pivot (while still leaving data sourced and updated from the internal data engine), it doesn't cover all the flexible worksheet interactivity covered in i3BAR. The combination of i3BAR and i4DABI will therefore provide the most power and flexibility of reporting through making both sets of tools and approaches available.