

# Prepare to pass

Welcome to your guide helping you to study for your P4 exam

#### Why use this guide?

- Structured approach to show you how to succeed
- ✓ Signposted resources and how to use them
- ✓ Tips for success to help you through your studies
- ✓ Interactive clickable checklists to keep you on track

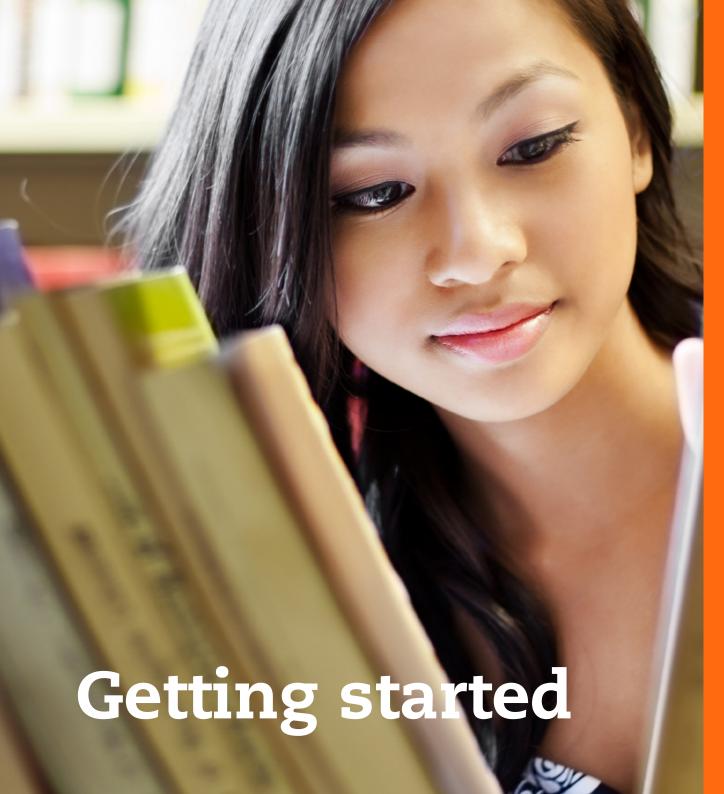
This guide applies to paper-based exams for September and December 2015 and March and June 2016.

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#### Your checklist

- D Enter for your exam
- O Buy an Approved Content Provider study text and question and answer bank
- Draw up your study plan
- O Get to know your exam

#### **Getting started** – Tips for success



#### Tips for success

We strongly recommend that you buy a P4 Approved Content Provider study text and question and answer bank to ensure exam success. These provide:

- the most up to date content and syllabus coverage.
- tests, quizzes and other support designed to help you prepare for your exam.
- past exam questions updated for changes to the syllabus, question style and exam format as well as practice questions and answers and full mock exams to ensure you are fully prepared for your exam.

- ✓ The earlier you enter for your exam the less it costs!
- ✓ Use the ACCA Learning
  Community to link up
  with fellow students around
  the world studying the same
  exam as you get tips, join
  discussions and share ideas
  and advice. You can also
  access live Q&A sessions and
  presentations.
- Download the Student Planner App – a tool that helps you map your journey to ACCA membership while balancing your work and social life.
- Spend some time familiarising yourself with the free resources available via the exam resource finder on the student section of the ACCA website – we will provide you with specific guidance on when and how to use these resources during the relevant stages of study.

- Remember to personalise your edition of Student Accountant so you receive P4 specific information as you need it.
- Consider working through the professional skills modules either before you start, or alongside your studies. These modules give you insight into professional skills that you can apply in your exam or in the workplace.

#### Exempt from F9?

- ✓ Make sure you have the assumed knowledge needed from F9 for P4 (see P4 syllabus and study guide).
- ✓ If you feel your knowledge is lacking, consider buying an F9 Approved Content Provider study text to refresh your understanding.

# When drawing up your study plan (see page 5)

- Be realistic and consider
  when you are best able
  to study maybe early
  mornings work better for
  you or perhaps shorter, more
  frequent study periods.
- Once you have prepared your plan stick to it!
- Consider building in an extra study period after every few chapters to review and consolidate your learning.
- ✓ Take a 5-10 minute break every hour to help maintain your motivation and concentration.

#### Getting started – Draw up your study plan

|         | Monday   | Tuesday           | Wednesday   | Thursday      | Friday | Saturday | Sunday |  |  |  |
|---------|----------|-------------------|-------------|---------------|--------|----------|--------|--|--|--|
| Week 1  | Monday   | Tuesday           | Wednesday   | Thursday      | Friday | Saturday | Sunday |  |  |  |
| Week 2  | Monday   | Tuesday           | Wednesday   | Thursday      | Friday | Saturday | Sunday |  |  |  |
| Week 3  | Monday   | Tuesday           | Wednesday   | Thursday      | Friday | Saturday | Sunday |  |  |  |
| Week 4  | Monday   | Tuesday           | Wednesday   | Thursday      | Friday | Saturday | Sunday |  |  |  |
| Week 5  | Monday   | Tuesday           | Wednesday   | Thursday      | Friday | Saturday | Sunday |  |  |  |
| Week 6  | Monday   | Tuesday           | Wednesday   | Thursday      | Friday | Saturday | Sunday |  |  |  |
| Week 7  | Monday   | Tuesday           | Wednesday   | Thursday      | Friday | Saturday | Sunday |  |  |  |
| Week 8  | Monday   | Tuesday           | Wednesday   | Thursday      | Friday | Saturday | Sunday |  |  |  |
| Week 9  | Monday   | Tuesday           | Wednesday   | Thursday      | Friday | Saturday | Sunday |  |  |  |
| Week 10 | Monday   | Tuesday Wednesday |             | Thursday      | Friday | Saturday | Sunday |  |  |  |
| Week 11 |          |                   | J           | REVISION      |        |          |        |  |  |  |
| Week 12 |          | REVISION          |             |               |        |          |        |  |  |  |
| Week 13 | REVISION |                   |             |               |        |          |        |  |  |  |
| Week 14 | REVISION |                   |             |               |        |          |        |  |  |  |
| Week 15 |          | REVISION          |             |               |        |          |        |  |  |  |
| Week 16 |          |                   | REVSION AND | O FINAL PREPA | RATION |          |        |  |  |  |

Other commitments

Daytime study period

#### Study plan checklist

- O Calculate the number of weeks from now until your exam date and draw up a plan see the example to the left and a possible proforma for you to use on the next page
- You may need to add or take away weeks depending on your own circumstances
- Block out days/half days/ evenings already committed to family/social events
- Plan study periods evenings/ half days/full days, aiming for roughly one evening/half day per chapter of your study text
- Leave a six week period for the revision and final preparation phases

Evening study period

#### **Getting started** – Your study plan

Print out and write down when you will study, relax and revise!

|         | Monday   | Tuesday  | Wednesday | Thursday           | Friday | Saturday | Sunday |  |  |  |  |
|---------|----------|----------|-----------|--------------------|--------|----------|--------|--|--|--|--|
| Week 1  |          |          |           |                    |        |          |        |  |  |  |  |
| Week 2  |          |          |           |                    |        |          |        |  |  |  |  |
| Week 3  |          |          |           |                    |        |          |        |  |  |  |  |
| Week 4  |          |          |           |                    |        |          |        |  |  |  |  |
| Week 5  |          |          |           |                    |        |          |        |  |  |  |  |
| Week 6  |          |          |           |                    |        |          |        |  |  |  |  |
| Week 7  |          |          |           |                    |        |          |        |  |  |  |  |
| Week 8  |          |          |           |                    |        |          |        |  |  |  |  |
| Week 9  |          |          |           |                    |        |          |        |  |  |  |  |
| Week 10 |          |          |           |                    |        |          |        |  |  |  |  |
| Week 11 |          |          |           | REVISION           |        |          |        |  |  |  |  |
| Week 12 |          |          |           | REVISION           |        |          |        |  |  |  |  |
| Week 13 | REVISION |          |           |                    |        |          |        |  |  |  |  |
| Week 14 |          |          |           | REVISION           |        |          |        |  |  |  |  |
| Week 15 |          | REVISION |           |                    |        |          |        |  |  |  |  |
| Week 16 |          |          | REVISIO   | ON AND FINAL PREPA | RATION |          |        |  |  |  |  |

Other commitments

#### **Getting started** – Get to know your exam

Review the syllabus& study guide

- This gives you an understanding of the aims and objectives of the exam, learning outcomes and exam structure
- Scan the most recent past exam for P4
- The most recent exam provides you with a clear picture of how P4 will be assessed and how the exam is structured as well as the likely style and range of questions that you could see in the real exam
- Read the examiner's approach article and listen to the examiner's approach interview
- Using these at the start of your studies will help you understand the focus of the exam by concentrating on the exam structure, question style, exam technique and tips as well as pitfalls to avoid see extracts from the examiner's approach article over the page
- Review the examiner's reports from the last four sittings
- These provide feedback on students' performance after each exam session, highlight problem areas that students need to improve on and tell you what the examining teams are looking for; these are critical to your success in passing P4
- Read the exam technique articles for P4
- The four articles Stepping up from Paper F9 to Paper P4, Passing the Professional level papers professional marks, How to tackle exams a marker's perspective and Passing the Professional level papers will provide you with a head start in terms of knowing what to expect and how to approach exam standard questions
- Familiarise yourself with the formulae sheet
- You will be provided with this document in the exam and so you will not need to learn these formulae

# Getting started – What the examiner has said about P4 (extracts from the examiner's approach article)

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# Comments on assumed knowledge

The principles underpinning Paper P4 are introduced and developed in Paper F9, Financial Management. In Paper F9, the following essential areas are introduced and developed: financial environment; investment appraisal; cost of capital; alternative ideas of, and impact of changes to, the capital structure; sources of finance; dividend policy; working capital management; risk management and business valuation.

Paper P4 explores these same areas, but at a more advanced level, and considers problems and issues (many derived from real situations) relevant to the highest-level financial management of an organisation. New areas specific to Paper P4 include responsibility towards stakeholders, acquisitions and mergers, corporate reconstruction and re organisation, the international business environment and multinational organisations, and emerging issues. Finance managers need more than a battery of theories and techniques to succeed – they also need a deep understanding of the context in which they work. As a consequence, candidates will be expected to demonstrate up-to-date understanding of the international macroeconomic environment and the operation of those international institutions that govern both trade and the operation of the financial markets. This is especially important in the current global economic climate of uncertainty.

To be successful at this level, candidates must be able to demonstrate an integrated understanding of the subject. Therefore, it is essential that candidates are able to draw upon the knowledge, techniques and skills gained in Paper F9, and apply these to Paper P4. Also knowledge gained from the other Fundamentals level papers and from Papers P1, P2 and P3 will be useful in helping candidates demonstrate an integrated approach.



# Comments on structure and layout of the exam

Section A now contains one compulsory 50-mark question. This question is scenario-based and the requirements come from different areas of the syllabus. The question normally requires candidates to perform complex computations, evaluate and analyse information, discuss and assess various options, and make judgments, possibly based on explained and justified assumptions. The question is substantive and analytically complex. It requires candidates to structure at least part of the answer in a formal context for which four professional marks are allocated. These professional marks are awarded on the basis of the clarity and structure of the answer. They may also be awarded for answers that are presented in the required format. So, for example, if a report is required, in order to gain the professional marks, the answer should be in a report format and consist of a title, an introduction, other features as appropriate, a conclusion, and make appropriate use of appendices.





#### Your checklist

- O Work through the control sheet which has been designed to give you a structured approach to your learning phase to ensure you:
  - gain the knowledge you need; and
  - learn how to apply that knowledge to pass the exam

#### **Learning phase** – Get the most out of your control sheet

#### Use the control sheet relevant to the Approved Content Provider's materials you have purchased:

- ✓ Becker Professional Education page 12
- ✓ BPP Learning Media page 14
- ✓ Kaplan Publishing page 16

### Tick the box Content in the control sheet once you have:

- Read through the introduction to the chapter
- Actively read and understood each chapter's content
- Noted any additional commentary and exam focus tips provided
- Worked through and understood examples and illustrations of concepts given

# Tick the box Quiz/Test in the control sheet once you have:

✓ Attempted the quiz at the end of the chapter (if you are using Becker or BPP material) or the test your understanding questions throughout the chapter (if you are using Kaplan material)

### Tick the box Questions in the control sheet once you have:

- ✓ Attempted the questions referred to in the question bank – some of these you should do in full but others you can just draw up a plan for, depending on the time you have available
- Compared your answer, or plan, with the solution given and understood where you did well or not so well and why

### Tick the box ACCA related resources in the control sheet once you have:

 Read / viewed the related ACCA article / video signposted

#### **Learning phase** – Tips for success



#### Tips for success

- Actively read the material ask yourself 'do I understand this?' If not re-read and re-work examples if you still struggle, make a note and come back to it during the revision phase.
- Scan headings before going into the detail to give you an idea of the content first and consider highlighting, underlining, making notes, drawing pictures or mind maps whatever helps you to remember.
- Consider using the additional resources provided by the Approved Content Providers including for example passcards or pocket notes to help

- you remember the key knowledge areas.
- Always work through the questions signposted – it is vital that you practise questions throughout the learning phase as this will ensure that you are applying the knowledge you learn as you progress.
- ✓ Make sure you use the ACCA resources to help your understanding these give you real insight to help you in your exam.
- If you find you are not covering all of the material in each study period, build some extra time into your planner – everyone works at a different pace.
- Keep an eye on Student Accountant for any relevant articles.

- Visit the ACCA Learning Community regularly to view new video content and to join online study events.
- There are PER (Practical Experience Requirement) objectives associated with specific syllabus areas and, if possible, you should try to gain experience in these alongside your studying as this will help you to put your studies into a workplace context and reinforce what you have learned.
- Try to read a good quality business journal or newspaper regularly and use this to help bring your studies to life by linking your learning into what you are reading.

#### **Learning phase** – Control sheet for Becker Professional Education

| Chapter  | Content | Quiz/Test | Questions | ACCA related resources   |  |
|--|---------|-----------|-----------|--|--|
| ✓ tick the boxes below when complete           |         |           |           |  |  |
| Introduction                                   |         |           |           |  |  |
| 1 Role of financial strategy                   |         |           |           |  |  |
| 2 Security valuation and the cost of capital   |         |           |           | Bond valuation and bond yields   |  |
| 3 Weighted average cost of capital and gearing |         |           |           |  |  |
| 4 Portfolio theory and CAPM                    |         |           |           | <ul> <li>Cost of capital, gearing and CAPM – part 1</li> <li>Cost of capital, gearing and CAPM – part 2</li> </ul>                                       |  |
| 5 Basic investment appraisal                   |         |           |           |  |  |
| 6 Advanced investment appraisal                |         |           |           | <ul> <li>International project appraisal – part 1</li> <li>International project appraisal – part 2</li> <li>Modified internal rate of return</li> </ul> |  |
| 7 Business valuation                           |         |           |           | Business valuations  |  |
| 8 Mergers and acquisitions                     |         |           |           |  |  |
| 9 Corporate reconstruction and re-organisation |         |           |           |  |  |
| 10 Equity issues                               |         |           |           | Being an angel   |  |
| 11 Debt issues                                 |         |           |           |  |  |
| 12 Dividend policy                             |         |           |           |  |  |
| 13 Options                                     |         |           |           | Study support video: Applying the option pricing theory to investments   |  |
| 14 Foreign exchange risk management            |         |           |           | Exchange traded foreign exchange derivatives   |  |
| 15 Interest rate management                    |         |           |           | <ul> <li>Interest rate risk management</li> <li>Determining interest rate forwards and their application to<br/>swap valuation</li> </ul>                |  |

#### **Learning phase** – Control sheet for Becker Professional Education

| Chapter   | Content | Quiz/Test | Questions | ACCA related resources   |  |  |  |
|---|---------|-----------|-----------|--|--|--|--|
| ✓ tick the boxes below when complete            |         |           |           |  |  |  |  |
| 16 The economic environment for multi-nationals |         |           |           | <ul> <li>Securitisation and tranching</li> <li>Aspects of Islamic finance</li> <li>Islamic finance – theory and practical use of sukuk bonds</li> </ul>                                  |  |  |  |
| 17 International operations                     |         |           |           |  |  |  |  |
| 18 Financial statement analysis                 |         |           |           | <ul> <li>Economic value added versus profit-based measures of<br/>performance – part 1</li> <li>Economic value added versus profit-based measures of<br/>performance – part 2</li> </ul> |  |  |  |
| Further ACCA resources relevant for this exam   |         |           |           | <ul> <li>Conditional probability</li> <li>Myopic management</li> <li>The European debt crisis</li> <li>Risk management</li> </ul>  |  |  |  |

#### **Learning phase** – Control sheet for BPP Learning Media

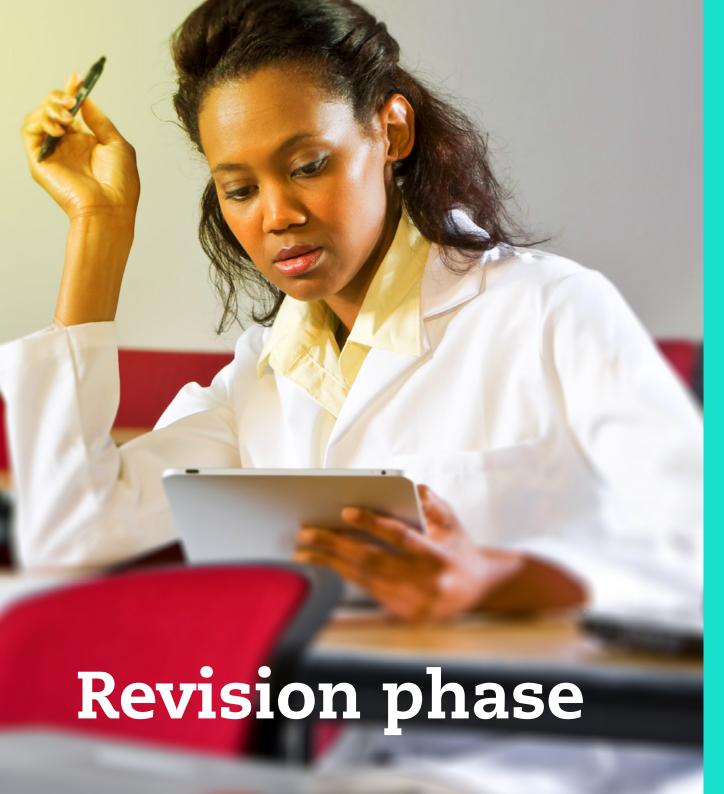
| Chapter  |  | Quiz/Test                            | Questions | ACCA related resources  |  |  |  |  |
|--|--|--------------------------------------|-----------|---|--|--|--|--|
|  |  | ✓ tick the boxes below when complete |           |   |  |  |  |  |
| Introduction   |  |                                      |           |   |  |  |  |  |
| The role and responsibility of senior financial executive / advisor      |  |                                      |           |   |  |  |  |  |
| 2 Financial strategy formulation   |  |                                      |           | <ul> <li>Economic value added versus profit-based measures of<br/>performance – part 1</li> <li>Economic value added versus profit-based measures of<br/>performance – part 2</li> </ul>  |  |  |  |  |
| 3a Conflicting stakeholder interests                                     |  |                                      |           |   |  |  |  |  |
| 3b Ethical issues in financial management                                |  |                                      |           |   |  |  |  |  |
| 3c Impact of environmental issues on corporate objectives and governance |  |                                      |           |   |  |  |  |  |
| 4 Trading and planning in a multinational environment                    |  |                                      |           |   |  |  |  |  |
| 5 Discounted cash flow techniques  |  |                                      |           | Modified internal rate of return  |  |  |  |  |
| 6 Application of option pricing theory in investment decisions           |  |                                      |           | Study support video: Applying the option pricing theory to investments  |  |  |  |  |
| Impact of financing on investment decisions and adjusted present values  |  |                                      |           | <ul> <li>Aspects of Islamic finance</li> <li>Islamic finance – theory and practical use of sukuk bonds</li> <li>Bond valuation and bond yields</li> <li>Cost of capital, gearing and CAPM – part 1</li> <li>Cost of capital, gearing and CAPM – part 2</li> <li>Being an angel</li> </ul> |  |  |  |  |
| 7b Valuation and the use of free cash flows                              |  |                                      |           | Business valuations   |  |  |  |  |
| 8 International investment and financing decisions                       |  |                                      |           | <ul> <li>International project appraisal – part 1</li> <li>International project appraisal – part 2</li> </ul>  |  |  |  |  |
| 9 Acquisitions and mergers vs other growth strategies                    |  |                                      |           |   |  |  |  |  |
| 10 Valuation of acquisitions and mergers                                 |  |                                      |           |   |  |  |  |  |
| 11 Regulatory framework and processes                                    |  |                                      |           |   |  |  |  |  |
| 12 Financing mergers and acquisitions                                    |  |                                      |           |   |  |  |  |  |
| 13 Financial reconstructions   |  |                                      |           |   |  |  |  |  |
| 14 Business reorganisation   |  |                                      |           |   |  |  |  |  |
| 15 The role of the treasury function in multinational organisations      |  |                                      |           | Securitisation and tranching  |  |  |  |  |
| The use of financial derivatives to hedge against foreign exchange risk  |  |                                      |           | Exchange traded foreign exchange derivatives  |  |  |  |  |

#### **Learning phase** – Control sheet for BPP Learning Media

| Chapter  | Content | Quiz/Test | Questions | ACCA related resources  |  |  |
|--|---------|-----------|-----------|---|--|--|
| ✓ tick the boxes below when complete                                   |         |           |           |   |  |  |
| The use of financial derivatives to hedge against interest rate risk   |         |           |           | <ul> <li>Interest rate risk management</li> <li>Determining interest rate forwards and their application to<br/>swap valuation</li> </ul>               |  |  |
| 18 Dividend policy in multinationals and transfer pricing              |         |           |           |   |  |  |
| Recent developments in world financial markets and international trade |         |           |           | <ul> <li>Securitisation and tranching</li> <li>Aspects of Islamic finance</li> <li>Islamic finance – theory and practical use of sukuk bonds</li> </ul> |  |  |
| Further ACCA resources relevant for this exam                          |         |           |           | <ul> <li>Conditional probability</li> <li>Myopic management</li> <li>The European debt crisis</li> <li>Risk management</li> </ul>                       |  |  |

#### **Learning phase** – Control sheet for Kaplan Publishing

| Chapter   | Content   | Quiz/Test     | Questions  | ACCA related resources   |
|---|-----------|---------------|------------|--|
|   | ✓ tick th | ne boxes belo | w when com | nplete   |
| Introduction  |           |               |            |  |
| 1 The role and responsibility of the financial manager                        |           |               |            |  |
| 2 Investment appraisal  |           |               |            | Modified internal rate of return   |
| 3 The financing decision  |           |               |            | <ul><li>Bond valuation and bond yields</li><li>Being an angel</li></ul>  |
| 4 The dividend decision   |           |               |            |  |
| 5 International operations and international investment appraisal             |           |               |            | <ul> <li>International project appraisal – part 1</li> <li>International project appraisal – part 2</li> </ul>   |
| 6 International operations – the financing decision and the dividend decision |           |               |            |  |
| 7 Option pricing  |           |               |            | Study support video: Applying the option pricing theory to investments   |
| 8 The weighted average cost of capital (WACC)                                 |           |               |            |  |
| 9 Risk adjusted WACC and adjusted present value                               |           |               |            | <ul> <li>Cost of capital, gearing and CAPM – part 1</li> <li>Cost of capital, gearing and CAPM – part 2</li> </ul>   |
| 10 Corporate failure and reconstruction                                       |           |               |            | <ul> <li>Economic value added versus profit-based measures of<br/>performance – part 1</li> <li>Economic value added versus profit-based measures of<br/>performance – part 2</li> </ul> |
| 11 An introduction to risk management   |           |               |            |  |
| 12 Hedging foreign exchange risk  |           |               |            | Exchange traded foreign exchange derivatives   |
| 13 Hedging interest rate risk   |           |               |            | <ul> <li>Interest rate risk management</li> <li>Determining interest rate forwards and their application to<br/>swap valuation</li> </ul>  |
| 14 Strategic aspects of acquisitions  |           |               |            |  |
| 15 Business valuation   |           |               |            | Business valuations  |
| 16 Topical issues in financial management                                     |           |               |            | <ul> <li>Securitisation and tranching</li> <li>Aspects of Islamic finance</li> <li>Islamic finance – theory and practical use of sukuk bonds</li> </ul>                                  |
| Further ACCA resources relevant for this exam                                 |           |               |            | <ul> <li>Conditional probability</li> <li>Myopic management</li> <li>The European debt crisis</li> <li>Risk management</li> </ul>  |



#### Your checklist

- O Revisit areas you struggled with during the learning phase
- D Ensure you are confident with the knowledge needed to pass the exam
- O Make sure you are able to apply that knowledge in questions

#### **Revision phase** – Question practice

- Exam-standard question practice is vital now
- Work through as many questions as possible and all mock exams included in the Approved Content Provider question and answer banks – remember these are best for question practice as they include past exam questions updated for syllabus and format changes
- Work through the most recent past exam for P4 – this will provide you with a clear picture of what the exam will look like making sure you know what to expect on the day



#### Tips for success

- Consider blocking time in your study plan for specific questions or mock exams to ensure you cover everything.
- Don't be afraid to attempt questions you have already done – especially the ones you found tricky first time round.
- ✓ It is really important that you do some questions in full, to exam time time management is often an issue and the more you prepare yourself the better you will perform in the exam.
- To keep motivation high, break some questions into individual parts, write plans or

- notes for some parts and do others in full.
- ✓ Work through the answers carefully pay attention to areas you got wrong and understand where you went wrong it is better to do a few questions well, than lots of questions badly.
- Try not to look at the answers before really attempting the question you won't be able to do this in the real exam!
- ✓ Don't forget to review the marking guide too – you need to understand how marks are allocated to ensure you know how to maximise your marks.

#### **Revision phase** – Key resources

- Review the examiner's approach article and examiner's interview again in the context of what you have learnt
- Remind yourself of areas that students often struggle with and obtain tips on how to ensure you do not make the same mistakes by reviewing the examiner's reports from the last four sittings again
- View the study support video referred to in your control sheet again – this time focusing on the exam technique aspects
- Read the exam technique articles Stepping up from Paper F9 to Paper P4, Passing the Professional level papers professional marks, How to tackle exams a marker's perspective and Passing the Professional level papers again this time using the techniques to help you practice questions
- Make sure you read the study skills articles in Student Accountant covering topics such as how to overcome exam anxiety as well as checking the Student Accountant Hub for any new technical articles related to P4



#### Tips for success

- Don't give up easily if you really cannot understand something then consider posing a question on the ACCA Learning Community – if you found it difficult so will have others.
- ✓ Don't forget there are professional skills modules which you might find useful in giving you some practical guidance when answering questions.

#### Revision phase – What the examiner has said about P4 (extracts from the December 2014 examiner's report)

#### **Comments** on overall performance

The overall performance of the candidates was lower than the recent trend of examinations, but in line with the P4 examinations since December 2010.

The main reasons for candidates performing less well were:

- i) Complexity of question 1 (c);
- ii) Poor management of time;
- iii) Not structuring question 1(c) into a report format and not gaining all the professional marks;
- iv) Lack of detailed knowledge of parts of the syllabus areas, answering only parts of some questions focussing either on the numerical parts or the discursive parts instead of a balanced approach;
- v) Not using the reading time effectively to plan a strategic approach to tackling the paper and to select the optional questions wisely;
- vi) Presenting the discursive answers in brief bullet-point format, often in incomplete sentences, as statements and not as discussion-based narrative.



#### Comments on question 1

Question one asked candidates to initially examine whether the strategic aims of a privately-owned company of diversification and of acquiring under-valued companied were valid and why it was being forced to sell one of its companies before pursuing further acquisitions. The question then asked candidates to provide a value of the company being sold both to the seller and the acquirer, incorporating synergic benefits. The question also asked candidates to comment on the financial impact of a project being considered by the target company. Candidates were asked to evaluate the impact of the sale using their computations in the form of a report.

Many candidates found the calculations required in this question difficult and appeared to spend a significant amount of time on them. This created pressure on them to complete the rest of the requirements of the question in less time and also the structure of the report was often unsatisfactory. This meant that candidates failed to gain many of the easier marks available for discussing the assumptions and the majority of the professional marks.



#### Your checklist

- O You are clear on the knowledge you need to pass the exam as well as how to apply that knowledge
- You have the skills you need to pass the exam – eg time management

# Ensure you are familiar with:

- O the exam format
- O the style of questions
- O the way the marks are allocated
- O what specific syllabus areas are likely to be tested and in which questions

#### Final preparation – Tips for success

# An extract from the syllabus and study guide for P4

Section A of both the P4 and P5 Options papers contain one 50 mark compulsory question, and Section B will offer a choice of two from three questions each worth 25 marks each.

# An extract from the **P4 June 2015**exam marking guide

#### Question 2

Other ratios

Trends and other calculations

| (a) Explanation of a dark pool network  Explanation of why Chawan Co | 3–4   |
|--|-------|
| may want to use one  | 1–2   |
|  | Max 5 |
| (b) Profitability ratios   | 1–2   |
| Investor ratios  | 3–4   |

Max 10

#### Note: Maximum 7 marks if only ratio calculations provided

| Discussion of company performance over time           | 2–3    |
|---|--------|
| Discussion of company performance against competitor  | rs 2–3 |
| Discussion of actual returns against expected returns | 1–2    |
| Discussion of need to maintain portfolio              |        |
| and alternative investments                           | 1–2    |
| Discussion of future trends and expectations          | 1–2    |
| Discussion of takeover rumour and action as a result  | 1–2    |
| Other relevant discussion/commentary                  | 1–2    |
|   |        |

Max 10

Total 25

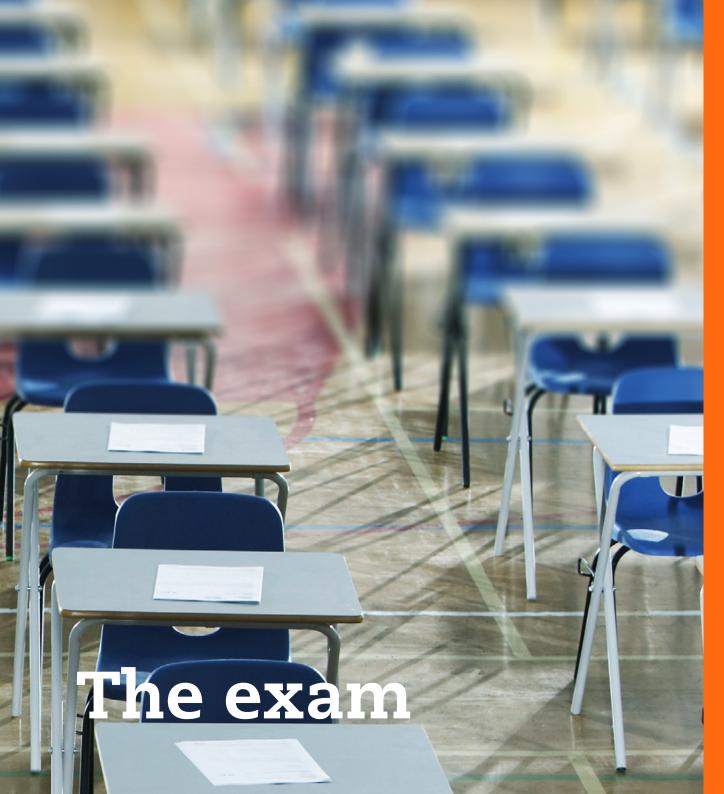
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# Tips for success

- Go over questions again that you found difficult during the revision phase and make sure you attempt at least one mock again in full to time.
- ✓ If you are unsure about the exam format, the style of questions or what specific syllabus areas are likely to be tested in which questions, read the syllabus and study guide again.
- ✓ If you are not sure about how the marks are allocated review the most recent past exam for P4 again.

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#### Your checklist

O Make sure you are ready to walk into your exam

#### **The Exam** – Tips for success



#### Tips for success

Very few students enjoy taking exams but there are things you can do to make the experience less stressful!

- ✓ Identify where the exam hall is.
- Plan your route to the exam hall, considering the time of day you will be travelling and any potential issues.
- Have in place a back-up plan in case of traffic problems or public transport delays.
- Ensure you have all the equipment you need for

- the exam (black pens, calculator etc).
- / Don't forget to take your exam docket with you as well as your student identification.
- ✓ Eat properly before you leave for the exam.
- ✓ Sleep properly do not spend the night before doing last minute late night revision you will perform so much better if you are alert and well rested (and in any case, last minute revision will only cause you to panic!).

✓ Try not to get into discussions with fellow students just before the exam about what might come up – again this will only cause you stress.

#### Once the exam is over:

- ✓ Relax.
- ✓ Don't over analyse – you cannot change anything now!

Good Luck!

# Appendix – Links

### Appendix - Links

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| 04         | Enter for your exam  | http://www.accaglobal.com/gb/en/student/acca-qual-student-journey/exams/enter-an-exam.html   |
| 04, 11, 18 | Approved Content Provider  | http://www.accaglobal.com/gb/en/student/your-study-options/alp-content.html  |
| 04         | ACCA Learning Community  | https://www.accalearningcommunity.com/   |
| 04         | Student Planner App  | http://www.accaglobal.com/gb/en/student/apps.html  |
| 04         | Exam resource finder   | http://www.accaglobal.com/gb/en/student/exam-support-resources.html  |
| 04         | Student section  | http://www.accaglobal.com/gb/en/student.html   |
| 04, 07, 22 | Syllabus and study guide   | http://www.accaglobal.com/gb/en/student/exam-support-resources/professional-exams-study-resources/p4/syllabus-study-guide.<br>html                                 |
| 04, 19     | Professional skills modules  | http://studentvirtuallearn.accaglobal.com/index.php  |
| 07         | Exam formulae and maths  | http://www.accaglobal.com/gb/en/student/exam-support-resources/professional-exams-study-resources/p4/exam-formulae-maths-tables.html                               |
| 07, 18, 22 | Past exam for P4   | http://www.accaglobal.com/gb/en/student/exam-support-resources/professional-exams-study-resources/p4/past-exam-papers.html   |
| 07, 19     | Examiner's approach article  | http://www.accaglobal.com/gb/en/student/exam-support-resources/professional-exams-study-resources/p4/technical-articles/examiner-approach-to-paper-p4.html         |
| 07, 19     | Examiner's approach interview  | http://www.accaglobal.com/gb/en/student/exam-support-resources/professional-exams-study-resources/p4/examiners-reports.html  |
| 07, 19     | Examiner's reports   | http://www.accaglobal.com/gb/en/student/exam-support-resources/professional-exams-study-resources/p4/examiners-reports.html  |
| 07, 19     | Exam technique article: Stepping up from paper F9 to paper P4                      | http://www.accaglobal.com/gb/en/student/exam-support-resources/professional-exams-study-resources/p4/technical-articles/f9-p4.<br>html                             |
| 07, 19     | Exam technique article: Passing the professional level papers – professional marks | http://www.accaglobal.com/gb/en/student/exam-support-resources/professional-exams-study-resources/p4/technical-articles.html                                       |
| 07, 19     | Exam technique article: How to tackle exams – a markers perspective                | http://www.accaglobal.com/gb/en/student/exam-support-resources/professional-exams-study-resources/p4/technical-articles.html                                       |
| 07, 19     | Exam technique article: Passing the professional level papers                      | http://www.accaglobal.com/gb/en/student/exam-support-resources/professional-exams-study-resources/p1/technical-articles/passing-the-professional-level-papers.html |
| 11         | PER (Practical Experience Requirement) objectives                                  | http://www.accaglobal.com/gb/en/student/practical-experience/performance-objectives.html   |
| 13, 14, 16 | Securitisation and tranching   | http://www.accaglobal.com/gb/en/student/exam-support-resources/professional-exams-study-resources/p4/technical-articles/toxic-assets.html                          |
| 12, 14, 16 | Exchange traded foreign exchange derivatives                                       | http://www.accaglobal.com/gb/en/student/exam-support-resources/professional-exams-study-resources/p4/technical-articles/exchange-derivatives.html                  |

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| 13, 15, 16 | Conditional probability  | http://www.accaglobal.com/gb/en/student/exam-support-resources/professional-exams-study-resources/p4/technical-articles/conditional-probability.html   |
| 12, 14, 16 | Business valuations  | http://www.accaglobal.com/gb/en/student/exam-support-resources/professional-exams-study-resources/p4/technical-articles/<br>business-valuations.html   |
| 13, 15, 16 | Myopic management  | http://www.accaglobal.com/gb/en/student/exam-support-resources/fundamentals-exams-study-resources/f9/technical-articles/myopic-managementcauses-and-remedies.html                                  |
| 12, 14, 16 | International project appraisal – part 1                                   | http://www.accaglobal.com/gb/en/student/exam-support-resources/professional-exams-study-resources/p4/technical-articles/international-project-appraisal.html                                       |
| 12, 14, 16 | International project appraisal – part 2                                   | http://www.accaglobal.com/gb/en/student/exam-support-resources/professional-exams-study-resources/p4/technical-articles/international-project-appraisalpart-2.html                                 |
| 13, 14, 16 | Aspects of Islamic finance   | http://www.accaglobal.com/gb/en/student/exam-support-resources/professional-exams-study-resources/p4/technical-articles/aspects-of-islamic-finance.html  |
| 13, 15, 16 | Islamic finance – theory and practical use of sukuk bonds                  | http://www.accaglobal.com/gb/en/student/exam-support-resources/professional-exams-study-resources/p4/technical-articles/islamic-financetheory-and-practical-use-of-sukuk-bonds.html                |
| 13, 15, 16 | The European debt crisis   | http://www.accaglobal.com/gb/en/student/exam-support-resources/professional-exams-study-resources/p4/technical-articles/the-european-debt-crisis.html  |
| 12, 14, 16 | Economic value added versus profit-based measures of performance – part 1  | http://www.accaglobal.com/gb/en/student/exam-support-resources/professional-exams-study-resources/p4/technical-articles.html   |
| 12, 14, 16 | Economic value added versus profit-based measures of performance – part 2  | http://www.accaglobal.com/gb/en/student/exam-support-resources/professional-exams-study-resources/p4/technical-articles.html   |
| 12, 15, 16 | Determining interest rate forwards and their application to swap valuation | http://www.accaglobal.com/gb/en/student/exam-support-resources/professional-exams-study-resources/p4/technical-articles/interest-rate-swap-valuation.html  |
| 12, 14, 16 | Bond valuation and bond yields   | http://www.accaglobal.com/gb/en/student/exam-support-resources/professional-exams-study-resources/p4/technical-articles/bond-valuation-yields.html   |
| 13, 15, 16 | Risk management  | http://www.accaglobal.com/gb/en/student/exam-support-resources/professional-exams-study-resources/p4/technical-articles/risk-managementunderstanding-why-is-as-important-as-understanding-how.html |
| 12, 14, 16 | Cost of capital, gearing and CAPM – part 1                                 | http://www.accaglobal.com/gb/en/student/exam-support-resources/professional-exams-study-resources/p4/technical-articles.html   |
| 12, 14, 16 | Cost of capital, gearing and CAPM – part 2                                 | http://www.accaglobal.com/gb/en/student/exam-support-resources/professional-exams-study-resources/p4/technical-articles.html   |
| 12, 14, 16 | Being an angel   | http://www.accaglobal.com/gb/en/student/exam-support-resources/professional-exams-study-resources/p4/technical-articles.html   |
| 12, 14, 16 | Modified internal rate of return   | http://www.accaglobal.com/gb/en/student/exam-support-resources/professional-exams-study-resources/p4/technical-articles/<br>Modified-internal-rate-return.html                                     |
| 19         | Study support video: Applying the option pricing theory to investments     | http://www.accaglobal.com/gb/en/student/exam-support-resources/professional-exams-study-resources/p4/technical-articles.html   |
| 19         | Study skills articles in Student Accountant                                | http://www.accaglobal.com/gb/en/student/sa.html  |