

Guidance Notes for Irish Stream Students

SEPTEMBER 2017, DECEMBER 2017, MARCH 2018 AND JUNE 2018

Please note this document applies to F4 IRL exams for December 2017 and June 2018. P2 IRL and P7 IRL exams are however held four times a year and this will apply to September and December 2017, and March and June 2018.

If you live in the Republic of Ireland, or are an Irish national resident in another country, you may wish to sit papers adapted to reflect Irish legislation and practice.

The main purpose of these Guidance Notes is to highlight the modifications made to individual papers in the ACCA Qualification in order to reflect legislation and practice in the Republic of Ireland.

Modifications are made in one of two ways.

1 Adapted Exams

At the time of registration, you may choose to follow either the International, the Irish or the UK Stream for the accounting and auditing exams. The Irish Stream papers are adapted from the UK exams. They are checked by Inspectors who are conversant with Irish legislation and practice to ensure that they are suitable for Irish Stream students. Where there are differences in legislation and practice between the UK and the Republic of Ireland, the exams are adapted, to make them relevant to Irish students.

Exams which may be adapted in this way are:

Professional

P2 (IRL) Corporate Reporting

P7 (IRL) Advanced Audit and Assurance

The accounting and auditing exams are adapted from the UK exams. Syllabus and Study Guides are published both on the ACCA website at www.accaglobal.com. Students should obtain advice on any relevant additional reading from their tutors.

These Guidance Notes outline the relevant areas of difference between UK and Irish legislation and practice, and explain how P2 and P7 may be adapted for Irish Stream students.

2 Variant Exams

In certain subjects, it is more appropriate for students to sit a completely separate exam specifically written to encompass the law and best practice of the Republic of Ireland. These papers are called variant exams.

At the time of registration, you may choose whether to sit the UK exams or the Irish variants.

Separate Irish variant exams are available for:

Fundamental

F4 (IRL) Corporate and Business

F6 (IRL) Taxation

Professional

P6 (IRL) Advanced Taxation

Syllabus and Study Guides for F4 (IRL), F6 (IRL) and P6 (IRL) are published on the ACCA website at www.accaglobal.com.

Please note that for the following exams you will be examined in accordance with the syllabus published on the website at www.accaglobal.com.

F1 Accountant in Business
F2 Management accounting
F3 Financial Accounting
F5 Performance Management
F7 Financial Reporting
F8 Audit and Assurance
F9 Financial Management
P1 Professional Accountant
P3 Business Analysis
P4 Advanced financial management
P5 Advanced Performance Management

EXAMINABLE LEGISLATION

Finance Acts

If you are sitting F6 (IRL) Taxation or P6 (IRL) Advanced Taxation the examinations will be based on a specific Finance Act. You should refer to the Syllabus and Study Guide relevant to your exam session for details of which Finance Act is examinable.

Companies Acts

If you are sitting F4 (IRL) Corporate and Business Law, P2 (IRL) Corporate Reporting or P7 (IRL) Advanced Audit and Assurance, you should note that the Companies Act 2014, and European Union (Statutory Audits) (Directive 2006/43/EC, as amended by Directive 2014/56/EU, and Regulation (EU) No 537/2014) regulations 2016 are examinable. Knowledge is also required of the Registration of Business Names Act 1963.

Students should also have knowledge of Company Law relating to the use of FRS 101, 102 and 105 (not yet applicable in Ireland) for P2 (IRL).

Knowledge of the Criminal Justice (Money Laundering and Terrorist Financing) Act 2010 and 2013 in relation to money laundering is required in F4 (IRL) Corporate and Business Law and P7 (IRL) Advanced Audit and Assurance.

UK Financial Services Act 1986

Irish stream students are not required to be aware of the requirements of the UK Financial Services Legislation. The Financial Services Act 1986 is not therefore examinable in F4 (IRL) Corporate and Business Law, P2 (IRL) Corporate Reporting or P7 (IRL) Advanced Audit and Assurance. The UK Financial Services and Markets Act 2000 is however, now examinable in relation to market abuse in F4 ENG. The relevant legislation that is examinable in F4 IRL is the EU Regulation on Market Abuse (EU 596/2014), the EU Directive (2014/57/EU), and the EU (Market Abuse) Regulations 2016 (Directive 2003/6/EC).

ACCOUNTING AND AUDITING DOCUMENTS

If you are sitting P2 (IRL) Corporate Reporting, and P7 (IRL) Advanced Audit and Assurance - you will be examined on International Financial Reporting Standards (and certain accounting differences between ROI and IFRS as detailed within the study guide and examinable documents).

Following the adoption of EU Directive 2014/56/EU the Irish Auditing & Accounting Supervisory Authority (IAASA) became responsible for the adoption of the

auditing framework in Ireland. In July 2016 the IAASA published its intention to obtain a license from the UK's Financial Reporting Council (FRC) to adopt and tailor the UK FRC audit framework for use in Ireland. This approach was confirmed by the IAASA in January 2017 which resulted in the publication of International Standards on Auditing (Ireland). The ISAs (Ireland) will be examinable for examinations sat in the September 2017 to June 2018 exam year. A separate list of examinable documents for P7 (IRL) has not been prepared for the current year as the ISAs (Ireland) currently remain broadly similar to the ISAs (UK). Students should therefore refer to the examinable documents published on the website applicable for P7 (UK) to ascertain the standards which are examinable and subsequently ensure that they refer to the relevant ISAs (IRL) which are available on the IAASA website at www.iaasa.ie.

SPECIFIC COMMENTS ON INDIVIDUAL EXAMS

F4 (IRL) Corporate and Business Law

This is a variant exam based on the legal framework of the Republic of Ireland. It is completely separate from the ENG exam. You will find full details of the Syllabus and Study Guide on the ACCA website at www.accaglobal.com.

F6 (IRL) Taxation and P6 (IRL) Advanced Taxation

These are variant exams based on the tax systems of the Republic of Ireland. They are completely separate from the UK exams with a separate syllabus and separate lists of publications. You will find full details of the Syllabus and Study Guide on the ACCA website at www.accaglobal.com. You should refer to the Syllabus and Study guide for your exam session for details of which Finance Act is examinable.

Papers are set in Euro.

Students should know the definition of reckonable income for PRSI and universal social charge purposes.

Students should note that the rules surrounding the calculation and payment of universal social charge are examinable.

Dividend Withholding Tax (DWT) may be examined.

Students should also have knowledge of the PRSI chargeable under Class A1, K, and S.

Finally they should know the taxation provisions applying both to short-term and long-term (including pensions) Social Welfare benefits.

Students should note that terminal loss relief for sole traders is examinable.

For P6 (IRL) Advanced Taxation, candidates should note that marks will be specifically awarded in question 1 for format of solutions, letter writing and report writing skills.

P7 (IRL) Advanced Audit and Assurance

This exam is adapted to incorporate differences between legislation and practice in the UK and in the Republic of Ireland.

The main differences are in the following areas:

- i Requirements of the Companies Acts and Statutory Instruments relating to the responsibilities, powers, duties, appointment, reporting requirements, removal and retirement of auditors;
- ii Companies Acts requirements relating to the contents of the auditor's report;
- iii The exception from the requirement to have accounts audited Chapter 15 and 16 of Part 6 of the Companies Act 2014;
- iv The reporting requirements for auditors under Section 393 of the Companies Act 2014;
- v Companies Act requirements relating to receivership, examinership and liquidation; and
- vi Adoption of ISAs (Ireland) which have been adopted from ISAs (UK) with relevant statutory and legislative amendments

P2 (IRL) Corporate Reporting

This exam is adapted to incorporate differences between legislation, taxation and accounting practice in the UK and in the Republic of Ireland. The major differences are in the following areas:

- i the Irish system of taxation and its treatment in company accounts;
- ii Companies Act requirements in respect of distributable profit;

iii legal requirements relating to merger accounting;

iv requirements of the Companies Act relating to the preparation and content of annual financial statements, including disclosure requirements and the content of directors' reports;

v Companies Act requirements relating to capital reductions and reorganisations;

vi Companies Act requirements relating to receivership, examinership and liquidation; and

vii control and regulation of mergers and takeovers.

You will find full details of the Syllabus and Study Guide for these papers on the ACCA website at www.accaglobal.com.

FORMAT OF EXAMS

The formats of the exam for P6 (IRL) Advanced Taxation, P7 (IRL) Advanced Audit and Assurance and P2 (IRL) Corporate Reporting are the same as the formats of the exams for the UK Stream equivalents.

For the format of F4 (IRL) Corporate and Business Law and F6 (IRL) Taxation, candidates should refer to the Syllabus and Study Guide and past exams from December 2017 for F4 and June 2016 for F6 onwards on the ACCA website at www.accaglobal.com.

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

To help you with your studies you should refer to *student accountant* for:

- Articles by the Examiners on important topics in the syllabus
- Articles of general educational value written by a range of contributors
- Examinable documents which contain useful guidance on individual exam papers e.g.
 - syllabus clarifications;
 - list of examinable documents for the Accounting, and Auditing papers;
 - changes in the format of the exam paper, with reasons for the change

The examinable documents are updated every 12 months and are published on the website at www.accaglobal.com.

- Examiners' reports for INT papers are published in *student accountant* and on the ACCA website, which describe the general performance in all papers at the previous exam sitting, highlighting in particular the most common errors made, and problems encountered by students
- Examiners' reports for variant papers are usually posted onto ACCA's website, www.accaglobal.com, in February and August each year.

Irish Stream students may obtain further information and advice from ACCA's Irish Office. The contact detail is as follows:

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The Office is open from 9.00am until 5.00pm Monday to Friday. Staff are available to help students who may have queries or problems ranging from exemption from ACCA's examinations, experience for membership, training schemes, vacancy lists, information on colleges, details on Open Learning and district/functional society activities amongst others.