

# How to approach the Advanced Performance Management (APM) exam

The APM syllabus has five capabilities which can be summarised as follows:

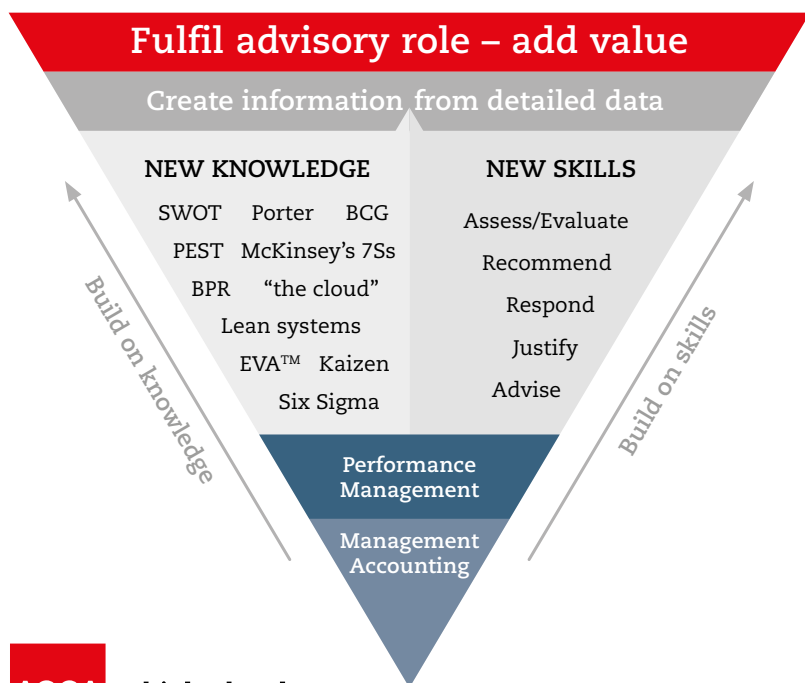
- Use *strategic* planning and control models
- Identify and **evaluate** design features of performance management systems
- **Apply** appropriate *strategic* performance measurement techniques
- **Advise** clients on *strategic* business performance **evaluation**
- **Apply** a range of professional skills in addressing requirements within the exam.

Most of these will feature to some extent in **every** exam session.



## APM – A Strategic View

The exam requires you to build on a good grasp of basic knowledge and skills and show awareness that performance management depends on an organisation's specific situation and environment.



## Advice from the examining team

- Remember that APM builds on PM knowledge by applying it in more complex scenarios
- Create information from the detailed data provided in the scenario
- Add value to the organisation with comments relevant to the issues at hand



## Tips for success in the APM exam

- ✓ Visit **this page** for guidance on how to approach question practice, including using the ACCA Practice Platform
- ✓ Understand the links between issues at the strategic, tactical and operational levels
- ✓ Understand in particular how the choice of operational performance measures affects strategic performance
- ✓ Be able to apply PM knowledge to more complex scenarios
- ✓ Use any exhibit, information, model or technique explicitly referred to in a requirement
- ✓ Interpret and further analyse data provided
- ✓ Be selective in making calculations
- ✓ Assess alternative approaches from different perspectives
- ✓ Justify advice using the evidence given in the scenario
- ✓ Quantify comments, where possible
- ✓ Discuss commercial implications



## Tackling the exam

Most frequently used APM exam verbs:



ASSESS



EVALUATE



ADVISE

Read [this article](#) for more about exam verbs

## How to earn professional skills marks:

The APM exam has 20 marks for demonstrating professional skills



- **Communication**  
Section A questions require a report  
Use appropriate headings and sub-headings, and clear, concise language  
Answer the question asked!
- **Analysis and evaluation**  
Analysis or evaluation must be relevant to the organisation and their situation
- **Scepticism**  
Have a questioning mindset that challenges information, evidence and assumptions
- **Commercial acumen**  
Demonstrate your understanding of what is appropriate in different types of organisation and different contexts  
Draw appropriate conclusions and make properly informed decisions which are appropriate to the scenario



## Links to support resources

- [Examining team guidance](#)
- [Practice exams in the Practice Platform](#)
- [Examiner reports](#)
- [Strategic Professional CBE support](#)
- [Technical articles and tricky topics](#)
- [FAQs](#)
- [Ethics and Professional Skills module](#)

ACCA Find out how the **ACCA Study Hub** helps you prepare for exams.