

# **FOUNDATIONS IN ACCOUNTANCY AND THE ACCA QUALIFICATION**

**AN OVERVIEW FOR EMPLOYERS**



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# Why choose ACCA?

ACCA is the leading global body for professional accountants. We offer world-class finance and accountancy qualifications and brand partnering opportunities through our unrivalled global, regional, national and local network of offices and partners.

We help businesses grow by developing their finance capability and enhancing their brand reputation.

## **FINANCE CAPABILITY**

We prepare accountants for business. ACCA can uniquely support your organisation in developing its finance capability because our qualifications can be tailored to delivering the finance skills it needs. We provide renowned finance and accountancy qualifications for any organisation in any sector and with 83 offices and 400 examination centres worldwide, we have the greatest network qualification delivery capability and professional development programme of any accountancy body. We will work with you to ensure flexible, accessible, cost effective training delivery at all levels.

## **BRAND REPUTATION**

As the leading global professional accountancy body we can uniquely support building your business brand through partnership opportunities. Partnership with ACCA delivers great

brand exposure for your organisation as we have a leading platform with unmatched visibility, channels to market and influence at global, regional, national and local levels.

## **OUR PEOPLE**

We support our 147,000 members and 424,000 students in 170 countries, helping them to develop successful careers in accounting and business, based on the skills required by employers.

ACCA accountants in the corporate and public sectors transform the finance capabilities of their organisations through their in-depth skills in finance strategy, business analysis, investment appraisal, cost control, financial management, performance management, risk management, and financial reporting. In public practice, ACCA accountants provide advice from a business perspective

through their deep skills and knowledge in corporate and business law, taxation and audit and assurance.

Our values are aligned to the needs of employers in all sectors. We ensure through our qualifications that we help build the finance capabilities your business needs, and through our brand we give you the best partnership opportunities for your organisation. ACCA helps you to grow your business.

# Foundations in Accountancy

# Why will Foundations in Accountancy be good for my organisation?

## **REACH AND DEVELOP NEW TALENT POOLS**

Competition for talent remains high. Good graduates and qualified professionals in particular are hard to come by. Foundations in Accountancy will help your organisation access new talent pools such as school leavers and career changers. It allows your employees to demonstrate their capabilities and enables you to identify talented people for further development.

## **ENHANCE YOUR REPUTATION AS AN EMPLOYER OF CHOICE**

Foundations in Accountancy will reinforce your organisation's reputation in the employment market as an organisation that provides opportunity. The modular and progressive nature of the suite of awards enables people to join, and exit, at levels that can be matched to their job roles and capabilities.

## **PROFESSIONALISM AND ETHICS**

With increased scrutiny in recent years on how businesses operate, it is essential that all trainees – irrespective of which level or role they work in – know what it means to act and behave professionally and ethically in the workplace. With the introduction of Foundations in Professionalism, which is a requirement for all trainees to complete if they wish to receive certification for an individual award, you will be able to reassure your clients that you have employees who know how to behave professionally and ethically within the work environment.

## **HELP YOU CONTROL YOUR COSTS**

Qualified professional accountants are not required at all levels of the finance function within business. Foundations in Accountancy will enable you to reduce and target more effectively the costs of recruitment, salary and training by developing junior employees in the specific occupational skills that they need to effectively perform their

duties. Your organisation will be able to achieve better and earlier returns on its training investments as people will be able to progress to a level matched to their capabilities and appropriate for their job roles. Foundations in Accountancy will provide an excellent grounding for employees who have the potential to perform well in technical and management positions which will reduce the time and costs of studying for the ACCA Qualification.

## **DEVELOP ESSENTIAL FINANCE SKILLS ACROSS THE WHOLE ORGANISATION**

Non-financial managers must have a good grounding in finance and accounting techniques in order to make effective business decisions. Foundations in Accountancy can be used to provide this. Managers can enter at, and progress to, a level of expertise matched to their level of financial responsibility – from essential knowledge at the certificate levels to the diploma level, which is more relevant for those working in practice.

# Foundations in Accountancy

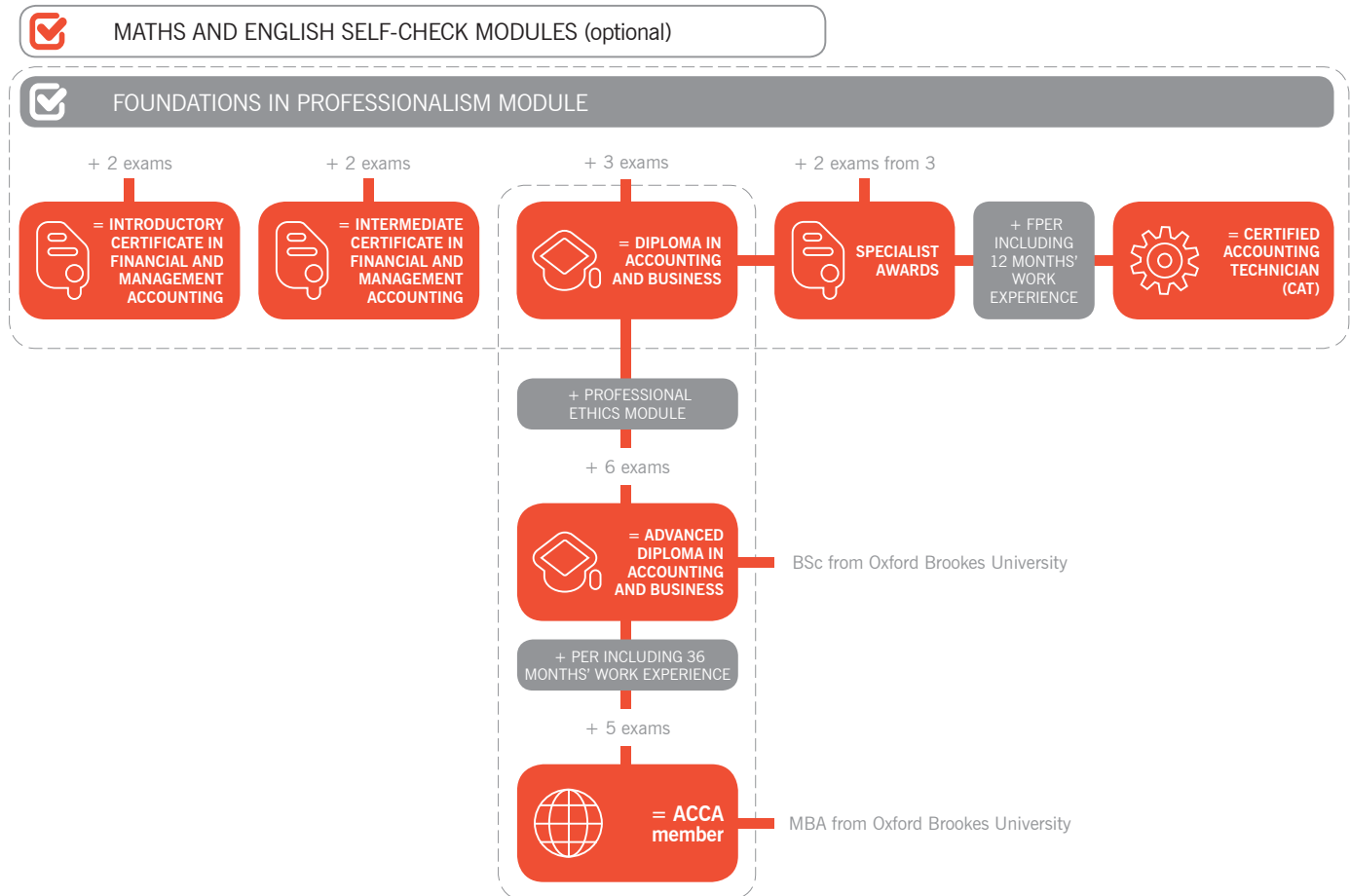
ACCA's foundation level awards – Foundations in Accountancy – has been developed with employers in mind. This suite of qualifications will provide you with access to competent and ethical technicians, trained to consistent standards, with built-in flexibility to allow for skills to be tailored to meet different business needs and environments.

The accountancy profession at every level is constantly evolving to meet the needs and demands of how businesses operate and nowhere is this more apparent than at an accounting-support level. The accounting technician of today and tomorrow needs a rigorous and flexible

qualification to help them contribute to business performance and an ever-changing business landscape.

Foundations in Accountancy will provide even greater access to the ACCA Qualification and aims to satisfy

the needs of employers by allowing individuals to choose from a flexible range of qualifications which will help them develop the relevant technical knowledge and practical skills required to perform in accounting technician roles.



### **MATCHING FOUNDATIONS IN ACCOUNTANCY SUITE OF AWARDS TO ROLES AND LEVELS**

As a guideline, we have matched roles and qualifications against the suite of qualifications within Foundations in Accountancy.

#### **Introductory Certificate in Financial and Management Accounting**

Suitable for those aspiring to work or already working in:

- a junior accounts clerk/junior bookkeeper role in a small-medium sized enterprise (SME)
- a range of junior accounting administration roles within an accounting department of a larger organisation or financial shared service centre.

The Introductory Certificate in Financial and Management Accounting is broadly equivalent to UK GCSE level.

#### **Intermediate Certificate in Financial and Management Accounting**

Suitable for those aspiring to work or already working in:

- a bookkeeping or cost clerk role in an SME
- a range of accounting administration roles within an accounting department of a larger organisation or financial shared service centre.

The Intermediate Certificate in Financial and Management Accounting is broadly equivalent to UK A level.

#### **Diploma in Accounting and Business**

Suitable for those aspiring to work or already working in:

- a wide ranging and responsible accounting role in an SME
- a financial reporting and/or financial decision-support role, possibly in a supervisory role, within an accounting department of a larger organisation
- a financial supervisory or management role in accounts payables and/or receivables, or a financial role in fixed asset accounting or in financial shared service centres
- an accounting technician role in a commercial organisation.

The Diploma in Accounting and Business is broadly equivalent to UK Higher National Diploma level or equivalent.



# Overview of Foundations in Accountancy

Foundations in Accountancy consists of foundation level awards, including certificates, diplomas and the Certified Accounting Technician (CAT) Qualification. These flexible awards focus on the core skills of financial accounting and management accounting; and the wider role of the accountant in business at higher levels. The range of awards means that you can pick the level of qualification which most appropriately meets your business needs.

The first examinations will take place in December 2011.

Foundations in Accountancy contains the following qualifications:

- Introductory Certificate in Financial and Management Accounting – awarded on completion of exams *Recording Financial Transactions* (FA1) and *Management Information* (MA1); and Foundations in Professionalism
- Intermediate Certificate in Financial and Management Accounting – awarded on the completion of exams *Maintaining Financial Records* (FA2) and *Managing Costs and Finance* (MA2); and Foundations in Professionalism
- Diploma in Accounting and Business – awarded on the completion of exams *Financial Accounting* (FFA), *Management Accounting* (FMA) *Accounting in Business* (FAB); and Foundations in Professionalism
- Certified Accounting Technician (CAT)
- Foundation specialist papers in audit, tax and financial management are available as individual awards. A certificate will be awarded on the successful completion of the exam and Foundations in Professionalism.

## ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

Foundations in Accountancy offers various entry points, allowing maximum flexibility for your trainees to select the most appropriate entry route and progression to additional qualifications, based on previous qualifications, experience and future career aspirations.

It is important to note that exams FAB, FMA and FFA within Foundations in Accountancy are exactly the same as exams F1, F2 and F3 of the ACCA Qualification and share identical syllabuses, study guides and assessment methods. Students who complete F1, F2 and F3 of the ACCA Qualification and Foundations in Professionalism will also be awarded the Diploma in Accounting and Business.

Students with no formal academic qualifications can register to take exams at any level within Foundations in Accountancy. There is no requirement to complete the Introductory Certificate in Financial and Management Accounting or the Intermediate Certificate in Financial and Management Accounting prior to completing the Diploma in Accounting and Business. However students are strongly recommended to do so as results show students' performance is significantly better where they take the certificates before the diploma

## Optional English and maths self-check modules

ACCA operates an open entry policy through Foundations in Accountancy. However, to assist prospective students – and their employers – in gauging their general level of ability in English and maths, ACCA has developed optional self-check modules in English and maths. Included within the self-check modules are learning materials to help students improve their English language and maths skills which they may wish to complete before embarking on any of ACCA's qualifications. The self-check modules are free of charge and can be accessed online at [www.accaglobal.com](http://www.accaglobal.com)

## FOUNDATIONS IN PROFESSIONALISM

In line with current best practice, and to meet IFAC's (International Federation of Accountants) recommendations for technical accountants, a professionalism and ethics module is included as part of Foundations in Accountancy. Completion of Foundations in Professionalism is compulsory for students who wish to be awarded the Introductory and Intermediate certificates in Financial and Management Accounting, the Diploma in Accounting and Business and the CAT Qualification. Please note Foundations in Professionalism only needs to be completed once by students who

choose to complete one or more of these awards. Foundations in Professionalism is free of charge and can be accessed from the ACCA website. Foundations in Professionalism will not contribute towards the Professional Ethics module which is part of the ACCA Qualification as they are distinct and separate modules.

#### **EXPERIENCE**

Students who wish to complete the CAT Qualification will be required to complete a practical experience requirement.

Four of the CAT Qualification essential competences will be the same as the performance objectives which form part of the ACCA Qualification, and will be introduced alongside the current elements of technical competence. If these four essential competences are completed as part of the CAT Qualification practical experience requirements, they can count towards four of the 13 performance objectives required to achieve the ACCA Qualification. Students will be required to update and maintain paper records of progress towards performance objectives and technical competences.

#### **EXEMPTIONS**

Students with relevant qualifications from a recognised institution may be eligible to claim exemption from papers within Foundations in Accountancy. Students who choose to complete the CAT Qualification may also be eligible to claim exemptions from some or all of the papers within the Introductory Certificate in Financial and Management Accounting and Intermediate Certificate in Financial and Management Accounting based on relevant practical experience.

## EXAM SYLLABUS

The table below summarises the aims of each paper within the syllabus and the corresponding capabilities trainees will develop as they progress through the exams.

RECORDING FINANCIAL TRANSACTIONS (FA1)	
<p><b>AIM</b></p> <p>To introduce knowledge and understanding of the business and its environment and the influence this has on how organisations are structured and on the role of the accounting and other key business functions in contributing to the efficient, effective and ethical management and development of an organisation and its people and systems.</p>	<p><b>MAIN CAPABILITIES</b></p> <p>On successful completion of this paper, candidates should be able to explain and understand the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Types of business transactions and documentations</li> <li>• Duality of transactions and the double entry system</li> <li>• Banking system and transactions</li> <li>• Payroll</li> <li>• Ledger accounts</li> <li>• Cash and bank</li> <li>• Sales and Credit transactions</li> <li>• Purchases and Credit transactions</li> <li>• Reconciliation</li> <li>• Preparing the trial balance.</li> </ul>
MANAGEMENT INFORMATION (MA1)	
<p><b>AIM</b></p> <p>To develop knowledge and understanding of providing basic management information in an organisation to support management in planning and decision-making.</p>	<p><b>MAIN CAPABILITIES</b></p> <p>On successful completion of this paper, candidates should be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explain the nature and purpose of cost and management accounting</li> <li>• Identify source documents in a costing system and correctly code data</li> <li>• Classify costs by nature, behaviour and purpose</li> <li>• Record costs for material, labour and expenses</li> <li>• Provide information on actual and expected costs</li> <li>• Use the spreadsheet system in Microsoft Excel.</li> </ul>
MAINTAINING FINANCIAL RECORDS (FA2)	
<p><b>AIM</b></p> <p>To develop knowledge and understanding of the underlying principles and concepts relating to Maintaining Financial Records and technical proficiency in the use of double-entry accounting techniques including the preparation of basic financial statements</p>	<p><b>MAIN CAPABILITIES</b></p> <p>On successful completion of this paper, candidates should be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explain generally accepted accounting principles and concepts</li> <li>• Outline the principles and process of basic bookkeeping</li> <li>• Preparing journals and ledger accounts</li> <li>• Record transactions and events</li> <li>• Prepare a trial balance (including identifying and correcting errors)</li> <li>• Reconcile the control accounts and cashbook</li> <li>• Extending the trial balance, year end adjustments and final accounts</li> <li>• Account for partnerships.</li> </ul>

## MANAGING COSTS AND FINANCES (MA2)

### AIM

To develop knowledge and understanding of how to prepare, process and present basic cost information to support management in planning and decision-making in a variety of business contexts.

### MAIN CAPABILITIES

On successful completion of this paper, candidates should be able to:

- Explain the role of costing within the organisation and how costs are classified
- Describe and record costs by classification
- Explain and apply cost accounting techniques
- Use management accounting techniques to make and support decision-making
- Explain principles of cash management
- Apply and use computer spreadsheets in Microsoft Excel.

## ACCOUNTANT IN BUSINESS (F1/FAB)

### AIM

To introduce knowledge and understanding of the business and its environment and the influence this has on how organisations are structured and on the role of the accounting and other key business functions in contributing to the efficient, effective and ethical management and development of an organisation and its people and systems.

### MAIN CAPABILITIES

On successful completion of this paper, candidates should be able to:

- Understand the purpose and types of businesses and how they interact with key stakeholders and the external environment
- Understand business organisation structure, functions and the role of corporate governance
- Recognise the function of accountancy and audit in communicating, reporting and assuring financial information and in effective financial control and compliance
- Recognise the principles of authority and leadership and how teams and individuals are recruited, managed, motivated and developed
- Understand the importance of personal effectiveness as the basis for effective team and organisational behaviour
- Recognise that all aspects of business and finance should be conducted in a manner which complies with and is in the spirit of accepted professional ethics and professional values.

## MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTING (F2/FMA)

### AIM

To develop knowledge and understand of providing basic management information in an organisation to support management in planning and decision making.

### MAIN CAPABILITIES

On successful completion of this paper, candidates should be able to:

- Explain the nature, source and purpose of management information
- Explain and apply cost accounting techniques
- Prepare budgets for planning and control
- Compare actual costs with standard costs and analyse any variances
- Analyse, interpret and monitor business performance.

## FINANCIAL ACCOUNTING (F3/FFA)

### AIM

To develop knowledge and understanding of the underlying principles and concepts relating to financial accounting and technical proficiency in the use of double-entry accounting techniques including the preparation of basic financial statements.

### MAIN CAPABILITIES

On successful completion of this paper, candidates should be able to:

- Explain the context and purpose of financial reporting
- Define the qualitative characteristics of financial information
- Demonstrate the use of double-entry and accounting systems
- Record transactions and events
- Prepare a trial balance (including identifying and correcting error)
- Prepare basic financial statements for incorporated and unincorporated entities
- Prepare simple consolidated financial statements
- Interpretation of financial statements.

## SPECIALIST PAPERS

### FOUNDATIONS IN AUDIT (FAU) (INTERNATIONAL)

**AIM**

To develop knowledge and understanding of the principles of external audit and the audit process and technical proficiency in the skills used for auditing financial statements.

**MAIN CAPABILITIES**

On successful completion of this paper, candidates should be able to:

- Explain the purpose and scope of an audit and its regulatory framework
- Explain how an auditor assesses risk and plans an audit
- Identify the principles of internal control and describe and evaluate the features of information systems
- Identify and describe audit evidence and audit procedures required to meet the objectives of an audit and apply International Standards on Auditing
- Explain how the audit is completed and reflected in the different types of audit report.

### FOUNDATIONS IN TAXATION (FTX)

**AIMS**

To develop the ability to prepare computations of tax liability for both individuals and businesses resident in the UK for the purposes of income tax, corporation tax, capital gains tax and value added tax. In addition, to develop knowledge and understanding of the manner in which dealings must be conducted with HM Revenue and Customs, including knowledge of the statutory timescales for the submission of claims and returns and the due dates for the payment of tax liabilities.

**MAIN CAPABILITIES**

On successful completion of this paper, candidates should be able to:

- Explain the basic operation and scope of the UK tax system
- Prepare adjusted profit / loss computations for trades and professions
- Compute the income tax liability of individuals, and prepare the income tax return
- Explain and compute the chargeable gains and capital gains tax liability arising on individuals
- Compute the corporation tax liability of a company, including any chargeable gains, and prepare the corporation tax return
- Explain and compute the effects of value added tax on incorporated and unincorporated businesses and prepare returns.

### FOUNDATIONS IN FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT (FFM)

**AIMS**

To develop knowledge and understanding of the way organisations finance their operations, plan and control cash flows, optimise their use of working capital and allocate resources to capital expenditure projects.

**MAIN CAPABILITIES**

On successful completion of this paper, candidates should be able to:

- Explain and apply the principles of working capital management
- Apply a range of accounting techniques used to forecast cash within the organisation
- Describe methods and procedures for managing cash balances
- Explain principles in making medium to long term financial decisions
- Explain and apply principles in making capital investment decisions
- Describe credit management methods and procedures.

## STUDY OPTIONS

Students have a range of study options available to them, from distance learning to traditional classroom-based learning. This flexibility enables students to select the best study method to fit with their work and personal commitments.

If you decide to provide training with a tuition provider, ACCA strongly recommends selecting one which is registered under ACCA's Approved Learning Partner – Student Tuition programme. This ensures that the provider:

- has been assessed against ACCA's widely recognised and highly-regarded global best practice benchmarks and
- has access to a range of development opportunities and tools provided by ACCA.

More information can be found online at [www.accaglobal.com/students](http://www.accaglobal.com/students) and a database of tuition providers can be found online at [www.accaglobal.com/employers](http://www.accaglobal.com/employers)

## EXAM FORMAT

Computer-based exams will be available for the certificates and diploma papers, but not the specialist papers. Paper-based exams will continue to be available for all exams within Foundations in Accountancy. The first exams under this syllabus will be available from December 2011.

## EXAM TIMETABLE

Written exams can be attempted twice a year in June and December and follow the timetable below. The papers can be sat in any order to suit business or study needs, however we advise that students start with the Introductory Certificate exams and work upwards unless they have previous academic qualifications at that level. And there is no restriction to the number of exams that may be attempted, allowing as many or as few papers to be taken at each exam session. Students are, however, recommended to attempt a maximum of four papers in each six-month period.

## PROGRESSION TO THE CERTIFIED ACCOUNTING TECHNICIAN QUALIFICATION AND THE ACCA QUALIFICATION

Students who successfully complete the Diploma in Accounting and Business through Foundations in Accountancy can either:

- transfer to the ACCA Qualification and commence their studies at F4 onwards of the ACCA Qualification or
- continue to study for the Certified Accounting Technician (CAT) qualification. On completion of this, they can progress to the ACCA Qualification if they choose to do so, beginning their studies at paper F4. They can also count the four essential competences and one year's work experience gained to achieve the CAT Qualification towards the three years' work experience, and four of the nine essential performance objectives required for the ACCA Qualification.

## THE CAT QUALIFICATION

ACCA has retained the CAT Qualification as part of the suite of awards within Foundations in Accountancy. In order to obtain the CAT Qualification, students will need to complete the following:

- FA1, MA1, FA2, MA2, FAB, FFA and FMA exams (or get exemption from any of FA1, MA1, FA2 and MA2)
- two of the three foundation specialist papers
- one year's practical experience including completion of four essential competences and a minimum of six technical competences
- Foundations in Professionalism.

### EXAM TIMETABLE – FOUNDATIONS IN ACCOUNTANCY

Day 1	Foundations in Taxation (FTX)
Day 2	Managing Costs and Finances (MA2) Foundations in Financial Management (FFM)
Day 3	Maintaining Financial Records (FA2)
Day 4	Management Information (MA1)
Day 5	Accountant in Business (FAB)
Day 6	Foundations in Audit (FAU)
Day 7	Financial Accounting (FFA)
Day 8	Recording Financial Transactions (FA1) Management Accounting (FMA)

## **DIPLOMA IN ACCOUNTING AND BUSINESS**

It is also possible for trainees to complete the Diploma in Accounting and Business if they are studying for the ACCA Qualification. The Diploma in Accounting and Business will be awarded after completion of F1, F2, F3 and Foundations in Professionalism.

## **ARTICULATION WITH THE ACCA QUALIFICATION**

### **Practical experience requirements**

There is greater articulation between the practical experience required for the CAT Qualification and the ACCA Qualification. The one year practical experience required for the CAT Qualification will continue to count towards the three year requirement for the ACCA Qualification. In addition, the two qualifications will share four common performance objectives: *act professionally at work, manage self, communicate effectively and use information and communications technology*. If these are completed as part of achieving the CAT Qualification, then they can count towards four of the 13 performance objectives required to achieve the ACCA Qualification.

### **Advanced Diploma in Accounting and Business**

To ensure greater articulation between Foundations in Accountancy and the ACCA Qualification, ACCA has introduced an Advanced Diploma in Accounting and Business which will form part of the ACCA Qualification.

The Advanced Diploma in Accounting and Business will be awarded when students have completed the Fundamentals level exams of the ACCA Qualification. Students will also need to complete the Professional Ethics module in order to receive certification for the award of Advanced Diploma in Accounting and Business.

Please note students will need to have taken and passed (as opposed to being exempted) at least two of the six Skills module papers in order to qualify for the Advanced Diploma.

The Advanced Diploma in Accounting and Business will be awarded to students who complete the Fundamentals level exams, on or after the June 2011 exam session.

## **CERTIFICATES IN AUDIT, TAX AND FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT**

It is possible for trainees to sit the foundation specialist papers in audit, tax and financial management as individual awards. Certificates will be awarded on the successful completion of the specialist paper and Foundations in Professionalism.

## **FEES**

Details of the latest fees, including registration, annual subscription and exam fees can be found on the ACCA website at [www.accaglobal.com](http://www.accaglobal.com)





# The ACCA Qualification

# Why choose the ACCA Qualification?

## RELEVANT

The design of the ACCA Qualification has mainly been determined by findings obtained from over 30,000 stakeholder competency surveys (including thousands of employers) and with reference to the latest developments in meeting the needs of modern finance professionals.

## BALANCED

ACCA provides a uniquely balanced qualification with excellent coverage of the core skills of accounting, business and finance. Your trainees will receive a first class grounding in the major business and accounting areas before being given the opportunity to specialise at the final stage of their studies – flexibility that provides a platform for increased mobility around your business.

ACCA identified the following nine areas of competence:

- professional ethics and governance
- business management
- personal effectiveness
- performance management and management accounting
- finance and financial management
- financial accounting and reporting
- taxation
- audit and assurance
- business and commercial law.

Finance professionals, in whichever sector they operate, must have some level of competence in each of these nine domains. The core elements of the ACCA Qualification ensure that every student has exposure to all of these areas.

## FLEXIBLE

What makes the ACCA Qualification most flexible is that specific areas of competence can be developed to a greater depth depending upon which routes through the qualification a student wishes to follow and upon the sector a student is aiming to work in.

In addition, our flexible exam policy allows your people to co-ordinate exams with career progress and our practical experience requirement simply embodies organisational best practice.

## SUSTAINABILITY AND ETHICS

The ACCA Qualification puts added emphasis on social and environmental responsibilities and recognises the importance of ethical conduct – particularly that accountants be people of integrity who will do the right thing rather than what is convenient or simply permissible.

# The ACCA Qualification

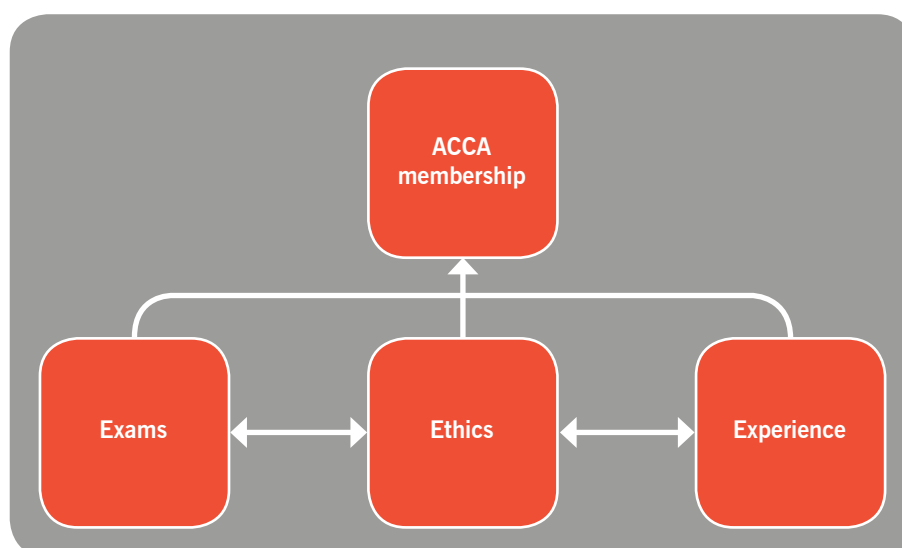
The ACCA Qualification is designed to provide the accounting knowledge, skills and professional values which will deliver finance professionals who are capable of building successful careers across all sectors and making a valuable contribution to your organisation, whether you are in the public or private sectors or in practice.

Accountancy is a dynamic profession. Both the needs of employers and the regulatory landscape are constantly evolving. Through regular reviews of its qualification, ACCA maintains and develops its position as a world-leading provider of qualifications for the development of accountants and finance professionals.

## THE ACCA QUALIFICATION EXPLAINED

In order to qualify as an ACCA member any individual registering on the ACCA Qualification is required to complete:

- 14 exams (nine of which are eligible for exemption)
- relevant practical experience, with a minimum of three years
- an online Professional Ethics module.



# Exams

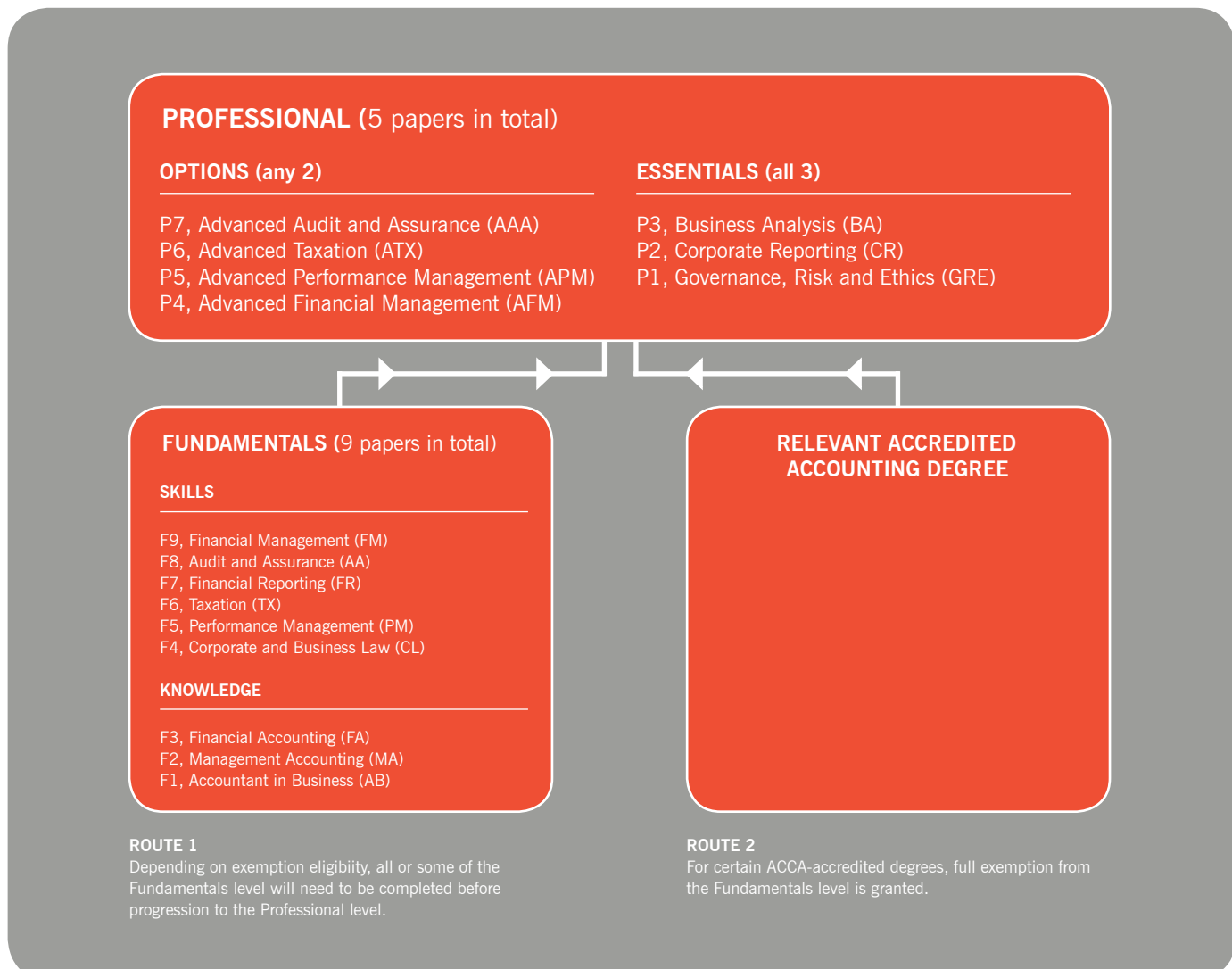
## THE EXAM SYLLABUS

The ACCA Qualification is divided into two levels – Fundamentals and Professional. The Fundamentals level is sub-divided into two modules – Knowledge and Skills. The Knowledge module introduces students to the core areas of financial and management accounting. This provides the platform from which the other technical accountancy areas will be studied in greater detail in the Skills module. The Skills module contains six subjects which

comprehensively cover the main technical areas that any accountant, regardless of their future career aspirations, are expected to have mastered. These comprise law, performance management, taxation, financial reporting, auditing and financial management.

The Professional level is sub-divided into two modules – Essentials and Options. Both these modules have been set at an intellectual level equivalent to that

expected of a student taking a Masters degree. The focus of the syllabus at this level is to build upon the technical skills already acquired and explore more advanced professional skills, techniques and values that are required and used by the expert accountant acting in a demanding professional role including advisory or consultancy responsibilities at a senior level. All students have to complete the three papers in the Essentials module.



The Options module contains four papers. These are directly underpinned and supported by their equivalent within the Skills module in the Fundamentals level. These exams assess the more advanced and sophisticated techniques that a professional needs in order to specialise in these areas at work or to follow as a career pathway in an advisory or consultancy role. Students select two out of four Options papers and are advised to choose the Options that relate to their chosen or anticipated field of work.

The table below summarises the aims of each paper within the syllabus and the corresponding capabilities trainees will develop as they progress through the exams.

### STUDY OPTIONS

On average, an individual registering with the minimum entry requirements, working full-time and studying on a part-time basis would take approximately three to four years to gain their ACCA Qualification.

Although we would always recommend that practical experience is gained along with passing the exams, it's up to the individual, and their employer, to decide how to study, how often to sit exams and where and how to gain relevant practical experience.

There is a variety of different worldwide study options. These include full-time courses, part-time day or evening courses, correspondence/distance learning, weekend courses and revision courses. A database of approved tuition providers can be found online at [www.accaglobal.com](http://www.accaglobal.com)

F1, ACCOUNTANT IN BUSINESS*		* sustainability focus
<p><b>AIM</b> To introduce knowledge and understanding of the business and its environment and the influence this has on how organisations are structured and on the role of the accounting and other key business functions in contributing to the efficient, effective and ethical management and development of an organisation and its people and systems.</p>	<p><b>MAIN CAPABILITIES</b> On successful completion of this paper, candidates should be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• explain how the organisation is structured, governed and managed by – and on behalf of – its external, connected and internal stakeholders</li> <li>• identify and describe the key environmental influences and constraints on how the business operates in general and how these affect the accounting function in particular</li> <li>• describe the history, purpose, and position of accounting in the organisation and the roles of other functional areas</li> <li>• identify and explain the functions of accounting systems and internal controls in planning, monitoring and reviewing performance and in preventing fraud and business failure</li> <li>• recognise the principles of authority and leadership and how teams and individuals behave and are managed, disciplined and motivated in pursuit of wider departmental and organisational aims and objectives</li> <li>• recruit and develop effective employees, using appropriate methods and procedures, while developing constructive relationships through effective communication and interpersonal skills.</li> </ul>	
F2, MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTING		
<p><b>AIM</b> To develop knowledge and understanding of how to prepare and process basic cost and quantitative information to support management in planning and decision-making in a variety of business contexts.</p>	<p><b>MAIN CAPABILITIES</b> On successful completion of this paper, candidates should be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• explain the nature and purpose of cost and management accounting</li> <li>• describe costs by classification, behaviour and purpose</li> <li>• Apply essential business mathematics and use computer spreadsheets</li> <li>• explain and apply cost accounting techniques</li> <li>• prepare and coordinate budgets and standard costing for planning, feedback and control</li> <li>• use management accounting techniques to make and support decision-making.</li> </ul>	
F3, FINANCIAL ACCOUNTING (INT)		
<p><b>AIM</b> To develop knowledge and understanding of the underlying principles and concepts relating to financial accounting and technical proficiency in the use of double-entry accounting techniques including the preparation of basic financial statements.</p>	<p><b>MAIN CAPABILITIES</b> On successful completion of this paper, candidates should be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• explain the context and purpose of financial reporting</li> <li>• define the qualitative characteristics of financial information and the fundamental bases of accounting</li> <li>• demonstrate the use of double-entry and accounting systems</li> <li>• record transactions and events</li> <li>• prepare a trial balance (including identifying and correcting errors)</li> <li>• prepare basic financial statements for incorporated and unincorporated entities.</li> </ul>	

#### F4, CORPORATE AND BUSINESS LAW (ENG)

**AIM**

To develop knowledge and skills in the understanding of the general legal framework, and of specific legal areas relating to business, recognising the need to seek further specialist legal advice where necessary.

**MAIN CAPABILITIES**

On successful completion of this paper candidates should be able to:

- identify the essential elements of the legal system, including the main sources of law
- recognise and apply the appropriate legal rules relating to the law of obligations
- explain and apply the law relating to employment relationships
- distinguish between alternative forms and constitutions of business organisations
- recognise and compare types of capital and the financing of companies
- describe and explain how companies are managed, administered and regulated
- recognise the legal implications relating to companies in difficulty or in crisis
- demonstrate an understanding of governance and ethical issues relating to business.

#### F4, CORPORATE AND BUSINESS LAW (GLO)

**AIM**

To develop knowledge and skills in the understanding of the general legal framework within which international business takes place, and of specific legal areas relating to business, recognising the need to seek further specialist legal advice where necessary.

**MAIN CAPABILITIES**

On successful completion of this paper candidates should be able to:

- identify the essential elements of different legal systems including the main sources of law, the relationship between the different branches of a state's constitution, and the need for international legal regulation, and explain the roles of international organisations in the promotion and regulation of international trade, and the role of international arbitration as an alternative to court adjudication
- recognise and apply the appropriate legal rules applicable under the United Nations Convention on Contracts for the International Sale of Goods, and explain the various ways in which international business transactions can be funded
- recognise different types of international business forms
- distinguish between the alternative forms and constitutions of business organisations
- recognise and compare types of capital and the financing of companies
- describe and explain how companies are managed, administered and regulated
- recognise the legal implications relating to companies in difficulty or in crisis
- demonstrate an understanding of governance and ethical issues relating to business.

#### F5, PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

**AIM**

To develop knowledge and skills in the application of management accounting techniques to quantitative and qualitative information for planning, decision-making, performance evaluation, and control.

**MAIN CAPABILITIES**

On successful completion of this paper candidates should be able to:

- explain, apply, and evaluate cost accounting techniques
- select and appropriately apply decision-making techniques to evaluate business choices and promote efficient and effective use of scarce business resources, appreciating the risks and uncertainty inherent in business and controlling those risks
- apply budgeting techniques and evaluate alternative methods of budgeting, planning and control
- use standard costing systems to measure and control business performance and to identify remedial action
- assess the performance of a business from both a financial and non-financial viewpoint, appreciating the problems of controlling divisionalised businesses and the importance of allowing for external aspects.

#### F6, TAXATION (UK)

**AIM**

To develop knowledge and skills relating to the tax system as applicable to individuals, single companies, and groups of companies.

**MAIN CAPABILITIES**

On successful completion of this paper candidates should be able to:

- explain the operation and scope of the tax system
- explain and compute the income tax liabilities of individuals
- explain and compute the corporation tax liabilities of individual companies and groups of companies
- explain and compute the chargeable gains arising on companies and individuals
- explain and compute the effect of national insurance contributions on employees, employers and the self employed
- explain and compute the effects of value added tax on incorporated and unincorporated businesses
- identify and explain the obligations of tax payers and/or their agents and the implications of non-compliance.

<b>F7, FINANCIAL REPORTING (INT) *</b>		* sustainability focus
<b>AIM</b>	<b>MAIN CAPABILITIES</b>	
To develop knowledge and skills in understanding and applying accounting standards and the theoretical framework in the preparation of financial statements of entities, including groups and how to analyse and interpret those financial statements.	On successful completion of this paper, candidates should be able to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• discuss and apply a conceptual framework for financial reporting</li> <li>• discuss a regulatory framework for financial reporting</li> <li>• prepare and present financial statements which conform with International accounting standards</li> <li>• account for business combinations in accordance with International accounting standards</li> <li>• analyse and interpret financial statements.</li> </ul>	
<b>F7, FINANCIAL REPORTING (UK) *</b>		* sustainability focus
<b>AIM</b>	<b>MAIN CAPABILITIES</b>	
To develop knowledge and skills in understanding and applying accounting standards and the theoretical framework in the preparation of financial statements of entities, including groups and how to analyse and interpret those financial statements.	On successful completion of this paper, candidates should be able to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• discuss and apply a conceptual framework for financial reporting</li> <li>• discuss a regulatory framework for financial reporting</li> <li>• prepare and present financial statements which conform with UK accounting standards</li> <li>• account for business combinations in accordance with UK accounting standards</li> <li>• analyse and interpret financial statements.</li> </ul>	
<b>F8, AUDIT AND ASSURANCE (INT)</b>		
<b>AIM</b>	<b>MAIN CAPABILITIES</b>	
To develop knowledge and understanding of the process of carrying out the assurance engagement and its application in the context of the professional regulatory framework.	On successful completion of this paper, candidates should be able to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• explain the nature, purpose and scope of assurance engagements including the role of the external audit and its regulatory and ethical framework</li> <li>• explain the nature of internal audit and describe its role as part of overall performance management and its relationship with the external audit</li> <li>• demonstrate how the auditor obtains an understanding of the entity and its environment, assesses the risk of material misstatement (whether arising from fraud or other irregularities) and plans an audit of financial statements</li> <li>• describe and evaluate information systems and internal controls to identify and communicate control risks and their potential consequences, making appropriate recommendations</li> <li>• identify and describe the work and evidence required to meet the objectives of audit engagements and the application of the International Standards on Auditing</li> <li>• evaluate findings and modify the audit plan as necessary</li> <li>• explain how the conclusions from audit work are reflected in different types of audit report, explain the elements of each type of report.</li> </ul>	
<b>F8, AUDIT AND ASSURANCE (UK)</b>		
<b>AIM</b>	<b>MAIN CAPABILITIES</b>	
To develop knowledge and understanding of the process of carrying out the assurance engagement, and its application in the context of the professional regulatory framework.	On successful completion of this paper, candidates should be able to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• explain the nature, purpose and scope of assurance engagements including the role of the external audit and its regulatory and ethical framework</li> <li>• explain the nature of internal audit and describing its role as part of overall performance management and its relationship with the external audit</li> <li>• demonstrate how the auditor obtains an understanding of the entity and its environment, assesses the risk of material misstatement (whether arising from fraud or other irregularities) and plans an audit of financial statements</li> <li>• describe and evaluate information systems and internal controls to identify and communicate control risks and their potential consequences, making appropriate recommendations</li> <li>• identify and describe the work and evidence required to meet the objectives of audit engagements and the application of the International Standards on Auditing (UK and Ireland)</li> <li>• evaluate findings and modify the audit plan as necessary</li> <li>• explain how the conclusions from audit work are reflected in different types of audit report, explaining the elements of each type of report.</li> </ul>	

F9, FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT	
<p><b>AIM</b></p> <p>To develop the knowledge and skills expected of a finance manager, in relation to investment, financing, and dividend policy decisions.</p>	<p><b>MAIN CAPABILITIES</b></p> <p>On successful completion of this paper, candidates should be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• discuss the role and purpose of the financial management function</li> <li>• assess and discuss the impact of the economic environment on financial management</li> <li>• discuss and apply working capital management techniques</li> <li>• carry out effective investment appraisal</li> <li>• identify and evaluate alternative sources of business finance</li> <li>• explain and calculate the cost of capital and the factors which affect it</li> <li>• discuss and apply principles of business and asset valuations</li> <li>• explain and apply risk management techniques in business.</li> </ul>
P1, GOVERNANCE, RISK AND ETHICS *	
* sustainability focus	
<p><b>AIM</b></p> <p>To apply relevant knowledge, skills and exercise professional judgement in carrying out the role of the accountant relating to governance, internal control, compliance and the management of risk within an organisation, in the context of an overall ethical framework.</p>	<p><b>MAIN CAPABILITIES</b></p> <p>On successful completion of this paper, candidates should be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• define governance and explain its function in the effective management and control of organisations and of the resources for which they are accountable</li> <li>• evaluate the professional accountant's role in internal control, review and compliance</li> <li>• explain the role of the accountant in identifying and assessing risk</li> <li>• explain and evaluate the role of the accountant in controlling and mitigating risk</li> <li>• demonstrate the application of professional values and judgement through an ethical framework that is in the best interests of society and the profession, in compliance with relevant professional codes, laws and regulations.</li> </ul>
P2, CORPORATE REPORTING (INT) *	
* sustainability focus	
<p><b>AIM</b></p> <p>To apply knowledge, skills and exercise professional judgement in the application and evaluation of financial reporting principles and practices in a range of business contexts and situations.</p>	<p><b>MAIN CAPABILITIES</b></p> <p>On successful completion of this paper, candidates should be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• discuss the professional and ethical duties of the accountant</li> <li>• evaluate the financial reporting framework</li> <li>• advise on and report the financial performance of entities</li> <li>• prepare the financial statements of groups of entities in accordance with relevant accounting standards</li> <li>• explain reporting issues relating to specialised entities</li> <li>• discuss the implications of changes in accounting regulation on financial reporting</li> <li>• appraise the financial performance and position of entities</li> <li>• evaluate current developments.</li> </ul>
P2, CORPORATE REPORTING (UK) *	
* sustainability focus	
<p><b>AIM</b></p> <p>To apply knowledge, skills and exercise professional judgement in the application and evaluation of financial reporting principles and practices in a range of business contexts and situations.</p>	<p><b>MAIN CAPABILITIES</b></p> <p>On successful completion of this paper, candidates should be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• discuss the professional and ethical duties of the accountant</li> <li>• evaluate the financial reporting framework</li> <li>• advise on and report the financial performance of entities</li> <li>• prepare the financial statements of groups of entities in accordance with relevant accounting standards</li> <li>• explain reporting issues relating to specialised entities</li> <li>• discuss the implications of changes in accounting regulation on financial reporting</li> <li>• appraise the financial performance and position of entities</li> <li>• evaluate current developments.</li> </ul>



**P3, BUSINESS ANALYSIS \***

\* sustainability focus

**AIM**

To apply relevant knowledge, skills, and exercise professional judgement in assessing strategic position, determining strategic choice, and implementing strategic action through beneficial business process and structural change; coordinating knowledge systems and information technology and by effectively managing quality processes, projects, and people within financial and other resource constraints.

**MAIN CAPABILITIES**

On successful completion of this paper, candidates should be able to:

- assess the strategic position of an organisation
- evaluate the strategic choices available to an organisation
- discuss how an organisation might go about its strategic implementation
- evaluate and redesign business processes and structures to implement and support the organisation's strategy taking account of customer and other major stakeholder requirements
- integrate appropriate information technology solutions to support the organisation's strategy
- apply appropriate quality initiatives to implement and support the organisation's strategy
- advise on the principles of project management to enable the implementation of aspects of the organisation's strategy with the twin objectives of managing risk and ensuring benefits realisation
- analyse and evaluate the effectiveness of a company's strategy and the financial consequences of implementing strategic decisions
- assess the role of leadership and people management in formulating and implementing business strategy.

**P4, ADVANCED FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT \***

\* sustainability focus

**AIM**

To apply relevant knowledge, skills and exercise professional judgement as expected of a senior financial executive or advisor, in taking or recommending decisions relating to the financial management of an organisation.

**MAIN CAPABILITIES**

On successful completion of this paper, candidates should be able to:

- explain the role and responsibility of the senior financial executive or advisor in meeting conflicting needs of stakeholders
- evaluate potential investment decisions and assessing their financial and strategic consequences, both domestically and internationally
- assess and plan acquisitions and mergers as an alternative growth strategy
- evaluate and advise on alternative corporate re-organisation strategies
- apply and evaluate alternative advanced treasury and risk management techniques
- evaluate the impact of macro economics and recognise the role of international financial institutions in the financial management of multinationals
- identify and assess the potential impact of emerging issues in finance and financial management.

**P5, ADVANCED PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT \***

\* sustainability focus

**AIM**

To apply relevant knowledge, skills and exercise professional judgement in selecting and applying strategic management accounting techniques in different business contexts and to contribute to the evaluation of the performance of an organisation and its strategic development.

**MAIN CAPABILITIES**

On successful completion of this paper, candidates should be able to:

- use strategic planning and control models to plan and monitor organisational performance
- assess and identify relevant macro economic, fiscal and market factors and key external influences on organisational performance
- identify and evaluate the design features of effective performance management information and monitoring systems
- apply appropriate strategic performance measurement techniques in evaluating and improving organisational performance
- advise clients and senior management on strategic business performance evaluation and on recognising vulnerability to corporate failure
- identify and assess the impact of current developments in management accounting and performance management on measuring, evaluating and improving organisational performance.

**P6, ADVANCED TAXATION (UK)****AIM**

To apply relevant knowledge and skills and exercise professional judgement in providing relevant information and advice to individuals and businesses on the impact of the major taxes on financial decisions and situations.

**MAIN CAPABILITIES**

On successful completion of this paper, candidates should be able to:

- apply further knowledge and understanding of the UK tax system through the study of further capital taxes, together with more advanced topics within the taxes studied previously
- evaluate and explain the importance of taxation to personal and corporate financial management
- identify and evaluate the impact of relevant taxes on various situations and courses of action, including the interaction of taxes
- provide advice on minimising and/or deferring tax liabilities by the use of standard tax planning measures
- communicate with clients, HM Revenue and Customs and other professionals in an appropriate manner.

P7, ADVANCED AUDIT AND ASSURANCE (INT) *		* sustainability focus
<p><b>AIM</b></p> <p>To analyse, evaluate and conclude on the assurance engagement and other audit and assurance issues in the context of best practice and current developments.</p>	<p><b>MAIN CAPABILITIES</b></p> <p>On successful completion of this paper, candidates should be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• recognise the legal and regulatory environment and its impact on audit and assurance practice</li> <li>• demonstrate the ability to work effectively on an assurance or other service engagement within a professional and ethical framework</li> <li>• assess and recommend appropriate quality control policies and procedures in practice management and recognise the auditor's position in relation to the acceptance and retention of professional appointments</li> <li>• identify and formulate the work required to meet the objectives of audit and non-audit assignments and apply the International Standards on Auditing</li> <li>• evaluate findings and the results of work performed and draft suitable reports on assignments</li> <li>• understand the current issues and developments relating to the provision of audit related and assurance service.</li> </ul>	
P7, ADVANCED AUDIT AND ASSURANCE (UK) *		* sustainability focus
<p><b>AIM</b></p> <p>To analyse, evaluate and conclude on the assurance engagement and other audit and assurance issues in the context of best practice and current developments.</p>	<p><b>MAIN CAPABILITIES</b></p> <p>On successful completion of this paper, candidates should be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• recognise the legal and regulatory environment and its impact on audit and assurance practice</li> <li>• demonstrate the ability to work effectively on an assurance or other service engagement within a professional and ethical framework</li> <li>• assess and recommend appropriate quality control policies and procedures in practice management and recognise the auditor's position in relation to the acceptance and retention of professional appointments</li> <li>• identify and formulate the work required to meet the objectives of audit and non-audit assignments and apply the International Standards on Auditing (UK and Ireland)</li> <li>• evaluate findings and the results of work performed and draft suitable reports on assignments</li> <li>• understand the current issues and developments relating to the provision of audit related and assurance services.</li> </ul>	

### TAX AND LAW VARIANTS

In a number of countries, students have the opportunity of taking exams based on national tax and law, referred to as 'variant papers'. Students select their variant papers at the time of registration. Variant papers are available for the following exam papers:

- F4 Corporate and Business Law
- F6 Taxation
- P6 Advanced Taxation.

Variant papers are available for either papers in the following countries: Botswana, China, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Hong Kong, Hungary, Ireland, Lesotho, Malawi, Malaysia, Malta, Pakistan, Poland, Romania, Russia, Scotland, Singapore, South Africa, Vietnam, and Zimbabwe. Further details can be found online at [www.accaglobal.com/students/exams](http://www.accaglobal.com/students/exams)

### ACCOUNTING AND AUDITING STANDARDS

Students have the option of taking the accounting and auditing papers based on international standards, UK standards or national standards in certain countries.

The following papers are based on International standards for financial reporting and auditing:

- F3 Financial Accounting
- F7 Financial Reporting
- F8 Audit and Assurance
- P2 Corporate Reporting
- P7 Advanced Audit and Assurance.

Students can select which standards they wish to follow after F3 (which follows international standards) for each individual accounting and audit paper, however the tax variant selected at the time of registration will be used to determine

the accounting and auditing standards that can be attempted. Further details of accounting and auditing standards available can be found online at [www.accaglobal.com/en/student/Exams.html](http://www.accaglobal.com/en/student/Exams.html)

### ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

Various entry points are available to the ACCA Qualification, depending on previous academic qualifications. These include:

- Pre-university matriculation – in the UK this is two A Levels and three GCSEs in five separate subjects including English and Mathematics, or the equivalent. Global entry requirements can be found online at [www.accaglobal.com](http://www.accaglobal.com)
- Graduate entry route – relevant degree holders from ACCA-accredited institutions may be exempted from selected exams. Degrees with some relevance may also qualify for exemptions.

## EXAM TIMETABLE

EXAM TIMETABLE		
<b>Day 1</b>	F5, Performance Management (PM)	P7, Advanced Audit and Assurance (AAA)
<b>Day 2</b>	F6, Taxation (TX)	P4, Advanced Financial Management (AFM)
<b>Day 3</b>	F7, Financial Reporting (FR)	
<b>Day 4</b>	F8, Audit and Assurance (AA)	P5, Advanced Performance Management (APM)
<b>Day 5</b>	F1, Accountant in Business (AB) F9, Financial Management (FM)	P6, Advanced Taxation (ATX)
<b>Day 6</b>	F4, Corporate and Business Law (CL)	P3, Business Analysis (BA)
<b>Day 7</b>	F3, Financial Accounting (FA)	P2, Corporate Reporting (CR)
<b>Day 8</b>	F2, Management Accounting (MA)	P1, Governance, Risk and Ethics (GRE)

- Foundations in Accountancy route – your trainees can study for the ACCA Qualification after completion of the Diploma in Accounting and Business or the Certified Accounting Technician (CAT) Qualification. Please refer to the Foundations in Accountancy section of this booklet for more information.

### EXAM FORMAT

Knowledge module exams are two-hours long. These are available both as computer-based exams (CBEs) – providing automatic marking and immediate results – and also as traditional paper-based exams.

Skills module exams and all Professional level exams are three-hours long with an additional 15 minutes reading time and make use of a range of assessment methods such as short-answer questions, extended computational exercises, essays, scenarios and case studies.

### PROGRESSION THROUGH THE SYLLABUS

To satisfy the exam requirements element which is one of the three necessary to become an ACCA member, students must pass or be exempted from all nine exams in the Fundamentals level, pass all three exams in the Essentials module and pass two Options papers from a choice of four from the Professional level. The ACCA Qualification does not require students to sit and/or pass any of the exams together.

Students are expected to study each module – Knowledge, Skills, Essentials and Options modules at the Professional Level – in order. Students may attempt a maximum of four exams within a six-month period, including CBEs.

Papers may be attempted from different modules at the same sitting as long as the modules are attempted in order. Students may vary the order they attempt exams within each module but they may not vary

the order of the modules. However, ACCA strongly recommends that papers within a module are taken in numerical order.

### DIPLOMA IN ACCOUNTING AND BUSINESS

It is possible for trainees to complete the Diploma in Accounting and Business if they are studying for the ACCA Qualification. The Diploma in Accounting and Business will be awarded after completion of F1, F2, F3 and Foundations in Professionalism.

### ADVANCED DIPLOMA IN ACCOUNTING AND BUSINESS

ACCA has introduced an Advanced Diploma in Accounting and Business which will be awarded when students have completed the Fundamentals level exams of the ACCA Qualification. Students will also need to complete the Professional Ethics module in order to receive certification for the award of Advanced

Diploma in Accounting and Business. Please note students will need to have taken and passed at least two of the six Skills module papers in order to qualify for the Advanced Diploma.

The Advanced Diploma in Accounting and Business will be awarded to students who complete the Fundamentals level on or after the June 2011 exam session.

#### **EXEMPTION POLICY**

No exemptions are available from the Professional level. Relevant degree holders from ACCA-accredited institutions may be exempted from up to all nine exams within the Fundamentals level and register directly at the Professional level.

For guidance on what exemptions are available, an easy-to-use exemption database of qualifications from accredited institutions can be accessed online at [www.accaglobal.com](http://www.accaglobal.com)

#### **ATTAINING MEMBERSHIP**

On completion of all the exams, the online Professional Ethics module and three-years' relevant practical experience, including completion of nine essential performance objectives and four from eleven optional performance objectives (or working for an Approved Employer), students will be awarded membership of ACCA and permitted to use the ACCA designatory letters after their name.

#### **DEGREE IN APPLIED ACCOUNTING**

ACCA works exclusively with Oxford Brookes University (OBU) to offer a BSc Honours Degree in Applied Accounting for students who wish to complete a degree as part of the ACCA Qualification. With an international reputation for innovation, high quality education and research, and global relationships, it is not surprising that Oxford Brookes University has been voted the best modern university in the UK for seven years in succession. By gaining the BSc (Hons) in Applied Accounting, awarded by Oxford Brookes University, your students can demonstrate that they possess all the relevant graduate skills to equip them for their career in accounting and finance with your organisation.

Students are able to obtain their degree, awarded by OBU, upon completion of the Fundamentals level, the online Professional Ethics module and by demonstrating their research, analysis, interpersonal and IT skills by completing a Research and Analysis Project and a Skills and Learning Statement. The degree can be obtained before or after gaining the ACCA Qualification.

Please visit [www.accaglobal/en/student/qualification-resources/bsc.html](http://www.accaglobal/en/student/qualification-resources/bsc.html) for more information.

# Ethics

Values, ethics and governance are essential skills for finance professionals. That is why ACCA has adopted a holistic approach to your trainees' ethical development via the exams syllabus, the practical experience requirements and Foundations in Professionalism and the Professional Ethics module – requirements to be completed in order to obtain these ACCA qualifications.

## **FOUNDATIONS IN PROFESSIONALISM**

All students studying for any of our entry-level qualifications within Foundations in Accountancy are required to complete Foundations in Professionalism. This is an online, interactive module designed to help develop understanding of what it means to act professionally and ethically in the work they carry out.

Foundations in Professionalism can be completed before or after finishing the exam component of any of the Foundations in Accountancy qualifications and the module only needs to be successfully completed once, even if students decide to complete one or more of our qualifications.

There is no set time allocated to completing Foundations in Professionalism. We encourage students to complete the module at their own pace to allow time to reflect on what has been learnt.

## **PROFESSIONAL ETHICS MODULE**

As part of their ethical development, students are required to complete an online training module, developed by ACCA. Instead of using traditional exam format, this module uses current best practices in online learning to give students exposure to a range of ethical perspectives, and includes several self-tests which require them to reflect on their own ethical behaviour and values. They will be able to apply what they have learned in a case study where they can experience an audit situation from two points of view – that of the auditor and the corporate financial accountant.

Students will be given access to the Professional Ethics module as soon as they become eligible to take Paper P1, *Governance, Risk and Ethics*. It is recommended that students take the Professional Ethics module at the same time as, or before, the *Governance, Risk and Ethics* paper is taken. While students have the flexibility to complete the ethics module at their own convenience, it must be completed as a requirement of gaining ACCA membership.

# Experience

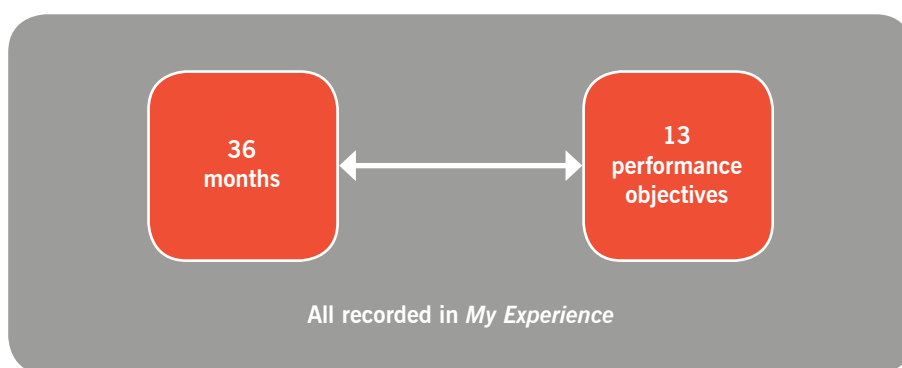
To give you a more valuable employee, and demonstrate that trainees have the abilities and maturity required to become a member, ACCA provides a framework for trainees to gain high standards of knowledge and ability in the workplace.

## PRACTICAL EXPERIENCE REQUIREMENTS

A key element of the ACCA Qualification is the practical experience requirement (PER). The PER helps ensure that ACCA members have the essential skills required by employers worldwide, complementing the knowledge they gain through the exams. Developed only after extensive research with the global profession and employers, ACCA's PER is designed to reflect international best practice in learning and development. Trainees must complete 36 months' relevant work experience and achieve their practical experience requirements before they are eligible to become an ACCA member.

## ACHIEVING PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVES

Under the ACCA Qualification, trainees need to demonstrate that they have met a range of workplace performance objectives – benchmarks of effective performance. Performance objectives are divided into nine key areas of knowledge which are closely linked to the exam syllabus – reinforcing that any knowledge developed through the exams process will have a clear application in the workplace. Individuals will be required to achieve 13 performance objectives in total – all nine from Essentials and any four from Options.



Trainees will demonstrate they have achieved a particular performance objective by responding to a set of 'challenge questions' – questions similar to those asked in a performance review, interview or appraisal. This will help them to describe their workplace achievements and encourage them to think about the quality of the work they have produced. It will also encourage the trainee to evaluate how the work they have completed has contributed to the workplace and benefited their employer.

## RECORDING PRACTICAL EXPERIENCE

Trainees record their achievements through an online *My Experience* record, which they access via *myACCA* using their secure

login. *My Experience* will provide the individual trainee with a valuable record of their workplace achievements – recorded through answering challenge questions. When these achievements are reviewed and signed off by a workplace mentor, the performance objective is achieved. Trainees can also use this facility to print out reports on their progress.

Trainees of employers who apply for the ACCA Approved Employer programme trainee development stream and gain approval at gold or platinum level are exempt from having to complete *My Experience* as they have participated in their employer's own appraisal and performance scheme.

## PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVES

### ESSENTIALS PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVES – COMPLETE ALL NINE

#### Professionalism, ethics and governance

- 1 Demonstrate the application of professional ethics, values and judgement
- 2 Contribute to the effective governance of an organisation
- 3 Raise awareness of non-financial risk

#### Personal effectiveness

- 4 Manage self
- 5 Communicate effectively
- 6 Use information and communications technology

#### Business management

- 7 Manage ongoing activities in your area of responsibility
- 8 Improve departmental performance
- 9 Manage an assignment

### OPTIONS PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVES – CHOOSE ANY FOUR

#### Financial accounting and reporting

- 10 Prepare financial statements for external purposes
- 11 Interpret financial transactions and financial statements

#### Performance measurement and management accounting

- 12 Prepare financial information for management
- 13 Contribute to budget planning and production
- 14 Monitor and control budgets

#### Finance and financial management

- 15 Evaluate potential business/investment opportunities and the required finance options
- 16 Manage cash using active cash management and treasury systems

#### Audit and assurance

- 17 Prepare for and collect evidence for audit
- 18 Evaluate and report on audit

#### Taxation

- 19 Evaluate and compute taxes payable
- 20 Assist with tax planning

*My Experience* includes detailed information on each performance objective.

## WORKPLACE MENTORS

Trainees require a workplace mentor to support their development and review their progress and achievements at work.

The workplace mentor, alongside the trainee, will be responsible for:

- selecting which performance objectives trainees should work towards achieving
- setting targets in terms of performance and timescales
- providing access to appropriate work experience and supporting trainees' development,

- evaluating and reviewing a trainee's progress on a regular and ongoing basis.

The trainee enters details of their workplace mentor on *My Experience*. It could be their line manager or another suitably responsible individual. Wherever possible their workplace mentor should be a qualified accountant. The workplace mentor is provided with their own secure online *My Experience* access to review and sign-off the trainee's challenge questions answers.

Comprehensive online guidance will be provided – free of charge – to workplace mentors to ensure they feel adequately prepared to support the development of trainees.

## LINKS BETWEEN THE EXAMS AND PRACTICAL EXPERIENCE

The ACCA Qualification closely links practical experience to the exam syllabus – reinforcing that any capabilities developed through the exams process will have a clear application in the workplace, illustrated in the table below.

Essentials performance objectives are marked with ‘ \* ’ and must be completed by all trainees.

EXAM PAPER	AREA OF KNOWLEDGE	PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVE
P1, Governance, Risk and Ethics	Professionalism, ethics and governance	1* Demonstrate the application of professional ethics, values and judgment 2* Contribute to the effective governance of an organisation 3* Raise awareness of non-financial risk
All exam syllabuses test a range of personal effectiveness skills, including time management and communications skills	Personal effectiveness	4* Manage self 5* Communicate effectively 6* Use information and communications technology
P3, Business Analyst F1, Accountant in Business	Business Management	7* Manage ongoing activities in your area of responsibility 8* Improve departmental performance 9* Manage an assignment
P2, Corporate Reporting F7, Financial Reporting F3, Financial Accounting	Financial accounting and reporting	10 Prepare financial statements for external purposes 11 Interpret financial transactions and financial statements
P5, Advanced Performance Management F5, Performance Management F2, Management Accounting	Performance measurement and management accounting	12 Prepare financial information for management 13 Contribute to budget planning and production 14 Monitor and control budgets
P4, Advanced Financial Management F9, Financial Management	Finance and financial management	15 Evaluate potential business/investment opportunities and the required finance options 16 Manage cash using active cash management and treasury systems
P7, Advanced Audit and Assurance F8, Audit and Assurance	Audit and assurance	17 Prepare for and collect evidence for audit 18 Evaluate and report on audit
P6, Advanced Taxation F6, Taxation	Taxation	19 Evaluate and compute taxes payable 20 Assist with tax planning
F4, Corporate and Business Law	Business and commercial law	Law, regulation and compliance are integrated through appropriate performance objectives
* Performance objectives marked ‘*’ are Essentials and MUST be completed by all trainees		



# ACCA qualified

Once the individual components of the ACCA Qualification have been completed, your trainee will automatically be invited to transfer to membership. A unique combination of technical knowledge and practical experience qualifies our members to use the ACCA letters after their name and enjoy the reputation associated with being a member of the global body for professional accountants.

## CPD

ACCA provides a leading range of services to our members and offers privileged access to world-renowned technical and thought-leadership materials, as well as ACCA's leading-edge continuing professional development (CPD) programme. All members are required to undertake relevant CPD to ensure that they maintain and develop the knowledge and skills needed to succeed in today's dynamic and demanding business environment and make an annual declaration to ACCA confirming their compliance.

ACCA's approach to CPD aims to ensure that learning and development is relevant at all stages of the professional career. The principal benefits of our programme are that it:

- helps to identify areas of development which are relevant and provide career support
- reassures employers and the public that ACCA members are up to date and employ an ethical approach
- offers a measurable and transparent approach to CPD

- provides an accessible range of services to help maintain and develop expertise.

## ETHICS AND PROFESSIONALISM

ACCA takes a strong position on ethics and requires all ACCA members to adhere to our ethical code of conduct. Ethics also lie at the heart of our programme. An ethical declaration forms part of the annual CPD declaration to ensure that our members maintain and develop their ethical competence.

Professionalism is a dedication to work which requires a high level of skill and also a commitment to a set of principles centred on the public interest. At the heart of being an ACCA professional is the duty to serve the public interest.

Accountancy is one of the most respected professions in the world and ACCA works hard to ensure our members adopt the highest standards of practice and ethical conduct. We lead the way in driving global standards of professionalism and ethics and our reputation for integrity and accountability provides a firm foundation for the positive standing of our members.

# ACCA Approved Employer programme

The ACCA Approved Employer programme recognises high standards of staff training and development and rewards them with bespoke relationships with ACCA that fast-track our business processes to keep things quick and easy for your organisation. Over 8,000 organisations worldwide are ACCA Approved Employers.

Three individual streams are available:

- trainee development – for recognition of your existing in-house training policies and to simplify your trainees' membership application process .
- professional development – available if you actively support the continuing professional development (CPD) of your qualified finance professionals.
- practising certificate development – to enable your organisation to train ACCA staff for practising certificates.

The Approved Employer programme is free to join and, by helping you to bring talented people into your organisation, it can have a positive effect on your bottom line.

## TRAINEE DEVELOPMENT

The trainee development stream recognises the learning opportunities your organisation provides for its employees working towards the ACCA Qualification, Certified Accounting Technician or Diploma in Financial Management. There are three levels of approval – silver, gold and platinum.

The scheme is accessible to all and the level of approval awarded reflects the support your organisation provides to trainees. It is also progressive, enabling organisations approved at silver or gold levels to work towards a higher level of approval.

You can find more information and apply for approval online at [www.accaglobal.com/employers](http://www.accaglobal.com/employers) or by contacting your nearest ACCA office.

## FEES

Details of the latest fees, including registration, annual subscription and our new flexible exam fees for early, standard and late exam entry can be found on the ACCA website at [www.accaglobal.com](http://www.accaglobal.com)

## MORE INFORMATION

Visit [www.accaglobal.com](http://www.accaglobal.com) for further information on ACCA qualifications. If you have any queries, your local ACCA contact will be happy to help or you can email [employers@accaglobal.com](mailto:employers@accaglobal.com). You can also contact ACCA Connect – ACCA's global customer services contact centre – by telephone on +44 (0)141 582 2000.



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