Syllabus and study guide

Taxation Singapore (E1 SGP)



December 2027

Designed to help with planning study and to provide detailed information on what could be assessed in any examination session.

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1. Overall aim of the syllabus

The overall aim of the syllabus is to develop and enable the application of technical knowledge and skills relating to the Singapore tax system as applicable to individuals, single companies, and groups of companies.

2. Introduction to the syllabus

The syllabus for E1 Taxation (E1 SGP) starts by introducing candidates to the functions of the Singapore tax system, including sources of tax law and practice, the rights and obligations of taxpayers and their agents, the powers of the tax authorities and the consequences of non-compliance.

The syllabus then moves on to provide the core knowledge of the major technical areas of Singapore taxation as they affect the activities of individuals and businesses, beginning with individual income tax. The syllabus covers the taxation of income from employment, property and investments, including the availability of exemptions and reliefs.

The next technical area covered by the syllabus is corporate income tax, in particular the profits which are chargeable to corporate income tax, how the corporate income tax liability is computed and exemptions and reliefs available to companies. This syllabus area also covers the implications of a group corporate structure and the reliefs available to corporate groups.

Lastly, the syllabus covers goods and services tax (GST), in particular the registration requirements and calculation and administration of GST.

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3. Main capabilities

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

- Assess the operation and scope of the Singapore tax system, the rights and obligations of taxpayers, their representatives, and tax authorities, and the implications of non-compliance
- Analyse and calculate the income tax liabilities of individuals
- Analyse and calculate the income tax liabilities of individual companies and groups of companies
- Analyse and calculate the effects of goods and services tax on incorporated and unincorporated businesses
- Assess the impact of relevant taxes which apply in a variety of business and personal contexts

4. Intellectual levels

The ACCA Qualification syllabus is designed to progressively broaden and deepen the technical knowledge, skills and professional values demonstrated by the candidate on their journey through the qualification.

The specific learning outcomes within the detailed syllabuses and study guides are assessed at one of three intellectual or cognitive levels:

Level 1: Knowledge and comprehension
Level 2: Application and analysis
Level 3: Synthesis and evaluation

Very broadly these intellectual levels relate to the three levels of the ACCA Qualification: Knowledge, Expertise and Strategic Professional.

Each learning outcome included in the detailed study guide is given a 1, 2 or 3 superscript, denoting its intellectual level. This gives an indication of the intellectual depth at which a learning outcome could be assessed within the examination. However, while Level 1 broadly equates with the Knowledge level, Level 2 to the Expertise level and Level 3 to the Strategic Professional level of the ACCA Qualification, some lower-level skills can continue to be assessed as the candidate progresses through each level. This reflects that at each stage of study there will be the requirement to broaden, as well as deepen, capabilities.

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5. The syllabus

A The Singapore tax system and its administration

1. Singapore taxes
2. Principal sources of revenue law and practice
3. The system for the submission of information, claims and procedures relating to enquiries, appeals and disputes

B Individual income tax liabilities

1. The scope of individual income tax
2. Income from employment
3. Income from self-employment
4. Property and investment income
5. The comprehensive computation of taxable income and income tax liability
6. The use of exemptions and reliefs in deferring and minimising income tax liabilities.
7. Penalties for non-compliance

C Corporate income tax liabilities

1. The scope of corporate income tax
2. Profits chargeable to corporate income tax
3. The comprehensive computation of the corporate income tax liability
4. The effect of a group corporate structure for corporate income tax purposes
5. The use of exemptions and reliefs in deferring and minimising corporate tax liabilities
6. The cash payout option under the Enterprise Innovation Scheme (EIS).
7. Penalties for non-compliance

D Goods and services tax

1. Goods and services tax (GST) registration requirements
2. The computation of GST liabilities
3. Administration of GST and penalties for non-compliance

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6. Detailed study guide

A The Singapore tax system and its administration

1. Singapore taxes

a) Explain the difference between direct and indirect taxation.[1]

b) Summarise the different types of revenue tax.[1]

c) Recommend an appropriate ethical action or response to a given tax situation.[2]

2. Principal sources of revenue law and practice

a) Explain the overall structure of the Singapore tax system.[1]

b) Summarise the different sources of revenue law.[1]

c) Assess the interaction of the Singapore tax system with that of other tax jurisdictions.[2]

d) Compare and contrast tax avoidance and tax evasion.[2]

3. The system for the submission of information, claims and procedures relating to enquiries, appeals and disputes

a) Analyse the requirement and apply the time limits for record keeping and the filing of returns, including estimates of chargeable income and the making of claims, the filing of objections and the appeals procedure.[2]

b) Analyse and apply the withholding tax implications arising in respect of payments made to non-residents.[2]

c) Apply the due dates for the payment of tax including instalment arrangements and tax assessed on estimated chargeable income and withholding tax.[2]

d) Summarise the information and records that taxpayers need to retain for tax purposes.[1]

e) Analyse the circumstances in which the Comptroller can enquire into the tax affairs of taxpayers.[2]

f) Explain the procedures for dealing with appeals and disputes.[1]

B Individual income tax liabilities

1. The scope of individual income tax

a) Explain how the residence of an individual is determined.[1]

b) Analyse and apply the three-year and two-year concession rules for tax residence.[2]

2. Income from employment

a) Assess the factors which determine whether an engagement is treated as employment or self-employment.[2]

b) Analyse the basis of assessment for employment income for both resident and non-resident individuals.[2]

c) Analyse the difference between gains and profits, and capital receipts from employment.[2]

d) Calculate the income assessable.[2]

e) Analyse the allowable expenses which can be deducted from employment income.[2]

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f) Calculate the amount of benefits assessable, including share options, share awards and excess Central Provident Fund (CPF) contributions made by an employer.[2]

3. Income from self-employment

a) Analyse the basis of assessment for self-employment income, including cases of commencement, cessation and change of accounting date.[2]

b) Analyse the difference between income receipts and capital receipts.[2]

c) Apply the badges of trade.[2]

d) Analyse the expenditure which is allowable in calculating the tax-adjusted trading profit.[2]

e) Analyse the relief which can be obtained for pre-trading expenditure.[2]

f) Capital allowances:

(i) Explain what constitutes plant and machinery for capital allowances purposes.[1]
(ii) Calculate capital allowances including accelerated and one-year write off allowances.[2]
(iii) Calculate balancing allowances and balancing charges.[2]
(iv) Calculate Land Intensification Allowance (LIA) for qualifying capital expenditure on an LIA building.[2]
(v) Calculate the balancing adjustment on the disposal of an LIA building.[2]
(vi) Analyse how capital allowances can be carried forward and carried back.[2]
(vii) Analyse how capital allowances can be claimed against total income.[2]
(viii) Analyse the order of set-off of current and previous years capital allowances.[2]

g) Relief for trading losses:

(i) Analyse how trading losses can be carried forward and carried back.[2]
(ii) Analyse how trading losses can be claimed against total income.[2]
(iii) Analyse and apply the order of set-off of current and previous years' trading losses.[2]
(iv) Analyse the factors which will influence the choice of loss relief claim[2]

h) Partnerships, limited liability partnerships and limited partnerships:

(i) Analyse how a partnership is assessed to tax.[2]
(ii) Calculate the assessable profits for each partner following a change in the profit-sharing ratio, a change in membership or a change in accounting date.[2]
(iii) Explain the capital allowances, LIA and trade loss relief restriction which applies to the partners of a limited liability partnership and a limited partnership.[1]

i) Analyse the treatment of Singapore sourced professional income of non-residents.[2]

4. Property and investment income

a) Calculate the net income from investments in properties, equities, placement of funds on deposits with banks and loans granted both within and outside Singapore.[2]

b) Analyse how losses from investments are treated.[2]

c) Compare and contrast between a business being carried on and pure investment intent.[2]

d) Calculate the tax payable on dividend income.[2]

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e) Analyse and apply the exemptions available for certain types of investment income.[2]

5. The comprehensive computation of taxable income and income tax liability

a) Prepare a basic income tax computation involving different types of income.[2]

b) Calculate the amount of personal allowance available to individuals and analyse the principal reliefs claimable, such as earned income, standard/handicapped spouse, sibling, children, working mother's, child relief, life insurance, parent, grandparent caregiver, and NSman.[2]

c) Assess and apply the relief given for donations and the carry forward of unabsorbed donations.[2]

d) Calculate the amount of income tax payable.[2]

6. The use of exemptions and reliefs in deferring and minimising income tax liabilities.

a) Assess and calculate the relief given for contributions to the Central Provident Fund (CPF) made by employees and the self-employed.[2]

b) Compare and contrast the tax implications of a shareholder/director extracting profits from an owner managed company by way of remuneration versus dividend payments.[2]

7. Penalties for non-compliance

a) Apply the due dates for payment and explain the penalties which can be charged for non-compliance with the requirements of the Income Tax Act.[1]

b) Calculate late payment penalties on overdue tax and withholding tax.[2]

C Corporate income tax liabilities

1. The scope of corporate income tax

a) Contrast the terms basis period and the year of assessment.[2]

b) Apply the rules to determine the basis period for assessing corporate profits, including the case of a change of accounting date.[2]

c) Analyse the factors which must be considered when incorporating a business.[2]

d) Assess the residence of a company.[2]

e) Contrast the nature of an incorporated company, a branch of a foreign company and a representative office.[2]

f) Interpret and apply the basic Singapore transfer pricing guidelines and reporting requirements, including: [2]

(i) the definition of related parties.
(ii) analysing and applying the arm's length principle.
(iii) IRAS administrative practices for routine support services and intercompany loan arrangement.
(iv) requirement to prepare transfer pricing documentation and exemption therefrom.
(v) penalties and surcharges in relation to transfer pricing adjustments and non-compliance with transfer pricing documentation.

2. Profits chargeable to corporate income tax

a) Contrast income receipts with capital gains.[2]

b) Analyse the tax treatment of income from trade/business.[2]

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c) Analyse the expenditure which is allowable in calculating the tax-adjusted trading profit (as for individual income tax) including further tax deduction and enhanced deduction under the Enterprise Innovation Scheme for qualifying training and AI adoption expenditure.[2]

d) Analyse the tax treatment of income from sources other than trade/business.[2]

e) Analyse the tax treatment of foreign sourced income including gains on sale of foreign assets received or deemed received in Singapore.[2]

f) Explain how relief can be obtained for pre-trading expenditure.[1]

g) Calculate capital allowances:[2]

(i) as for individual income tax in B3(f) above.
(ii) including enhanced allowances under the Enterprise Innovation Scheme.
(iii) including capital allowances in respect of intellectual property rights.

h) Calculate income from the business of the making of investments.[2]

i) Analyse the income which is exempt from tax.[2]

j) Analyse how trading losses can be carried forward and forfeited.[2]

k) Analyse how trading losses can be claimed against income of the current or previous accounting periods.[2]

l) Assess and apply the factors which will influence the choice of loss relief claim.[2]

m) Assess and apply the order of set-off of capital allowances and losses of the current and previous years.[2]

n) Calculate profits chargeable to corporation tax.[2]

3. The comprehensive computation of the corporate income tax liability

a) Prepare a basic tax computation for a company involving the different types of income.[2]

b) Assess and apply the relief given for donations and the carry forward of unabsorbed donations.[2]

c) Assess the tax implications arising from the distribution of profits by a company to its shareholders.[2]

d) Calculate the corporation tax liability.[2]

e) Analyse how exemptions and reliefs can defer or minimise corporation tax liabilities.[2]

4. The effect of a group corporate structure for corporate income tax purposes

a) Assess whether a group exists and analyse the effect of being a member of the same group for corporation tax purposes.[2]

b) Apply the reliefs which are available to members of such a group.[2]

c) Analyse the effects of a corporation becoming a member of a group for only part of a year or change in shareholding in group members.[2]

5. The use of exemptions and reliefs in deferring and minimising corporation tax liabilities

a) Analyse, calculate and apply the right reduction/relief and tax saving/deferral arrangement in given circumstances.[2]

6. The cash payout option under the Enterprise Innovation Scheme (EIS)

a) Analyse the cash payout option under the EIS.[2]

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b) Explain the conditions which must be met for a business to be eligible for a cash payout under the EIS.[1]

c) Calculate the EIS cash payout.[2]

d) Assess whether it is more beneficial for a business to elect for the EIS cash payout option or to claim enhanced deductions for qualifying expenditure.[2]

7. Penalties for non-compliance

a) Apply the due dates for payment and explain the penalties which can be charged for non-compliance with the requirements of the Income Tax Act.[2]

b) Calculate late payment penalties on overdue tax and withholding tax.[2]

D Goods and services tax

1. Goods and services tax (GST) registration requirements

a) Assess the circumstances in which a person must register (compulsory or voluntary) or deregister for GST.[2]

b) Assess the circumstances in which pre-registration input GST can be recovered.[2]

c) Explain which information must be included on a GST invoice.[1]

2. The computation of GST liabilities

a) Calculate the amount of GST payable/recoverable.[2]

b) Assess and apply the tax point when goods or services are supplied.[2]

c) Assess and apply the principles regarding the valuation of supplies.[2]

d) Contrast the treatment of zero rated and exempt supplies.[2]

e) Analyse and apply the circumstances in which input GST is non-deductible.[2]

f) Analyse and apply the relief which is available for trade debts which are bad.[2]

g) Assess and apply the treatment of the sale of a business as a going concern.[2]

h) Analyse and apply the GST treatment of imports, exports and trade outside Singapore.[2]

i) Analyse situations where the reverse charge and overseas vendor registration applies.[2]

j) Apply the de minimis rule and partial exemption for general traders.[2]

3. Administration of GST and penalties for non-compliance

a) Analyse how GST is accounted for and administered.[2]

b) Calculate late payment interest and the penalties which can be applied.[2]

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7. Reading list

Income Tax Act Cap 134

Singapore Master Tax Guide - CCH Asia Ltd Singapore Tax Workbook - CCH Asia Ltd

eBook Taxation in Singapore – McGraw Hill

IRAS e-Tax Guide / published information – www.iras.gov.sg

8. Approach to examining the syllabus

The syllabus for E1 Taxation (E1 SGP) is assessed by a three-hour computer-based examination.

The examination will consist of two sections:

Section A will contain 15 two-mark objective test questions (OTs).

Section B will contain six constructed response questions (CRs). Four of the CR questions will be worth 10 marks each and two of the CR questions will be worth 15 marks each. The two 15-mark questions will focus on individual income tax (syllabus area B) and corporate income tax (syllabus area C).

All other questions can cover any areas of the syllabus.

Tax rates, allowances and information on certain reliefs will be given in the examination.

9. Guide to ACCA examination structure and delivery mode

The structure of examinations varies, depending on the level of the qualification.

The Expertise examinations contain 100% compulsory questions to encourage candidates to study across the breadth of each syllabus.

All Expertise examinations are assessed by three-hour computer-based examinations.

The pass mark for all Expertise examinations is 50%.

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10. Guide to ACCA examination assessment

ACCA reserves the right to examine anything contained within the study guide at any examination session. This includes knowledge, techniques, principles, theories, and concepts as specified.

For specified financial accounting, audit and tax examinations, except if indicated otherwise, ACCA will publish examinable documents once a year to indicate exactly what regulations and legislation could potentially be assessed within identified examination sessions. For most examinations (not tax), regulation issued, or legislation passed on or before 31 August annually, will be assessed from 1 September of the following year to 31 August of the year after. Please refer to the examinable documents for the examination (where relevant) for further information.

Regulations issued or legislation passed in accordance with the above dates may be examinable if the effective date is in the future, unless explicitly stated otherwise in the syllabus and study guide or examinable documents. The terms 'issued' or 'passed' relate to when regulation or legislation has been formally approved.

The term 'effective' relates to when regulation or legislation must be applied to entity transactions and business practices.

The study guide offers more detailed guidance on the depth and level at which the examinable documents will be examined. The study guide should therefore be read in conjunction with the examinable documents list, where applicable.

For E1 SGP, generally examinations in June and December will be based on legislation passed, including practice notes or circulars issued by the relevant authorities including the Inland Revenue Authority of Singapore (IRAS), by the previous 30 September. Note: Exceptionally, the examination in June 2027 will be based on legislation passed by 30 September 2025 and only the examination in December 2027 will be based on legislation passed by 30 September 2026.

11. Learning hours and education recognition

The ACCA Qualification does not prescribe or recommend any particular number of learning hours for examinations because study and learning patterns and styles vary greatly between people and organisations. This also recognises the wide diversity of personal, professional and educational circumstances in which ACCA candidates find themselves.

As a member of the International Federation of Accountants, ACCA seeks to enhance the education recognition of its qualification on both national and international education frameworks, and with educational authorities and partners globally. In doing so, ACCA aims to ensure that its qualifications are recognised and valued by governments and regulatory authorities and employers across all sectors. To this end, ACCA qualifications are currently recognised on the educational frameworks in several countries. Please refer to your national education framework regulator for further information about recognition.

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